

# Naples, City of a thousand faces



View  
of the Gulf of Naples

## famous travellers

There is no one that has not dreamt of seeing Naples.

*Paul Edme de Musset, 1885*

In the shadow the Vesuvius tourism's roots run deep: on the imprints of great greek columns refined aristocrats and roman emperors built their sumptuous villas and oasis all along the shoreline of the Gulf.

It is not a coincidence that at the beginning of this third millennium the peculiar magic of this civilisation continues to generate new sources of amazement: the recovery of age old monuments and traditions – folklore, gastronomy, genuine cultivation – that were thought irreparably lost, events and shows worthy of the great international circuit, new fodder for artistic and scientific research.

The artistic treasure of Naples to visit are, in fact, to many to count: the historical centre, a patrimony under the tutelage of UNESCO, the palaces, churches, catacombs and underground passageways, the Archaeological Museum, the places of medieval and renaissance power amassed around the Castel Nuovo and Royal Palace, the unforgettable waterfront from Castel dell'Ovo to Posillipo.

The hilly area of Vomero offers masterfully restored buildings like the Capodimonte Royal Palace and the Certosa (monastery) of San Martino, museum collections amongst the most important in the world.

A trip through the twentieth century city takes you, among the notable emerging urban and architectural sights, to the rationalist Mostra d'Oltremare, with its park, sports complex and exhibition space, to Città della Scienza (Science City) near by.

Science is also witness to the recovery of industrial archaeological complexes and the originality of a scientific tradition that renews itself. Unusual and surprising is the exploration of the new homes of contemporary art: monumental structures like the PAN, Palazzo delle Arti Napoli, the MADRE, Museo d'Arte Contemporanea Donnaregina (Donnaregina Contemporary Arts Museum), and the unique artistry of the metro stations that evidence the original horizons of farseeing cultural politics.

Naples, in the final sum, remains, deep in its roots, even with all the difficulties and contradictions inherent to all big metropolitan cities, an extraordinary place to live, admire, and enjoy with all the senses: for the depth of the art and civilisation that has idelibly marked its history; for the mild climate that accompanies day and night the shows, musical and theatrical events, exhibitions, fairs and religious gatherings; for the gourmand possibilities to search out the age old culinary tradition, the seafood and the unique typical products (buffalo mozzarella, pizza, Docg wine, varied and refined pastries) in all their local translations, or for finding fine hidden little shops where craftsmen still ply their wares.



### The mask of Pulcinella

The typical neapolitan mask seems to have been invented in 1656 by Andrea Calcese, known as Ciuccio,

a tailor from Acerra, a town in the Province of Naples. The character already existed in the Atella region and the name comes from the Italian word for chick, pulcino. Pulcinella is the epitome of "poor", of a person treated badly, and is known for always being hungry, therefore having a

voracious appetite. He seems innocent, inexperienced, a bit "thick", but is in reality a man with a million resources: with great charm he manages to squeeze out of all kinds of trouble. The philosopher Benedetto Croce defines him as "the portrait, the character or the ideal of the neapolitan".



### Campania > Artecard

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### City Sightseeing

Trips of 50 minutes to 2 hours that permit you to hop on or off at will for the duration of the ticket or of the trip. tel. 081 5517279 [www.city-sightseeing.it](http://www.city-sightseeing.it)

**Ente Provinciale per il Turismo di Napoli**  
piazza dei Martiri 58  
tel. 081 4107211  
[www.eptnapoli.info](http://www.eptnapoli.info)

**Azienda Autonoma di Cura Soggiorno e Turismo di Napoli**  
Palazzo Reale  
tel. 081 2525711  
[www.inaples.it](http://www.inaples.it)

**Museo Archeologico Nazionale**  
piazza Museo 19  
tel. 848 800288

**Museo di Palazzo Reale**  
piazza Plebiscito  
tel. 848 800288

**Museo Nazionale di Capodimonte**  
via Miano 1  
tel. 848 800288

**Museo Nazionale di San Martino**  
largo San Martino 8  
tel. 848 800288

**MADRE**  
via Settembrini 79  
tel. 081 5624561

<b>not to be missed</b>	<b>naples in 1 day</b>
Piazza del Plebiscito	Royal palace and Piazza del Plebiscito
Castel Nuovo	Castel Nuovo
The historical centre	National Archaeological Museum
Castel dell'Ovo	"Spaccanapoli" and the historical centre
National Archaeological Museum	Castel dell'Ovo and the waterfront
Capodimonte Museum	
Museum of San Martino	
MADRE	

The origins of the city are lost in time and charming legends. The most tenable hypothesis puts the beginnings of the city in the 9<sup>th</sup> century BC, when the Greeks colonised the Gulf on their way up to the high Thyrrean mineral deposits. In 326 it was declared a Roman colony. After the fall of the Roman Empire, Naples became the capital of an important Duchy, that managed to stave off the invading Longobards. In 1137 the Duchy fell into the hands of the Normans, who favoured cultural integration. The Port of Naples became the most important in the world. After the death of Frederick II of Svevia, Carlo D'Angiò made his triumphal entrance to Naples in 1266. Power passed into the hands of Alfonso d'Aragona in 1442, after a long war that brought the city to its knees. In a short time, however, the situation changed: important civil engineering (the construction of sewage conduits and streets) and restoration works were undertaken (at Castel Nuovo the Triumph Arch was built). Other works (like the opening of via Toledo, the construction of the Spanish Quarters – formerly barracks – and the restoration of the Chiaia Riviera) were completed during the following two centuries during the Spanish rule (1503-1707), up to the arrival of the Bourbons (1734), who reigned the Kingdom of Naples until 1860 when Italy was finally united.

Our journey of discovery of the city begins in the historic core which preserves ancient Greek-Roman imprints, to continue with the places of power of the medieval-renaissance period concentrated around the Castel Nuovo and Royal Palace. We will then follow along the waterfront from the Castel dell'Ovo to Posillipo, to end up on the green hills of Capodimonte and Vomero.

<b>art and archaeology</b>	
San'Elmo Castle	Royal Palace
Castel Nuovo	Pompeii and Herculaneum
Historical centre and Underground Naples	Royal Palace of Portici
Monastery and Museum of San Martino	Vesuvian Villas of the Miglio d'Oro (Golden mile)
National Archaeological Museum	
Capodimonte Museum	
MADRE	
Duca di Martina Museum	

<b>naples in 3 days</b>	
Royal Palace and Piazza del Plebiscito	Capodimonte Museum
Castel Nuovo	Castel dell'Ovo and Borgo Marinari
Monastery and Museum of San Martino	Waterfront and Mergellina
National Archaeological Museum	Posillipo
"Spaccanapoli" and the historical centre	MADRE Museo d'Arte Contemporanea Donna Regina



Cloister of the San Gregorio Armeno Church

<b>nature and parks</b>	<b>for young people</b>
Cloister of Santa Chiara	Arenile di Bagnoli (summer)
Cloister of San Gregorio Armeno	Borgo Marinari
Gardens of the Royal Palace	Piazza Bellini and historical centre
Botanical gardens	Piazza dei Martiri and surrounding area
Capodimonte Park	Piazza Vanvitelli and surrounding area
Virgilian Park	
Villa Comunale	
Villa Floridiana	
Vesuvius National Park	

<b>shopping</b>	
Nativity scenes and shepherds of San Gregorio Armeno	Food Market of Pignasecca (Montesanto)
Coral and Cameoware	Fish Market of Porta Nolana (via Marina)
Porcelain of Capodimonte	Lavic rock, copper, wrought iron and wicker objects
Antignano Market (Vomero)	

<b>specialities</b>	<b>spas and fitness</b>
Babà	Beauty centres of the major hotels
Coffee	
Buffalo Mozzarella Dop	
Margherita Pizza Dop	
Neapolitan Salami	
Sfogliatella shortcrust and crinkly pastry	
Spaghetti with clams	
Apricots and cherry tomatoes from the Vesuvius	
Wines of Vesuvius	

