

The Islands of the Gulf of Naples

72



Ischia. Aragonese
Castle

All different, due to their diverse natural characteristics and attractions, the three islands are a must for any tourist in search of excitement: from the evocative Procida to the health spas of Ischia, to the mythical Capri, rich with Roman remains and immersed in exceptional natural beauty. Legendary places, rife with history, whose fascination only grows with time.

All three can be reached from Naples or from Pozzuoli. Procida and Ischia, known as the Phlegrean islands, are north of the Gulf, in front of Pozzuoli. Capri is in front of the Sorrentine Peninsula.

73



**Azienda di Cura Soggiorno
e Turismo Ischia e Procida**
via A. Sogliuzzo 72
Ischia
tel. 081 5074211
www.infoischiaprocida.it

**Azienda di Cura Soggiorno
e Turismo Capri**
piazzetta Cerio 11
tel. 081 8375308
www.capritourism.com

Capri
Certosa di San Giacomo
via Certosa di S. Giacomo
tel. 081 8376218
Museo I. Cerio
piazzetta Cerio 5
tel. 081 8376681
Villa Jovis
via Tiberio
tel. 081 8374549
Villa San Michele
viale Axel Munthe
Anacapri
tel. 081 8371401
Grotta Azzurra
Gruppo Motoscafisti
via Provinciale Marina Grande
ufficio tel. 081 8377714
pontile tel. 081 8375646

Ischia
Museo di Pitheculusae
corso Angelo Rizzoli
Lacco Ameno
tel. 081 900356
fax 081 900183
www.pitheculusae.it

famous travellers

The islands of our archipelago, down there,
on the Neapolitan sea, are all beautiful.

Elsa Morante, 1957

not to be missed

| | |
|----------------------|-----------------------------------|
| <i>Procida</i> | <i>Capri</i> |
| Terra Murata | Blue Grotto |
| Marina di Corricella | Piazza Umberto I ("la Piazzetta") |
| <i>Ischia</i> | Punta Tragara and the Faraglioni |
| Lacco Ameno | Villa San Michele (Anacapri) |
| Forio d'Ischia | |
| Sant'Angelo | |
| Ischia Ponte | |

procida in 1 day

| |
|-----------------------|
| Marina Grande |
| Terra Murata |
| Marina di Corricella |
| Marina di Chiaiolella |

ischia in 1 day

| |
|----------------|
| Port of Ischia |
| Lacco Ameno |
| Forio d'Ischia |
| Sant'Angelo |
| Ischia Ponte |

capri in 1 day

| |
|-----------------------------------|
| Blue Grotto |
| Piazza Umberto I ("la Piazzetta") |
| Certosa di San Giacomo |
| Via Krupp |
| Marina Piccola |
| Punta Tragara and the Faraglioni |
| Baths of Tiberius |

shopping

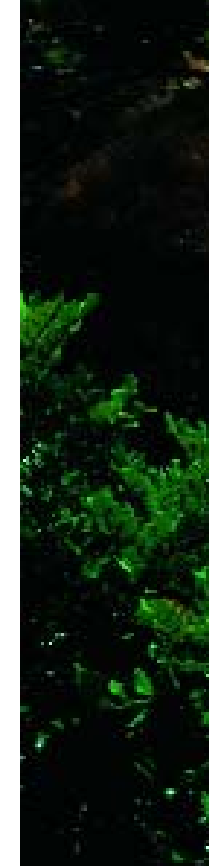
| |
|-------------------------|
| <i>Procida</i> |
| Limoncello |
| Lacework and embroidery |
| <i>Ischia</i> |
| Artistic ceramics |
| Natural cosmetics |
| Wine |

| |
|------------------|
| <i>Capri</i> |
| Capri Limoncello |
| Caprese fashion |
| Capri essences |
| Caprese sandals |
| Wine |

outings with children

| |
|----------------------------------|
| <i>Procida</i> |
| Marina di Chiaiolella |
| Terra Murata |
| <i>Ischia</i> |
| Aragonese Castle (Ischia Ponte) |
| Farmers Museum of Ischia (Panza) |

| |
|---------------------------|
| Sea Museum (Ischia Ponte) |
| Sant'Angelo |
| <i>Capri</i> |
| Baths of Tiberius |
| Monte Solaro chairlift |
| Blue Grotto |



