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TOLL FREE 800 804-8686 OUTSIDE USA 406 587-3883 FAX 406 587-9449

trips@adventurewomen.com | www.adventurewomen.com

Hiking the Amalfi Coast: Italy– 2016

Trip Summary

Dates

May 14 - 22, 2016

Cost

\$4,395 (\$800 deposit) from Naples, Italy

Rating

Moderate with 1 day High Energy

Activities

- Hiking
- Cultural Exploration
- Sightseeing
- Wine Tasting
- Photography
- Archaeology

"The sun, the moon, the stars, and Amalfi" is how the Amalfitans of 600 years ago described their kingdom. Exploring Italy's classic Mediterranean coast, today's walkers feel the same way. Many people say the Amalfi coastline, extending south of Naples, is the most beautiful region in the Mediterranean. Having been there, it's difficult to disagree.

At first view, it looks like Amalfi's coastal cliffs and mountains are too steep to walk, but you will be happily surprised to discover that there is a wonderful network of footpaths linking the radiant landscape where one mountain after another plunges into the aquamarine sea; where towns full of lemon and olive groves are linked to terraced hillsides of vineyards and vegetable gardens; where green forests, deep gorges, and limestone cliffs link the picturesque villages of Positano, Ravello, and Amalfi. These ancient and intricate pathways ascend to mountaintop monasteries and Roman villas, and often consist of well-constructed steps or mule paths that were once the only route of communication between villages. From this vertical landscape the paths descend to romantic harbors and lovely beaches. John Steinbeck once described Positano as "a dream place" and D.H. Lawrence and Gore Vidal raved about Ravello. We're sure you will too!

We'll discover the dreamy island of Capri, where extraordinary rock formations rise from the sea; Sorrento, the mythological and bewitching home of the Sirens; and visit the old Roman city of Ercolano (ancient Herculaneum), famous as one of the few cities, besides Pompeii, whose ruins from its destruction in AD 79 from Vesuvius can be viewed. Our hikes take us off the beaten path to discover the hidden side of the Amalfi coast, and we'll marvel at the golden light, dark blue water and what the Romans called "The Happy Land."

In addition to feasting our eyes on spectacular coastal scenery and staying in wonderfully panoramic accommodations, we literally feast on the bounty of the region's incredible variety of flavors. Lemons from the Sorrentine Peninsula have inspired the liqueur limoncello, sipped ice cold after dinner. Fresh Italian cuisine from seafood and cheeses to pasta dishes unique to the Amalfi region in Italy, are among other tastes to be savored in this exploration of a mythical coastline—a blend of flavors from the sea and the fertile countryside. **Join us in May on the Amalfi Coast in Italy hiking idyllic and enchanting paths!**

PLEASE NOTE: This trip is for women who are *active, in shape, and LOVE to hike!* We expect all participants to be in *excellent hiking condition*, and that you have read the description of the Activity Level that you need to be in to take part in this adventure.

Main Attractions

- Hike Italy's classic Amalfi Coastline, said by many to be the most beautiful region in the Mediterranean.
- Explore Herculaneum, the remains of a Roman city that was destroyed in a sea of volcanic mud when Vesuvius blew up in 70 AD.
- Take a boat trip to the magical island of Capri, explore its Roman villas, and the gardens of Villa Michele.
- Sip the famous limoncello, and eat an entire lunch based entirely on lemons!
- Hike such gorgeous trails with names like Sentiero degli Dei (Path of the Gods) and the Scala Fenicia (800 stone steps of Greek and Roman origin).
- Visit Ravello, one of the most panoramic towns in Italy, and its famous gardens, Villa Cimbrone and Villa Rufolo.

What's Included:

- 8 days/7 nights, with lodging in twin-bedded, double-occupancy rooms with private baths in fine hotels and family run inns.
- Transportation and all transfers in Italy, beginning from, and ending at, the Naples Airport.
- Fully guided hikes each day with Gillian Arthur, our Italian-based guide.
- All luggage transfers.
- Meals specified in the daily itinerary including 7 breakfasts, 2 lunches, and 5 dinners.
- A special wine tasting, scenic boat ride to Capri, and guided visit to Ercolano.
- All gratuities for meals covered in the itinerary.