<b>outings with children</b>	
Aquarium of the Anton Dohrn Zoological Station	Edenlandia amusement park
Castel dell'Ovo	Vesuvius National Park
Città della Scienza (Science Centre)	
Archaeological Museum (educational tours for children)	



<b>events</b>	
<b>January-December</b>	<b>July-August</b>
_Naples Antiques Fair	_Ulysses Gance and Migrating Music
Villa comunale (Third weekend of each month)	Concerts, tango, films
<b>Spring</b>	<b>July-September</b>
_Galassia Gutenberg (book fair)	_Midnight in the Parks
<b>May</b>	Events in Naples parks
_May is for Monuments	<b>September</b>
_Italia Vine	_Piedigrotta - The Festival of Naples
Traditional Italian native vines	_Pizzafest
_Park to Park	<b>October</b>
Running in Naples and New York	_Chamber Music Festival
<b>June</b>	_Artcinema
_Napoli Film Festival	Festival of films on contemporary art
_Marechiaro Jazz Festival	Teatro Politeama
_International Show Jumping Competition	<b>October-May</b>
Piazza del Plebiscito	_Associazione Scarlatti
<b>June-July</b>	Concert season
_Neapolis Rock Festival	Naples
_Napoli Jazz Festival	<b>December</b>
_Provinciamo	_Market-Exhibition of Nativity Scenes
Travelling performance review	San Gregorio Armeno
<b>July</b>	_Myriad-Coloured Naples
_AgriCulture. Skills and Tastes of Campania	Winter notes in Naples
_Naples Blues Festival	<b>December 31<sup>st</sup></b>
_Pomigliano Jazz Festival	_Live Concert and Fireworks
Pomigliano d'Arco	Piazza Plebiscito
_Afrakà Rock Festival	
Alfragola	

# The historical centre: from Spaccanapoli to Piazza Mercato

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The “womb” of Naples is the greco-roman historical centre: a chessboard divided by three main roads, the decumans, intersected at right angles by roads called “cardinals”.

It is here that the pulse of the City is best felt: the alleys, the artisan workshops, the innumerable artistic marvels that surprise you in the least expected places, the voices of the “napolitani”. It is also the cultural centre of the City, with the University on via Mezzocannone, the literary cafès of Bellini Square, the bookshops of Port’Alba, and the Italian Institute for Historical Studies on via Benedetto Croce.

The **Piazza of the Gesù Nuovo** is the entrance gate to the old centre.

The **steeple of the Immacolata** (1747) and the **Church of the Gesù Nuovo**, which on its facade preserves the 15<sup>th</sup> century ashlar-work of the Sanseverino Palace (before it became a church it was the property of the Sanseverino family which used it as its palace), introduce baroque religiousness to the city. The inside of the church is an exultation of marble, stucco and frescoes, with works by Francesco Solimena, Luca Giordano and Massimo Stanzione.

Not far away is the austere church of **Santa Chiara**, built in 1310 by Roberto d’Angiò in a Provençal gothic style and transformed with baroque decorations in the mid 1700’s. After being damaged by the bombings of 1943, it was restored back to its original, more sober, form.



Spaccanapoli

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## Sfogliatellas and other delicacies

The Sfogliatella, typical neapolitan pastry, was invented in the 18<sup>th</sup> century by Pinturo. Filled with

sweet aromatic ricotta cheese with candied fruit bits, it is called frolla when it is roled in short pastry, crinkly when it is wrapped in very fine layers and fried. At Pinturo, on via Toledo, you can enjoy this classic sfogliatella pastry.

The famous Scaturchio pastry shop, in piazza San

Domenico, prepares a sweet and a salty version. Other delicacies are the famous babà; puffy, soft and impregnated with rum; and the “pastiera”, once an Easter delicacy, now available all year round, made with short pastry, ricotta, cooked grain and candied fruit bits.

Do not miss out on the struffoli at Christmas time, fried balls of soft dough soaked in honey and covered in coloured sugar sprinkles and candied fruit. A must: neapolitan coffee – hot, sweet and very very strong.





The veiled Christ in the San Severo Chapel

Main Door of the church of the Gesù Nuovo



Piazza San Domenico Maggiore

The artisan shops of San Gregorio Armeno

Here you will find the sepulchral monuments of the royal Anjou family (14<sup>th</sup> century), work of sculptors of the Tuscan school. A stroll in the **cloister of the Poor Clares** is not to be missed. It was designed by Domenico Antonio Vaccaro. Here Naples suddenly becomes silent and perfumed by narcissus and wistaria; yellow, green and blue are the dominating colours of the tiles that dress the magnificent octagonal columns and the seats on which the neapolitan “riggiolari” Donato and Giuseppe Massa painted pastoral and mythological scenes.

In **via Benedetto Croce** the 14<sup>th</sup> century **Filomarino della Rocca Palace** can be found, home to the philosopher Benedetto Croce, who also founded the Italian Institute for Historical Studies, still a busy didactic centre with a rich library. **Piazza San Domenico** is one of the Aragons’ most notable urban legacies, a peaceful co-existence of contrasting architectural styles: the **church** (13<sup>th</sup> century) was the official Aragonese dynastic church, of which the funereal arches remain: the **steeple of San Domenico** (17<sup>th</sup> century) and the lovely façades of the **Corigliano Palace** (18<sup>th</sup> century), today seat of the University Institute Orientale, and the **Sansevero Palace**.

In piazzetta Nilo stands the **hellenistic statue of Nilo**, rediscovered in the middle ages, to which the Neapolitans have given the affectionate name of “**Body of Naples**”. Here the little church of **Sant’Angelo a Nilo** stands. Constructed in 1385 and altered in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, it contains the beautiful Renaissance tomb of Cardinal Rinaldo Brancaccio, made in Pisa from 1426 to 1428 by Donatello, Michelozzo and Pagno di Lapo, and sent to Naples by sea, alongside other works from the 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> century. Strolling along via San Biagio dei Librai (also known as **Spaccanapoli**) you can browse in the little shops full of antiques, religious objects and jewelry. At number 114 we come across a masterpiece from the late Mannerism period of the 17<sup>th</sup> century – the **Chapel of the Monte di Pietà**, part of the monumental Carafa Palace and decorated with frescoes by Belisario Corenzio with the help of Luigi Rodriguez and Batistello Caracciolo.

Almost hidden in a tiny alley that intersects with vico San Domenico we find the small but extraordinary **Sansevero Chapel**. A visit to this spectacular baroque complex is a must.

A triumph of a single artwork is to be found in the statue of the *Veiled Christ*, sculpted by Giuseppe Sanmartino: the effect, the virtuosity of the handling of the marble and the play of light make it a true masterpiece. It will be difficult to contain your curiosity for the many inventions and anatomical machines exhibited, which gave the Prince Sansevero the fame (not deserved) of being a witch and a sorcerer.

**Via San Gregorio Armeno**, with its lively bustling scene, is characterised by the belltower of the church with the same name. In the two months before Christmas San Gregorio Armeno become the most vivacious area of the centre, and it fills up with stands that sell little figurines and decorations for nativity scenes. Apart from the traditional baby Jesus, Mother Mary and father Joseph figures the craftsmen compete with one another to make figurines depicting current political and gossip column personalities. In the **complex of the convent of San Gregorio Armeno**, annexed to the church, and characterised by the sumptuous Baroque nave and by the extraordinary caisson ceiling, a visit to the cloister with its gardens, orchards and citrus groves, is not to be missed.

At the end of this street we find ourselves in the heart of the greco-roman city, corresponding to the part of town that was the agora and forum, and where the layers can still be seen. The centre of all of this was **piazza San Gaetano**, where the **San Paolo Maggiore Church** built between the 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> century, and the **San Lorenzo Maggiore Church**, which in the cloister hosts greco-roman excavations, are to be found. It is here that the great writer Giovanni Boccaccio met his darling Fiammetta on Holy Saturday in 1336.

