

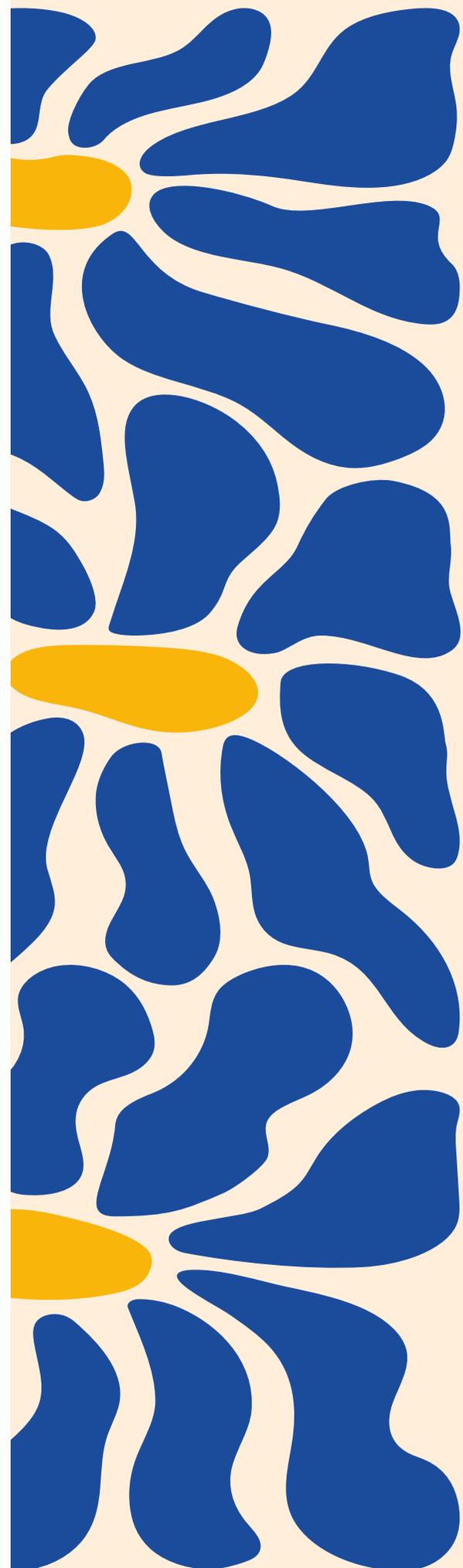
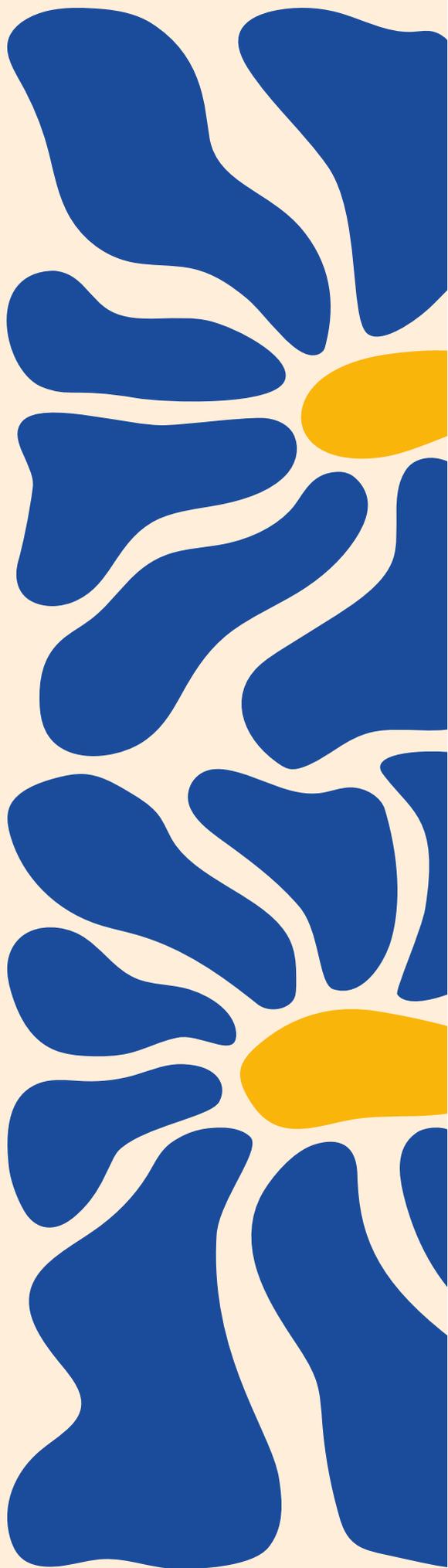
CHRISTINE COUNTESS PAHLEN
MAYK WENDT