What's Not Included:

- Round-trip airfare to Naples Airport, Italy.
- Meals not specified in the itinerary.
- All drinks, including alcoholic beverages, wine, and beer.
- A recommended tip to your main guide is \$100 per person, assistant guide is \$50 per person.

Our Professional Guide

Born in England, Gillian lived much of her life in Australia and for the past twenty five years has lived in Italy with her daughter and husband. She has been designing and leading trips in Europe for AdventureWomen for almost 20 years. Gillian's knowledge, her enthusiasm for the great outdoors, and her passion for good food and wine always creates a truly memorable experience on the AdventureWomen trips that she guides. She has recently been awarded the Diploma of Wine from WSET (London). Her expertise in wine on this trip will be truly appreciated! When not researching and guiding tours, Gillian divides her time between Friuli, Italy and Scotland.

Passports and Money

Citizens of the U.S. must possess a valid passport to travel to Italy. There is no visa required. If you do not have a passport, APPLY NOW! You should always carry two extra photos, just in case of emergency (i.e., if your passport is stolen).

*Credit cards are widely accepted in France and ATM machines are accessible in many towns (see the next paragraph!). You should bring a few hundred dollars in cash, which you can exchange into Euros, for your spending money and tips. Tips are also accepted in U.S. Dollars.

***Important information about credit cards! Please note:** You should bring **at least one smart card, usually referred to as a chip card, or chip-and-PIN credit card** for travel to Europe and to other overseas destinations. These new cards are more secure and you are more protected from credit card fraud.

These so-called smart cards have embedded microchips in them. You will see the silver or gold microchip on the front of your card. They also have the traditional magnetic stripe, so can be used the same as your regular credit/debit card. You'll either sign for purchases, or enter a 4 digit PIN into a terminal. (Confirm with your bank that your PIN, or 4 digit number, will be the number that you use the FIRST time that a PIN is required for use with your new card. So just make sure you remember it for all future transactions!)

It is best to have your chip card as a VISA or MasterCard, since American Express is often not accepted in many places. In Europe and in parts of Asia, they simply don't acknowledge magnetic-strip cards anymore unless they are chip-and-PIN enabled. In addition, in any automated transactions such as train stations and gas stations, ONLY chip-and-PIN cards are accepted.

Chip-and-PIN cards have become standard in many European countries because of their superior fraud-prevention abilities. Now countries in Asia, North America and South America, and Canada are doing the same.

Health Requirements and Physical Condition Required

This AdventureWomen trip is rated as **Moderate with 1 day High Energy** and requires that you be in very good physical condition, and be able to hike 5 - 8 miles a day. Some of the landscape is quite mountainous. We have tried to have options for hikes (or parts thereof) that are less strenuous. Many of the hikes are on footpaths through the woods or on old stone staircases, while others are on well surfaced roads. The most you will carry is a small day pack with your rain gear, camera, water, etc. Paths are through rolling terrain and can be rough and uneven, so good hiking boots are recommended, as well as a walking stick if you prefer to hike with one. A typical day consists of 3 to 5 hours of leisurely hiking, with stops that include plenty of time for lunch, and exploring villages, cultural, and historical sites.

You MUST have your own health insurance, and not have any physical problems or conditions that would be adversely affected by participating in any of the planned trip activities and the rigors of international travel.

How To Register

First, call (800-804-8686) or email (trips@adventurewomen.com) the AdventureWomen office to determine space availability. As a courtesy, we will hold your space for 5 days while you are completing the registration process, and making personal and travel arrangements.

Next, complete and sign the Trip Registration and International Passenger Information forms on our Web site by clicking “Sign Up for this Trip” on the trip page. We can also fax or email them to you. Include, with your forms, the required deposit that can be made by credit card (Visa, MasterCard, or Discover), personal check, money order, or cashier’s check. You can also give us your credit card number over the phone. Once we receive **your deposit and BOTH forms**, we will mail you a trip confirmation/information packet verifying your registration.

