

# Foreign exchange:

## *Amalfi Coast*

Perfectly poised on the Mediterranean Sea, Italy's Amalfi Coast offers shopping, restaurants and lazy days on the beach.

BY JACKIE SHAW

### Ravello

While Ravello is much smaller than its neighbours, this relaxed town is the perfect base to discover the Amalfi Coast.

### Browse the shops

**Gruppo Petit Prince, Via San Francesco 9, Ravello, +39 (089) 858 033**, stocks an interesting array of printed artworks and stationery, which makes for perfect gifts. Ravello is packed with amazing ceramics stores that stock everything from mirrors and plates to serving bowls - all with traditional Italian designs. If your suitcase is already full, most stores will organise for pieces to be sent to you back home. Head to **Cermu, Via Roma 58, +39 (089) 858 181**, for beautiful mosaics and outdoor furniture, or stop by **Ceramiche d'Arte, Via Della Repubblica 41, Ravello, +39 (089) 858 576, [ceramichearte.com](http://ceramichearte.com)**, which has a little bit of everything, including kitchen accessories, vases and tiles - plus you can buy online, should you opt out in the store and regret it later.

### Where to stay

The four-star family-run luxury hotel **Villa Maria, Via Santa Chiara 2, Ravello, +39 (089) 857 255**, sits only five minutes up the hill from the main square and provides spacious rooms, friendly and accommodating staff, and access to a pool in the neighbouring hotel. With views to die for from room balconies and the in-house restaurant, you could quite happily spend your entire afternoon lounging around the gardens of Villa Maria after a long morning shopping.

WHAT WE BOUGHT:  
Lerbario Toscano  
Olive Oil Vegetable  
Soap, \$12.95, (02)  
9319 4599.



WHAT WE BOUGHT:  
Lerbario Toscano  
Ambient  
Perfumers in  
Grape and  
Bilberry, \$29.95,  
(02) 9319 4599.

WHAT WE BOUGHT:  
Lerbario  
Toscano Olive  
Oil Body Milk,  
\$24.95, (02)  
9319 4599.



## Positano

Perhaps the most famous town on the coastline, Positano does not disappoint. Much bigger than Ravello, this bustling tourist town is truly breathtaking.



**MATCH IT BUY:**  
Shoes, \$1200 (36-41), Missoni from Miss Chic Boutique, (02) 9969 7986.



## Browse the shops

Want some authentic gladiator sandals? Hop off the boat at Positano and head straight to **La Botteguccia da Giovanni, Via Trara Genoino 13, Positano, +39 (089) 811 824**. You can't miss it, and if you do, there are stalls dotted all over town. Here, clever artisans will custom make any style in the colour you like, or you can take your pick of the ready-made sandals on offer - all in the softest leather you can imagine. At around \$100 for a pair, it's best to stock up while you can. Also worth a visit is **Missoni, Via Cristoforo Colombo 95, Positano, +39 (089) 875 666**, for the most divine selection of everyone's favourite Italian homewares and fashion. If you're still in the mood to splurge - on more Italian labels, of course - get yourself to **D'Anna, Via Marina 17, Positano, +39 (089) 811 490**. This store has all the big guns including Prada, Miu Miu, Balenciaga and Dolce & Gabbana. For truly unique designer buys (and perhaps the most charismatic shop owner on the coast), head to **Antonio Della Mura, Via Del Saracino 36, Positano, +39 (089) 875 020**. Set just back from the beach, this store shows artistic Italian design at its best. And as you wander the winding streets of Positano towards the sea, take a moment to browse the local handicrafts stalls. You'll find a startling array of jewellery made from rich turquoise and corals - great gifts for friends back home - and also be sure to pick yourself up a painted landscape of this amazing town before you head home, dreaming of Positano.

*While in Positano, make sure you sample some of the local cuisine. Italian staples like pizza and pasta are always on the menu, and don't leave town without trying some fresh local seafood.*



**WHAT WE BOUGHT:**  
Dior Escale à Portofino, limited edition, from \$100 (75mL), (02) 9695 4800.

**WHAT WE BOUGHT:**  
Shoes, \$100 (made to order), La Botteguccia da Giovanni, Positano, +39 (089) 811 824.

**Tourist heaven:** Make time to stop for some gelato on the main strip and hit the beachfront corso for all your souvenirs. You'll find printed totes, straw hats, and caftans, which may be a little too bling for some - but when in Rome...



## Capri and Sorrento

Round day-trips by boat to Sorrento and Capri are a must. While Capri is the jet-set island of the coast, Sorrento has a more quaint, laidback feel. Both have all the usual souvenirs but keep your eyes peeled for the smaller boutiques that offer some surprising finds.



**MATCH-IT BUY:**  
Missoni Acqua  
Limited Edition  
EDP, from  
\$160 (100mL),  
1800 061 326.

**web buy**

**MATCH-IT BUY:**  
Glasshouse candle  
in Amalfi Coast,  
\$34.95, from  
Paradise Emporium,  
(02) 9247 8773,  
paradisemporium.  
com.au.

## A Roman holiday

After the long haul flight from Australia to Italy, why not stay a night or two in Rome to break up the trip? **Domus Borgognona, Via Borgognona 12, Level 4, Rome, +39 (06) 6992 2361**, is a brand-new boutique hotel in the centre of the action – a perfectly placed little piece of luxury in an ancient city. With only five beautiful rooms and exceptional staff, it has a warm, homely feel that's like an exclusive guest house. And, it's located right near the Spanish Steps, which makes meeting up with your old friends Gucci, Pucci and Prada far too easy.

## Getting around

Attempting to negotiate narrow winding roads on the Amalfi Coast requires guts and patience, but if you're not game, **GLS Italy car service, +39 (089) 813 028**, can help you out. Picking you up from whatever town you decide to visit and returning you to your hotel, this professional car service makes transport a breeze – and prevents road rage!

**WHAT WE BOUGHT:**  
Bangle, \$290,  
Yves Saint  
Laurent, +39  
(066) 797 750.



The SHOP team flew to Rome, Italy courtesy of **Thai Airways International, 1300 651 960, thairways.com.au**, which has direct flights to Rome weekly. Visiting the Amalfi Coast? **Infinity Amalfi Coast Travel, infinity-amalficoast.com** will organise your accommodation, sight-seeing and even a personal shopper!

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