A TASTE
OF THE

WINE
WORLD

COAST

CALLWEY





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FOREWORD

BY CHRISTINE COUNTESS VON DER PAHLEN

When I was a child, Italy ended at the Ligurian coast. Summer holidays meant beach, spaghetti, gelato every year—and the schmaltzy music of Rocco Granata, Peppino di Capri, and Rita Pavone. Later Naples joined the mix, the gateway to the islands of Capri, Ischia, and Stromboli. Now, finally, the time has come. I'm ready to start out on a week in a tomato-red Alfa Romeo Spider, cruising down the coast for 37 miles (60 kilometers) from Sorrento to Salerno. Top turned down, music turned up, soaking up the freedom to the rhythm of the winding road.

The little coastal towns are as many-faceted as the curving, twisting roads, clinging to the steep slopes of the Monti Lattari between the sky and the sea in all their variety. Everything—truly everything—crammed into this narrow strip of coastline looks like a snapshot of Mediterranean lifestyle: pastel-colored houses heaped up into pyramids, hosts of churches and monasteries, many now transformed into romantic luxury hotels.

In the foreground is Positano, haunt of bons vivants, flower children, and a perpetual groundswell of artists; Amalfi, vibrant with Mediterranean cheer; and Ravello, discreetly frequented by wealthy aristocrats and secret lovers. In their shadow are the smaller towns of Praiano, Scala or Atrani—lower-key, less eas-

ily accessible. They lack grand hotels or glitz, but instead offer simple bars and family-run trattorias with terraces overlooking the sea, serving traditional recipes based on whatever the gardens on the hills provide: zucchini and artichokes, tomatoes and eggplants, fragrant herbs—and, of course, the finest lemons in the world.

Sorrento is a true one of a kind. Often unfairly overlooked in favor of Positano and Amalfi, this little town on the peninsula's west coast begins to work its magic as soon as visitors draw near. The spirit of the legendary Grand Tour still lingers; as in the past, guests can stay in venerable grand hotels even in winter, spend public holidays in style, stroll through magnificent public parks, and take excursions to Pompeii, Herculaneum, and, of course, to the opera in Naples.

But the cherry on the top, then and now, is the charismatic chefs, hosts, and hoteliers who keep the flag of hospitality flying no matter how frenetic the tourist crowds, and light up the world around them with their special charm. Arrivals are always the same: a welcome with open arms, a small compliment that works its magic right away—and one cannot help but smile and admit: "It doesn't get more Italian than this."



CUISINE OF THE AMALFI COAST

Italian food is an affair of the heart, a feast for the eyes, and a treat for the soul. I count myself among the many passionate fans of *cucina casalinga*, down-to-earth home cooking that would unhesitatingly plump for spaghetti napoli as a last meal. The dish is an affectionate nod to the tomato, that round red prima donna that plays the starring role in Mediterranean cuisine. The further south, the stronger the sun, and the more delicious she becomes.

She is found everywhere along the Amalfi Coast: in countless pasta and pizza recipes, in the kitchens of simple trattorias and on the menus of ambitious fine-dining locales alike. Italian cuisine is all about *semplicità*, a straightforward, deeply rooted way of cooking that always follows the seasons. And it shows off its unique character here in particular, on this narrow strip between the Monti Lattari rocks and the sea, where cultivatable land is scarce. Tomatoes, eggplants, onions and zucchini crowd together in terraced gardens that have been farmed for centuries between

olive and lemon groves. And on the subject of lemons, the famous Amalfi lemon is another queen that, like the tomato, is an intrinsic part of the daily menu. Big, glowing yellow and rather thick-skinned, these lemons have a scent so sweet and fragrant that they are often eaten sugared as dessert.

