



AMERICAN
HORTICULTURAL
SOCIETY

Garden Wonders of Southern Italy

Naples, Sorrento, and the Amalfi Coast

with AHS Host Joan Barclay

May 21–29, 2025

*with an optional pre-tour extension to
Pompeii & Paestum | May 19–21, 2025*





Ninfa Gardens (Claudio Palma 56)

Dear Friends,

I am delighted to invite you to join the AHS on an enchanting journey through the captivating landscapes of Naples, Sorrento, Capri, and the Amalfi Coast in May 2025, after the springtime sun has brought seaside gardens to their colorful best and before the overwhelming summer crowds arrive.

This unique AHS itinerary offers one day after another of breathtaking scenery, splendid gardens, and exclusive access to private venues opened especially for our group. Meet homeowners in their distinctive garden spaces – some tidy, others a riot of exotic plants and flowers. Cruise the Bay of Naples by hydrofoil, by ferry, and by lovely private boats, accessing places that can be hard to get to on your own such as Ischia and Capri. Discover the outstanding yet under-visited cultural treasures of the city of Naples, among them grand historic monuments like the Reggia di Caserta, the Capodimonte Museum, and the National Archaeological Museum. Experience exquisite views of flower-filled Sorrento and the awe-inspiring Amalfi Coast, from the old port town of Amalfi to the sky-high gardens of Ravello.

Throughout the tour, enjoy stays in premium five-star accommodations and a great variety of superb culinary delights – from home-cooked lunches to Michelin-starred tasting menus – which promise to make your time in Italy especially delicious.

I am excited that joining us on this custom-designed program is AHS Host Joan Barclay, former Chief Operating and Financial Officer of the AHS. With an MBA from The Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania, Joan served as a key strategic advisor to the World Bank's expansive international network of agricultural research centers. Additionally, she led operational initiatives in support of the Pew Charitable Trusts' international ocean and land conservation efforts. A lifelong nature lover, Joan enjoys spending time gardening with her family.

For those who would like to spend additional time in Bella Italia, the trip offers a special, optional 2-night pre-tour extension for an exploration of the iconic archaeological sites around the Bay of Naples, including an in-depth look at Pompeii from both an archaeological and botanical standpoint, and a visit to the fascinating city of ancient Herculaneum.

We hope you will join us for this magnificent exploration of Southern Italy's garden paradises. Limited spaces are available for this special AHS journey, so we recommend making your reservation early. For your convenience, a reservation form is included in the brochure.

Warmest regards,

Suzanne Laporte
President & CEO

When you travel with the AHS, you make a difference.

Designed for garden enthusiasts who love to explore horticultural wonders around the world, AHS Travel Study offers exceptional programs that include many exclusive experiences and unique insights. Your participation in an AHS Travel Study program supports the AHS's nonprofit work to increase knowledge among gardeners, inspire passion for plants and the natural world, and encourage responsible stewardship of the earth.

AHS Host Joan Barclay



Joan served as the American Horticultural Society's Chief Operating and Financial Officer in 2022 and has since provided strategic support to the AHS's membership expansion. She lives in Great Falls, Virginia with her husband, Michael, and very active lab, Lincoln. A lifelong nature lover, Joan feels especially fortunate to enjoy quality time gardening with her adult son, who lives in nearby Arlington. She is currently working on local efforts to save the area's "Great Oaks."

Earlier in her career, Joan was a key strategic advisor to the World Bank's global network of agricultural research centers, a consortium tackling some of the world's greatest environmental challenges. She also led operations to support the Pew Charitable Trusts' international ocean and land reserve work. She has a BS and MBA from the Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania.

Joan previously spent time exploring Italy's picturesque Amalfi Coast while living in Brussels and looks forward to returning with AHS travelers.

Accommodations

Grand Hotel Parker's, Naples

Poised on a hill overlooking the Bay of Naples, Grand Hotel Parker's is the city's original luxury hotel. A beautiful gem restored to its late 19th century glory, elegant public rooms are adorned with original antiques, and bronze sculptures gleam under chandeliers. In the midst of all this palatial splendor, the effortless boutique style and flawless service create a welcoming ambience. Fine Italian marble bathrooms, floor-to ceiling windows and elegant furnishings continue the luxurious, heritage theme in the Grand Hotel Parker's bedrooms and suites. Wake up to the gentle sea breeze and captivating views over Vesuvius and Capri. Then, as the moon rises over the 'old city' of Parthenope, the rooftop terrace bar and lounge invite you to savor the finest panoramic views – a chilled Negroni or vintage Champagne in hand.

