

# The Ancient Shore: Dispatches from Naples



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by Shirley Hazzard

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## A City of Contrasts

Naples is a city of contrasts, where the ancient and the modern coexist in a vibrant and fascinating way. From the ruins of Pompeii to the bustling streets of the Spanish Quarter, Naples has something to offer everyone.

The city's history is long and storied, dating back to the 7th century BC. Over the centuries, Naples has been ruled by a succession of different empires, including the Greeks, Romans, Byzantines, Normans, and Spanish. Each of these empires has left its mark on the city, creating a unique and eclectic mix of cultures.

Today, Naples is a thriving metropolis with a population of over one million people. The city is home to a number of important universities, museums, and art galleries. It is also a major center for commerce and industry.

## **Must-See Attractions**

No visit to Naples would be complete without seeing some of the city's most famous landmarks. These include:

- **Pompeii:** The ruins of this ancient Roman city are one of the most popular tourist destinations in Italy. Pompeii was destroyed by a volcanic eruption in 79 AD, and its ruins have been remarkably well-preserved.
- **The Spanish Quarter:** This historic neighborhood is home to narrow streets, charming shops, and lively bars. The Spanish Quarter is a great place to experience the authentic atmosphere of Naples.
- **The National Archaeological Museum:** This museum houses a vast collection of artifacts from Pompeii and other ancient sites in the region.
- **Castel Nuovo:** This 13th-century castle is one of the most iconic landmarks in Naples. The castle is home to a museum and offers stunning views of the city.
- **The Royal Palace of Naples:** This opulent palace was once the home of the kings of Naples. Today, it is a museum and a popular tourist destination.

## **Food and Drink**

Naples is known for its delicious food and drink. The city is home to a number of traditional dishes, such as pizza, pasta, and seafood. Naples is also home to a number of excellent restaurants and bars.

Here are a few of the must-try dishes in Naples:

- **Pizza:** Pizza is one of the most popular dishes in the world, and it originated in Naples. Neapolitan pizza is made with a thin, crispy crust and topped with fresh tomatoes, mozzarella cheese, and basil.
- **Pasta:** Pasta is another popular dish in Naples. There are many different types of pasta dishes available, including spaghetti, lasagna, and ravioli.
- **Seafood:** Naples is located on the coast, so it is no surprise that seafood is a popular dish in the city. Fresh fish and shellfish are used in a variety of dishes, such as grilled fish, fried calamari, and seafood pasta.

Naples is also home to a number of excellent wines. The region of Campania, where Naples is located, is known for its production of red wines, such as Aglianico and Taurasi.

## Shopping

Naples is a great place to shop for souvenirs, clothing, and other goods. The city is home to a number of markets and shopping streets.

Here are a few of the best places to shop in Naples:

- **Via Toledo:** This is one of the main shopping streets in Naples. It is lined with a variety of shops, including clothing stores, jewelry stores,

and souvenir shops.

- **The Spanish Quarter:** The Spanish Quarter is a great place to find unique and handmade souvenirs. The neighborhood is home to a number of artisans and craft shops.
- **The Capodimonte Market:** This market is one of the largest and most popular in Naples. It is a great place to find fresh produce, meats, cheeses, and other goods.

## Getting Around

Naples is a large city, but it is easy to get around. The city has a good public transportation system, including buses, subway, and trams. You can also hire a taxi or rent a car.

Here are a few tips for getting around Naples:

- **Use the public transportation system:** The public transportation system in Naples is efficient and affordable. You can purchase a ticket that allows you to use any of the city's public transportation services for 24 hours.
- **Hire a taxi:** Taxis are a convenient way to get around Naples. You can hail a taxi on the street or order one by phone.
- **Rent a car:** Renting a car is a good option if you want to explore the surrounding area. However, be aware that traffic in Naples can be heavy.

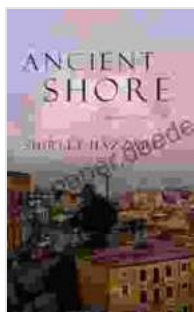
## Where to Stay

There are a wide variety of hotels and guesthouses available in Naples. You can find a hotel to suit any budget.

Here are a few of the most popular hotels in Naples:

- **Grand Hotel Vesuvio:** This five-star hotel is located on the waterfront and offers stunning views of the Gulf of Naples. The hotel has a variety of amenities, including a spa, a pool, and a fitness center.
- **Hotel Excelsior:** This four-star hotel is located in the heart of Naples. The hotel has a rooftop terrace with panoramic views of the city.
- **Hotel Palazzo Alabardieri:** This three-star hotel is located in a historic building in the Spanish Quarter. The hotel has a charming courtyard and a rooftop terrace.

Naples is a city with something to offer everyone. Whether you are interested in history, culture, food, or shopping, you will find it in Naples. The city is a vibrant and exciting place to visit, and it is sure to leave a lasting impression.



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