

# Buon giorno, Italia Day 5: Visiting Pompeii and on the road to Sorrento

After a wonderful experience of faith and tranquility in the Franciscan holy city, we headed out on Monday morning for a drive from Assisi in the region of Umbria (whose capital is Perugia), across the Appanine Mountains, passing through the region of Lazio, toward the Bay of Naples and Campania (capital Napoli/Naples) for an afternoon in Pompeii.

Naples is known for the world's best and freshest mozzarella: "mozzarella bufala Campania."

Good cheeses, wines, and bread are basic staples to accompany fine dining throughout Italia.

## **The scavi at Pompeii:**

We have learned that meals are meant to be eaten leisurely with much conversation and interaction with family and friends. So our first stop was lunch before our scavi tour of Pompeii.



*Eleanor, Micaela, Amanda*



*Annalise, Emily, Lily*

It was an insightful experience to hear in-person about the eruption of Mount Vesuvius and the many thousands who perished from the effects of the gases released, as well as the stone, ash, and debris released by the explosion of this volcano in 79 AD. So much of the remains of Pompeii were well-preserved as

uncovered by the excavations.



*The John Carroll group at the ruins in Pompeii.*

Our tour director suggested that we read the novel “Pompeii” by Robert Harris to learn even more about the volcano that buried Pompeii and nearby Herculaneum before the lava went into the Gulf of Naples. The people didn’t know what a volcano was and didn’t understand the warning sulfuric odor as it smelled like rotten eggs.



*Pompeii with Mount Vesuvius in the background*

**Toward the Sorrento coast:**



*On the road to Sorrento*

Afterward we headed through the Appian Mountains toward Sorrento.

It was an incredibly beautiful drive with umbrella pines (pini marini), olive tree groves, and flowering wisteria everywhere. The area is known for their lemons, oranges, and olives. Some of the lemons were as big as soccer balls.

We rode past the ancient Appian Way where the umbrella pines on both sides lined the road from Rome to Pompeii. As we approached the peninsula with Sorrento on one side and Amalfi on the other, we were delighted with the breathtaking views of the coastline, the lush flowers and landscape, and the beautiful beaches along the way.

**Sunset in a perfect location:**

As we checked into the Hotel Mary in Vico Equense, located on a cliff overlooking the beach, boats, and sea on this perfect sunny day, we had some free time before dinner where we would watch the sun set in front of us over the water.



*Sunset from the dining room of the Hotel Mary in the Sorrento town of Vico Equense*

After dinner we explored the town of Sorrento for shopping, dessert and cappuccino in small cafés, and taking in the sights and sounds of this beautiful place. I found a little formerly-used chapel on one of the small side streets that was holding a sacred

art exhibit for Holy Week. Coming upon it fifteen minutes before closing, I was delighted to be able to walk around and take photos.

Tuesday is going to be a busy day with a trip to the isle of Capri. We enjoyed our hotel balcony overlooking the water below before getting a good night sleep. Everyone is tired and happy. The pace has been busy to fit in as much as possible during the week tour. All of us can sleep when we get home.

God is good!!