**The Doll Hospital**

Born in the 1800’s they have been restoring dolls here for three generations. The family tradition lives on

in the footsteps of the founder Luigi Grassi, with his grandson, also a Luigi, and his daughter Tiziana continuing the work. You can visit the historical shop, in via San Biagio dei Librai 81, by appointment calling 081 5634744.



Cloister of Santa Chiara

**famous travellers**

You can, from Piazza Dante, via Port’Alba, reach via dei Tribunali, and from Toledo by the Maddaloni Palace reach San Biagio dei Librai, and with a guidebook in hand go looking for the building where a plaque that was cemented to the wall by its proprietor assures “In this building the most illustrious citizen of Naples was born, Saint Gennaro” and where the porter, asked to confirm this clamorous news, with a slight rising of his shoulders answers “that’s what they say”.

Giovanni Ansaldo, 1961



Façade of the Duomo

Detail of a decoration in the church of Santa Maria del Purgatorio ad Arco

## famous travellers

The Cathedral, which has a beautiful door and columns of African and Egyptian granite that once graced the Temple of Apollo, contains the celebrated blood of San Gennaro, or Janarius. It is preserved in two little ampullas in a silver reliquary and three times a year it miraculously liquefies to the great joy of the people.

*Charles Dickens, 1845*

A trip in **the underground of Naples** is a tremendously exciting experience that reveals the secrets, history and legends of the city. No one knows the exact dimensions of the "dark" Naples, but spelunkers have, in the last few years, counted up to 700 cavities for a total area of 1 million metric cubes. To begin this time travel one starts from **piazza San Gaetano**, in the heart of the historical centre, for a two hour trip through subterranean passages and cisterns. The Greek-roman theatre is interesting, with a picturesque low entrance in Cinquesanti alley. From the cloister of the **San Lorenzo Maggiore** church it is just a few paces to step backwards 2,600 years among the stones of the greek walls. In the **Spanish Quarters** the descent is to 40 mts below the ground along stairs to arrive at the ancient cisterns and aqueducts used more recently as shelters from the bombing during the war.

In **via Tribunali**, to the left, the little **Santa Maria del Purgatorio ad Arco church** is characterised by a bizzare baroque decoration: the skull and bones in front of the Church symbolise the devotion of the Neapolitans to the "pained souls", known as "pezzentelle", a slang for "without relatives". Just a little ways on is the church and former convent of **San Pietro a Majella**, where since 1826 one of the most important conservatories of music has its home. There you can see the paintings of Mattia Preti, masterpieces of Italian painting in the 17<sup>th</sup> century.

The nearby **piazza Bellini** is very lively, especially in the evenings, and full of cafès. In the opposite direction, towards the end of **via Tribunali**, the **church of the Girolamini** rises and houses **the gallery** of the same name with paintings from the 16<sup>th</sup>-18<sup>th</sup> centuries.

Via Tribunali intersects with **via Duomo**, which in turn takes its name from the Cathedral, a gothic structure completed by Robert of Anjou in 1313. The façade has been often renovated, as the original one collapsed in the 1349 earthquake. Inside, the structure is based on the latin cross with three naves and is richly decorated. You can clearly see the 18<sup>th</sup> century baroque interventions on the central nave. Along the left nave is the entranceway to the

paleochristian basilica of **Santa Restituta**. Founded in the 4<sup>th</sup> century by the Emperor Constantine, today it reveals a Baroque interior created after the 1688 earthquake. The ample fragments of mosaic pavement seem to belong to yet another paleochristian basilica, **Stefania** (6<sup>th</sup> century). Under Santa Restituta you can see greek-roman archaeological remains. On the left of the apse is the entrance to the **Baptistry of San Giovanni in fonte**, built between the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> century, and therefore the oldest bulding of its kind in the western Christian world. On the square structure rests a mosaic covered dome. Other than the medieval chapels rich with frescoes and décor, the 17<sup>th</sup> century **Chapel of the Treasure of San Gennaro** is a must. For the rich embellishments the most famous of contemporary painters were summoned (Fanzago, Domenichino, Ribera, Lanfranco). The magnificent chapel is highlighted by the precious decorations and large silver reliquary busts. It is here that for the two weeks of celebration of the miracle (the liquifaction of San Gennaro's blood) the reliquary of San Gennaro's blood is on exhibit.

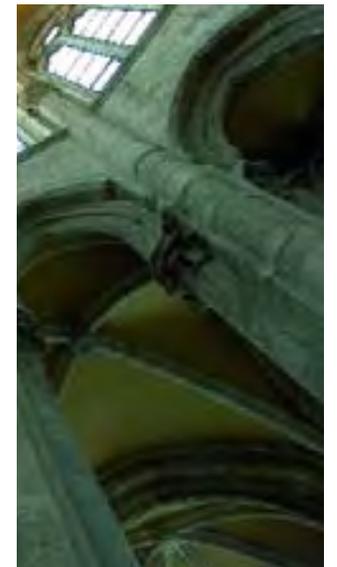
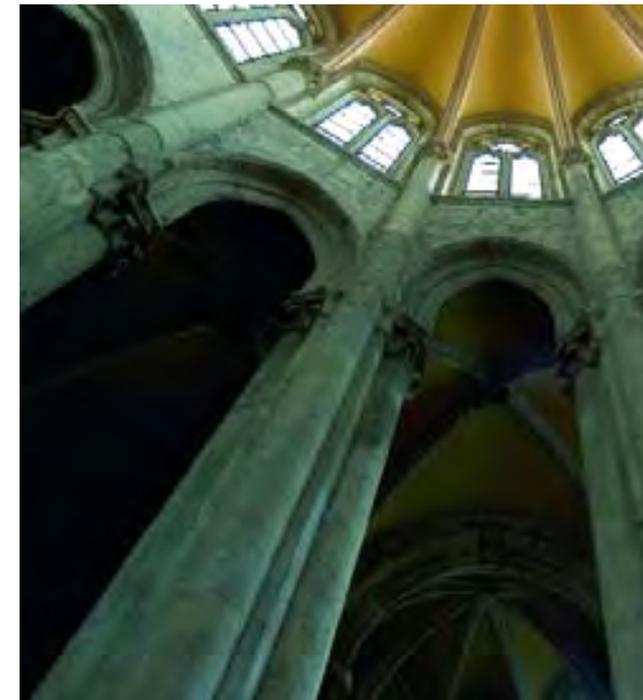
At number 288 of **via Duomo** is the **Filangieri Civic Museum**, donated to the City in 1882 by Gaetano Filangieri, Prince of Satriano. The collection is composed of a vast series of art objects – from arms to porcelain, books and furniture.



### The miracle of San Gennaro

Hope, expectations, tension and invocations are uttered by the faithful that take part in the liquefaction of Saint

Gennaro's blood. For 600 years, on the first Sunday of May (commemoration of the first translation of the Saint's corpse) and on September 19 (day of his martyrdom) a special mass is held following a procession that crosses the narrow lanes of the historical centre.



Miracle of San Gennaro

San Lorenzo Maggiore Church



Belltower and interior of the basilica of Santa Maria del Carmine

### famous travellers

O, scarce in trivial tenor all, Much less to mock man's mortal sigh, The syllables proverbial fall, "Naples, see Naples, and - then die!"

Herman Melville, 1857

Going up past the Duomo, to the right on a cross street, is the Donnaregina Palace. This is where **MADRE Museo d'Arte Donna Regina** (Contemporary Art Museum) has its seat. The building was projected by the celebrated Portuguese architect Alvaro Siza and is a grand museum with an international feel. The permanent collection is made up of works by artists that have worked in Naples in the past: it hosts works that were once shown in piazza del Plebiscito and the Archaeological Museum, as well as works conceived, projected, painted and constructed expressly for this museum: important works of such artists as Long, Bianchi, Clemente, Horn, Kapoor, Kounellis, Paolini, Sol Lewitt, Serra, and others. Cross via Duomo and on the right on via dei Tribunali is the **Pio Monte della Misericordia** complex, founded in 1601; it is one of the city's oldest charitable organisation. The octagonal church has, on its main altar, Caravaggio's masterpiece depicting the **Acts of compassion**. The Gallery is also interesting, put together over time with private donations. One of the major benefactors of this gallery was the painter Francesco de Mura who, in 1782, left 192 of his paintings (of which 42 remain today).