Capri. Via Krupp

events

| |
|------------------------------------|
| Procida |
| april-may |
| _Procida Festival of Chamber Music |
| Procida |

Ischia

| |
|-----------------------|
| june |
| _Ischia Film Festival |
| Ischia |

june-september

| |
|------------------------|
| _Ischia Music Festival |
| Ischia |

september

| |
|---------------------------------|
| _Ischia Jazz Weekend |
| _Harmony Festival |
| Chamber Music |
| Forio d'Ischia |
| _September on the Church Square |
| Music Festival |
| Ischia |

september-october

| |
|-----------------------------|
| _Visconti Festival (Cinema) |
| Villa La Colombaia |
| Forio d'Ischia |

Capri

| |
|-------------------------|
| june-august |
| _Axel Munthe Foundation |
| Sunset Concerts |
| Munthe Anacapri |

august

| |
|----------------------------------|
| _International Folklore Festival |
| Anacapri |

december

| |
|----------------------|
| _Capri Film Festival |
| Capri |

december 31

| |
|------------------------------------|
| _Party and Fireworks on the square |
| Capri |

art and archaeology

| | |
|---|------------------------------|
| <i>Procida</i> | <i>Capri</i> |
| Terra Murata | Certosa di San Giacomo |
| | Villa Jovis |
| <i>Ischia</i> | Villa Malaparte |
| Aragonese Castle (Ischia Ponte) | Villa San Michele (Anacapri) |
| Archaeological Museum of Pitheculusae (Lacco Ameno) | Bagni di Tiberio |
| Santa Restituta excavations (Lacco Ameno) | Casa Rossa (Anacapri) |
| Madonna del Soccorso sanctuary (Forio) | Chiesa di Santo Stefano |
| | Museo Archeologico |
| | "I. Cerio" |

nature and parks

| |
|-----------------------------------|
| <i>Procida</i> |
| Natural Oasis of Vivara |
| <i>Ischia</i> |
| Mount Epomeo |
| La Mortella Garden (Forio) |
| <i>Capri</i> |
| Mount Solaro (Anacapri) |
| Mount Barbarossa Oasis (Anacapri) |
| Augusto Gardens |

for young people

| |
|-------------------------------|
| <i>Procida</i> |
| Marina di Chiaiolella |
| <i>Ischia</i> |
| 'Rive Droite' at Ischia Porto |
| Sant'Angelo |
| <i>Capri</i> |
| Anacapri |
| La 'Piazzetta' |
| Via Camerelle |

specialities

| |
|---------------------------|
| <i>Procida</i> |
| Lemons of Procida |
| <i>Ischia</i> |
| Ischia Rabbit |
| Doc Wines of Ischia |
| <i>Capri</i> |
| Caprese salad |
| Limoncello of Capri |
| Caprese Ravioli |
| Caprese cakes |
| Cicerchie soup (Anacapri) |
| Doc Capri wines |

spas and fitness

| |
|--|
| <i>Ischia</i> |
| Establishments and thermal parks, beauty centres of the major hotels |
| <i>Capri</i> |
| Beauty centres of the major hotels |

My island has small solitary roads closed in by ancient walls, on the other side of which orchards and vineyards that seem like Imperial gardens stretch. It has several beaches of delicate and clear sand, and other shores that are smaller, covered in pebbles and seashells, and hidden between high cliffs.