Grand Hotel La Cocumella, Sorrento

Originally built as a 16th-century Jesuit monastery, Grand Hotel La Cocumella sits right on the cliff edge in a quiet spot immersed in wonderfully manicured gardens full of flowers and overlooking the Bay of Naples. With views of Vesuvius, expect monastic architecture, fine dining, a lovely swimming pool and plenty of heavenly tranquility. Walnut furniture, old majolica, frescoed ceilings, gilded mirrors and antiques stamp the period finesse that blends with modern amenities in every guest room. Located in an upscale neighborhood yet within walking distance of the core of the resort town of Sorrento, La Cocumella is an oasis you will not soon forget!



Itinerary

WEDNESDAY, MAY 21

Arrival in Naples

Arrivals into Naples Capodichino Airport (NAP) will be greeted by private transfers to the classic five-star Grand Hotel Parker's, our home for the first four nights of our journey. Located in the toniest neighborhood of the city, Parker's is a great base for exploring Naples, and all guests will have upgraded sea view rooms. This afternoon, enjoy a first taste of Naples' amazing heritage with a cultural tour of Spaccanapoli featuring Caravaggio, virtuoso baroque sculpture, and grand architecture. Take an inside look at Naples' more aristocratic side when a local family invites us for an aperitivo in their lovely city garden. Back at the hotel, celebrate our arrival with a delicious welcome dinner featuring Neapolitan delights.

Grand Hotel Parker's, Naples (Dinner)

THURSDAY, MAY 22

The Island of Ischia

Head out on the water today, ferrying across the Bay of Naples to one of Southern Italy's great hidden treasures – the island of Ischia. Our focus will be on the splendid gardens of La Mortella – the magical creation of British garden designer Russell Page, with an incredible riot of lush plants, trees, and flowers and beautiful views over the bay. Lunch will be arranged outdoors at a lovely waterside restaurant. This afternoon, another stunning private garden will be opened specially for our group, with a chance to meet the gardener who keeps the property looking splendid. Ferry back to Naples and enjoy a fun, casual evening of real Neapolitan pizzas and antipasti.

Grand Hotel Parker's, Naples (Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner)

FRIDAY, MAY 23

Caserta & Private Gardens

This morning is dedicated to the family that ruled Naples for centuries, the Spanish Bourbons. Discover their spectacular Reggia di Caserta, built to be larger and more ornate than Versailles. Our special focus here will be the splendid and extensive gardens and park of the complex, with a chance to speak with a gardener. Not far away, a beautiful private townhome is opened to us by its architect owner, who has preserved gorgeous 18th-century interiors as well as a romantic courtyard garden. After drinks and snacks in the garden, enjoy a festive luncheon. In the afternoon, head to the nearby hillsides where another family has a beautiful historic orchard featuring wonderful, rare trees, and vivid spring color. Sample their produce before driving back to Naples for an evening at leisure.

Grand Hotel Parker's, Naples (Breakfast, Lunch)



Photos (from top):
Naples (Hervé Simon); Caserta Palace (C1superstar);
La Mortella Garden (2benny)

SATURDAY, MAY 24

Cultural Gems of Naples

Today, experience the historic treasures of Naples, perhaps one of the most underappreciated cultural capitals of Europe. Begin with a morning walk through the stately gardens of the Bourbon's Royal Palace in the old city. Then head to the city's famed National Archaeological Museum, filled with stunning art and personal items uncovered in Pompeii and Herculaneum. After lunch at a fine dining restaurant, discover Capodimonte on a stroll through its historic park and then a guided tour of the museum's outstanding Old Masters art collection, one of the best in Italy. Returning to the hotel later in the day, dinner and the evening are on your own.

Grand Hotel Parker's, Naples (Breakfast, Lunch)

SUNDAY, MAY 25

The Garden City of Sorrento

Board a high-speed hydrofoil for a float across the bay to the enchanting historic resort town of Sorrento, perhaps the "jewel in the crown" of the Bay of Naples. After a light lunch of fresh seasonal cuisine, we are guests in a beautiful private garden and home just outside the town. After checking into the five-star Grand Hotel La Cocumella – housed in a restored 17th-century religious complex – enjoy a private tour with the head gardener, walking through the 3 acres of picturesque gardens connecting the hotel to its unforgettable bayfront terrace. Enjoy a candlelit dinner in the hotel's elegant fine dining restaurant this evening.

