



## 6 Best Things to Do in Naples, Italy

### Explore Via Toledo

Via Toledo is one of the longest and oldest shopping streets in Naples. It dates back to 1536 and is bursting with history and character.

The three-quarter mile street runs between two major city squares and is lined with local shops, traditional trattorias, churches, and historic buildings.

Spend the afternoon browsing through trinkets from sidewalk vendors, popping into high-end retailers, and of course, eating your way through the city!

Galleria Umberto I is one of our favorite stops along this road. This public shopping arcade dates back to the late 1800s and is an architectural gem. With its elegant glass dome and intricate details, it is one of the most beautiful malls you'll ever step foot in.

San Nicola alla Carita is a beautiful baroque church located along Via Toledo known for its ornate interior and significant artworks.

The Toledo Metro Station may seem like an odd recommendation, but it is often regarded as one of the most beautiful metro stations in Europe. Its worth stopping by to admire the striking blue mosaics and modern art installations.

To get the most out of your visit, I would recommend a [guided small-group tour](#) where you will get a chance to dive deep into the history of Naples with a knowledgeable local tour guide.

We also love exploring the maze of alleys and side streets adjacent to Via Toledo known as the Spanish Quarter.

The narrow alleys are draped with clotheslines, window flower boxes, and strands of lights. It gives you a glimpse into the authentic local side of the city with a sense of its deep-rooted history and grit. It's one of my favorite places to get lost exploring.

It is often said that Rome is the heart of Italy and Naples is the soul. You really get a sense of that while exploring this district!

There are actually hidden underground tunnels in the Spanish Quarter and you can take an inexpensive [guided tour](#) to explore the labyrinth of underground tunnels and the Neapolitan aqueduct.

If you are stopping in Naples while on a [Mediterranean Cruise](#), Via Toledo is within walking distance of the cruise terminal so it's easy to visit.

## Eat Authentic Pizza

Naples is known as the birthplace of pizza, particularly the Margherita pizza which was created in honor of Queen Margherita of Savoy. The simple flat bread pizza represented the colors of the Italian flag with red tomatoes, white mozzarella cheese, and fresh green basil.

Today, Naples still boasts the best pizza in the world. We have visited Naples a few times and tried their pizza at different restaurants and every time we have been blown away but just how unbelievably delicious it is!

There is something about the thin chewy crust, simple tomato sauce, and fresh mozzarella that will have your eyes rolling into the back of your head.

One of our favorite pizza shops is Pizzeria Napoli in Bocca. This small local shop is located on Via San Carlo near Via Toledo. We ordered 2 large pizzas for our family of 4. The size of the pizza is generous and we thought we would have leftovers, but we devoured every last bite!

For a fun experience, try taking a [Naples Street Food Tour](#) to discover the best local restaurants and dishes in Naples.

## Tour the Catacombs of San Gennaro

The [Catacombs of San Gennaro](#) are one of Naples' most fascinating and historically rich sites. These ancient underground burial chambers offer a unique (and somewhat eerie) glimpse into Naples' early Christian history.

The Catacombs date back to the 2nd century AD and are named after Saint Januarius (San Gennaro), the patron saint of Naples.

Initially, the catacombs began as a small family tomb but expanded significantly over the centuries, particularly between the 4th and 5th centuries, as Christianity grew and became more established in the region.

The catacombs served not only as a burial site, but also as a place of worship. You'll find the Basilica of Sant'Agrippino, an underground church that is one of the oldest churches in Naples. The walls of the basilica are adorned with remarkably well-preserved early Christian frescoes depicting biblical scenes.

The Catacombs of San Gennaro are divided into two main levels, the upper catacomb and the lower catacomb. The upper catacomb features larger and more elaborate tombs, while the lower catacomb contains simpler burial chambers.

Many of Naples' early bishops are buried in the Crypt of the Bishops. You'll also find the stone chair (known as the cathedra) that was used by the bishops on display here. The original tomb of San Gennaro is also located in the Catacombs.

The best way to visit the catacombs is on a [guided tour](#), which I would recommend booking in advance.

## Visit Historic Sites and Museums

Naples is filled with such a rich history, so a visit to the numerous historic sites and museums in the city is a must!

The **Naples National Archaeological Museum** is home to the largest collection of artifacts from nearby Pompeii and Herculaneum, as well as other ancient Greco-Roman artifacts.

A short funicular ride will take you to **Castel Sant Elmo**, perched high on Vomero Hill in the center of the city. This former military fortress and prison was originally built in 1329 and was reconstructed in the mid 1500s. Today it serves as a museum and boasts some of the best views in the city.

