

## VASES AND VOLCANOES: EXPLORING THE BAY OF NAPLES

WEDNESDAY 25 – MONDAY 30 OCTOBER 2017 (6 DAYS)

LECTURER: CHRISTOPHER SMITH

£2075

- Discover the world of Roman antiquity
- Relive the Grand Tour of the Bay of Naples
- Pompeii and Herculaneum explored in depth
- Range further afield when we visit the Greek city at Paestum
- Pozzuoli and Baia also included
- Enjoy the comforts of an excellent hotel on the famed Bay of Naples



Pompeii, The Amphitheatre, shortly after its excavation, from a 19<sup>th</sup> century engraving

### OVERVIEW

Sir William Hamilton was British envoy to the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies from 1764 to 1800. His period in office coincided with the ‘rediscovery’ of Pompeii, Herculaneum, Paestum and a host of other sites. It was in the mid eighteenth century that the famously lethargic Bourbon dynasty finally authorised systematic ‘archaeological’ exploration of the extraordinary places within its control. Hamilton, an intelligent, sophisticated and particularly acquisitive individual, was ideally placed to make the most of such unprecedented opportunities. Sir William moved suavely about with royal approval, excavating and collecting until he had amassed the finest non-royal collection of antiquities assembled at that time. Choice pieces illustrating his collection of vases and other treasures were eventually published in a series of luxury folios, the most famous of which are the four volumes edited by Baron d’Hancarville between 1767 and 1776, his *Antiquities Etrusques, Grecques et Romaines...*

*Nea polis*, or “new city”, was built in the fifth century BC as the original Greek settlements on this beautiful bay became overcrowded. Even after the Roman conquest of the city in 326 BC, Naples clung to its Greek heritage. It is fitting therefore that we begin with a visit to Paestum, the ancient Poseidonia, the site of three magnificent Doric temples (dated between 530 - 450 BC), where we can sense the atmosphere of *Magna Graecia*, the wealthiest part of the Greek world, before it was absorbed by the Romans.

Herculaneum is the site of the first famous excavations of the eighteenth century, sparking off an intense interest in the archaeology of the ancient world. The contrast between this opulent city and the more commercial and bustling Pompeii will be obvious. Our visits to both cities will allow us to explore the public and private sides of Roman city life in detail. Special amongst our visits will be the intimate Villa Oplontis, said to be the home of Nero’s second wife, Poppaea and the remarkable Flavian amphitheatre at Pozzuoli. We shall also visit the city’s archaeological museum, an unrivalled collection of antiquities giving us an insight into this opulent Roman world.

Our journey will trace those of the ‘Grand Tourists’ as we travel in the footsteps of the Hamiltons and their friends, shadowed by Vesuvius, as we seek to find that ‘attic grace’ so beloved by the eighteenth century.

We shall stay in Naples at the comfortable **5\* Grand Hotel Santa Lucia**, situated picturesquely on the shores of the Bay of Naples overlooking the Castel del Ovo, using sea-view rooms. Our lecturer, Christopher Smith, is Professor of Ancient History at the University of St Andrews and Director of the British School at Rome. He studied at Oxford University and has written extensively on the early history of the city of Rome, the Etruscans and Etruscology, and also on Roman historical writing. James Hill will be the tour manager.

## ITINERARY OUTLINE

**Day 1:** Wednesday 25 October – We fly from Gatwick with BA to Naples arriving late afternoon. We transfer by coach to our hotel, the **5\* Grand Hotel Santa Lucia**. All rooms will have a sea view. Later in the evening there will be a group dinner in a local restaurant – wine, water and coffee are included with all group lunches and dinners.

**Day 2:** Thursday 26 October – We travel south to spend the day visiting the remarkable Greek temples and Museum at **Paestum** on the Gulf of Salerno. This was a Greek colony taken over by the Romans and then abandoned with the fall of the Empire. The three temples are the finest surviving examples of the Greek Doric style on the Italian mainland. There is also an excellent Museum at the site, famed for its tomb frescoes and some splendid grave goods. There will be a group lunch at Paestum and on our return to Naples the evening will be free.

**Day 3:** Friday 27 October – **Pompeii** needs no introduction. It remains utterly impressive in its mute testimony to all aspects of Roman life, love and death. We spend a day slowly making our way round all the major surviving public monuments and a representative selection of the city's private houses and nearby villas, including the recently restored and re-opened **Villa of the Mysteries**. There will be a break for lunch (not included) and on our return to Naples there will be a group dinner later that evening at the small port in front of our hotel.

**Day 4:** Saturday 28 October – Today we spend a morning north-west of Naples visiting two small sites. First will be **Baia**, a particularly evocative place where the Romans relaxed in their luxurious holiday villas. The extraordinary Flavian amphitheatre at nearby **Pozzuoli** is the third largest in Italy with its hypogeum intact and accessible. After lunch in Pozzuoli (not included), we return to our hotel where the remainder of the day will be free. You may wish to explore the historic centre of **Naples** during this free time? Naples, (from the Greek *nea polis*, or new city) was originally a Greek colony, then became Romanised, followed by decline during the 'Dark Ages'. The city was subsequently revived in late Medieval times under the House of Aragon dynasty, later flourishing under the Habsburgs and their successors, the Bourbons. Advice will be given locally concerning what will be open. The evening will be free.

**Day 5:** Sunday 29 October – The buried city of **Herculaneum** is a remarkable site, an amazing reminder of the awesome power unleashed by Vesuvius when it exploded that fateful day, 24 August, AD 79. The British School at Rome has for many years maintained an ongoing conservation programme and we shall see the latest developments and revelations at the site. After some free time for lunch (not included) we visit the nearby Roman Villa at **Oplontis**, said to be that of Nero's wife, Poppaea, famed for its opulent frescos. Later in the evening we drive out to nearby **Posillipo** for our final dinner.

**Day 6:** Monday 30 October – On our final day we visit the **Naples Archaeological Museum**, which has an unrivalled collection of antiquities, including the most interesting finds from Herculaneum and Pompeii. There is also on display a second group of antiquities, 'The Farnese Marbles', originally excavated in Rome during the sixteenth century by Pope Paul III and members of his family. After a group lunch in central Naples our final visit will be to the **Basilica of San Lorenzo Maggiore** to admire the underground *macellum*, or Roman market, located beneath the basilica. We continue to the airport for our return flight to London Gatwick.

## PRACTICALITIES

**Price** £2075                      **Without Flights** £1935                      **Deposit** £300

**Single Supplement** £375 (Double for Sole Use)

**Hotel** 5 Nights with Breakfast at 5\* Grand Hotel Santa Lucia

**Tour Manager** James Hill

**Flights** British Airways

Outward: **BA2608** Depart London Gatwick (North Terminal) **1425** arrive Naples **1805**

Return: **BA2613** Depart Naples **1900** arrive London Gatwick (North Terminal) **2050**

**Price includes** 3 Dinners & 2 Lunches with water, wine & coffee, all local transfers, entry fees & gratuities, the services of Christopher Smith, our tour manager, James Hill & our local guide Pina D'Esposito

**Not included** Travel to/from Gatwick, 2 Dinners & 3 Lunches



**CICERONI TRAVEL**  
2 The Square, Aynho, Banbury, Oxfordshire, OX17 3BL  
Telephone +44 (0) 1869 811167      Fax +44 (0) 1869 811188  
Email [info@ciceroni.co.uk](mailto:info@ciceroni.co.uk)      Website [www.ciceroni.co.uk](http://www.ciceroni.co.uk)

