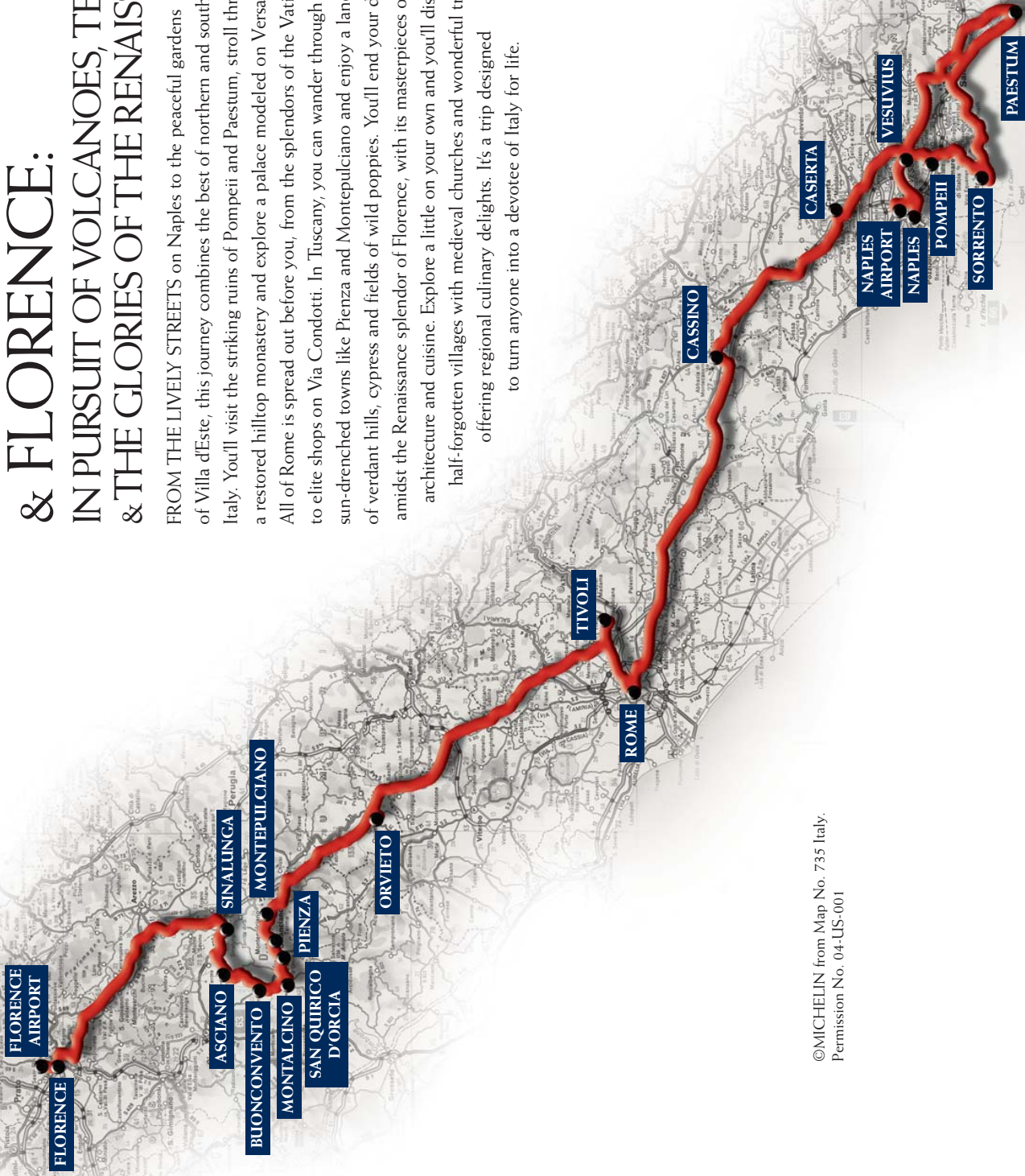


NAPLES, ROME & FLORENCE: IN PURSUIT OF VOLCANOES, TEMPLES & THE GLORIES OF THE RENAISSANCE

FROM THE LIVELY STREETS on Naples to the peaceful gardens of Villa d'Este, this journey combines the best of northern and southern Italy. You'll visit the striking ruins of Pompeii and Paestum, stroll through a restored hilltop monastery and explore a palace modeled on Versailles. All of Rome is spread out before you, from the splendors of the Vatican to elite shops on Via Condotti. In Tuscany, you can wander through sun-drenched towns like Pienza and Montepulciano and enjoy a landscape of verdant hills, cypress and fields of wild poppies. You'll end your drive amidst the Renaissance splendor of Florence, with its masterpieces of art, architecture and cuisine. Explore a little on your own and you'll discover half-forgotten villages with medieval churches and wonderful trattorias offering regional culinary delights. It's a trip designed to turn anyone into a devotee of Italy for life.



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NAPLES, ROME & FLORENCE

(*Mileage is estimated from each preceding city or site. Before you begin your trip, please note: For space reasons, we could not provide the most detailed map with this brochure. We recommend the use of Michelin Map #735 Italy in conjunction with this guide. To order Michelin maps, call 1-800-223-0987.*)

NAPLES INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

Begin your trip here with a connecting flight from Rome or Milan. The airport is just four miles from the center of Naples.

NAPLES—Italy's liveliest and most vibrant city, Naples epitomizes the vitality of southern Italy. It boasts a colorful waterfront as well as the engaging streets of the Spaccanapoli quarter. Here you'll find the "centro storico" or historic center of Naples, a Baroque jumble of tenements and palazzi. Make time for a visit to the Duomo, which was finished in the 14th century. Have a delicious lunch of true Neapolitan pizza, arguably the best in Italy. Visit the Museo Archeologico Nazionale, which houses many of the most significant finds from Pompeii. Do take time to visit the Museo Capodimonte, which is located in one of the Bourbon royal palaces. Finally, buy tickets in advance for an evening of opera at the Teatro San Carlo, which opened in 1737. Both Rossini and Donizetti were musical directors here.