Traveling to Italy: Arrival and Departure

It is important you work with **Ciretta Green at Travel Café (800-247-3538)** in Bozeman, MT to coordinate your flights with our group pick-up and drop-off times at the Naples International Airport (also known as Capodichino Airport). **You must be at Naples airport by 12:30 pm on May 15, 2016**, for the group pick up and bus transfer to your first night's hotel near Massa Lubrense. If you are unable to arrive by that time, you'll need to come in a day early and stay overnight near the airport so that you can meet the group on May 15 at 12:30 pm for the bus transfer our first night's hotel.

Gillian will wait until 1:30 pm before the van departs. If your flight is late, you will have to arrange to get to our first night's hotel on your own. You will need to get a bus from the airport to Sorrento. It leaves every hour and takes one hour and 15 minutes from the airport to Sorrento. Then take a taxi to the hotel at Marina del Cantone, which will cost about 20 Euros.

On **May 22, you will be transferred back to the airport by 10 am**. You can schedule your departure for any time after 12 noon.

Making Travel Arrangements to Italy

We suggest you book your air reservations with our travel consultant soon after registering for this trip!

On this AdventureWomen **Hiking the Amalfi Coast** adventure we ask that once you work directly with our travel consultant at **Travel Café, Montana's Travel Agency**, to make your travel arrangements. After booking your trip, please call Ciretta Green to discuss your air schedule based on the arrival and departure times we have set for the group pick-up and departure.

1-800-247-3538 OR FAX 1-406-586-1959
email: ciretta@travelcafeonline.com
CANADIAN RESIDENTS, please call 406-587-1188

When calling, please identify yourself as an AdventureWomen traveler. If you leave a message on Ciretta's voice mail, she will return your call promptly. She will be happy to discuss your travel

plans and help you decide when to purchase your ticket for the best rate. If you purchase your ticket through her, she can also help you with hotels, should you want to come early, stay longer, or share a hotel room with another participant. If you do not purchase your air ticket through Travel Café, you are responsible for making your own arrangement for hotels, rental cars, trip extensions, transfers, etc.

NOTE: The recent trend in travel is for travelers to finalize their plans much closer to departure time than was customary in the past. While we try to be as flexible as possible booking last minute registrants, we must often relinquish hotel space and air reservations up to 6 – 12 weeks prior to departure!

Please keep this in mind when making your travel plans.

Liability Form and Final Payment

Part of what AdventureWomen, Inc. hopes to foster is the taking of more self-responsibility for our own lives, health, and safety. Please read the LIABILITY FORM carefully, return it with the remainder of your balance due by **FEBRUARY 15, 2016**.

Cancellations and Refunds

Notification of cancellations must be received in writing. Full payment is due 90 days prior to departure date, and 50% of the registration deposit is non-refundable.

For cancellations received 60-89 days prior to the trip departure date: 50% of the total trip cost is non-refundable. For cancellations received 1-59 days prior to the trip departure date: 100% of the total trip cost is non-refundable.

You are highly encouraged to purchase trip cancellation insurance to cover emergency situations. A brochure will be sent to you in your registration packet.

Switching Trips

Before your final balance due date, you may change your deposit to another trip within the same calendar year by paying a \$75 fee to switch. You may not switch your deposit to a trip in another calendar year.

No Smoking Policy

Beginning in 1995, our trips became smoke free. Please note that there will be no smoking by any participants on AdventureWomen vacations.

Trip Itinerary

DAY 1

Saturday, May 14, 2016

Depart from the United States to Naples, Italy

Meals enroute

DAY 2

Sunday, May 15

Morning Arrival in Naples, Italy

This morning you arrive at the Naples airport and meet for the group pick up and transfer by minibus to ancient Herculaneum (today's Ercolano). This Roman city was buried under stones and ash when nearby Vesuvio blew up in 79 AD. With time the mud hardened and the city is preserved, almost as if it has been fossilized. It was forgotten until the 1700s, when it was found by engineers digging a well. Excavations started in the 1700s under the Bourbon government, but serious archaeological work had to wait until Mussolini's rule. Most of the site is unexcavated and still covered by the modern-day town of Ercolano. We'll explore this perfect time capsule with the help of a local guide.

In the late afternoon we transfer to the Marina del Cantone on the Sorrento peninsula, our base for the next two nights. There is the option to take a short panoramic walk to the small bay of Recommone on arrival.

