

The Bay of Naples Visit

At the end of the last academic year, students in Years 10-13 were offered the amazing opportunity to visit the Bay of Naples in two separate trips with the Classics Department. Although we hardly imagined it beginning at 2am, cold and dark in front of the school gates, by the afternoon we were traipsing up and down Sorrento's Old Town – lemon granitas in hand.

Pompeii was an obvious highlight of the visit, with many of us having sentimental attachments to the city with its ancient inhabitants featured in the Cambridge Latin Course. Although we would not see many of its beautifully preserved frescoes and mosaics until we visited the Naples Archaeological Museum, the sheer size of the site was incredible. A guided tour from several selected students provided a great opportunity to expand our knowledge of Roman civic life while actually standing amongst its most striking monuments (the Stabian Baths, the Amphitheatre and the Forum), and free-roaming allowed us to venture into the more curious sites like the Villa of Mysteries and the Necropolis. While Pompeii was surely impressive for the expansiveness of its ruins, Herculaneum was special for its depth of preservation. Protected by a pyroclastic flow, the surviving features offered a more detailed view of ancient towns which was rather extraordinary.

We also had the chance to go up Mt. Vesuvius itself. While a little tiring in the Neapolitan heat, the climb was satisfying and the view even more so. For those who were prepared to undertake another long walk, a hike to Tiberius' palace on Capri immersed us even further after a leisurely morning of gardens and window-shopping.

Our time in Italy has undeniably become one of my most memorable experiences with Woodford – however, it was spending it with friends which made the trip truly unforgettable. After long days exploring Naples, enjoying the evening by strolling through Vico Equense and chatting on our balcony long into the night has made some of my most valued memories.

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