8 miles

MOUNT VESUVIUS—The most fabled and feared volcano in the world, Mount Vesuvius rises dramatically some 4,200 feet above a flat landscape. It remains an active volcano, and it erupted most famously in 79 AD, burying the nearby towns of Pompeii and Herculaneum in thick clouds of ash and cinders. Centuries passed before these towns were discovered and unearthed. You can drive to a car park and make the ascent in about half an hour. Walk around the crater, gaze into the depths and then enjoy the panoramic view of the Bay of Naples.

10 miles

POMPEII—A haunting and wondrous place, Pompeii was a thriving Roman city when it was engulfed by cinders and ash following the eruption of Mount Vesuvius in AD79. It was only rediscovered about 1750, and it took years to unearth the occupants, their household objects and their works of art. Today, those finds are housed in the Museo Archeologico Nazionale in Naples. What remains are the houses, the shops, the streets and an eerie sense that the residents have just departed. From the Stabian Baths to the market known as the Macellum, from the Forum to the Amphitheater, daily life for Pompeians comes to life. Take time to stroll the ancient streets and be sure to see the Villa of the Mysteries, with its extraordinary frescoes, and the House of Meander, one of Pompeii's grandest houses.

17 miles

SORRENTO—This town has been welcoming tourists since the 1700s, and the likes of Casanova and Goethe came here as sight-seers. Pause at the 14th-century Duomo and the Museo Correale di Terranova with its objets d'art. Visit the Bagno della Regina, Giovanna or Queen Joan's Bath, where seawater funnels into a natural pool. Adjacent are the ruins of the house of the great Roman patron, Pollio Felix.

Roman Forum and the Coliseum for hours. Arise for the morning market at Campo de Fiori, lunch at a trattoria in picturesque Trastevere, and have your picture taken at the Trevi Fountain. But save one day to explore the treasures of Vatican City, from stately St. Peter's to the intricate splendor of Michaelangelo's Sistine Chapel.