We celebrate our first dinner together at our hotel, on a terrace overlooking the sea.

(1 hour hike)

Dinner

Our hotel for the next two nights is **La Certosa**

La Certosa
Marina del Cantone, 23,
80061 Massa Lubrense NA, Italy
Tel: +39 081 808 1209
www.hotelcertosa.com

The beautiful, small Hotel La Certosa is located in an ancient monastery dating from the 15th century. Recently renovated, the original structure of the monastery was maintained. It is characterized by two large arches on the facade and original windows on the upper floor. The hotel is located close to the sea and the beach in Marina del Cantone, and many of the rooms have terraces with sea views.

DAY 3

Monday, May 16

Introduction to Spectacular Views!

After a wonderful Italian breakfast, we begin our day with a short transfer to the small village of Termini, only a few miles from the famous Amalfi coast.

The Amalfi Coast stretches along some of Europe's most beautiful coastline for 31 miles along a promontory from Sorrento to Salerno. The road hugs the zigzagging bends and curves of the cliffy coast, overlooking intensely blue waters and passing picture-postcard villages that cling to the cliff walls like matchbox houses.

Before beginning our walk, we visit a limoncello shop, where you can wander in for a taste of this most Italian drink. Maybe you will buy a bottle to sip on your terrace before dinner?! To make real limoncello, which is done in the winter, the lemons used in the process must be locally produced and untreated by chemicals.

Our hike starts with a gentle walk to Punta Campanella, a promontory with a fine watchtower that was built in the 14th century to protect the coastline against pirate invasions from the east. The summit of Monta San Costanzo offers outstanding views of the entire region, the Bay of Naples laid out on one side and Capri rising starkly from a glistening blue sea straight ahead, with panoramic views of the Bay of Jeranto.

We enjoy lunch al fresco gazing out at the legendary island of Capri. (Another option is to walk back down to Termini for lunch in a local café). In the afternoon we return directly to the hotel on foot.

(4 to 5 hour hike)

Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner

Overnight **La Certosa**

DAY 4

Tuesday, May 17

Capri, the Magical Island

Following breakfast we board a boat for a wonderful ride to the magical island of Capri. Ahead lie the striking “teeth” of Capri, the Faraglioni cliffs and rock formations of its shores.

Many claim that Capri is the most beautiful island in the Mediterranean. It has more than 800 species of plants and is truly a Garden of Eden, plus a bird watchers paradise. It is also home to a rare blue lizard.

Our morning walk takes us on a gradual ascent through Capri’s pedestrian streets to the Emperor Tiberius’ Villa Jovis (Jupiter’s Villa) on the island’s easternmost peak. Villa Jovis is the most important of the 12 Roman villas on the island, and Tiberius (successor to Caesar Augustus) governed the Roman Empire from here during the last ten years of his life. First constructed in the Augustan period (27 AD) and modified in the Tiberian Age, the villa was occupied until the second century AD. Architectural exploration in the 1930s revealed a series of structures built over several levels on the hilltop. Views from it stretch out over the entire Gulf of Naples.

Our hike continues to the Faraglioni, three enormous sheer-sided limestone pinnacles, shooting straight out of the sea, then past the Grotta Matromania, where the Romans came to worship the goddess Cybele.

For the energetic, there is the afternoon option of walking up the Scala Fenicia, 800 stone steps of Greek and Roman origin—the original link between Capri and Anacapri—where we have time to visit the villa and gardens of Villa Michele, an estate built in the 1880s on the site of a Roman villa.

In the afternoon we take the boat to Positano, Italy’s most vertical town. Once a fishing village, today it is a chic seaside resort and truly sublime, with tiered arcades of rose and honey-colored

houses that hover precariously over an iridescent sea. Cascades of bougainvillea, lemon trees, striped awnings and trellised roof terraces lead down to a small beach.

The square pastel-colored villas of Positano are famous and it has long been a hideaway for artists and writers, including notables such as John Steinbeck, Gore Vidal, Rudolph Nureyev, and Margot Fonteyn. It's endless steps presumably made dancers feel less guilty about abandoning their training routines!

