

Port of Call

By Diana Lambdin Meyer
Photos by Bruce N. Meyer

CAPRI, ITALY

In the Footsteps of Caesar

The year I turned 20—don't even ask how long ago that was—I was an impressionable young woman, a child really, spending the summer traveling across Europe on my own. I knew that the two days I had set aside for Naples were not enough, but I wanted to see Pompeii and eat pizza where it all began. Then someone told me about Capri, a little island on the south side of the Gulf of Naples.

Capri, they told me, is like living in a perfume bottle. The scents of millions of blooming flowers, combined with the richness of the lemon trees and fresh baked breads flavored by local herbs were carried along on a crisp ocean breeze.

Those who told me about Capri pronounced it CAH-pri, with the emphasis on the first syllable. Only unsophisticated tourists will pronounce it ca-PREE, emphasizing the second syllable, they said.

My short diversion left a lasting memory of a small island jewel that at the time I called the most beautiful place in the world.

So when I had a chance to return to Capri as a part of a recent Mediterranean cruise, I was delighted to see that the realities of life had not diminished the beauty that I experienced during that long-ago summer.

Of course, I am not the first traveler to become so enchanted by Capri. It has been a delightful escape from the world's conditions since the time of the Roman Republic.

Capri is both the island and the first village you encounter when arriving at the harbor. Here you must sample limoncello, the lemon liqueur made on Capri. Many gift shops and boutiques along Via Camerelle offer tastings and numerous gift items made from Capri lemon trees. Be certain of your cruise line's policy on bringing alcohol aboard before investing in much limoncello.

The other village on the island is Ana Capri. When I was there in my 20s, I vigorously climbed the 800 steps up

the hillside to explore Ana Capri, but this time we chose a bus ride, which allowed the opportunity to come in very close contact with other travelers and workers reaching the higher village. The chairlift to Mount Solaro will take you to the highest and most panoramic spot on the island, where the views of the Mediterranean are most spectacular. Lounge away the afternoon at the café and you, too, will have experienced the beauty that has been Capri since the days of Caesar. **GP**



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