

Understand Naples, Pompeii & the Amalfi Coast

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Naples, Pompeii & the Amalfi Coast Today

Berlin, Portland, Melbourne, Napoli? It might be better known for the old and classic than the cool and cutting edge, but Italy's third-largest city is finally finding its hipper side. A fresh, youthful energy is sweeping through Naples' ancient streets, driven by young, globe-hopping Neapolitans who are giving the style, innovation and thinking of trend-setting cities a local flavour.

Best on Film

L'oro di Napoli (Vittorio De Sica; 1954) An anthology of stories set in Naples and featuring Sophia Loren.

Passione (John Turturro; 2010) Turturro's tribute to Naples' hypnotic music and traditions.

Gomorra (Matteo Garrone; 2008) A fast-paced feature exposing the city's violent underbelly.

E poi c'è Napoli (Gianluca Migliarotti; 2014) Neapolitan fashion, style and tailoring are the focus of this refreshing documentary.

Best in Print

Capri and No Longer Capri (Raffaele La Capria; 1991, English translation 2001) La Capria presents a slightly melancholic vision of modern Capri.

Falling Palace: A Romance of Naples (Dan Hofstadler; 2005) Naples' electric streets are brought to life in this evocative love story.

Naples '44: An Intelligence Officer in the Italian Labyrinth (Norman Lewis; 1978) An engrossing account of postwar Naples.

The Ancient Shore: Dispatches from Naples (Shirley Hazzard & Francis Steegmuller; 2008) Eloquent musings on Neapolitan life and history.

Winds of Change

In the *centro storico* (historic centre), a new generation of cafes and bars is embracing a less-is-more aesthetic, ditching chintzy, kitsch interiors for pared-back tufa-stone walls and quirky designer detailing. *Monocle* magazine would approve of. Even old-school coffee-bar chain Mexico is in on the act, its newest branch a past-meets-present combo of retro barista caps, recycled timber cladding, post-industrial steel and sit-down tables dotted with laptop-tapping clients.

Keywords such as sustainable, organic and locally sourced are peppering a growing number of menus, including those of new-gen eateries and wine bars like Eccellenze Campane, Salumeria and Jamón. Here, chances are your *prosciutto crudo* (cured ham) is made using cognoscente *maialino nero casertano* (a speciality breed of pig from Caserta), your cinnamon-infused *mortadella* comes from organic pork and your *birra* (beer) is of the craft variety.

This burgeoning interest in all things artisanal, local and creative extends beyond the table. Naples' hoard of streetart – which includes Banksy's only Italian creation – is finally getting the recognition it deserves thanks to local street-art fan Federica Belmonte and her friends. Thirty-something Belmonte sparked the idea for Napoli Paint Stories, whose walking tours showcase the city's vibrant street art and graffiti scene to both locals and visitors.

Meanwhile, at San Caterina in Formiello on the east-ern edge of the *centro storico*, grassroots project Made in Cloister is steadily transforming a historic cloister and wool factory into a thriving cultural hub for artisans, artists and musicians. Among its venues is Lanificio 25, a live-music venue already drawing reinvigorated crowds of cosmopolitan, forward-thinking Neapolitans.