

# Italy

by Nancy Burgess

I've never been to Europe let alone, out of the country. I was lucky enough to spend two solid weeks in Italy, the home of "my people" this past fall. A country that 3 of my grandparents came from before settling in the midwest.

I saw all the typical historical tourist sites in Rome and Venice and visited several small towns in northern Italy; Ferrara, Chioggia, Lido Island, and Abano Terme. Most of my time was spent in Rovigo, a small town with a population of 50,000. Few people in the town speak English and I do not speak Italian, yet somehow, we were able to communicate with one another.

Without a doubt, Italy has history and it's a place you should put on your bucket list. From the Vatican to a gondola ride in Venice, the food, the shopping, castles, cemeteries, and churches, you'll have plenty to do and see. My two greatest memories from this trip were having my deceased mother's rosary blessed by a priest in St. Peter's

Basilica and riding my bike 20 miles through the countryside exploring churches, castles, and cemeteries. But, I want to share with you what I observed and what it meant to me.

What's very apparent in Italy is the love and affection that the Italians have for each other and for each day. No one is rushing around, no one is looking at their cell phones. It's a place where people still read newspapers! Men and women hold hands walking down the street and without embarrassment, middle school kids also hold their parents' hands in public! They are fit, natural beauties, they walk or ride bikes to school, work, the market, or out to dinner. In the evening people gather in the town center, called the Piazza, to socialize and dine out with family and friends. They linger over an espresso, glass of wine or dinner. Business owners are not rushing you out, they are welcoming you in to stay and relax. Italians seem to appreciate one another and live in the moment.

**My experience in Italy helped me to slow down and appreciate the world around me. Staying connected, living in the present...it's what matters and it's what's important.**

Before my grandparents' time, Italy was being built and history was being made without all the technology, tools, and resources that we have today. Appreciation and being grateful to experience the people, the culture, and the history that Italy has to offer was invaluable. ...Now, plan that trip to somewhere that has a rich history where you can sit back and enjoy everything life has to offer!

◀ Clockwise from left: 1. Venice, 2. Castello di San Michele is a moated medieval castle in the center of Ferrara, northern Italy, 3. Pizza in Rovigo, Italy and YES, I ate the ENTIRE pizza in one sitting!!!, 4. Venice with my brother



# Positano, Italy

by Eve Sotiriou

Positano, Italy is located on the Amalfi Coast in the Campania region in Italy.

## Things to Know



### Language: Italian

You'll be able to get by with English. A good idea though to know some Italian phrases: greetings, say thank you, and goodbye.