Elsa Morante, 1957

76

Procida, the smallest and least known of these islands, has kept unaltered its mediterranean identity. With strong seafaring ties, it is an ideal destination for those seeking an out-of-the-way holiday, far from the mass tourism routes. It is geologically tied to the Phlegrean Fields area that from the west of Naples goes to Cuma. The tuff ground and the jagged coast confirm its volcanic origins. Compared to Ischia and Capri, famous tourist destinations, Procida still today seems like an island "to discover", fascinating for its quiet streets, the vivid colours of the ancient buildings and the villages clinging to the rocks above the little ports. The rich vegetation that acts as backdrop for the mediterranean architecture, the pristine and splendid sea and the beautiful boulders of the coast, all make for unusual and exciting scenery.



Terra Murata

famous travellers

I was writing the story of *Graziella* on my knees, this sad and pleasant foreboding of love that I had found in the past in this same gulf, and I was writing it in front of the island of Procida, in sight of the ruins of the little house between the vines and the garden on the coast that her shadow seemed to point out to me like a finger.

Alphonse de Lamartine, 1844

The **Port of Sancio Cattolico**, also known as **Marina Grande**, is where the boats that arrive from Naples and Pozzuoli dock. The brightly coloured houses that face the sea are the first images that welcome the visitor. This fishing village is dominated by the Castle that sits on the top of a sheer cliff overlooking the sea, on the inside of the highest part of the island, **Terra Murata**, heart of the island. This unusual quarter-city, that encloses medieval houses with courtyards and gardens, churches, buildings and a castle, has remained more or less intact for three hundred years. Entering the city by its little alleys one is overcome by the magic of a rhythm of life from another era. From the belvedere the view is enchanting. The small port of Corricella is very characteristic, with its delightful architecture of intricate little houses one upon the other: intertwining alleys on to which doors and windows open make it seem like a natural stage setting. The favourite place for bathers is the **Marina di Chiaiolella**, a lovely semicircular inlet closed by the old Santa Margherita promontory. The waterfront is the preferred promenade of the island. Separated from the Chiaiolella by a narrow strip of sea is the **Procida lido**, a busy bathing establishment. A long bridge unites la Chiaiolella with the islet of **Vivara**, an oasis protected by the WWF. Permission from the City of Procida is required to visit it.



Procida.
Marina della Corricella



The first to celebrate Procida's charm was the french Alphonse de Lamartine in his novel

Graziella (1852). In more recent times, Elsa Morante set her novel *Arthur's Island* (1957) in Procida, with a procidean boy as protagonist. Many films have been made here, among which "The Postman" with Massimo Troisi, based on the poet Pablo Neruda's stay in Italy.

View of Vivara



77

Ischia could be seen as an immense vineyard; her fruits are exquisite and her figs were praised by Horace...

Audot, 1834

The largest island in the Gulf of Naples is a very popular destination and is visited in all seasons by travellers from all over the world, thanks also to its particularly mild climate. For its extraordinarily beautiful scenery the island has merited the name Green Island: the fertility of its terrain, which produces prized wines, also paints the island with beautiful flowers.

Apart from the attraction of the scenery and its **bathing facilities**, that which makes Ischia a must are its **thermal baths**, famous for the quality of its waters and the landscape that is the backdrop for spas and thermal parks. The thermal wealth of the island is immense: 29 basins, and hundreds of mineral springs and fumaroles.

The use of the thermal-mineral waters for therapeutic reasons is ages old, and has contributed to spreading of the island's fame the world over. It has attracted the attention of travellers fascinated with the idea of treating their ills naturally and amidst an enchanted and uncontaminated scenery. Next to the baths, in fact, the islands' biggest claim to fame is its **scenery**. Breathtaking landscapes of valleys and hills, cliffs and beaches, woods and mountains.

The main centre is **Ischia**, made up of the two hubs of the Port, bathing and thermal venues, and Ponte, characteristic village dominated by the Aragonese Castle, a combination of construction from differing times closed in by a fortified wall.