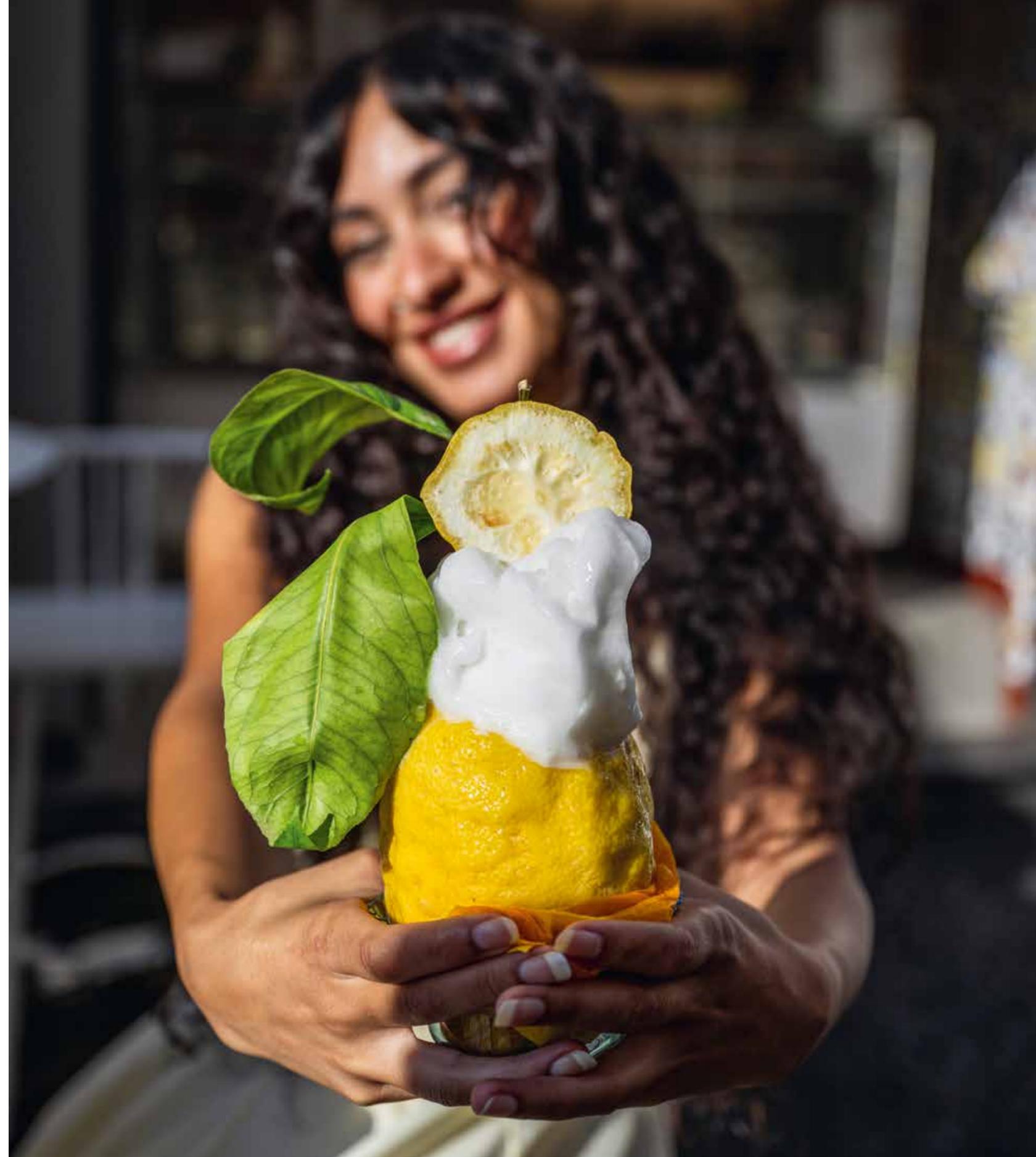
Ah, dessert! The passion for sweet things grows the further south we go. It starts in the morning with a jam or cream-filled cornetto to accompany a espresso or cappuccino, washed down with freshly squeezed orange juice. And it ends with a tempting list of desserts that could almost fill a whole chapter for the Amalfi coast alone. Naturally including classics such as tiramisù and profiteroles, but the excitement rises when the lemon takes center stage again.

Its name is *delizia al limone*, but it is far more than a simple lemon tart. This sweet sensation was created by Sorrento pastry chef Carmine Marzuillo in 1978, and comprises a sponge cake soaked in limoncello, topped with a delicate ball of lemon

mousse, crowned with a raspberry. Utterly irresistible!

