



# Salerno & the Cilento

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## Best Places to Eat

- » La Cantina del Feudo (p179)
- » Vicolo della Neve (p179)
- » Anna (p189)
- » I Tre Gufi (p191)

## Best Places to Stay

- » Agriturismo i Moresani (p212)
- » Villa Vea (p212)
- » Marulivo Hotel (p211)
- » Hotel Calypso (p210)

## Why Go?

Salerno can be visited on foot, but concentrate on the picturesque *centro storico* (historic centre) with its labyrinth of colourful earthy streets. This is the only area of the city that was miraculously spared during World War II bombing when the city was designated the capital of Allied Italy. Have a look, too, at the splendid waterfront promenade lined with palm trees. Then, allow at least three hours for the fascinating excavations at Paestum, among the best-preserved Greek temples in the world.

And don't miss the Cilento region, one of this area's un-sung glories, with a largely undeveloped coastal strip and a beautiful national park. It's a burgeoning region for walkers, too, and *agriturismi* (farm-stay accommodation) make perfect bases. The region has some heavyweight sights as well, including an extraordinary monastery, an evocative archaeological site, and intriguing grottoes and caves.

## Road Distance (KM)

Paestum	27			
Agropoli	45	17		
Castellabate	58	30	13	
Palinuro	112	69	62	53
	Salerno	Paestum	Agropoli	Castellabate

**DON'T MISS**

Ordering the locally produced buffalo-milk mozzarella; soft, creamy and mildly tangy, it is considered to be among the best in the country.

**Best Beaches**

- » Ascea (p191)
- » Santa Maria di Castellabate (p190)
- » Spiaggia Palinuro (p192)
- » Agropoli (p188)

**Best Activities**

- » Wreck diving in Agropoli (p189)
- » Moonlit ocean trip on the Cilento Coast (p191)
- » Hiking in the Parco Nazionale del Cilento (p182)
- » Boat trip to the grottoes in Palinuro (p192)

**Resources**

- » **Salerno City** ([www.salecity.com](http://www.salecity.com)) Comprehensive city website.
- » **Salerno Province** ([www.salernomemo.com](http://www.salernomemo.com)) Emphasis on sports and activities.
- » **Agropoli** ([www.comune.agropoli.sa.it](http://www.comune.agropoli.sa.it)) General information and local news.
- » **Paestum** ([www.infopaestum.it](http://www.infopaestum.it)) Information about the town and archaeological site.
- » **Cilento** ([www.discovercilento.com](http://www.discovercilento.com)) General information on the park and coastal resorts.

**Getting Around**

Salerno is on the ferry route from Naples and Sorrento, and in summer the Amalfi coast resorts and islands. The main Cilento towns can be reached by bus or ferry; however, renting a car will provide the flexibility to explore the smaller villages and the Parco Nazionale del Cilento e Vallo di Diano (Cilento National Park and the Valley of Diano) inland, where the bus service is sporadic, with many villages only accessible by car. Overall the roads are good throughout the Cilento region with well signposted towns and resorts within easy reach.

**3 PERFECT DAYS****Day 1 – Culture & Cuisine**

Start off in Salerno by checking out the magnificent cathedral (p178), followed by an atmospheric stroll around the narrow backstreets of the city's small *centro storico* (historic centre). Take a cappuccino break in a typical hung-with-washing piazza, then hop on a train or drive to Paestum (p182) for an early lunch and an afternoon visiting its magical temples (p183). In the evening continue south to Agropoli (p188) for an ocean-front dinner.

**Day 2 – Coastal Cilento**

Stretch your legs with a morning stroll along Agropoli's sweeping promenade. Visit the castle (p188) and historic quarter before continuing south along this dramatic coastline of hidden coves and high cliffs. Stop for a swim, a snack or a stroll at small traditional Italian resorts like Acciaroli (p190), a favourite of Ernest Hemingway's; Pioppi (p191), with its pale pebble beach; and medieval Pisciotta (p191), home to a lovely traditional piazza. Carry on along this unspoiled coastline before ending the day in pretty Palinuro (p192).

**Day 3 – Explore hidden caves and grottoes**

It's not half as famous as its Capri cousin, but Palinuro's Grotta Azzurra (Blue Grotto; p193) is just as spectacular. Next, head inland into the Parco Nazionale del Cilento (p182) and two otherworldly caves, the Grotta di Castelvita (p183), one of the largest cave complexes in Europe, and the equally tantalising Grotta dell'Angelo (p183) in Pertosa, where your tour includes the added adventure of a boat ride. Consider staying overnight at one of the park's superb *agriturismi* (farm-stay accommodation).

**Accommodation**

While Salerno doesn't have a great choice of accommodation, the Cilento coast and park have a diverse range of places to lay your head. Mountaintop discreet *palazzi* (mansions), breezy beachfront hotels and ecofriendly *agriturismi* are here, with prices considerably lower than those on the Amalfi Coast. For more information, see the Accommodation chapter, p194.