(3 hour hike)

Breakfast and Dinner

Our hotel for the next two nights is **Hotel Margherita**.

Hotel Margherita
Via Umberto I, 70 - 84010 Praiano, Salerno
Tel. 0039 089.874628
Fax Tel: 0039 089.874227
www.hotelmargherita.info

Rated as #2 of 20 hotels in Praiano, the Hotel Margherita is a charming and magical 3-star hotel on the Amalfi Coast, with a magnificent view that spans all the way from Capri to Positano and Amalfi. It is located just up the coast from Positano (and much less crowded), a picturesque white villa set in lush Mediterranean vegetation. The hotel has a terrace with a pool, and the restaurant is on a terrace overlooking the verdent hills and crystal clear blue waters of the sea below.

DAY 5

Wednesday, May 18

Path of the Gods—The Most Beautiful Walk of the Week

Aptly named Sentiero degli Dei, or Path of the Gods, our walk today is considered the most beautiful walk of the week. We travel by minibus into the mountains and begin in the small village of Agerola, following a trail that contours the mountains and feels to be suspended above the sea. The path winds below the ridge of the south-facing mountains with spectacular views of the sea and dramatic coastline, passing through groves of Italian cypress and fields of wildflowers, past ancient stone huts and terraced vineyards ingeniously clinging to the hillsides.

We pass magnificent grottos and walk through the tiny villages of Montepertuso and Nocella, the last being accessible only on foot until very recently when a road was built. We have lunch along the trail, and in the afternoon descend to Positano by a series of panoramic stone stairways. (It is also possible, for those who wish, to descend to Positano by bus). Again reaching Positano, we see why the town's setting of brightly painted houses covered in bougainvillea gives it that picture-postcard image!

Tonight you are free for dinner to choose from one of Praiano's local restaurants.

(4-5 hour hike)

Breakfast

Overnight **Hotel Margherita**

DAY 6

Thursday, May 19

Panoramic Hike from Praiano to Furore, and Transfer to Ravello

This morning we hike to the small village of Furore, far from the madding crowds. Our trail is the Path of 'I Pippistrelli Impazziti' (the Crazy Bats), which takes us upwards along a botanical trail, past caves and cliffs where peregrine falcons nest. Through woodlands and past abandoned mills, the path leads to a spot called Punta Tavola (Table Point), above Conca dei Marini. From this path we can rejoin the upper Furore road, which takes us into Furore.

This little village of Furore isn't typical, because it has no central piazza and no tight clusters of houses. Often travelers and hikers pass right by the village, admiring the view, but totally overlooking Furore because they didn't see it. This earned Furore the name of "the village that doesn't exist." So the mayor decided it was time to put his tiny commune on the map, and give Furore an identity, and it became "il Paese Dipinto" - the "painted village." Every September, artists from around the world are invited to a festival called Muri d'Autore to add to the murals now decorating the local buildings. These are colorful affairs with Bacchus featured heavily, cheerful nudes clutching generous bunches of grapes, and sea scapes inspired by the beautiful setting. Even the railings and lamp posts are decorated in bizarre and bright colors: lilac, pink, blue, green. So a walk around Furore easily becomes a visit to an open air art museum, with many and different fresco paintings, telling stories of the local culture and surrounding nature. Few drivers and hikers can now fail to notice that they are passing through or by, a destination with a character all of its own!

Another interesting tidbit which makes Furore even more legendary is that Anna Magnani and Roberto Rossellini lived there during the filming of *L'Amore*.

In the afternoon we depart for Ravello, one of the most panoramic towns in Italy, perched on a mountain balcony above Amalfi. Ravello was once the second city of the Amalfitan Republic. Now it is a village of barely 2000 people, but it has a medieval history dating back to Roman times and a treasure house of Medieval art. Exquisitely located at the top-of-the-world on the Amalfi Coast, Ravello has spectacular views over the Bay of Naples. The French author Andre Gide described it as being "closer to the sky than the seashore."

