



Salerno & the Cilento

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Best Places to Stay

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Why Go?

Salerno may not have the glamorous looks of the Amalfi coast resorts, but its picturesque *centro storico* (historic centre) comprises an intriguing labyrinth of colourful earthy streets, which makes for a refreshing change from the more touristy towns to the west. An enthralling archeological museum and Norman cathedral add depth, and there's also a spacious waterfront promenade lined with palm trees as well as a lively restaurant scene.

The fascinating excavations at nearby Paestum include some of the world's best-preserved Greek temples standing proud among meadows scattered with wildflowers. The museum here holds some captivating ancient frescoes, including the famous Tomba del Truffatore (Tomb of the Diver).

And don't miss the Cilento region, one of this area's lesser-known glories, with a largely undeveloped coastal strip and a beautiful national park famed for its orchids. Villages here have a tangible stuck-in-a-time-warp feel, so be prepared for stares. It's a burgeoning region for walkers, 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.

When to Go

- ➔ The Cilento coastal resorts can be crowded with gelato-slurping Italian holidaymakers from July to August, with hotel rooms hard to find.
- ➔ May and June, and September and October are preferable, when temperatures are pleasant and there's more towel space on the sand.
- ➔ If you are planning on visiting the Parco Nazionale del Cilento, then springtime is best, when the weather is ideal for strolls or hard-core hiking, and the wildflowers are in bloom.



Salerno & the Cilento Coast Highlights

1 Roaming the ruins of the Hellenistic town of **Velia** (p192).

2 Wondering at the extraordinary **Certosa di San Lorenzo** (p186) in Padula.

3 Taking a trip to the ancient Greek world at **Paestum**

(p184), one of Europe's most majestic archaeological sites.

4 Joining the *passeggiata* (stroll) through the fascinating *centro storico* (historic centre) in **Salerno** (p178).

5 Enjoying a sunset walk along the lovely promenade in **Agropoli** (p188).

6 Marvelling at the heady views from Salerno's **castle** (p178).

7 Visiting the fascinating **Grotte di Pertosa** (p185) by boat.