Enchanting are the towns of **Casamicciola Terme**, of the renown thermal springs, and **Lacco Armeno**, also famous for the curative nature of its spring waters.

Here, in the beautiful Villa Arbusto, the **Archaeological Museum of Pithecusae**, with many precious artifacts, has its home. Ischia was, in fact, the first Tyrrhenian settlement of the Greeks, founded in the 8th century BC, with the name Pithekoussa (island of the 'pithekou' or monkeys, or the 'pithoi', clay vases). Some of the most important relics of the museum date back to those times, like the famous **Coppa di Nestore** (Nestor's Cup). From the crypt of the nearby **Santa Restituita Church** one enters the excavations of a paleo-Christian basilica and the museum's relics that tell the story of the island from the time of the Greeks to the first Christians.

Forio, less visited by mass tourism, holds on to its strong tradition of fisherman's village. Here, on a rocky outcrop, the **Santa Maria del Soccorso church** stands out, with its tradition of local architecture intact. Sunset, in this little corner of paradise, with the reflected red of the blazing sun that seems to burn the white walls of the church, is a unique experience.

A 5th century **tower** dominates the centre of town and is home to the Civic Museum. The renown **beach of Citara** is one of the most beautiful on the island.

Near to Forio is the spectacular garden of **Villa La Mortella**, home of the composer Sir William Walton, projected by the famed landscape architect Russell Page. On the southern part of the island is the enchanting **Sant'Angelo**, a tiny fishing village now become an elegant tourist centre. Inland are **Panza**, in a lovely panoramic position, **Serrara Fontana**, from which excursions to Mount Epomeo depart, and **Barano d'Ischia**, on the hills that descend to the wide **beach of Maronti**, dotted with thermal springs and fumaroles. **Mount Epomeo** (788 mt) gives the island its unmistakable shape, dominates the coast below and offers breathtaking views over the Gulf of Naples. Once on the summit, a visit to the hermitage of San Nicola (15th century), entirely carved into tuff rock, is rewarding. Thanks to its climate, you can enjoy the beautiful sandy beaches of Ischia in almost any season. Food-lovers can explore the secrets of a cuisine strongly anchored in tradition and of wines produced with care by wine-makers with a true vocation.



Chiesa del Soccorso at Forio d'Ischia



delicacies of land and sea

The wine and flavour trails of the island of Ischia are not to be missed: an itinerary that takes you to

the wine cellars, vineyards, typical restaurants and artisanal shops to enjoy the great typical products and wines that prompted the Romans to call it 'Aenaria' (www.sito.regione.campania.it/agricoltura/home.htm). Great whites and reds from local grapes are still produced on the island

today. The most cited of the whites are the Biancolella and the Forastera, of the reds the Pere 'e palummo ("pigeon foot", with its grape-stalk red colour). Apart from the great seafood to be enjoyed in any of the island's many restaurants, Ischia is also famed for its traditional

"land" cuisine, the most famous dish being rabbit, and for the flavourful cherry tomatoes.



Nestore's Cup

The Archaeological Museum of Pithecusae in the Villa Arbusto houses Nestor's Cup (750 BC),

which carries one of the oldest known Greek inscriptions, an allusion to the cup of the King of Pylos cited in Homer's *Iliad*: "Of Nestor... the cup good to drink from, but he who drinks from it will soon be overcome by the desire for Aphrodite of the beautiful crown".



The island of Capri is a miracle. Yes, a miracle!... I have been to Capri three times, for long periods, and I tell you: the impression will remain with me until death.

Ivan Sergeevic Turgenev, 1871

80

“One of the magnetic points of the earth”. That is how the writer and painter Alberto Savinio described Capri, one of the most famous islands on earth. This immense cliff that rises from the abysses is a true miracle combining earth, sky, sea and light. The marine grottoes, the Faraglioni with their extraordinary shapes, the green of the vegetation on the steep rocky slopes, the incomparable scenery, the mix of nature, art, culture, and jet-set society, make this most dreamed of and celebrated island of them all.