82 miles

TIVOLI—There are two extraordinary villas here. Villa Adriana, or Hadrian's Villa, was built for Emperor Hadrian during a 20-year period, from AD 118 to 130. It is comprised of more than 30 buildings and set on 250 magnificent acres. The ruins that remain are a visual feast, with reflecting pools, columns and statuary, and are designated a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Another UNESCO site is Villa d'Este, which dates from the late Renaissance. The gardens, brainchild of the 16th-century Cardinal Ippolito d'Este, are truly extraordinary, with dozens of fountains, grottoes and elaborate terraces.

23 miles

ORVIETO—Famed for the white wine that bears its name, Orvieto has a dramatic location on a volcanic plateau. The town's Duomo is a brilliant Romanesque-Gothic structure. Inside is the Cappella del Corporale, which houses a miraculous altar cloth.

77 miles

MONTEPULCIANO—This walled Tuscan town dates from Etruscan times. Wander along Via del Corso, to the Piazza Grande. In this beautiful square is the magnificent Duomo. Climb the tower in the 15th-century Palazzo Comunale, a smaller version of the Palazzo Vecchio in Florence, for tremendous views. And unwind at a café with the famed Vino Nobile di Montepulciano.

30 miles

PAESTUM—Originally a Greek colony from around 600 BC known as Poseidonia, this settlement was known as Paestum under the Romans around 273BC. The town was rediscovered only in the 1950s. The three Greek temples at Paestum, most notably the Temple of Neptune, are extraordinarily evocative structures.

28 miles

CASERTA—The Royal Palace of Caserta was conceived by Charles III, Bourbon King of Naples, to be another Versailles. The vast 1,200-room palace was begun in the 18th century but not completed in 1852. The 18th- and 19th-century Royal Apartments are opulent, with an amazing ceiling fresco by Domenico Mondo. The lavish Throne Room, the Art Gallery and the Court Theater are among the highlights.

71 miles

CASSINO—On a mountain overlooking the city of Cassino is Montecassino, a Benedictine Abbey founded by St. Benedict himself. The abbey dates from about 547AD and is the spiritual home of the Benedictine order. It has survived four different sieges in its time, most notably a severe bombardment from Allied forces during WWII. Thankfully, it has been fully restored.

45 miles

ROME—You could spend a lifetime exploring the Eternal City. Do visit the Pantheon and take a stroll with Roman families in the Borghese Gardens. Fortify yourself with a cup of the best espresso in Italy at Tazza d'Oro and explore the fashionable shops on Via Condotti. Make the obligatory pilgrimage to the Spanish Steps, have tea at Babbington's Tea Rooms and then slip into the Keats-Shelley house to glimpse the connection between the Romantic poets and Rome. You can wander through the ruins of the



41 miles

PIENZA – Pienza is the Renaissance personified. Conceived by Pope Pius II and built by architect Bernardo Rossellino, it was eventually completed in 1464. The Piazza Pio is the center of it all, and the buildings surrounding it are classics of Renaissance architecture. Of particular interest is Rossellino's masterpiece, the Duomo, with its enormous stained glass windows. The lavish Palazzo Piccolomini, home to Pius II's descendants until 1968, offers guided tours.

9 miles

SAN QUIRICO D'ORCIA – This town's 15th century walls are capped with turrets, giving it a true Renaissance feel. Do visit La Collegiata church, spend some time at the Palazzo Chigi, and plan to visit the thermal baths, Bagno Vignoni, which lie outside the town.

10 miles

MONTALCINO – If you're already acquainted with Brunello di Montalcino, one of Italy's finest red wines, you'll be happy to find yourself in this hilltop town. The center is the Piazza del Popolo, with the 13th-century tower of the Palazzo Comunale. The Rocca is probably the town's most famous attraction, a 14th-century fortress with views all the way to Siena.

9 miles

BUONCONVENTO – Magnificent stone walls surround this town, dating from the 14th century and built by the Siennese. The Museo d'Arte Sacra has a rich collection of Siennese paintings, goldwork and sculpture. You're in the heart of white truffle country here, so count on a delightfully decadent meal.