Sorrento is also home to the recipe for *gnocchi alla sorrentina* au gratin with tomatoes, mozzarella, and basil. The same neighborhood is also the cradle of *spaghetti alla nerano*, where fried zucchini and savory provolone set the tone. And Cetara, the little fishing village further east towards Salerno, offers *spaghetti con la colatura di alici*, seasoned with that ancient Roman anchovy sauce that is now revered as the culinary gold of the coastal region.

Confirmation that the local cuisine's distinction far outstrips everyday standards was furnished yet again in 2025 when the Michelin Guide for Italy listed one three-star restaurant, one two-star spot, and 21 one-star addresses, three of which were in Sorrento alone. Pretty incontrovertible proof that unparalleled culinary excellence has evolved here among the lemon terraces, the sea views, and the centuries of tradition.





LA COSTA DIVA

It was Giuseppe, Napoleon Bonaparte's older brother, who decided during a trip through southern Italy in 1807 to build a road for the coast between Sorrento and Salerno, at the time only accessible by boat. Of course, what he envisaged was not cars or buses, but mules and horse-drawn carts to move people and goods around. Several decades would pass before the Strada Statale 163 finally opened in 1850. Today, the winding route is considered one of the most beautiful—and exciting—coastal roads in the world. And one of the busiest. Drivers' nerves are particularly frayed between April and the end of October. With the ink-blue Tyrrhenian Sea on the left and the steep Monti Lattari mountains on the right, they toil from one hairpin bend to the next, from one town sign to another. The scorching heat and smell of gasoline are great deterrents for anyone thinking about opening the convertible top, or even switching from a car to a Vespa. During the summer months, smart travelers follow the example of those artists and aristocrats of the pre-road past, and choose today's smoothly operating ferry links between Naples, Sorrento, Positano, and Amalfi, and from there onward to Capri and Ischia. Leave the car in the garage, and travel with hand luggage and comfortable shoes. Sandals-lovers are welcomed everywhere; the footwear is still made to measure, nailed together in no time at all, and decorated with coral, beads, or sparkling Swarovski stones. The perfect stylish accessories for enjoying déjà-vus on the sunset terraces of legendary locales that have stood the test of time.

SORRENTO





Visible from everywhere: the outline of mighty Vesuvius

PRELUDE TO THE AMALFITANA

Unlike the typical former fishing villages along the Amalfi Coast, Sorrento is a pretty little town with a Mediterranean atmosphere, perched on a mighty plateau of tufa. Travelers by ferry from Naples reach the town from Marina Grande via a narrow stepped lane, or, more comfortably, by elevator. The first glimpse of the parks and the 18th-century palazzi unavoidably conjures up thoughts of those golden days when the Grand Tours first became popular. In those days, the many churches and monasteries of Sorrento were as important for visitors' itineraries as the nearby ancient ruins of Pompeii and Herculaneum. And little has changed since then. Shopping-lovers will now find a surprisingly large selection here. Beyond the standard coastal fare, Sorrento offers elegant boutiques along Corso Italia, flanked by charming little stores in the narrow side streets.

Nerano, an easy-going fishing village on the western side of the peninsula, benefits from several beautiful bays nearby for swimming: Baia di Ieranto is perfect for all kinds of water sports, and there is the beach at Reconnone, and Baia di Marina del Cantone. The latter is famous for its many family-run hotels and restaurants, which bring the bay to life in the summer months. On mild winter days, it's fun to take the wheel and lean boldly into the curves without being surrounded by RVs or tour buses. This is also the perfect season for a hike across the peninsula's oak and chestnut forests, as far as Punta Campanella, or for mountain trekking along the old mule trails and footpaths. With panoramic views of the Tyrrhenian Sea and the clear, fresh mountain air of Monti Lattari, every hour up there is an experience.



The Strada Statale 163 winds its way across the Sorrento peninsula.

Leisure time in Sorrento's traffic-free old town



The tiny vintage Fiat is the perfect companion for those narrow streets.



L'ORANGERIE

CASUALLY ELEGANT POOLSIDE FLAIR

W

**L'ORANGERIE
AT THE GRAND HOTEL
EXCELSIOR VITTORIA
VIA CORREALE 8
80067 SORRENTO
orangerie.exvitt.it**

OPENING HOURS:
Open daily from 12:30–3:30 pm
and 7:30–11:00 pm

When the old town's narrow lanes are bursting at the seams in summer, the grand hotel—a pleasure palace built into the coastal cliffs 1,000 feet (300 meters) above the sea—feels like a true oasis of calm. L'Orangerie Poolside Bar & Restaurant, cloaked in Mediterranean greenery, is as popular with hotel guests as it is with local businesspeople.