Capri has enchanted writers, poets, musicians and painters. Many are the producers that have chosen this as set for their films, and many are the famous stars that have filled the tables of its celebrated little square, “la piazzetta”.

One of the first admirers of the island was the Emperor Tiberius, who lived here during the last years of his life. The true vocation of the island was discovered in the mid 1800's, when visitors from all over the world chose it as their home, forming a cosmopolitan colony that has spread the myth of Capri and the Blue Grotto.

The most important town on the island is **Capri**, accessible from the dock of the **Marina Grande** by bus, taxi or chair-lift.

The hub of town, characterised by homes with terraces and pergolas, is the famous “**piazzetta**”, nickname of the tiny Umberto I Square, the open-air salon of tourists and high society life. The Baroque church of **Santo Stefano** dominates the square, with its arabesque cupola and priceless Roman pavement, transplanted from Villa Jovis. To the right is **Palazzo Cerio**, dating back to 1372.

The complex of the **Certosa di San Giacomo** is one of the finest examples of Caprese architecture. Built in the 1300's and expanded in the 1600's, it has a gorgeous view of the Faraglioni. In spite of the numerous reconstructions, the original lines are conserved particularly in the medieval extrados vaults, typical of Capri.

The **gardens of Augustus** are not far away, and the view of the Faraglioni and the Marina Piccola is stunning.

The park, criss-crossed by innumerable alleys and little stairways, is an oasis of green with a magnificent belvedere. From the gardens one arrives at the Marina Piccola by way of **via Krupp**, a tortuous street that descends to the sea. It offers enchanting glimpses of views onto the sea and the Faraglioni. The most famous walk of Capri is the one that takes you to the **belvedere of Tragara**, a shaded square with views over the **Faraglioni** and the Marina Piccola. Under Tragara begins the street that descends to the Faraglioni, the three famous rock-cliffs. The first, *Stella*, nearest to the coast, is 109 mt high, the middle one, *Faraglione di Mezzo* is 81 meters, and the third, known as *Scopolo*, is 104 meters high and inhabited by the rare blue lizard.

Breathtaking scenery immersed in luxuriant vegetation also accompany you along the way from Capri to the **Arco Naturale** (Natural Arch), a scenic rock arch on a sheer cliff over the sea. The **Grotta di Maternania** is reached going down the stairs. It is a grandiose natural cove already consecrated in Roman times by the Cibebe cult, the “great mother of the latins” (the Latins' *Magna Mater*). Imbedded in the rocky landscape of Masullo Point is **Villa Malaparte**. Built at the end of the 1930's by Adalberto Libera for the writer Curzio Malaparte, it is still eccentric and extraordinarily modern.

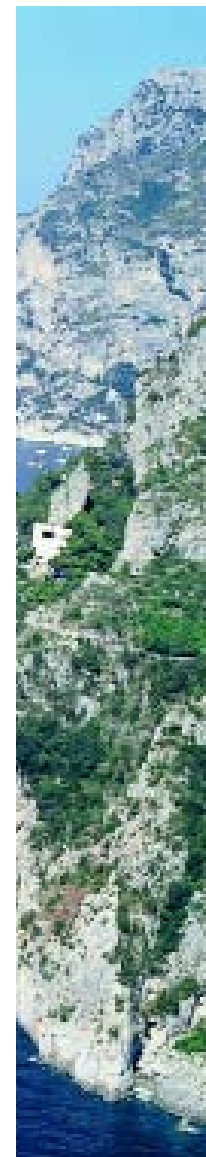
jewellery, or delicate lace, then the picturesque streets of Capri (particularly via Camerelle) and Anacapri are the ideal places to find everything you desire. Small boutiques and tiny craftsmen's shops give the visitor the possibility to admire and buy local products.