12 miles

ASCIANO – This medieval walled town is located in a ghostly region known as the Crete Senesi, a landscape of white clay hills and valleys. On Corso Matteotti, you'll discover some extraordinary examples of Renaissance palazzi. There are antique shops and boutiques as well for your shopping needs. Stop at the Basilica di Sant'Agata, a 13th-century Romanesque church, as well as the adjacent Museo d'Arte Sacra, which features paintings from the Siennese school. A café in Piazza Caribaldi is the perfect place to sample the local Chianti Classico.

14 miles

SINALUNGA – In this classic hilltown, you can see traces of the town's Etruscan past at the Antiquarium Comunale and explore the world of 18th-century theater at the Accademia degli Smalettiani. There is art to be seen in the churches, especially in the Collegiata di San Martino, where there are works by Girolamo Pacchia.

64 miles

FLORENCE – Every visit to Florence should start with the Duomo, the cathedral with the enormous dome by Brunelleschi. Plan an early morning or late afternoon tour of the Galleria degli Uffizi to avoid the crowds. You'll have masterpieces by Piero della Francesca, Uccello and Botticelli virtually to yourself. The Bargello has a fine collection of Renaissance sculpture while the Vasari frescoes are a prime reason to tour the Palazzo Vecchio. When the shopping urge strikes, leather goods, antiques and hand-made paper are good bets. Dining in Florence runs the gamut from bustling trattorias to discretegastronomic temples. You'll find some all'fresco places near the Mercato Centrale to be lively lunch choices. Then stroll across the medieval bridge known as the Ponte Vecchio on the Arno River for more timeless views.

FLORENCE AIRPORT –

Florence's airport is minutes from the city center and it's ideal for connections to Milan, Rome or other European cities for the flight back home.

HOTELS

Parkers. A grand hotel that has welcomed VIP's and high society since 1870. Some of the 83 ornately decorated rooms have views of the Bay of Naples. Corso Vittorio Emanuele, Naples.
Tel: 39-081-761-2474
Fax: 39-081-663-527

Excelsior Vittoria. This romantic Belle Epoque hotel overlooks the Bay of Naples. Many of the 98 rooms boast terrific views. Piazza Tasso 34, Sorrento.
Tel: 39-081-807-1044
Fax: 39-081-877-1206
For reservations in the USA: 800-745-8888

Hotel Eden. This 121-room hotel offers sublime luxury, from its rooftop terrace overlooking the Villa Borghese to its much-praised La Terraza dell'Eden dining room. Antiques, plush fabrics, and marble baths cocoon you in luxury just a few minutes from the Spanish Steps. Via Ludovisi 49, Rome.
Tel: 39-06-482-1584
Fax: 39-06-482-1584
For reservations in the USA: 800-543-4300

Locanda dell'Amorosa. This restored 14th-century stone village is now an estate and hotel, with a walled courtyard and grand entrance along a corridor of cypress trees. The 20 guestrooms have beamed ceilings and antiques.
53048 Sinalunga.
Tel: 39-0577-677-211
Fax: 39-0577-632-001



Hotel Relais II

Chiostro di Pienza. A small, charming, restored 15th century cloister. The 37 rooms are large and airy and have terrific views of the countryside. Corso Rossellino, 26, Pienza.
Tel: 39-0578-748-400
Fax: 39-0578-748-440

Westin Excelsior. This refurbished 165-room grand dame occupies two houses that overlook the Arno River. The marble floors, 19th century staircases and stained glass windows are complemented by a highly-praised staff. Piazza d'Ognissanti 3, Florence 50123.
Tel: 39-055-27151
Fax: 39-055-210278
For reservations in the USA: 888-625-5144

DINING

Restaurant Enoteca Pinchiorri. Set in a Renaissance palace, this restaurant draws gourmands from all over Europe. Owner Eugene Pinchiorri has a 150,000 bottle wine cellar and his chef, Annie Féolde, creates inventive Tuscan cuisine. Via Ghibellina, 87, Florence.
Tel: 39-055-24 27 77
Fax: 39-055-24 49 83
For reservations in the USA: 800-735-2478