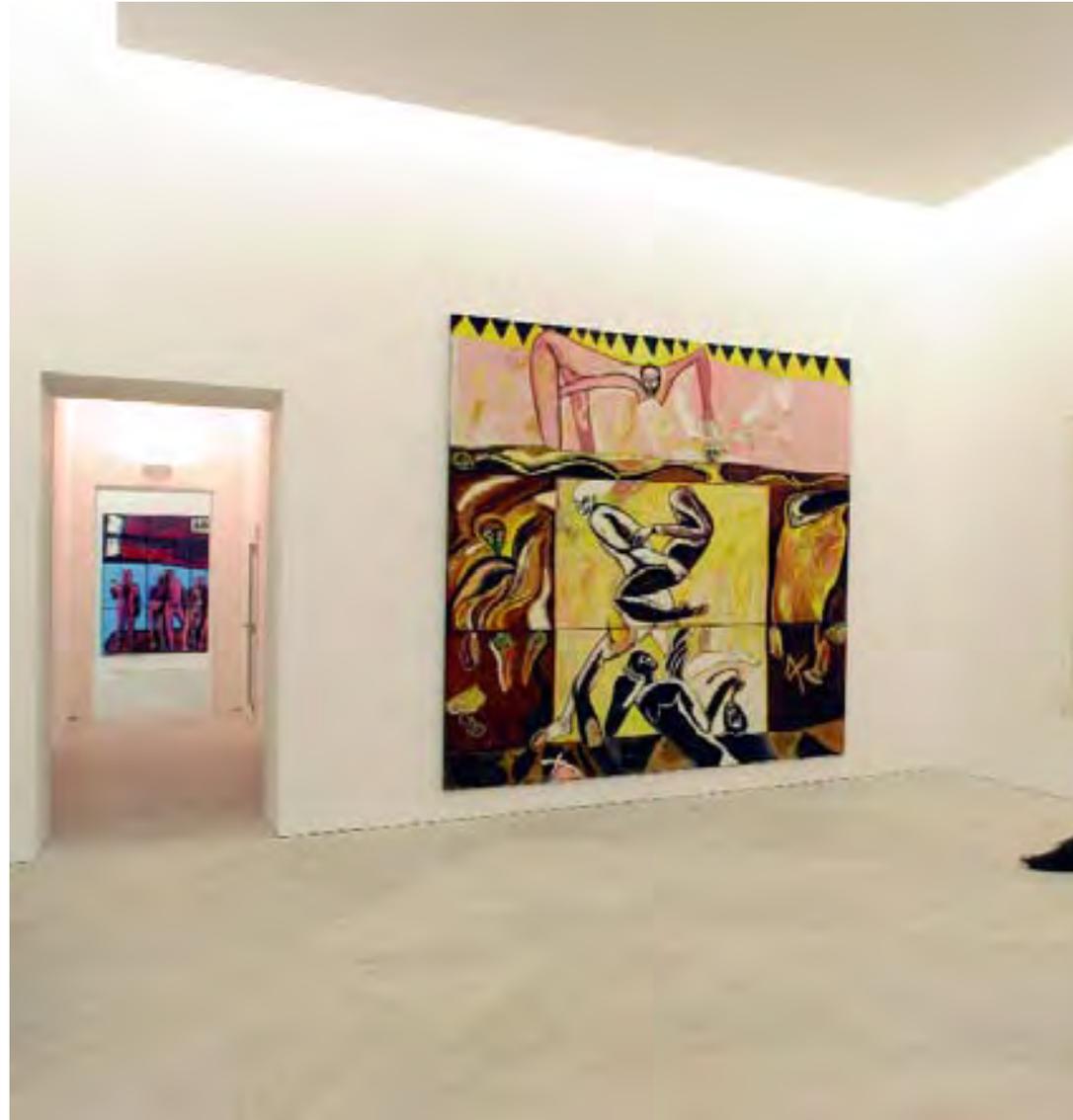
At the end of via dei Tribunali we find ourselves in front of **Capuano Castle**, the oldest of the four castles Naples boasts. Built in the Norman era, it became the Palace of Justice and is still today the

seat of the Civil Court. One of the gates of Naples is also here, **Porta Capuana**; erected in 1484 it was the most important eastern entrance to the city. Here, and near the **Porta Nolana** by the train station of Garibaldi Square, there are two of the most picturesque of the city's markets, specialising in fish, fruit and vegetables.

Not far away is the Church of **San Giovanni a Carbonara**, constructed between 1343 and 1418. Here the elegant Caracciolo del Sole (1427) and Caracciolo di Vico (1516) chapels are to be found, as well as the grandiose tomb of Ladislao of Durazzo (1428), king of Naples.

The last stop is **piazza Mercato**, one of the crucial corners of Neapolitan history: here Konradin von Hohenstaufen was beheaded in 1268, and in 1647 Masaniello gathered his people during the anti-spanish revolt led by him.

The square is dominated by one of the most popular and venerated churches of all of Naples, the Basilica of **Santa Maria del Carmine**, dedicated to Santa Maria la Bruna. In her honour, in July, a fireworks competition is held that concludes with the burning of the highest belltower of the City (75 mts). On via Nuova Marina, lastly, the Port opens up before us. It was begun by Charles II with the foundation of the Angioino Pier, and enlarged in the course of the centuries up until the early 1900's, when it reached its present day dimensions.



### Pizza fit for a queen

A good crust distinguishes a Neapolitan pizza from those made in the rest of the world. 3-4 centimeters

wide and cooked to the right point it encircles a disc of soft and elastic consistency. To prepare the most classic of pizzas, the Margherita (invented in 1889 by the pizzamaker Raffaele Esposito of the Brandi pizzeria when Queen Margaret of Savoia visited Naples), the pizzamaker

must work with his palms and thumbs, use San Marzano tomatoes, mozzarella, olive oil, grated Parmigiano Reggiano cheese and a few leaves of fresh basil.

MADRE - Donnaregina Contemporary Art Museum

Castel Capuano

The Acts of Compassion by Caravaggio



# From Castel Nuovo to Foria and the Sanità

## famous travellers

But, look: what mean yon surly walls? A fortress? and in the heart of town? Even so. And rapt I stare thereon.

*Herman Melville, 1857*

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The area between Castel Nuovo and the National Archaeological Museum, going by via Toledo, is the centre of Naples. Considered by the Neapolitans to be the most representative, it contains some of the most symbolic monuments of the City: the Maschio Angioino, the Royal Palace, piazza del Plebiscito, the San Carlo Theatre, the Umberto I Gallery, the National Archaeological Museum.

**Castel Nuovo** (named so as to distinguish it from the older royal residences - Castel dell'Ovo and Castel Capuano) is also known as **Maschio Angioino**.

The impressive fortress, on which work was begun in 1279 by Charles I of Anjou but subsequently modified by the Aragonese, has a trapezoid base and is surrounded by a moat where the foundations of the five cylindrical towers stand.

The **Triumph Arch** marks the entrance to the castle and is its main ornament. It was erected to commemorate the triumphal entrance to the city by Alfonso of Aragon in 1443.

The magnificent sculpted reliefs represent the best finest examples of Renaissance sculpture in the south.

Inside the castle is the Palatine Chapel, the only building that still has its original look, and the extraordinary Barons' Hall. The **Civic Museum** here was inaugurated in 1992.