No matter where you decide to treat yourself—breakfast in the elegant salon of the Vittoria Restaurant, a light lunch on the Terrazza Vittoria with a picture-postcard view over the Bay of Naples, or dinner at Michelin-starred Terrazza Bosquet—the hospitality reveals the old-school philosophy that has been sacred to the Fiorentino family since 1834.

Flawless service and top quality are also part of head chef Antonino Montefusco's principles. Born in Sorrento to parents who loved to cook up a storm for family and friends on special occasions, he went on to train with Heinz Beck at the three-star La Pergola in Rome and with two-star chef Philippe Chevrier at Domaine de Châteauevieux in Satigny. Since 2016, he has felt at home as head chef at Excelsior Vittoria. Gaining a Michelin star was a dream come true: "It feels rather like being an actor and winning an Oscar."

The majority of the ingredients for his regional cuisine with a modern twist are sourced straight from the hotel's own vegetable and herb gardens. Head sommelier Natale Sicignano keeps his treasures in a vault dating back to Roman times, while Gerardo Oliva's cocktail menu reads like a trip around the world. For sunset over Vesuvius, he recommends specialties such as Madame Bovary from France, Bollywood from India, and Flauto di Pan from Peru.

Guests are accommodated in 79 rooms and suites. The most sought-after is the Caruso Suite, where the great tenor spent a month in 1921. Hosts Guido Fiorentino and his charming wife Ornella keep his memory alive to this day with old photos, letters, caricatures, and the maestro's piano.

ANTONINO'S CHILDHOOD MEMORIES

On my days off, I go swimming with my family at Cala di Puolo and love returning to Ristorante Don Vito, where I used to eat with my parents on Sundays as a child. And when it comes to pizza, nothing beats Pizzeria Pellone in Naples for me—that's where it tastes the best.



Far left – The legendary grand hotel complex rests on a volcanic rock plateau.

Left – Ornella and Guido Fiorentino, hosts driven by passion for their metier

Below – Old World glamour in memory of the Grand Tour



SCIALATIELLI CON CREMA DI MELANZANE, POMODORINI E BASILICO

SCIALATIELLI WITH EGGPLANT CREAM, CONFIT TOMATOES, AND BASIL

SERVES 4
DIFFICULTY



SCIALATIELLI

3½ cups/14 oz (400 g) Italian flour, Tipo 00
(or all-purpose flour)
1 egg (medium)
Scant ½ cup/3.4 fl oz (100 ml) whole milk
Approx. ½ cup/1 oz (30 g) Pecorino,
finely grated
1 tbsp/½ fl oz (15 ml) extra virgin olive oil
¼ tsp/0.2 oz (5 g) salt

CONFIT CHERRY TOMATOES

7 oz (200 g) datterini tomatoes
(or cherry tomatoes)
1 tsp/0.14 oz (4 g) salt
1 pinch freshly ground black pepper
2 tsp/½ oz (10 g) brown sugar
½ tsp dried oregano
2 sprigs fresh thyme
1 garlic clove, unpeeled
2 tbsp/1 fl oz (30 ml) extra virgin olive oil

EGGPLANT CREAM

1.3 lb (600 g) eggplants
2 tbsp/1 fl oz (30 ml) extra virgin olive oil
1 clove of garlic
¼ tsp/0.2 oz (5 g) salt
1 pinch freshly ground black pepper
½ cup/½ oz (10 g) fresh basil leaves

SMOKED PROVOLA SAUCE

5½ oz (150 g) smoked provola cheese
(or smoked scamorza cheese)
Scant ½ cup/3½ oz (100 g) heavy cream
(min. 30% fat)
½ oz (15 g) butter
Pinch of salt
1 pinch freshly ground black pepper

FINISHING

½ cup/1 oz (30 g) Parmesan, finely grated
Salt for pasta water
Fresh basil leaves to garnish

1 SCIALATIELLI

Tip the flour onto your work surface and make a well in the middle. Add the egg, milk, pecorino, olive oil, and salt to the well, then knead from the center into a smooth, elastic dough. Add parsley or lemon zest if desired. Shape the dough into a neat ball, wrap in plastic wrap, and rest at room temperature for 30 minutes. Then roll the dough out to about ⅛ inch (3 mm) thick and cut into ¼-inch (5–6 mm) wide strips. Dust lightly with flour and set aside.