Grand Hotel La Cocumella, Sorrento (Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner)

MONDAY, MAY 26

Private Cruising & Garden Delights in Capri

As if Sorrento weren't beautiful enough, today, delight in the breathtaking natural and man-made beauty of the island of Capri. Our morning begins with a cruise on privately chartered traditional *rozzì sorrentini* boats, with morning mimosas and snacks as we make our way across blue waters to Capri, exploring the island's magnificent cliffs and rock formations and taking in several spectacular villas from the water. When we land in Capri, some free time is allotted to soak in the beauty yourself, enjoy some shopping, and grab a nice lunch. In the afternoon, explore two magnificent gardens – the Giardini di Augusto and the Villa San Michele. Return to Sorrento by public hydrofoil, followed by an independent evening



Photos (from top):
Mary Magdalene Raised by Angels by Giovanni Lanfranco
(c. 1616) at Capodimonte Museum;
Sorrento Terrace (Jordan Cook); Capri (Nitish Patel)

and dinner on your own.

Grand Hotel La Cocumella, Sorrento (Breakfast)

TUESDAY, MAY 27

Ravello and the Amalfi Coast

Today, uncover gems both famous and hidden along the Amalfi Coast. This morning, travel on the famous coast road, stopping for views over Positano, before arriving in the ancient seaport village of Amalfi. Tour the majestic cathedral and enjoy some free time for shopping or exploring. Not far away, a generous local garden owner will open his exquisite private home for us, hosting us for a memorable luncheon in his delightful green oasis along the Amalfi Coast. This afternoon, explore Ravello, suspended 1,000 feet over the water with imperious views and two world-class gardens, the Villa Rufolo and the Villa Cimbrone, with its unparalleled Infinity Terrace. We'll take our time exploring these remarkable gardens. Back at our hotel, a magical dinner in the gardens of La Cocumella awaits.

Grand Hotel La Cocumella, Sorrento (Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner)

WEDNESDAY, MAY 28

The Road to Rome: Ninfa Gardens & A Gourmet Finale

Today, enjoy a scenic drive en route back to Rome, with two exceptional stops along the way. After a longer morning drive up the coast, discover the seaside resort town of Terracina, where even ancient Roman VIPs came for R&R. Here we are the special guests of Chef Simone Nardoni, repeatedly recognized as one of Italy's top young chefs, at his Michelin-starred "Essenza." A special tasting menu will be prepared for us, with great local wines to accompany a memorable final taste of Italy. This afternoon, enjoy exclusive access to the fairytale garden of Ninfa, a heady mix of lush plantings, Italian formality, actual medieval ruins and scenic follies. There is no place quite like it, and – opened exclusively for us – it makes for a very special final garden visit together. We arrive at the Hilton Rome Airport, conveniently attached to Rome Fiumicino Airport, in time for dinner on your own.

Grand Hotel La Cocumella, Sorrento (Breakfast, Lunch)