Castel Nuovo dominates the centre of **piazza Municipio**. At the high end of the square **San Giacomo Palace** rises, seat of the City of Naples; it incorporates the 16<sup>th</sup> century San Giacomo degli Spagnoli Church. Behind the altar rests the magnificent tomb of the Viceroy Pedro da Toledo.



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The Royal Palace

Castel Nuovo



### The artisans of rua Catalana

In the area of via Medina, close to piazza Municipio, the narrow rua Catalana opens. It is known for its

numerous shops working iron, copper and tin. This, and the adjoining streets (via Graziella, via Basile and calata Ospitaletto), has become theatre of the permanent exhibition of humorous lampposts and iron sculptures signed by master ironmongers.

## famous travellers

The first impressions that of having landed in the palace of some oriental emperor. There is nothing in all of Europe that even comes close to this theatre, not even in the remotest way. Your eyes remain dazzled, your soul raptured...

Stendhal

The **Umberto I gallery** (1887-1890) above has a splendid iron and glass covering 57 meters high, and below an elegant inlaid marble floor. There are shops, cafés and bookstores on the inside.

**Santa Brigida Church** is part of the complex and has a beautiful fresco called *Heaven*, by Luca Giordano, in its dome.

The **San Carlo Theatre**, inaugurated on November 4, 1737, and named after its patron Charles of Bourbon, is the oldest opera house in the world. The building, partially destroyed by fire in 1816, was restored by Antonio Niccolini, the designer of its façade. In the early 1800's the San Carlo Theatre lived through one of its most glorious seasons ever thanks to the impresario Domenico Barbaja who commissioned works by musicians such as Gioachino Rossini and Gaetano Donizetti.

Coming out of the theatre we find ourselves on **piazza Trieste e Trento** (once piazza San Ferdinando) where the historical **café Gambrinus** still stands, once the preferred meeting place for poets and intellectuals.

The baroque **San Fernando Church**, which gives onto the same square, is home to a great tradition: every Good Friday the *Stabat Mater* of Pergolesi is performed.

Crossing the piazza Trieste e Trento the famous **piazza del Plebiscito** opens up, the largest of the city, spectacular backdrop of cultural events and concerts. It is characterised by the profile of the **San Francesco di Paola Church**, with its neoclassical colonnade and its Pantheon of Rome inspired interior.

At the centre of the square the two great **statues** of Charles of Bourbon (work of Antonio Canova) and Ferdinand I on horseback face the **Royal Palace**. Construction was begun in the early 1600's based on a project by Domenico Fontana. Enriched by Joachim Murat and Carolina Bonaparte with neo-classical embellishments and decorations, some from the Tuileries, it was damaged in 1837 by fire, and restored by Gaetano Genovese.

To visit the priceless interior cross over the honour courtyard and enter the **Historical Living Quarters Museum** (30 rooms on one floor) which has preserved the original furniture and décor. The **monumental staircase** of coloured marble inlay and the **Small Court Theatre**, a ballroom transformed in 1768 by Fernando Fuga into a gracious Rococo ambience, are beautiful. In another part of the palace the **National Library**, with its more than million and a half volumes and several priceless medieval codices, can be found. The famous papyrus of Herculaneum are preserved here.



### New Years in piazza del Plebiscito

Since 1994, when the square was permanently closed to traffic, thereby becoming the symbol of the

rebirth of the city, piazza del Plebiscito has welcomed in the New Year with a major concert alternating musicians and show business personalities. During the Christmas season, world famous artists exhibit their contemporary works of art in the square.



Umberto I Gallery

The San Carlo Theatre



Piazza del Plebiscito and San Francesco di Paola Church



### Italian Institute of Philosophical Studies

From piazza del Plebiscito, going up along via Gennaro Serra, you reach via Monte di Dio in the Pizzofalcone

quarter, first nucleus of the Greek settlement. Here you will find the Italian Institute of Philosophical Studies inside the Serra di Cassano Palace with its splendid stairway. The main entrance was walled up in 1799 by the Dukes of Serra di Cassano, after their son Gennaro,

martyr of the Partenopean Revolution of 1799, was hung. As a Unesco report states, the Institute "has conquered a dimension incomparable anywhere in the world and contributes to make Naples a true cultural capital".

“we wanna see Don Peppe!”

*Crowds of Neapolitans under the balcony of Doria d'Angri Palace where Garibaldi was staying*

From piazza del Plebiscito the vital via Toledo begins, the main axis of the urban expansion projected in 1536 by order of the Viceroy Pedro de Toledo. Many Neapolitans simply call it Toledo, for others it is via Roma (because it was so called from 1870 to the 1980's). Via Toledo is one of the main streets of the city, characterised by ancient churches and palaces such as the **Carafa di Maddaloni** (1582) and the **Doria D'Angri** (1755), fruit of the genius of Luigi Vanvitelli. From his balcony Garibaldi proclaimed the annexation of Kingdom of the Two Sicilies to the Kingdom of Italy. Off to one side of via Toledo, at the foot of the San Martino Hill, the **Spanish Quarters'** spiderweb unfolds.

Once in piazza Carità, a little detour must be made to visit two jewels of Renaissance art: the churches of Monteoliveto and Santa Maria La Nova.

Built in the 1400's, the church of **Monteoliveto** (or **Sant'Anna dei Lombardi**) preserves its simple interior and the rigorous formality of the original structure. *The Del Pezzo and Ligorio altars* are masterpieces of Renaissance sculpture. The magnificent lifesized terracotta sculptures of the *Lament of the Dead Christ* (said to represent the members of the Aragon royal family) are hosted in the capital area.

The **Santa Maria la Nova Church** is also Renaissance, with its imposing cloisters. Built in the 1200's it was completely restructured starting in 1596. Also splendid the gilded wood caisson ceiling, into which 46 panels, painted by the major Neapolitan artists of the day, were inserted at the end of the 1500's.

The last part of via Toledo gives onto **piazza Dante**.

Decorated by the monument to Dante (1872) by Tito Angelini, it is enclosed by the hemicycle of the **Foro Carolino**, constructed by Luigi Vanvitelli. **Port'Alba** stands out to the left of the hemicycle, from which you reach the street of the same name, site of some of the oldest bookstores of Naples.

Near to piazza Dante is the **National Archaeological Museum**, the most important museum of classical archaeology in the world. Charles of Bourbon put the largest art collection in Italy, the Farnese collection inherited by his mother Elisabeth, into this building (the old "Study Palace" or university). Over the years the largest archaeological collection of all time, relics from the city and from the villas buried under the ashes of Vesuvius in 79 BC, was brought here.

The most important collection of the museum is that of the **mosaics, paintings, jewellery and objects** recovered from the buried vesuvian homes. A collection unmatched peer in the world that attracts, needless to say, millions of visitors.

Another highlight is the **classical sculpture** collection, some roman copies of Greek originals, amongst which the celebrated Farnese sculptures (the *Bull*, the *Hercules* and dozens of others). The **cameo and cut gem collection**, which includes the extraordinary *Farnese Cup*, is also very rich. The vast **epigraph collection** includes over 2,000 pieces representing all of the languages once spoken in Campania (from Greek to Oscan, Etruscan to Latin). The **Egyptian collection** is only second in importance in Italy to that of Turin. There is a section dedicated to the **Papyrus Villa**, the famous roman house in Herculaneum that brought to light so many relics, amongst which the celebrated statues in bronze and marble.

The **Secret Cabinet** is a part of the museum that houses a 19<sup>th</sup> century collection of Greek and Roman objects considered "obscene" at the times, reserved only for authorized visitors. It includes now sculptures, frescoes, mosaics, amulets, oil-lamps and graffiti with erotic themes from the digs at Pompeii.