2 CONFIT TOMATOES

Preheat the oven to 230°F/110°C top and bottom heat. Halve the tomatoes and place them cut side up on a sheet pan lined with parchment paper. Season with salt, pepper, sugar, oregano, thyme, and the garlic clove, and drizzle with olive oil. Slowly bake for 90–120 minutes until the tomatoes are soft, slightly caramelized, and flavorful. Remove from the oven and keep warm.

3 EGGPLANT CREAM

Cut the eggplants into cubes about ¾ inch (2 cm) in size. Heat olive oil in a large pan, crush the garlic clove, and fry with the eggplant over medium heat until golden brown on all sides. Season with salt and pepper. Remove the garlic. Puree the eggplant and basil until smooth and creamy. Keep warm.

4 SMOKED PROVOLA SAUCE

Cut the provola into small cubes. Slowly heat the cream in a small pot, but do not boil. Stir in the provola and allow it to melt gently, stirring, to form a smooth sauce. If desired, stir in some butter. Season with salt and pepper and keep warm. For an extra silky texture, strain the sauce through a fine sieve.

5 FINISH

Bring plenty of water to a boil and salt well. Cook the scialatielli for 2–3 minutes until they float to the top, but are still al dente. Drain and add them straight to the pan with the eggplant cream. Gently mix together and bind with the parmesan until the pasta is creamy.

6 TO SERVE

Spoon the warm provola sauce onto the plates. Arrange the scialatielli on top, top with the confit tomatoes, and garnish with fresh basil leaves.



RISOTTO AL LIMONE CON GAMBERI ROSSI

LEMON RISOTTO WITH RED PRAWNS

SERVES 4
DIFFICULTY



RISOTTO

1 oz (30 g) shallot
2 tbsp/1 fl oz (30 ml) extra virgin olive oil
1½ cups/11¼ oz (320 g) Carnaroli rice
(alternatively: Arborio or Vialone Nano)
4 cups/34 fl oz (1 l) light vegetable broth, hot
3 tbsp/1½ oz (40 g) cold butter
½ cup/1 oz (30 g) Parmigiano Reggiano,
finely grated
Zest and juice of 1 organic lemon
(e.g. from Sorrento)
Pinch of salt
Pinch of white pepper

PRAWN TARTARE

12 red prawns, very fresh, cleaned
(deveined)
2 tsp/½ fl oz (10 ml) extra virgin olive oil
1 tsp lemon juice
Finely grated zest of 1 organic lemon
Pinch of salt
Pinch of white pepper

1 RISOTTO

Finely dice the shallot. Heat olive oil in a wide pot and gently sauté the shallot over low heat until translucent, but do not brown. Add the rice and toast for 1–2 minutes, stirring, until the grains become slightly translucent. Gradually add the hot vegetable broth, stirring regularly and only adding more when the previous broth is almost fully absorbed. After about 16–18 minutes, the rice should be al dente and creamy.

2 MANTECATURA

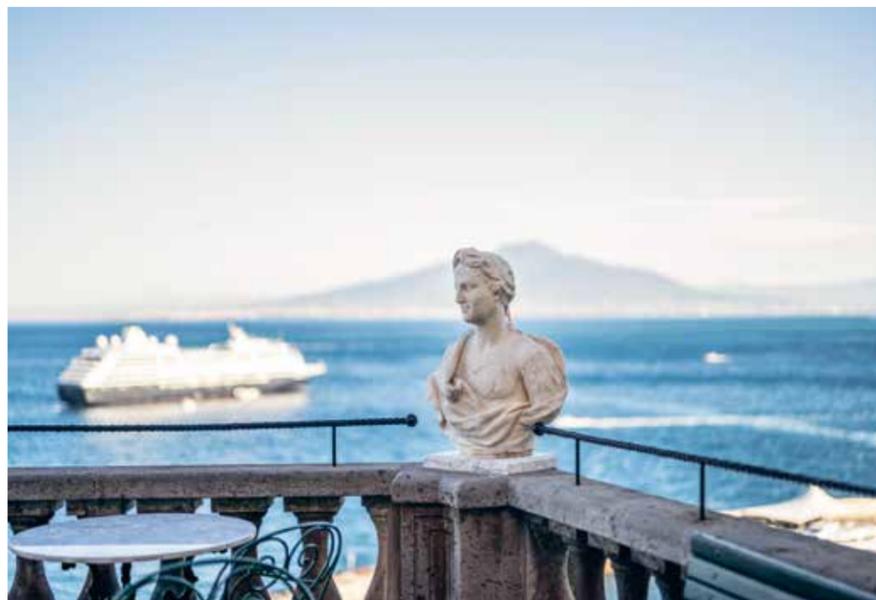
Take the pot off the heat. Stir in the butter in pieces, the Parmesan, the finely grated lemon zest, and a splash of lemon juice. Stir quickly and thoroughly until the risotto is silky and creamy. Season with salt and white pepper. The risotto should be soft and flowing, not firm.