You can visit the workshops where unforgettable essences are created, made from the flowers of the island, and the showrooms where prized limoncello of all qualities is exhibited. Caprese sandals are famous the world over.



sun, sea and... shopping

Capri is a truly wonderful setting for shopping. If you are looking for the latest designer garment, precious



The Faraglioni of Capri

81



Piazzetta (little square) of Capri

On the northeastern point of the island rises **Villa Jovis** (Jove's Villa), the most conspicuous Roman remains on the island, ordered built by the Emperor Tiberius. You get there from the town of Capri following a long walk that passes the *San Michele Church*, skirts the panoramic park of **Villa Astarita** and then leads to the archaeological area. The grandiose ruins dominate a marvellous panorama towards the Sorrentine peninsula and are on a sheer cliff 330 meters high, known as the **Jump of Tiberius**, from which, it is said, the Emperor had his victims thrown. The Villa is a huge palace on many levels, with the 'working parts' (foyer, thermal baths, servants quarters, private apartments of the Emperor, and receiving rooms) all grouped around a central nucleus, occupied by a gigantic cistern. At Anacapri the ruins of another imperial villa, **Damecuta**, can be found.

Anacapri, the other inhabited centre, is smaller and a more quiet town than Capri, with gracious streets, white houses immersed in green, and tranquil elegant hotels.

The most important monument is the **San Michele Church**, built in the 1700's and designed by Domenico Antonio Vaccaro, it has a beautiful majolica pavement. This is where the famous **Villa San Michele** is, built on roman ruins by **Axel Munthe**, the Swedish doctor and author who lived on the island for 50 years. The author set his novel, *The Story of San Michele*, here, helping to spread the fame of the island of Capri. The elegant and original villa is furnished with pieces from the 1700's, as well as works of art and relics from Roman times. The garden that surrounds the house is of rare beauty. Anacapri is the departure point for the chairlift and the trail that conduct you to the top of **Mount Solaro** (589 mt), the highest point of the island, from which the view is enchanting.

A vacation on Capri is not complete without a visit to the **Blue Grotto**, whose enchanted cavern attracts visitors from all over the world. One can arrive by boat from the Marina Grande or by land from Anacapri, to then be transfered onto little boats able to penetrate the very low and narrow entrance to the grotto.



the wine trails, and the trails of flavour and tradition of the island of Capri

The sunny slopes of Capri still embrace the vineyards that produce Falanghina, Biancolella, Greco, and

Piedirosso grapes from which the Doc wines of Capri are made. A walk on the slopes of Mount Solaro and among the vegetable gardens and gardens that cover the island is a good occasion to taste the exquisite delicacies that this earth has produced for more than two thousand

Known to the Romans, and rediscovered in the 1800's, it owes its fascinating aspect to a geological phenomenon that caused its lowering by about 20 meters, bringing the entrance to the cave to almost below sea level. The light, filtered by the crystalline water, fills the cave with an exceptional colour: an intense blue with silver reflections that covers everything it shines on. Not very large, 54 meters long, 14 wide and 30 high, the grotto goes inwards through the Pillar Gallery, rich with stalactites.