Pignasecca Market

“I am leaving. I will forget neither via Toledo, nor any of the other quarters of Naples: to my eyes it is, without a doubt, the most beautiful city in the universe”

*Stendhal, 1817*



The Mosaic of Alexander the Great  
The National Archaeological Museum

The Art Metro

Tyrannicides.  
National Archaeological Museum



**The Spanish Quarter**

Planned following a chessboard motif in the 16<sup>th</sup> century to accommodate the Spanish troops and their

families, the Spanish Quarter has been transformed over the ages into a city within the city, a picturesque and lively quarter. Strolling about these streets (carefully), one encounters kids playing ball and stands that sell just about everything.

**Art in the Metro**

“The best contemporary art museum in Italy” That is how Line 1 of the Naples Metro has been defined.

The stations, in fact, from Vanvitelli-Dante that connect the historical centre to the Vomero, are known as the art stations. Architects of international acclaim have redone the contours of the stations, and the stations themselves have become enriched with works of contemporary art.

In the Museo station, done by Gae Aulenti, a large bronze horse head, called Cavallo Carafa (belonging to the National Archeological Museum) and a copy of the Farnese Hercules, made by the students of the Naples Academy of Arts, are exhibited.

Three young friends that were travelling together in Italy last year visited the Museum of Studies, in Naples, where various ancient relics found in the excavations of Pompeii and Herculaneum were on display... The youngest, stopped in front of an exhibit, seemed not to hear the exclamations of his companions, so absorbed was he in profound contemplation.

*Théophile Gautier, 1852*

From the museum you get onto **piazza Cavour**: here begins **via Foria** that crosses the popular Sanità, Vergini and Sant'Antonio districts. The lovely 16<sup>th</sup> century church of **Santa Maria della Sanità**, with its grandiose pincer-shaped stairs that frame the crypt, is to be seen. From the church you gain access to the **Catacombs of San Gaudioso**. In this quarter you can find the 17<sup>th</sup> century **Palace of the Spaniard** (dello Spagnolo) and the **Sanfelice Palace** both works of Ferdinando Sanfelice and used as models for theatrical backdrops.

Further along, via Foria reaches the **Botanical gardens**.

Created in 1807 by Giuseppe Bonaparte, it was originally conceived to study plants useful to agriculture, commerce and for medicinal purposes. Today, the area of circa 12 hectares contains about 10,000 species for a total of 25,000 plants, one of Italy's most important collections for content and area. Particularly interesting is the rich variety of succulents.

Back at the Archaeological Museum, ascend towards Capodimonte on **via Santa Teresa degli Scalzi**. Next to the big Inconornata del Buon Consiglio Church are the **catacombs of San Gennaro**, among the oldest and most amazing of Campania. Going further up the hill you arrive at the Royal Palace of Capodimonte, which houses the museum of the same name.



Catacombs of San Gennaro  
Botanical Gardens  
Church of Santa Maria della Sanità



**Totò and Eduardo, poets of the Sanità**

"I am from the Sanità district, the most famous in Naples" Totò loved to exclaim, and in fact he was born here in 1898. His house in via Santa

Maria Antesaecula has become a shrine where one can go to pay homage to the great King of Laughs. Eduardo de Filippo, on the other hand, went to school in this quarter, and he has immortalised it in one of his most famous theatrical productions, *The Local Authority* (1960).



**Fontanelle Cemetery**

A gigantic bone deposit in tuff caverns where thousands of bones and skulls form macabre structures. Here started the Cult of the Souls in Purgatory, the

deaths due to the cholera epidemic in 1836. Adopting a skull, or some other remains of the dead, and not ever leaving them without a candle, means getting protection from them and having them pleasantly visit you in your dreams. You can get into the cemetery from the small church of Maria Santissima del Carmine, in via Fontanelle.



**Real Albergo dei Poveri**

From the vast piazza Carlo III you can admire the gigantic façade (600x150 m) of the Albergo dei Poveri (Hospice

for the poor), begun in 1751 by Ferdinando Fuga. The work, which was meant to lodge all the poor in the realm, remained incomplete. Cultural events are hosted in the restored area.



# The waterfront: from Chiaia to Posillipo



Castel dell'Ovo

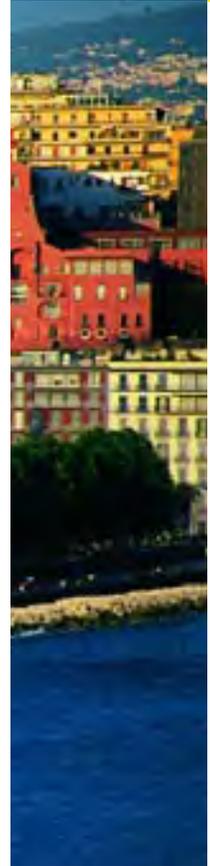
26

The waterfront between Castel dell'Ovo and Posillipo, with its panoramic view of the entire Gulf, Vesuvius and the islands, is the most famous scene of Naples.

The profile of the coast is dominated by the massive tuff wall of the **Castel dell'Ovo**, the oldest of the city, that sits on the little islet of Megaris facing the famous Santa Lucia quarter. Now connected to land by a small bridge, the island was chosen by the roman patrician Licinius Lucullus as site for his new villa. It was transformed into a convent by the Saint Basil monks in about 492 AD. Under the Normans in the 12<sup>th</sup> century it became a fortress. The *Hall of the Columns*, so called because it re-used the powerful columns of the original villa, must be visited. From the *cannon terrace*, on the high part of the castle, you can enjoy a marvellous view of the gulf. Under the walls of the castle is **Borgo Marinari**, constructed in the 1800's, it was originally meant to house fishermen, their boats and their families. It now houses nautical clubs, restaurants, bars and trendy night spots.



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Via Caracciolo and the Villa Comunale (City Park)

## famous travellers

If there is a place on earth where you can be happy, then it is on the Santa Lucia waterfront.

Paul Edme de Musset, 1885



### Virgil the wizard

The name of Castel dell'Ovo (Castle of the Egg) derives from a legend tied to the poet Virgil, to whom the

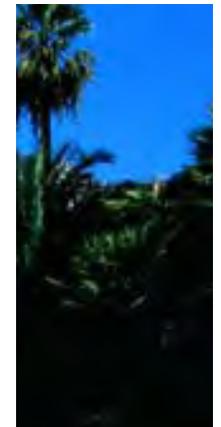
medieval Neapolitans attributed magical powers. One of the wizard's talismans was said to be hidden in the castle: an egg preserved in a jug and locked in an iron cage. The castle would never crumble as long as the egg remained intact.

I think of you every day, when, opening the balcony I see this sparkling sea unfold itself under the oranges of Posillipo, furrowed by the many boats, whose two little white veils are similar to the white wings of the seagulls. At my feet the grassy fields of the Royal Villa, dotted with rose bushes, already green like our most beautiful ones in Spring.

*Alphonse de Lamartine, 1820*

Walking along the very famous **via Caracciolo** you can enjoy some of the most beautiful scenery of Naples, from Vesuvius all the way to the hills of Posillipo, dotted with houses immersed in green and all framed by the intense blue of the sea. Via Caracciolo runs parallel to **Villa Comunale**, the City Park, once called Royal gardens and designed by Luigi Vanvitelli at the end of the 1700's, and to the old waterfront that even today is called the **Riviera di Chiaia**. You can visit the **Zoological Station**, (founded by the German Anton Dohrn in 1872) and the oldest **Aquarium** in Europe. On the Riviera di Chiaia, in the neoclassical **Villa Pignatelli**, is the **Principe Diego Aragona Pignatelli Cortes Museum**, still with its original furnishings. The Bank of Naples keeps its rich collection of paintings here. A **Carriage Museum** is soon to be opened in the old stables with a collection of period coaches and harnesses. Via Caracciolo ends at **Mergellina**, where according to legend the current dragged the lifeless body of the siren Partenope. Also here the view is breathtaking, the hills of Posillipo and Vomero with Vesuvius in the distance.