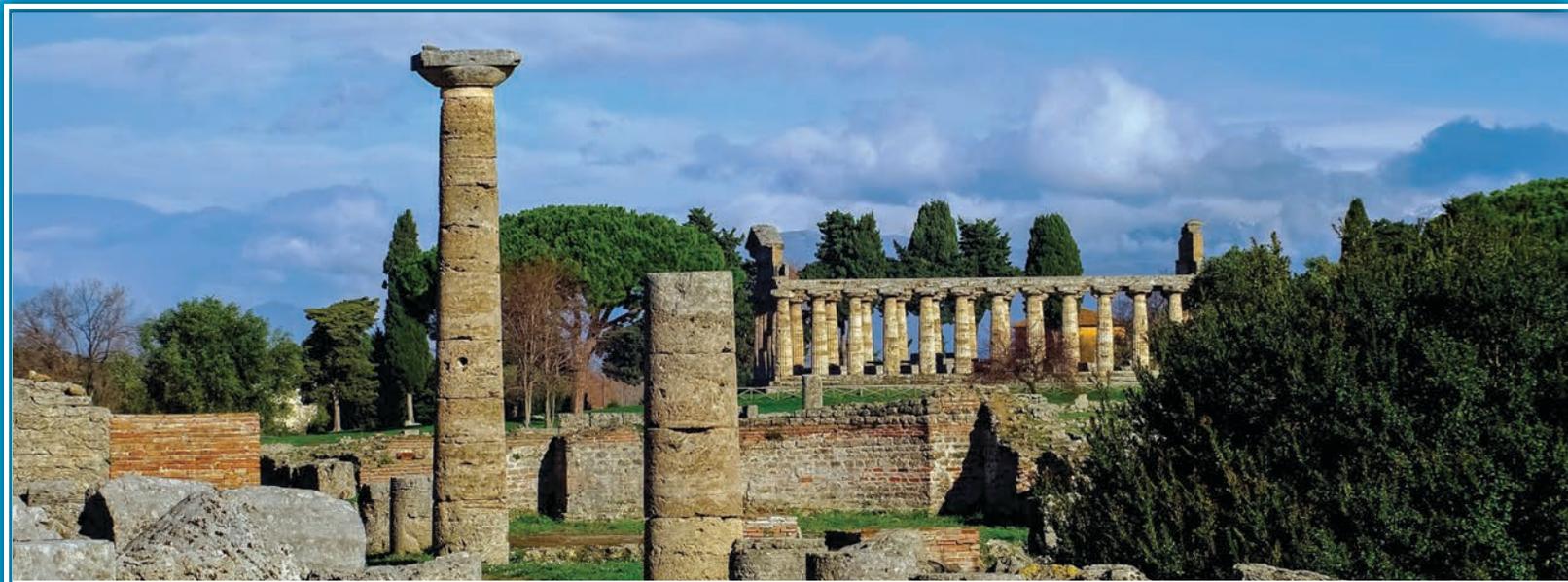
THURSDAY, MAY 29

Departures from Rome Airport

With the airport walkable from your hotel room, after breakfast, departures are independent. *Buon viaggio!*

(Breakfast)





Paestum (Valter Cirillo)

Optional Pre-Tour Extension

Pompeii & Paestum: Ancient Marvels and their Green Environs

May 19–21, 2025

In addition to our primary garden-focused program, the AHS is delighted to offer travelers intrigued by the remarkable ancient marvels of this region an exclusive opportunity to explore them under expert guidance. We've crafted a 2-night itinerary, featuring accommodations at a top four-star hotel with a great rooftop bar conveniently located near ancient Pompeii. This prelude seamlessly transitions into our main program beginning in Naples on May 20, 2025. During this pre-trip extension, participants can anticipate the following captivating highlights:

- An in-depth day exploring ancient Pompeii, also considering its archaeological park from a botanical standpoint.
- The “other” buried city of Herculaneum and its recently opened museum.
- A guided visit to the beautiful ancient Roman villa of Oplontis, off most tourist routes.
- An excursion to the remarkable ancient Greek temples at Paestum.
- A private tour, tasting, and farm lunch at an authentic family-run mozzarella dairy in the countryside near Paestum.

Herculaneum (Graham Hobster)





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Trip Information

AHS TRAVEL STUDY

This custom AHS Travel Study program has been created uniquely for AHS members and is offered in collaboration with International Seminar Design, Inc.

TOUR COST:

Main Tour Land Package.....	\$11,995
Main Tour Single Supplement	\$3,395
Extension Land Package.....	\$2,145
Extension Single Supplement.....	\$295

Land Package Prices are per person, based on double occupancy, with a minimum of 12 paying participants on the Main Tour and a minimum of 10 paying participants on the Extension.

AHS TRAVEL STUDY ACTIVITY LEVEL DESCRIPTION: AHS

Travel Study programs are designed to offer immersive experiences and often involve long days filled with exploration and extensive walking on uneven terrain. To participate in a program, it is recommended to be in good physical condition and prepared to walk for a minimum of two miles each day. Certain destinations in this program (Ischia, Capri, Amalfi Coast) have unavoidable and significant slopes to ascend and descend.

DEPOSIT & FINAL PAYMENT: A deposit of \$2,000 per registrant is required to reserve space on the tour, of which \$1,000 is nonrefundable for ISDI's registration and planning fee unless the tour is cancelled due to low enrollment. This deposit may be paid by check or by Visa, MasterCard, or American Express. Final balance will be invoiced and is due on February 7, 2025, and must be paid by check or wire/ACH transfer to International Seminar Design, Inc. Registrations are accepted after this date on a space-available basis.

FLIGHTS: Airfare is not included in the tour price. Participants are responsible for their own air arrangements. Please do not purchase airline tickets until the operation of the tour is confirmed by ISDI.

CANCELLATIONS & REFUNDS: Cancellation by participant must be made in writing to ISDI and is effective only upon acknowledged receipt by ISDI. There is a non-refundable registration and planning fee of \$1,000 per person regardless of cancellation date. Written cancellation received by ISDI on or before February 7, 2025: full refund minus the \$1,000 per person registration and planning fee. Written cancellation received by ISDI between February 8 and April 7, 2025: full refund minus \$6,000 per person cancellation fee for the Main Tour and \$1,000 per person cancellation fee for the Extension (includes the registration and planning fee). Written cancellation received by ISDI on or after April 8, 2025: no refund. Tour registration is non-transferable. In the case of cancellation, substitutions are not allowed. After the tour has commenced, no refunds will be issued for any reason including, but not limited to, unused portions of tour. If the tour is cancelled by ISDI or the American Horticultural Society due to low enrollment, active registrants will receive a full refund of all tour payments.