Once in Ravello you will have free time to explore its famous gardens: Villa Cimbrone, a romantic wilderness with breathtaking views, laid out by an Englishman in 1819; and Villa Rufolo, a semi-tropical paradise with an 11th-century villa. This garden so delighted the German composer Wagner that he made it the setting for the magic garden in his opera "Parsifal." The town also has a magnificent cathedral, San Pantaleone, a mixture of Arabic and Byzantine styles with fine 12th c. bronze doors.

Included today is also a visit to a local vineyard for a winetasting!

(3 hour hike)

Breakfast and Dinner

For the next three nights we stay at the delightful **Hotel Parsifal in Ravello**.

Hotel Parsifal
Viale Gioacchino D Anna 5, 84010 Ravello SA

+39 089 857144
www.hotelparsifal.it

Hotel Parsifal was once an ancient convent built in 1288 by the Hermits of St. Augustine, and converted into a hotel in 1948. Run by the Mansi family, this small, magical hotel still retains a certain monastic simplicity along with its 13th c. cloister, in keeping with the former convent. Named after the famous opera that Wagner was inspired to write here, the hotel has spectacular views across the Amalfi Coast, from its delightful terrace and garden full of flowers. Cozy and comfortable bedrooms overlook the sea, the garden, the cloisters of the convent, or the valley. The elegant restaurant serves classical and Mediterranean cuisine with a little touch of creativity.

DAY 7

Friday, May 20

From Amalfi (What It's All Named For) to Ravello

This morning we walk from Ravello down to Amalfi, a town of tall white houses facing the sea. Amalfi was a former supreme naval power in the Middle Ages, and one of the four great maritime representatives along with Pisa, Genoa, and Venice. The end of its glory days came when nature joined the enemy forces and most of the old city slid into the sea. In spite of these mishaps, it remains an elegant town, a picturesque place of cobbled streets and medieval houses, and the hub of the coast that bears its name.

Amalfi was famous for paper production, making use of the abundant water in this valley. (There may be an opportunity to visit one of the oldest paper mills still in operation). We wander through Amalfi to the beginning of the Valle dei Mulini (the Valley of the Mills). A rushing brook tumbling down from the mountain tops once supplied the energy to the numerous paper mills. On an easy trail, we walk past the ruins of the mills, past derelict mills, sylvan glades and more tumbling streams, emerging at the small village of Minuta.

We continue our walk from Amalfi back up to Ravello, stopping along the way for a marvelous lunch based entirely on lemons!

This evening you are free to choose dinner in one of Ravello's many fine and numerous restaurants.

(5-hour hike)

Breakfast and Lunch

Overnight **Hotel Parsifal**

DAY 8

Saturday, May 21

Hike the Valle delle Ferriere

Today's well-marked path, Valle delle Ferriere, takes us into the rugged hinterlands of the Lattari Mountains. Although never far from civilization, it feels like we have traveled into a very different and surreal world of high pastures, remote woodlands, and magnificent mountains.

We begin our walk in Scala, picking up the typical red and white marked trail. Along the way we pass through Bosco Grande, with its magnificent views of the valley below, and the charming small village of Pogerola, before descending to Amalfi below.

This has been a wonderful hiking trip on the Amalfi Coast, the most spectacular stretch of the Mediterranean, with its “head in the clouds and its feet in the sea... .” We now know why the Amalfi scenery has given inspiration over the ages to countless writers, musicians, dancers, and artists—and why it is inspiring to all who love to walk.

Tonight we celebrate our last evening together, and our hiking accomplishments, with a farewell dinner at one of Ravello's finest restaurants.

(5-hour hike)

Breakfast and Dinner

Overnight **Hotel Parsifal**

DAY 9

Sunday, May 12

Transfer Back to Naples Airport for Departure

Transfer to Naples and depart for the U.S.A.

Breakfast

What to Bring

May weather in this Mediterranean climate generally has daytime average temperatures in the comfortable 70s, with nighttime temperatures in the 50s. As in all outdoor activities, you must be well prepared for weather changes.