Near to piazza Sannazaro is **via di Piedigrotta** (so called because it was at the foot of the grotto, today a tunnel, dug in the 1st century BC by the Romans who wanted to make transit from Pozzuoli to Naples easier: in fact the other side of the tunnel is called Fuorigrotta, or out of the grotto) that ends in front of **Santa Maria di Piedigrotta**. Between the church and the Mergellina Station is the entrance to the **Park of the Tomb of Virgil**, one of the most visited sites of the Grand Tour. The park hosts the so-called tomb of Virgil, a 1st century AD sepulchre traditionally identified with the burial of the poet. In 1939 the tomb of another great poet, Giacomo Leopardi, who died in Naples in 1837, was also transferred here. Leaving the waterfront behind, going on to the Western district, in piazzale Tecchio we find the Mostra d'Oltremare; a large exhibition centre built in the 1930's of great historical, architectural and environmental value. The area of about 700.000 square metres houses buildings, gardens, fountains and a large open-air arena the serves as a theatre.



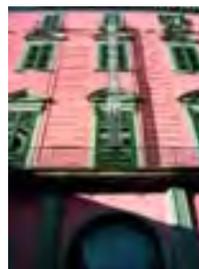
Villa Comunale, with the Aquarium in the background

Villa Pignatelli



**The PAN (Palazzo delle Arti Napoli)**

This new cultural centre welcomes contemporary art in all its forms: from painting to sculpture, architecture to photography, design to cinema.



The PAN, Palazzo delle Arti Napoli

In via dei Mille, PAN has recently been inaugurated in the 18th century Roccella Palace.



**Luxury Shopping**

The ideal shopping trip begins on via Toledo and then goes on to the vias Chiaia, Calabritto,

Filangieri, dei Mille, the streets considered the most elegant, and with the famous stores. Some of the big name fashion brands have shops here, from soft luxurious leather ware to clothing and ties. The Chiaia area is rich with noble buildings from the 16-1700's and scenic

façades like those on piazza dei Martiri, always considered one of the best addresses of the City, while the nearby Amedeo district offers a lovely repertory of Liberty-style architecture.

## famous travellers

The magnificence of a night in the full moon, like the one we enjoyed strolling the streets and piazzas, along the infinite waterfront of Chiaia, and then up and down along the shore. One is really overcome by the sensation of the infinity of space. To dream like this is worth while.

Johann Wolfgang Goethe, 1787

30

From Mergellina the beautiful scenic **Via Posillipo** goes up the hill, the old *Pausilypon* (Greek for "pain reliever"). You can see the enormous **Palazzo Donn'Anna** and numerous villas immersed in green.

At the extreme end of the promontory of Coroglio is the Villa del Pausilypon, the remains of the luxurious home of Publius Vedius Pollio, one of Octavian's supporters. Upon his death the villa went to the emperor.

The grandiose villa was composed of several buildings erected between the 1st century BC and the 4th AD, to cover an area of about 9 hectares. At the centre was the huge residential structure, around which were built a grandiose **theatre**, an *odeion* and thermal baths. Apart from its private dock on the Cala dei Lampi, the complex included its own roads and the tunnel known as the '**Grotta di Seiano**', that crosses the rocky coastline to Coroglio, which today is the point of access to the complex.



Palazzo  
Donn'Anna

## famous travellers

There saw we learned Maro's golden tomb, The way he cut, an English mile in length, thorough a rock of stone, in one night's space.

Christopher Marlowe, 1588

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### The Piedigrotta Festival and the Neapolitan song

The Festival takes place in September, with processions and spectacular firework displays. It was during this

very festival that in 1835 the Neapolitan song rose to the status of a musical genre. *Te voglio bene assaje*, its melody composed by Gateano Donizetti, became famous all over the world. The most famous Neapolitan songs were written during the last two decades of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, but the tradition

continued in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, with very popular singer-songwriters, and the Nuova Compagnia di Canto Popolare, which became famous worldwide with its *Gatta Cenerentola* by Roberto De Simone. The genre is still thriving thanks to the activities of singer-songwriters, rock groups and jazz musicians.



### Palazzo Donn'Anna

One of the most celebrated of the city for its spectacular position, like an enormous cliff that surges up from the

sea, Palazzo Donn'Anna is one of the symbols of Posillipo. Constructed in 1642 by Cosimo Fanzago for Anna Carafa, wife of Filippo Ramiro Guzman, Viceroy of Naples, it remained incomplete and assumed the fascinating aspect of an ancient ruin. It is the source of many dark legends:

Donn'Anna, abandoned by her husband, who went back to Spain, is said to have gone insane after being betrayed by a lover.



Panorama from the Virgiliano Park

## famous travellers

Say, tell or paint what you will, but here all expectations are exceeded. This shore, the gulfs, the coves... May all those who lose their minds in Naples be forgiven!

*Johann Wolfgang Goethe, 1787*

32

The most spectacular panorama of Posillipo is enjoyed from the **Virgiliano Park**, located on the top of the hill. From between trees, gardens and sporting facilities, one's eyes roam over the entire Gulf of Naples, the Phlegrean Fields, and over to the sea, from which the island of **Nisida** emerges. This magical scenery inspired a whole generation of painters in the 1800's, known as the School of Posillipo. Their rendering of this enchanted panorama did much to contribute to the fame of the beauty of Naples.

From the sheer cliffs of **Coroglio** and the **cove of Trentaremi**, to the western edge of Posillipo, we can see nearby **Bagnoli**. Today it is the object of an ample project aimed at recuperating the marine environment, the beach and the former Italsider ironworks abandoned years ago. Some of the results of this project can already be seen in the Science Centre or '**Città della Scienza**', an interesting example of the recovery of industrial archaeology. Dedicated to scientific phenomena and the history of discoveries, the first **science centre** in Italy is an interactive museum and a hub of scientific and avantgarde technology. The visit, from the large planetarium to the scientific instruments that "must" be touched, is particularly interesting for children.



### the beaches for a dive into the city

In the summer months, the beaches of Posillipo are assaulted by bathers. Under Palazzo Donn'Anna there are many bathing

establishments. At the end of the descending path of the same name is the Marechiaro lido, once a tiny fishing village, nostalgically described by the poet Salvatore Di Giacomo in the song by the same name (immortalized by a small plaque). The far point of Gaiola with the cove of Trentaremi is beautiful, and

the natural amphitheatre is grandiose with its high walls of yellow tuff. This is where the protected marine reserve Gaiola Underwater Park is. Here you can see the remains of some of the buildings of the nearby roman villa of Publius Vedius Pollio, submerged due to bradyseism (a geological phenomenon).

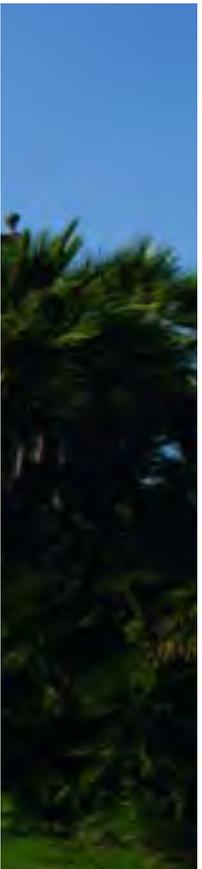
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Nisida and, in the background, Capo Miseno, Procida and Ischia

# The hills: from Vomero to Capodimonte

34 The **Vomero** district was born in the 1800's, in a green zone famous for its views of the Gulf. Today the small Liberty Style villas exist side by side to modern buildings, and are one of the most lively quarters of Naples, with a wealth of shopping attractions.

The heart of the Vomero is Piazza Vanvitelli, from which it is easy to reach **Villa Floridiana**, a gift of Ferdinand of Bourbon to his morganatic wife Lucia Migliaccio, the Duchess of Florida. The elegant building, built by Antonio Niccolini and surrounded by a large park with fake ruins, sumptuous paths, fields and a panoramic terrace, today houses the **Duca di Martina Ceramics Museum**. The nucleus of the collection are the pieces donated by the heirs of Placido De Sangro, Duke of Martina, an avid collector of coral, ivory, snuff-boxes and most of all porcelain and majolica. The collection of porcelain from Capodimonte and the Far East are especially interesting.