3 PRAWN TARTARE

Finely chop the shrimp. Gently mix in a bowl with olive oil, lemon juice, a little lemon zest, salt, and white pepper. Chill and use just before serving.

4 TO SERVE

Spoon the risotto loosely onto pre-warmed plates and spread out slightly. Place the prawn tartare in the center, and finish with a touch of lemon zest and a few drops of olive oil. Serve immediately.



RISTORANTE O'PARRUCCHIANO LA FAVORITA

DINING IN THE SHADE OF LEMON TREES

RISTORANTE O'PARRUCCHIANO FAVORITA
CORSO ITALIA 71
80067 SORRENTO
parrucchiano.com

OPENING HOURS:
Open daily from 12:00–3:30 pm
and 7:00–10:30 pm

FRANCESCO'S SPOT IN THE GREEN

For a quiet break, I love to retreat to the garden at Hotel Antiche Mura. Under shady poolside trees, I meet up with friends, sip an Aperol spritz, or enjoy a gelato, a mere stone's throw from all the hustle and bustle.

It all started back in 1868. Antonino Ercolano actually intended to become a priest. After studying for some time at the local seminary, he was suddenly inspired to open a tiny trattoria in a lemon grove bordering Corso Italia, determined from then on to care more for the bellies of his “flock” than their souls. Although he named his restaurant La Favorita, his friends—who quickly became regulars—gave it the name that has stuck to this day: O’Parrucchiano, “the priest’s place.”

Since pious Antonino had no children of his own, he handed the restaurant over to his nephew Giuseppe Manniello in the 1940s. Giuseppe turned the little trattoria into a restaurant famed far beyond the borders of Sorrento. Artists, filmmakers, football stars, and globetrotters came and went—as the old black-and-white photos covering the walls can testify.

His successor, son Enzo, is now already assisted by his own two sons, Mario and Giuseppe—the fourth generation! Aside from the fact that chef Francesco De

Simone—a true legend in Sorrento cuisine—serves the region’s specialties at their very best, it is the stunning, rampantly flourishing setting that is a real feast for the eyes. From the front of the restaurant, with planters, statues, and amphoras creating the feel of a Mediterranean greenhouse, the restaurant extends further back into a huge lemon grove full of colorful flowerbeds and rare exotic plants.

Of course, there’s also a big vegetable garden crammed with tomatoes, eggplants, zucchini, lemons, oranges, and countless herbs. Guests invited for a stroll will find little benches everywhere to rest and relax. Under an old olive tree, a slightly worn wicker chair marks the favorite spot of Padrone Enzo, who likes to take a well-earned break there now and then.



Left – A veritable institution on the traffic-free Corso Italia

Below – King of the barbecue: Giuseppe Lo Destro





**AN INDULGENT JOURNEY
ALONG ONE OF THE WORLD'S
MOST BEAUTIFUL COASTLINES**

From the dramatic cliffs of Capri to the sun-drenched lemon terraces of Amalfi, this Callwey book is an invitation to immerse yourself in the spirit of the Mediterranean. It portrays authentic eateries, vibrant markets, and the people who are passionate about cooking, eating, and living here.

Accompanied by inspiring photography, the book offers glimpses into lively kitchens, colourful gardens, and fragrant lemon groves. Each chapter celebrates the magic of *dolce far niente* and, through exclusive recipes, stories, and travel tips, brings the sunshine, lightness, and flavors of the Amalfi Coast straight into your home.

UNIQUE

**Authentic portraits, insider tips,
and culinary highlights from
Sorrento to Cetara**

**Exclusive recipes and stories
celebrating classics such
as limoncello, spaghetti alle
vongole, and sfogliatella**

**Mediterranean joie de vivre—
for browsing, dreaming, and
cooking at home**

CALLWEY