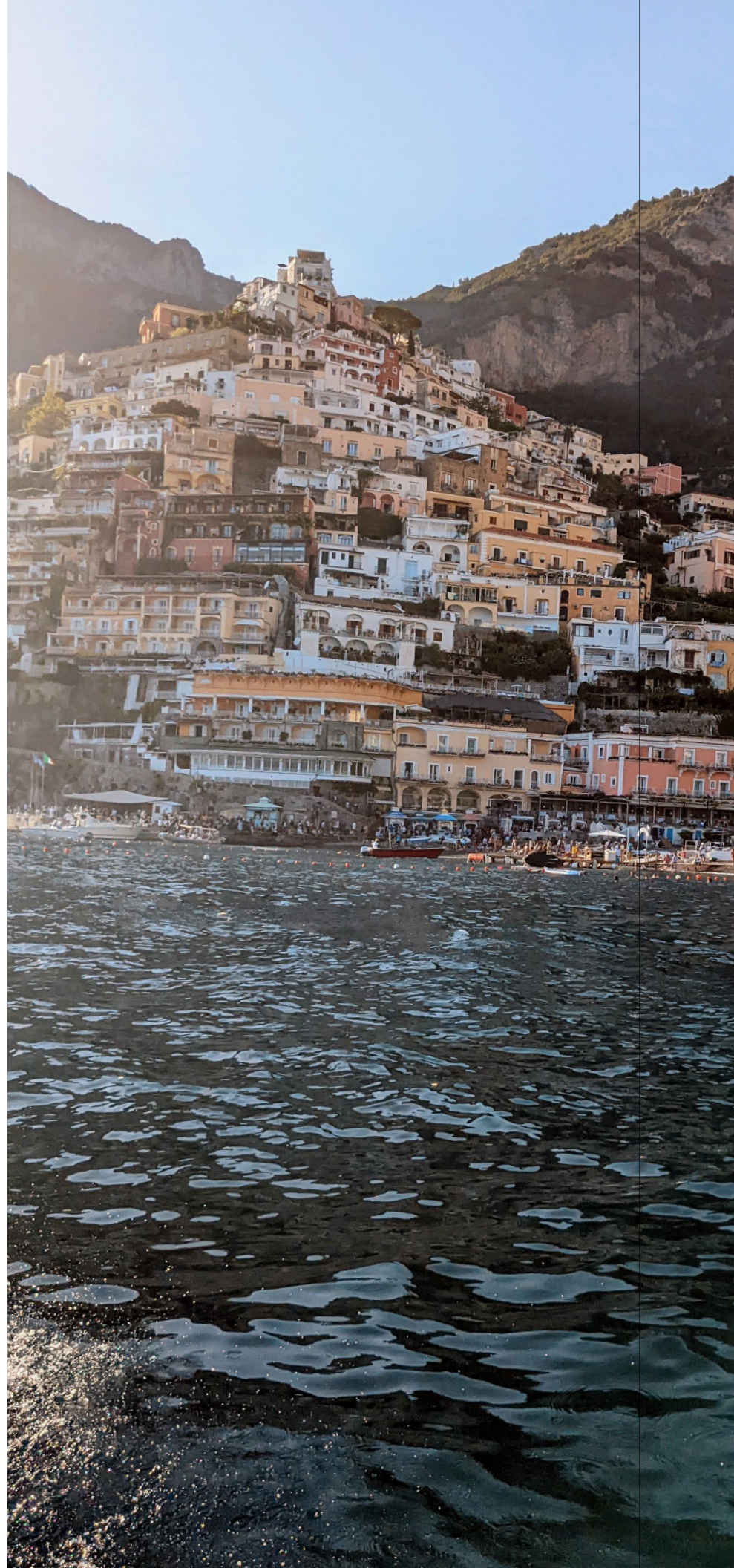
### Currency: Euros

Most places do take credit cards (check on those international fees), but it's best to have euros on hand for tipping.



### Weather:

Best times to visit is when it is warm, as it is a beach town! During peak tourist season, May through October, you can expect the Positano weather to be sunny and warm with daytime temperatures ranging from 70–85 degrees Fahrenheit. You can go a month or two before or after season, prices will be cheaper, but you might sacrifice on weather.



## Eating in Positano

Not all the pastas on the menus are homemade. So make sure you ask which pasta dishes are made with homemade pasta, versus the dry pasta. For some reason I thought that all pasta in Italy would be homemade, and there is nothing like homemade fresh pasta! If you are going during the popular travel season, it is so important to make reservations ahead of time. I found that people like to eat around 8:00 pm, so I would make our reservations earlier when the restaurants first opened around 5:30p or 6:00p.

**Some popular restaurants that are worth a try:**

**La Sponda** \$\$\$\$

**Ristorante Al Palazzo Murat** \$\$\$

**La Tagliata** \$

**Chez Black** \$\$







## Things to do in and Around Positano

Positano is a picturesque beach town , so most days were spent at a beach club or on a boat. One nice thing about Amalfi Coast and Positano is you can do quick day trips to different towns and villages, the popular ones we went to were: Praiano, Amalfi, Ravello, Capri and Sorrento.

### TIPS



#### Stairs are a big deal in Positano, and really all of the Amalfi Coast.

This may not sound like an issue but you'll know why it's important when you have to climb a hundred stairs to get back to your hotel after having some pasta and a couple glasses of wine! Carrying suitcases around here is not fun either.



#### Wear comfortable shoes, leave your new shoes home!

You will have a fair share of steep inclines to climb.

## Day Trip to Capri



We took a quick 45-minute ferry to Capri one of the days we were in Positano. It is probably one of the places you absolutely need to visit while on the Amalfi Coast.



A few things to do while In Capri is to go to a beach club, one of the more popular ones is La Fontelina is a jaw-dropping, iconic beach club located on the island of Capri. You need reservations in advance and expect it to be a once in a lifetime thing you will do, so expect to spend some money too.



Another popular thing to do in Capri is, SHOP. It was fun to roam around the little shops on the main street. They have a lot of local, handmade, custom sandals which the Amalfi Coast is known for. Within around 15 minutes you have your own pair of fully custom sandals, a different kind of keepsake then you're the traditional vacation memorable.



# Naples, Rome, Venice and Pisa Italy

by Glenn Martinez

Private event - Make your own authentic pasta



Italy is a country steeped in history, culture, and delicious food. It's no wonder that so many people dream of visiting this beautiful country at least once in their lifetime.

In November 2022, I had the pleasure of traveling to Italy with my wife and sister for the first time. The trip was an amazing experience, filled with unforgettable memories.

## Naples

Our journey began in Naples, where we visited my brother and his family. We explored the shopping areas and enjoyed a lovely lunch at a café called Gambrinus. One of the highlights of our time in Naples was a private event where we got to make our own authentic pasta. It was a fun and unique experience that we will always cherish.

3 hr

Naples

Rome



The Coliseum, Rome

## Rome

After spending time with family in Naples, we took a 3-hour train ride to Rome, where we spent a day and a half. We walked around the city and visited many of the famous landmarks, including the Colosseum, Pantheon, Trevi Fountain, Spanish Steps, and Saint Peter's Square. Rome is a city with so much history and beauty that

2 hr

Venice

it's impossible to see everything in just a day and a half. We also indulged in lots of gelato, which is a must when in Italy.

## Venice

Next, we took a 2-hour train ride to Venice, which quickly became my favorite city. It's a unique and charming place with no roads, so we traveled by water taxi and walking. We saw the famous Rialto Bridge and tried the squid pasta, which was absolutely delicious. Our hotel had a beautiful balcony with a view of the water, making our stay even more memorable.

Rialto Bridge, Venice



4 hr

Pisa



## Pisa

After a day and a half in Venice, we took a 4-hour train ride to Pisa to see the famous Leaning Tower. Although we only spent a couple of hours in Pisa, the tower was impressive and definitely worth the visit. Then we took a 1-hour train ride to Florence, where we took a break from the busy itinerary and did some light shopping and relaxation. We tried the Florence steak and enjoyed a nice spritz before visiting the cathedral.

Our trip to Italy was a whirlwind, but we felt like we saw a lot of the country in just 10 days. The food, wine, and beer were all amazing, and we couldn't get enough of the pizza and pasta. Italy is truly a magical place, and we can't wait to return one day to explore more of its wonders.