## famous travellers

A forty year-old widow, far from beautiful but none-the-less kind, at the time rented me half of her small house... at the foot of the mountain that dominates, the close by villa of Princess Florida, wife of the old King. It is, perhaps, the only part of Naples that is a bit tranquil.

*Stendhal, 1839*

Capodimonte Museum

Hall of the Duca di Martina Museum in the Villa Floridiana



## famous travellers

Beneath, the great city with its four hundred thousand souls, its red tiles and irregular masses of brick-work, contrasting with the gilded domes of the superb churches.

A.J. O'Reilly 1884



Naples as it was at the end of the 1400's. The 'Strozzi Table'. Museum of San Martino

36

From Piazza Vanvitelli you can get to the top of the hill (with the escalator, if you wish), to the Castel Sant'Elmo and the Certosa (charterhouse) of San Martino.

**Castel Sant'Elmo** dominates the city with its imposing profile. With the nearby charterhouse, it is visible from many parts of Naples. This massive fortress was built in the 1300's by Robert of Anjou and was completely restructured under the Pedro de Toledo government (1537-1546). The ground plan forms a six-pointed star; part of it carved into the tuff rock, and is surrounded by bastions and moats. From the glacis you can enjoy a 360° panorama of Naples.

Next to the Castle is the monumental complex of the **Certosa of San Martino**, also projected by Robert of Anjou. It was begun by Tino di Camaino in 1325, and later transformed in the 1500's and the middle 1600's by the most noted architects of the day (Dosio, Fanzago), thus becoming the most complete example of Neapolitan Baroque and one of the city's most grandiose monuments.

The inside of the church is a triumph of frescoes, sculptures, polychromatic marble and paintings. The frescoes were done by, among others, Giovanni Lanfranco and Battistello Caracciolo. Even the presbytery and the sacristy are richly decorated: oils by Ribera, Massimo Stanzione and Guido Reni, wardrobes and choir-stalls of inlaid wood. The vault of the 'Cappella del Tesoro' is decorated with the luminous fresco by Luca Giordano, *The Triumph of Judith*. The halls around the cloister house the **National Museum of San Martino**. The museum has sections dedicated to sculpture and painting, minor arts and theatre.

The section dedicated to the scenes of the city is very important, starting with works from the 1400's and including the famous *Tavola Strozzi*. Particularly interesting is the cribs' section made up of works by artists from the 1700's and by two exceptional groups of works: the wooden figurines of San Giovanni a Carbonara from the 1400's and the **Cuciniello Crib** from the 1800's, named after its donor. Do not miss the **Prior's Apartment** (the restored living quarters of the Prior), set in a very panoramic position, and the beautiful gardens of the convent.



37



### the 'pedamentina' of San Martino

From San Martino, follow the steps of the long steep Via Pedamentina, to arrive to Corso Vittorio Emanuele

and then on to Via Toledo in the heart of the lower city. With its 414 steps it is one of Naples' oldest streets. At the end of the first ramp there is an old gate that takes you into the belly of the hill. From there, the royal guards warded off the assaults on the Castel Sant'Elmo.

View of Castel Sant'Elmo and the Certosa of San Martino from Castel Nuovo

Cuciniello Crib. Museum of San Martino





The *Inebriated Silenus* by Ribera and the *Crucifixion* by Masaccio, Capodimonte Museum

The highest point of the city is the **Eremo dei Camaldoli**, an hermitage at 457 mt above sea level. It was constructed in 1585 and has a splendid view over the Gulf, the islands and the Phlegrean Fields. The border of the urban weave of the hill, it also merits a visit to fully enjoy the nearby **Camaldoli Park**.

From Camaldoli, going down along Viale Colli Aminei, you arrive to Capodimonte. The name derives from the late latin “Caput de Monte” (top of the mount) and clearly indicates its position: a hill on the highest part of the City. Here rises the **Royal Palace of Capodimonte**, surrounded by a vast park. Charles of Bourbon, a dedicated hunter, wanted to construct a hunting lodge here. After having done so, he had it enlarged to house the precious Farnese collections. The building, designed by Antonio Medrano, was finished only in 1839. Located in the immense park are the hunting lodge of Vittorio Emanuele II, a small lodge known as “of the Queen”, the Chapel of San Gennaro, the building of the old 1737 **porcelain factory** of Charles of Bourbon, the hermitage of the Cappuccini monks and the Fagianeria (pheasant breeding facility).

Today, the Royal Palace is home to the **National Museum of Capodimonte**, one of the most important in the world for painting and the decorative arts.

The main nucleus of the Museum is the **Farnese Collection**, started by Pope Paul III and inherited by Charles' mother Elisabeth Farnese. The picture gallery has more than 200 masterpieces: Masaccio, Botticelli, Raphael, Ribera, Titian, Mantegna, Correggio, El Greco, Lorenzo Lotto, Parmigianino, Carracci, and Bruegel. There are also two preparative drawings by Raphael for the 'Segnatura Room', and by Michelangelo for the Pauline Chapel in the Vatican. Also exceptional is **the gallery of 13th-19th century Neapolitan painting**: the *Saint Ludovico of Tolosa* by Simone Martini, the evocative *Flagellation* by Caravaggio, and again the works of Ribera, Luca Giordano, and Francesco Solimena. The section dedicated to the **1800's** is rich with the School of Posillipo painters, from Anton Smick Pitloo to Giacinto Gigante, and the masters of Naturalism, like the Palizzi. The many artists of the late 1800's and early 1900's – from Domenico Morelli to Vincenzo Migliaro – complete the artistic panorama. The **contemporary section** is also renewed by the presence of artists such as Alberto Burri, Andy Warhol, Carlo Alfano and Mimmo Paladino. The Museum holds other surprises: the **Historic Apartment**, with the **porcelain sitting room** of Queen Maria Amalia, for example. The collection of **decorative arts** is one of the richest in all of Italy with unique works like the precious Farnese Box and the wall tapestries of d'Avalos, and the exceptional porcelain works like the *Aurora Cart* by Filippo Tagliolini.

**the Capodimonte Porcelains**

In 1738 Charles of Bourbon wed Maria Amalia, daughter of August the Strong of Saxony and founder of the

celebrated porcelain factory of Meissen. The King decided to open a porcelain factory to produce precious pieces like the famous “porcelain sitting room” of the Queen, and a multitude of other elegant and curious objects: vases and snuff-boxes, soup-tureens and plates, statuettes and bowls.

In 1759 Charles, now King of Spain, took the manufacture with him to Madrid. The production continued in Naples in the Fernandea Royal Factory. Today the Neapolitan craftsmen keep the ancient art alive, continuing to make works inspired by the old masters, as well as with original creations.



Porcelain in the Capodimonte Museum

**famous travellers**

Capodimonte, that rises on the mountaintop... is a vast palace begun by Don Carlos, presently King of Spain. Here are housed all the riches...from the Parma Palace of the Farnese family that Charles took to Naples when he came through this Duchy to the throne of the Two Sicillies. The position of this palace is the best of the world.

*Marquis de Sade, 1776*

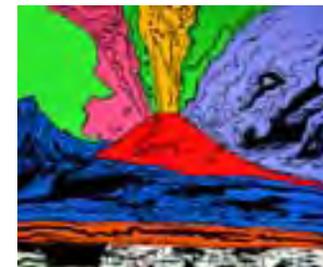


The *Flagellation* by Caravaggio, Capodimonte Museum

**the Capodimonte Observatory**

Located in a splendid position on the Miradois Hill and housed in a neo-classical building, the

Astronomic Observatory, the first of the modern observatories of Europe, was founded in 1819 by the astronomer Giuseppe Piazzi. The museum contains a rich collection of historic scientific instruments.



*Vesuvius* by Andy Warhol, Capodimonte Museum