Ideally, you should bring one suitcase or duffel bag, and your daypack should act as your carry on bag. Your carry on bag should contain one change of clothing, your camera equipment, all medications and your important travel documents. **PACK LIGHTLY!**

- Medium-weight hiking boots: It is best not to wear shoes, even if they are walking shoes, because ANKLE support is absolutely essential in mountain terrain. Please do not buy heavy leather boots as there are numerous medium-weight quality hiking boots on the market that will better serve your purpose. Asolo, Garmont, Merrell, Vasque - to name a few - are widely available and designed especially for women. Since they are waterproof, Gore-tex boots, although a bit more expensive, are our first choice. Other boots should be waterproofed with one of the excellent waterproofing products available such as Nikwax. **MAKE SURE** your boots fit properly and are well broken-in. Wear them around town to thoroughly break them in. Please do not come on this trip with a pair of boots you have never worn before!
- Rain gear: You should be well prepared for whatever conditions occur. Therefore, it is very important to bring a good water PROOF (not just water REPELLENT) rain suit (jacket and pants). A rain parka or poncho will not keep your legs and feet dry, and it is important that your entire body is covered in a downpour. Many outdoor stores carry inexpensive rain suits, but beware of cheap VINYL gear that may tear easily at the seams. Your rain parka can also act as a lightweight wind jacket.
- Socks – it is best to wear 2 pair of socks inside your hiking boots, such as a pair of wool socks, and a thin pair of liner socks underneath the wool socks. We like Thorlo hiking socks and polypropylene liner socks which wick moisture and reduce blistering. Bring plenty of socks!
- Comfortable shoes for the evening in hotels.
- Medium-weight jacket, fleece jacket, or sweater for cool evenings.

- Pants (loose and comfortable for walking) and two pairs of walking shorts (if you like to wear shorts). Zip off pants are often the most versatile.
- Shirts (long- and short-sleeved) and a few T-shirts.
- Underwear, sleepwear.
- Sun hat and sunglasses with securing strap.
- A spare pair of glasses (if you wear glasses).
- Swimsuit.
- Day pack that is water resistant for carrying rain gear, camera, water bottle, etc., on day trips (you can use this for your carry-on bag). If not waterproof, bring a garbage bag to line the inside of the pack.
- Money belt, waist pouch, or a way to carry your money, passport, and airline tickets. You can leave these valuables at the hotels while day hiking.
- One-quart water bottle. We recommend the 24 oz. Nalgene Everyday OTG Tritan Bottle. Made of Eastman Tritan™ copolyester, the bottle is completely BPA-free. Tritan™ copolyester provides excellent impact resistance and is suitable for both warm and cold beverages.
- Regarding Foot Care: To prevent blisters, many hikers use moleskin. However, we recommend bringing a small roll of ordinary duct tape as an alternative. Applied before the hike, it reduces friction much better than moleskin. If you develop a blister, Spenco “2nd Skin” is a very comforting necessity. Your foot care kit should also include: cloth Band-Aids (not plastic), individually wrapped alcohol pads, a small tube of Neosporin or other antibiotic cream, and foot powder.
- Bandanas. Bring 2 or 3 (100% cotton) for instant sweat bands and other uses too numerous to mention, some of which you have never even dreamed! Besides, it’s a tradition at AdventureWomen!
- Swiss Army knife or equivalent (for picnics, opening wine bottles, cutting cheese, etc.). Be sure to pack this in your checked luggage.
- Sunscreen, lip balm with sunscreen.
- Small flashlight with spare batteries and bulb to use if you need to get up at night and don’t want to wake your roommate by turning on the lights.
- Earplugs. We recommend Mack's Pillow Soft White Moldable Silicone Snore Proof Earplugs, which you can buy at most drug stores, or at www.earplugstore.com. Good to 22 decibels!
- Small travel alarm clock.
- Toiletries, prescription medications, and a washcloth (sometimes not provided in Europe).
- Pre-moistened towelettes or baby wipes.
- Hand sanitizer (alcohol based).
- Ziploc bags in various sizes for dirty boots and dirty clothes, etc.
- A collapsible walking stick (to fit into your suitcase) if you prefer to hike with one.
- Book, notebook, pen, lightweight binoculars (optional).
- Electricity: Italy's electric current is 220 volts, 2 prong European outlets, so if you are traveling with electrical appliances you will need an international converter. Cameras only need the 2 prong European adaptor.

Camera Equipment

For many women, photography will be a VERY LARGE part of this trip. The opportunities are endless, and the scenery spectacular! We suggest that you bring many more memory cards and batteries than you think you could ever use!

