

La Bella Vita

European Excursion Part 2

September 2016

Amalfi Coast

Naples

Ponza

Rome



Thursday, September 15 - Travel Day

Début du Matin, Deb

Prayer:

Scripture for the day:

Historical fact(s) for the day:

Today's happenings:

Deb, Julie, Lori and Lisa head out to Paris / Orly Airport for a 12:35 departure on Easy Jet (EZY4253), arriving at the Naples airport at 14:45. Julie and Michelle come in at 15:25 on Air France (KL3489). Kim and Aly...

Deb, Julie, Lori and Lisa will wait for the other planes. We have a six passenger transfer reserved after Julie and Michelle's plane arrives. About 3pm, there will be a guy with a card with my name on it as people exit the plane!!! He will drive us one hour to La Locanda de Fiordo Hotel, Via Transit 9, 84010, Costiera Amalfitana, Italy, (+39) 089 874813. It will be a windy drive, so take your motion sickness stuff if you need it. I hope to get to the hotel by 5:30pm and the sun sets a little after 7. We will have dinner at the hotel and just hang out there for a beautiful evening. Maybe the sea, the jacuzzi (aka "hydromassage pool") and a bottle of wine will be calling out to us!



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Friday, September 16

Ahhhhh... we are here... Italia! Breakfast is included in our reservation. It will be bread-y with juice and coffee, usually no eggs, but we shall see. It might be the best breakfast of my life with this view though!

Début du Matin, in our rooms, on our own

Prayer: Let's pray for our families and that we might be a light to the Italians we meet.

Scripture for the day: John 1 and Psalm 34

Historical fact(s) for the day: With pebbly beaches lined with rows of colorful umbrellas, seaside restaurants and tourists strolling along the narrow streets, it's hard to imagine Amalfi as more than the pretty seaside resort that it is today. Nature seems to have perfectly adjusted to idea of the town nestled in the ravine of the Valle dei Mulini and set alongside the sea. Yet, the history of Amalfi is far more remarkable than today's tranquil setting suggests.

The majestic beauty of the Amalfi Coast has always been irresistible. Greek sailors admired the dramatic landscape, even imagining parts of the coastline as home to mythic creatures. Later wealthy Roman patricians built seaside villas along the coast and created some of the first settlements. The first document tracing the origin of Amalfi, dating from 596, is a letter written by Pope Gregory I when the town was a defensive point for the Byzantine Duchy of Naples. Taking advantage of a period of unrest in the region, Amalfi declared itself a Republic in 839. This small fishing town was about to take the Mediterranean by storm.

By the time the Republics of Pisa, Genoa and Venice were firmly established, Amalfi traders were already navigating the waters and trading throughout the Mediterranean. At this time the town's small harbor was full of sailing vessels that crisscrossed the sea, reaching ports as far as Egypt, Syria and Constantinople in the Byzantine Empire. Amalfi had its own gold currency, called the *Tarì*, which was used in ports throughout the Mediterranean, Africa, the Greek Empire and the East. Amalfi's influence on the seas is well documented in the *Tabula Amalphytana*, or the Amalfi Tables, which established a maritime code that used throughout the Mediterranean until 1570.

Amalfi remained a rich and powerful Republic until 1073 when it fell under Norman control. Power was shifting in the Mediterranean to the Republics of Pisa and Genoa, both of which were eager to secure their territory. Amalfi suffered two damaging attacks by the Pisans in 1135 and again two years later. Despite these setbacks, Amalfi thrived intellectually and creatively during the 12th and 13th centuries. During this period, Amalfi sailors were among the first to introduce the compass for navigational purposes. The town's impressive *Duomo* was constructed during this period, including the serene *Cloister of Paradise* (1268) and the Romanesque-Moorish style *Campanile* (1180-1276).

Thanks to trading connections with the East, by about the 1230s Amalfi became one of the first locations in Europe to produce paper. Sitting at the base of a ravine with a fresh water source running down the *Valle dei Mulini* (Valley of the Mills), Amalfi was an ideal setting for papermaking. Mills were powered by the cool mountain water, and Amalfi's paper was soon sold all over the Mediterranean. Papermaking continued as an important local trade throughout the Middle Ages and Renaissance. Today you can visit the ruins of the original mills as well as learn more about the history of papermaking in Amalfi at the *Museo della Carta* (Paper Museum).

Amalfi's period of prosperity changed drastically in the 14th century when the town succumbed to the plague in 1306 and 1348. The trading economy was all but ruined during a devastating sea storm in 1343 that destroyed the port, sailing ships and much of the



town. Amalfi's days as a major maritime Republic were over, and the town came under the rule of the nearby Kingdom of Naples in the late 14th century.

Lacking military and trading influence, the town slowly returned to a sleepy fishing village. By the 19th century travelers from throughout Europe began to rediscover the history and beauty of the Naples area on the Grand Tour. The wild and seemingly untouched beauty of the Amalfi Coast spoke to the romantic spirit of these travelers, who found inspiration in the scenes of daily life, the evocative architecture and natural landscape. Writers, poets, musicians and painters arriving on the Amalfi Coast were stunned by its natural beauty. The American poet Henry Longfellow arrived in 1869 and later wrote a poem entitled "Amalfi" (1875) inspired by his time in the small fishing village.