While you're in the area, be sure to visit **Certosa di San Martino**, a former monastery and museum located adjacent to the castle.

**Castel dell'Ovo** is another former military fortress and royal residence in Naples. It is located on the seafront and stands as the oldest fortification in the city. Today, it serves as an event and temporary exhibition space and is not open for tours, but is worth stopping by for a photo.

If you are interested in art history, the **Capodimonte Royal Palace** is a 150,000 square foot palace and manicured garden that dates back to 1738. Today, it is an art museum that houses

an impressive art collection, including works by Caravaggio, Raphael, and Titian.

Stop by the Neo-Gothic **Naples Cathedral**, also known as the Duomo, which was completed in 1314. It features three soaring naves, handpainted frescos, historic sculptures, intricate carvings, and even a vial of San Gennaro's blood!

The **Sansevero Chapel Museum** is a stunning Baroque chapel where you'll find a staggering collection of religious sculptures and artwork. The most famous piece is the Veiled Christ, by Giuseppe Sanmartino. His ability to sculpt the appearance of a thin veil out of marble defies explanation.

Wander around **Centro Storico**, the Historic District found in the heart of Naples. This neighborhood has been designated as a UNESCO World Heritage Site and is filled with narrow streets, historic churches, and vibrant piazzas.

Don't miss Via San Gregorio Armeno, a street famous for selling hand-crafted holiday nativity figurines year round. The **Spaccanapoli** is also a well-known street that cuts through the bustling historic center. It is lined with artisan shops, sidewalk cafes, and historic buildings.

If you are interested, this [guided walking tour](#) will take you through Naples's Historic District where you can learn more about its history and visit important landmarks.

## Book a Guided Tour of Pompeii

Pompeii is located about 20 miles from Naples and draws millions of visitors from around the world each year.

The ancient city of Pompeii with a population of about 12,000 was covered in ash and pumice from the tumultuous eruption of Mount Vesuvius in 79 AD. Because the city was entombed by ash and not lava, many of the structures have been preserved somewhat in the same state as they stood on that fateful day.

Pompeii is an active archaeological site that is still continuing to be excavated today. The city is spread across 170 acres and only about two-thirds of the city has been excavated.

It truly is an incredible experience to walk the streets of this ancient city that has been frozen in time. You'll be able to see markets, family homes, laundry mats, public baths, brothels, theaters, and so much more.

While you can visit Pompeii and explore on your own, I would highly recommend booking a [guided small-group tour](#) where your guide will unveil the clues that archeologists have uncovered to determine what life was like centuries ago.

It really is fascinating to see how advanced their society was! To learn more interesting facts about Pompeii, see our guide [18 Things You Didn't Know About Pompeii](#).

I would also highly recommend visiting the ruins of [Herculaneum](#). This city was also destroyed by the same eruption and is equally well-preserved. It doesn't get as much hype as Pompeii, but it is definitely worth a visit as well.

## Take a Day Trip to the Amalfi Coast

The Amalfi Coast is one of the most beautiful places we've ever visited, and I do not say that lightly!

The drive from Sorrento to Salerno is ranked as one of the most scenic drives in the world. You'll find a stunning rugged coastline punctuated with sandy beach coves and romantic terraced villages.

It's about an hour drive from Pompeii to Positano, the gateway to the Amalfi Coast, so you will need to rent a car, hire a private driver, or [book a tour](#) that departs from Naples. The road is narrow and winding with steep drop-offs, so if that makes you nervous then you will be better off going with an experienced driver. Another perk is that you won't have to worry about parking, which can be a bit of a nightmare.

While on the Amalfi Coast, I would recommend taking the steps down to the famous Spiaggia Grand Beach in Positano.

Fiordo di Furore is also one of my favorite stops where you'll find a picturesque small fishing village and beach hidden in a gorge.

Conca dei Marini is a romantic village that was one of Jacqueline Kennedy's favorite holiday destinations. This is also where you'll find the famed Emerald Grotto.

Amalfi Town is a great place to grab lunch at a sidewalk cafe and enjoy the views of the Tyrrhenian Sea.

The refined village of Ravello is known as The City of Music and is a cultural hub on the Amalfi Coast. One of the highlights includes the Gardens of Villa Cimbrone and the Terrace of Infinity.

If you have time, book a boat tour along the coast or extend your trip to include a few nights in one of the Amalfi Coast towns. For more recommendations, see our guide [5 of the Best Places to Go on the Amalfi Coast](#).