TERMS & CONDITIONS: Upon receipt of registration, ISDI will send registrant a Participant Tour Agreement detailing the full terms and conditions for this tour. This document must be signed and returned to ISDI before participant's registration is considered complete and any arrangements can be confirmed.

TRAVEL INSURANCE: Travel Insurance is not included in the tour cost, but participants are strongly encouraged to purchase a travel protection plan in conjunction with this tour, including coverage of trip cancellation, trip interruption, emergency evacuation/repatriation, medical expenses, lost or damaged baggage, and other expenses and/or losses incurred due to unexpected situations. Should a participant cancel at any time after registering for the tour, ISDI must strictly abide by the cancellation policy outlined herein. Travel insurance information will be provided upon receipt of your registration. One travel insurance provider to consider is USI Affinity Travel Insurance Services. For more information on the plan for AHS travelers, visit www.ahsgardening.org/travel. Information is also available at this link regarding optional flight and travel arrangement services.

TOUR PRICE INCLUSIONS:

Main Tour: 4 nights in sea view rooms at the Grand Hotel Parker's, Naples; 3 nights at the five-star Grand Hotel La Cocumella, Sorrento or similar, 1 night at the Hilton Rome Airport; breakfast daily at the hotel, 6 lunches, 4 dinners; personalized transfers from Naples Capodichino Airport (NAP) to the Grand Hotel Parker's on May 21, 2025; private cruise from Sorrento to Capri on traditional rozzi sorrentini boats.

Pre-Tour Extension: 2 nights in deluxe rooms at the HABITA79 MGallery Pompeii; breakfast daily at the hotel, 1 lunch, 2 dinners; 1 group transfer from Naples Capodichino Airport (NAP) on May 19, 2025.

Both Segments: water, wine, soft drinks, coffee, tea included with all meals; ground transportation by private motor coach, minibus, or sprinter vans; entrance fees to sites per itinerary; services of an ISDI Tour Manager; expert local guides; handling of 2 pieces of luggage per person at hotel; gratuities for guides, drivers, and restaurant staff at included group meals; bottled water on motor coach; service charges and taxes.

TOUR PRICE EXCLUSIONS: Airline tickets, airline taxes and surcharges, and baggage fees; airport portorage; airport transfers for those not arriving on May 21, 2025; meals other than those specified in the itinerary; gratuities for hotel housekeeping; personal items such as telephone calls, room service, valet service, à-la-carte orders, specialty wines and liquors, laundry charges, travel extensions, or tour deviations; travel insurance; any other items not specifically included in the itinerary.

FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT AHS TRAVEL STUDY PROGRAMS: Please contact travel@ahsgardening.org or 703-768-8801.

Information is also available at www.ahsgardening.org/travel.



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Registration Form

Name - Participant 1

Name - Participant 2

Address

City

State

Zip

Home Phone

Cell Phone

E-mail Address - Participant 1

E-mail Address - Participant 2

OPTIONAL PRE-TOUR EXTENSION:

Please sign me up for the optional pre-tour extension to Pompeii and Paestum, May 19–21, 2025

ROOMING OPTIONS: (please select)

- Double Occupancy; I will share a room with _____
 - We prefer separate beds
- Single Occupancy (\$3,395 single supplement for the Main Tour, and \$295 for the Pre-Tour Extension)
 - I would like a roommate but will pay the single supplement if one cannot be found

TOUR DOCUMENTS:

ISDI will send all documents pertaining to the tour by email to the email address listed above.

- If you wish to receive hardcopy versions of the tour documents by post as well, please check this circle. Paper documents will not be sent to your home address unless this circle is checked.

DEPOSIT (\$2,000 per person):

_____ # of persons _____ Amount Enclosed

Visa MasterCard American Express Check (make check payable to International Seminar Design, Inc.)

Card Number

Exp. (mm/yy)

Name as it appears on card

CVV Security Code

By registering and paying the deposit for this tour, registrant acknowledges that he/she has carefully read and understands all information contained in the tour brochure, recognizes and accepts any risks therein, and agrees to be bound by the terms and conditions outlined above.

COMPLETE AND RETURN THIS FORM TO:

International Seminar Design, Inc.
5614 Connecticut Ave NW, #295
Washington, DC 20015
or by email at info@isditravel.com

TO REGISTER BY PHONE, CALL:

International Seminar Design, Inc. at 202-244-1448 ext. 1

FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT AHS TRAVEL STUDY PROGRAMS:

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