The Amalfi Coast remained isolated geographically until the 19th century when Ferdinand II, the Bourbon King of Naples, commissioned the construction of a road connecting the villages dotting the coastline. The Amalfi Coast road reached Amalfi by the middle of the century, and this provided the access that today allows countless tourists each year to experience the beauty of the Amalfi Coast.

Today's happenings:

Eat, relax, eat, hike, explore Amalfi

- Since Michelle and Julie are adjusting to the time change, let's just eat breakfast when each of us wants to, lay out, swim, read, whatever. Around 1:30pm we can catch the bus to Amalfi Town where we will eat a quick lunch and start our hike. Like most activities, this is optional. We have another big hike tomorrow and a big day after that. If you do come, bring a backpack with snacks, cash, coins, water, hiking/walking shoes, maybe a sundress, etc. Around 2:30pm, we can start our beautiful hike led by the one and only Lisa Curran. The hike is right behind Amalfi Town and is about 6 miles of hills, stairs, waterfalls, abandoned mills and more.
- After our hiking excursion, we can explore Amalfi for a bit, get a snack and head back to our hotel. Dinner in Italy is often served from 7:30 to 11 pm, so we will be eating late.



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Saturday, September 17

Here's to another beautiful day in paradise. Today we plan to hike the Path of the Gods with the lovely Michelle Gregg as our guide.

Début du Matin, in our rooms, on our own

Prayer: Let's pray that God would draw us closer to Himself as we explore all of these wonderful places that he created.

Scripture for the day: Acts 28 - Puteoli is the ancient name of Pozzuoli, a town we will be near Monday.

Historical fact(s) for the day: Amalfi is the first place that paper, as we know it, was made.

- The hike takes a little over three hours. Let's leave by 9:30am to so we can have lunch at Da Adolfo!

This is the hike:



We hike to here:



We take this boat:



We have lunch here:



Da Adolfo, great food at \$10-20,
beach loungers available for \$10-ish.

Beach wear casual

Trying to get a 2pm reservation

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Sunday, September 18 - Naples



Now we change modes for a day and a half. This morning we head to Naples to explore, experience and learn about an ancient city. We will have a transfer van for all 8 of us that will pick us up at the hotel at 9:15 and head to our bed and breakfast in Naples (Belledonne Suite, Via Belledonne a Chiaia 28 Naples I-866-599-6674) where we will meet our guide, Orietta about 10:30. Orietta has many wonderful plans for us including the Naples Underground Tour at 6pm. This will be a very full day of touring wonderful sites and trying Neapolitan foods.



Monday, September 19 - to Ponza

Début du Matin

Prayer: Let's spend some time thanking God for His blessings to us.

Scripture for the day: Acts 28 - Let's look at it again. Puteoli can be seen on the Bay of Naples. The passage also mentions Rome. What do we know about this journey of Paul's?

Historical fact(s) for the day: Do you know that one of the oldest continuously inhabited cities in the world is located in Naples, Italy? During the second millennium BC, the area was inhabited by Bronze Age Greek settlements.

In the morning, we can take it slow. We will see a few more sites this morning and about 1pm we will take an one hour train (making sure not to get on the two hour train) to Formia. From Formia we can catch a 2.5 hour ferry to Ponza at 3pm. Break out the motion sickness paraphernalia! Our AirBnB is on the other side of the island from the port, so we take a 20 minute taxi ride. Donatino a Mare, Ponza, 04020, +390771809684.



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Tuesday, September 20 - Ponza

Today we will hire a boat for the day in front of our apartment to circumnavigate the island. Should cost about \$200 total for the day for all 8 of us.

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Wednesday, September 21 - to Rome

Head to Rome in the late afternoon on the 4:15pm (1 hour 20 minutes) ferry to Formia, then a two hour train ride to Rome. The train goes to central Rome... Kelly will have to catch another one out to the airport. She flies out of Ciampino (not Fiumicino) at 9:15am on Thursday, Ryan Air FR4101.

Our apartment is very near the river in Rome called the Tiber. It is near Campo di Fiore. We can cross a bridge to Trastevere. The address is Via Giulia 194, phone - 3287823952.



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Thursday, September 22 - Rome

Slow morning, Appian Way, catacombs?, a few good meals.



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Friday, September 23 - Rome

Kim, Julie and Michelle leave at 10:10 for LAX, non-stop, KL2740

Julie, Lori, Lisa and Deb stay in Rome

Possible activities: Vatican, vespas, colosseum, rooftop bars, castel sant angelo, campo di fiore, shopping, Trastevere, Borghese Park, bike along the river, pantheon, parthenon, and so much more.

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Saturday, September 24 - Rome

Rome

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Sunday, September 25 - Rome

Rome to Airport hotel

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Monday, September 26 - Rome

Leave Rome Fiumicino at 7:20am, Norwegian D81020

Arrive Copenhagen 9:50am, DY7091

Head into the city for a quick visit

Fly out of Copenhagen to LAX at 15:10

Arrive LAX at 17:30