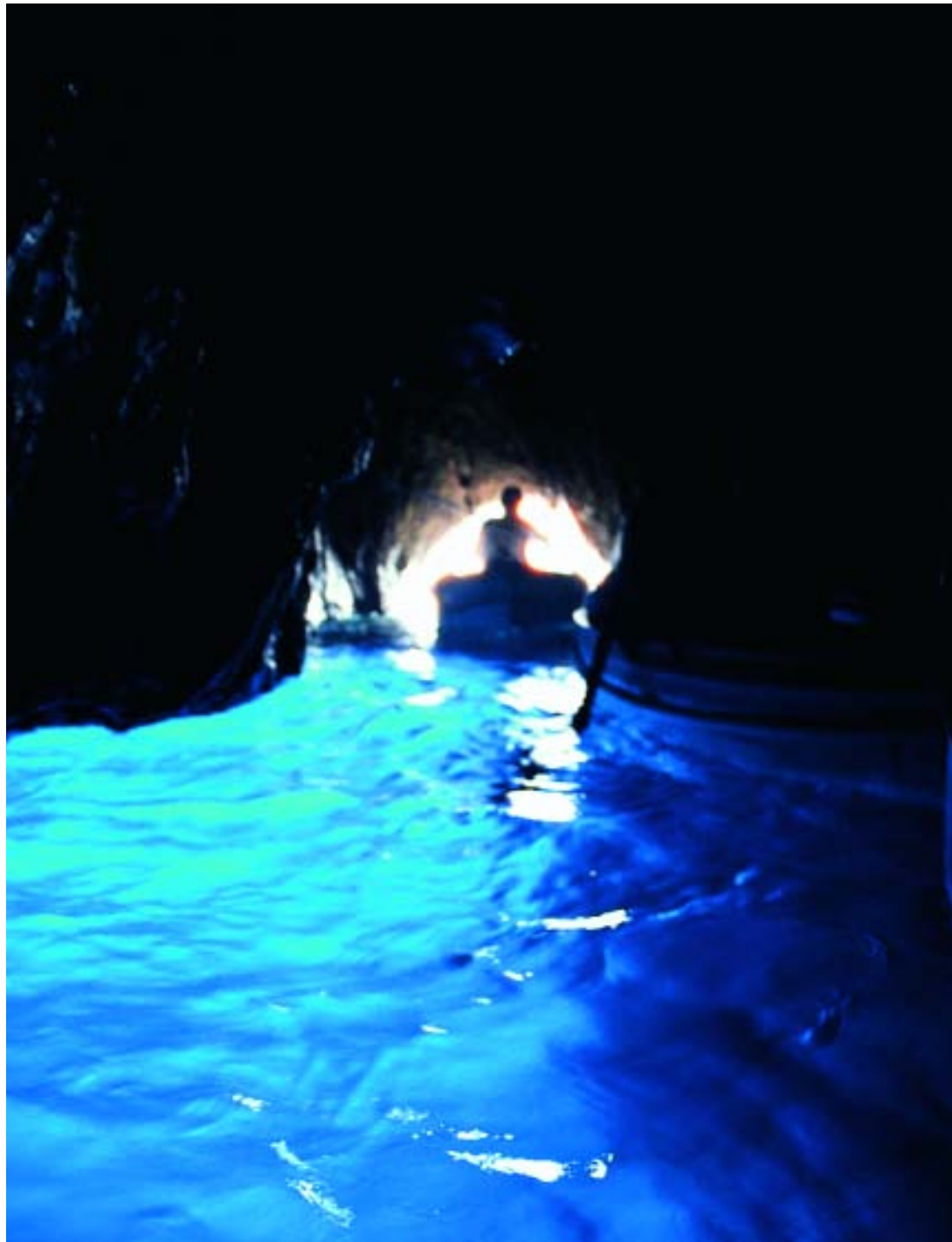
Blessed with enchanting coves and imposing cliffs, Capri has lovely bathing establishments on its rocky shoreline and some on white sandy beaches. Some of the establishments on the rocky shore are at the Faraglioni (easily reached descending on foot from Tragara crossing a lovely stand of pines), and the Grotta Azzurra and Faro at Anacapri. Sandy beaches are to be found at Marina Grande, Marina Piccola and the Baths of Tiberius. Yet the best way to enjoy the sea at Capri and the incomparable scenery is to circle the island on a boat.

years, and the dishes man has made with them: do not miss the Torta Caprese.

famous travellers

I suddenly found myself in an extraordinary grotto (the Blue Grotto) and gave out an involuntary cry of delight. In front of me, around, above and behind, I saw things too marvellous to describe. Imagine a completely blue cavern, as though God was amusing himself making a tent with pieces of firmament.

Alexandre Dumas, 1835



The Blue Grotto