- Digital camera, memory cards, battery chargers. You will be able to charge all of your batteries in hotels.

- Any camera gear you carry during the trip should be in a backpack or in a bag that will leave your hands free. It is also recommended that a tight sealing camera bag be used to protect your camera equipment from moisture, dust, sand and dirt. Large Ziploc bags are especially handy.

Personal First-Aid Kit (bring in small amounts in small containers)

- Foot powder for moisture absorption; cloth, not plastic Band-aids; about 10 individually wrapped alcohol pads; and a small tube of Neosporin or other antibiotic cream.
- Aspirin/ibuprofen, etc.
- Cold-symptom relief tablets, antihistamine, cough drops.
- Tweezers.
- Ace bandage.
- Systemic antibiotic (prescription)/optional (but not a bad idea to always take this on international trips.)
- Prescription medicines in their original bottles.
- Acidophilus enzyme (available in capsules in health-food stores). This often helps your digestive system get in shape for "new" flora.
- Immodium, Lomotil, or similar anti-diarrhea medicine.
- Pepto-Bismol tablets and/or liquid (in leak-proof bottle).
- Laxative tablets.
- Visine or similar eye drops.

Last Minute Reminders

- Make photocopies of your airline tickets and the first two pages of your passport, and put them in different locations (suitcase, carry-on bag, etc.).
- Bring 2-3 extra passport size photos to use in emergencies.
- Your valuables should be insured for the duration of the trip, but better yet, leave them at home.
- Remove extra credit cards, driver's license, and personal items from wallet or purse.
- Make sure passport and airline tickets are valid and in the correct name.
- Check with airline to reconfirm reservations and departure time.

Some Extra Items to Add to your "What to Pack" List

We are always updating and adding items for all international trips. With over 32 years of experience flying around the world, we think these items help make your long airline flights much more comfortable and even more bearable:

- Neck pillow - Inflatable neck pillow for blissful support and deep sleep. For packing, it folds into itself. Self-sealing valve means nothing to close. Soft microfleece cover removes for washing.
- Sleep mask /Comfort eye shade - Ultra lightweight and comfortable, the Comfort Eye Shade screens out light and distractions for a cozier flight. Ultra-soft micro fleece for comfort. Adjustable elastic strap for a perfect fit. Made of Molded Polyester Micro Fleece.
- Travel compression socks - Reduce ankle and leg swelling and reduce the risk of deep vein thrombosis. These doctor-designed socks stimulate circulation through gradual compression that stops swelling and guards against (DVT). Made of coolmax®-lycra®-nylon. The TravelSox® cushion Walk Socks have extra-padded soles and are made of moisture wicking SoftPrim®.

- Noise canceling headphones - Block out unwanted sounds of children crying and airplane engine drone, and/or enjoy great audio sound. Reduce distortion and increase perceived loudness so you can enjoy sound at a lower volume. Get the around the ear design, which is very comfortable.

About Adventure Travel Today - Please Read Carefully!

At AdventureWomen, we would like to ensure that all participants understand that our excursions are *adventure travel vacations*, and not "tours." We define "adventure travel" as travel in which one *actively participates*, as opposed to a "tour," in which one is more or less a passive observer. AdventureWomen designs and organizes vacations all over the world for women who want to experience an *active, out of the ordinary vacation, and meet new friends*. Most of all, we want our trips to be fun!

In this spirit, the successful adventure traveler should be a *good-natured realist* and have a *sense of humor!* *Adventure vacations, by nature, require that participants be self-sufficient, flexible, and able to accept situations as they exist*, and not just as they would have preferred or expected them to exist. The constraints of scheduled group traveling also necessitate that each of us be understanding of and sensitive to others. *Being on time is important*, and contributes to the congeniality, success and well being of both individuals and the group!

Thank you for choosing to travel with AdventureWomen! *If you have any questions or concerns, please don't hesitate to call, write or email us.*

AdventureWomen, Inc.
300 Running Horse Trail
Bozeman, MT 59715
800-804-8686
406-587-3883 (outside the U.S.)
trips@adventurewomen.com