

What to do in Paestum Italy's must-see archaeological site, a little-known nugget



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By Floriane

Visit Paestum, one of Italy's most beautiful ancient sites, and the icing on the cake is that it's much less crowded than its neighbors Pompeii and Herculaneum.

What is there to see in Paestum? What temples can't you miss? We had the same questions as you when preparing our visit, and we'll answer all your questions.

We've put together **all the information you need** to organize your visit to the site.

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Why visit the archaeological site of Paestum: our opinion

During our stay in the region, we took advantage of our [visit to Naples](#) to visit the archaeological site of **Paestum**. A **UNESCO World Heritage** site, it is the largest group of preserved Greek temples outside Greece.

What makes Paestum even more remarkable is its **state of preservation**, which is particularly impressive. And the advantage of Paestum is that, unlike more famous

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archaeological sites such as [Pompeii](#) or [Herculaneum](#), it's located a little further from Naples and therefore attracts fewer visitors.

It's a site that deserves to be **better known**, we were so close to missing it that we went there, because we exchanged with travelers used to [visiting Naples and its region](#), who told us it was their favorite site in the area. This lesser affluence makes Paestum a **hidden gem**, offering a quieter, more intimate experience.

We spent 1h30 on site, as we were traveling with a young child, so we had to prepare our visit as well as possible to optimize our time and limit the fatigue of the visit.

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What temples are worth seeing in Paestum?

When we entered the **Paestum archaeological site**, we were instantly transported to another era. Founded by the **Greeks in the 7th century BC**, this ancient city, formerly known as **Poseidonia**, was a flourishing cultural and commercial center.

Paestum's main attraction is its **three imposing Greek temples**, all remarkably well-preserved.

Temple of Hera

- The **Temple of Hera**, to the south of the site, is the oldest of the 3 temples, majestic and imposing, standing like a guardian of the past. It is also known as the "Basilica". This temple was dedicated to Hera, Zeus' wife.

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Temple of Poseidon

- The **Temple of Poseidon**, the most recent of the 3 temples, is considered one of the best-preserved examples of Greek architecture in the West. This is the largest of the 3 temples, with 14 columns on each side and 6 columns on the front and back.

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Temple of Athena

- **The Temple of Athena or Temple of Ceres**, located to the north of the site, dedicated to the goddess Athena, the goddess of war and wisdom.

In addition to the temples, you can stroll through the **ancient Greek city** and see the **remains of the Roman period** (amphitheatre, forum...). We explored the site for 1h30.

Paestum Museum

We were surprised by the size of the archaeological site, and our daughter had no energy left to visit the museum adjoining the site.

The site also boasts a **well-stocked museum**, with an impressive collection of artifacts discovered on site. Frescoes, sculptures and pottery tell stories of daily life, religion and art from this remote era. It's a unique opportunity to get up close to the refinement and complexity of the civilization that flourished here.

We'll keep it for our next visit to Paestum!

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Practical tips for your visit: tickets...

1. **How to get there from Naples or Salerno?** Paestum can **be** reached by car or train from Naples (1.5 hours) or Salerno (45 minutes). [Private car transfers](#) are also available from Naples.
2. **Price of combined site + museum ticket:** March to November, full price €15, concessions €2; December to February, full price €10, concessions €2.

→ Comme for other archaeological sites in the region, the absence of explanatory panels on the site makes it difficult to fully understand the site. We advise you to prepare your visit well in advance, or opt for a 2-hour [guided tour in French that you can book online](#), which is more than enough time to explore the site.

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You can book in advance to choose your day and time slot, and by booking online you can cancel your ticket up to 24 hours before the activity and get a full refund.

3. Where to sleep?

You can sleep around the site or in **Salerno**, the nearest town. Find our [best accommodations in Naples here](#).

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4. **When to visit Paestum** Paestum is best visited in the early morning or late afternoon. Not only will you avoid the crowds, but you'll also benefit from light that's ideal for photography.

Map of Paestum near Naples

The Paestum site is located south of Naples.

Video of Paestum archaeological site

Here are some drone images of the Paestum site for a virtual tour.

What to do around Paestum

The Paestum area offers a myriad of activities and sites to explore. From archaeological sites to idyllic beaches and picturesque villages, there's so much to see and do.

- The archaeological sites of Pompeii and Herculaneum
- The natural site of [Vesuvius, the volcano of Naples](#)
- The Almafittine coast
- The city of Naples and its islands, [Capri](#), Ischia and [Procida](#)

And don't forget to sample the local cuisine. Campania is famous for its tasty, authentic cuisine. Crispy pizzas with fresh seafood and mozzarella di Bufala. We stopped to fill up on mozarellas at the **Tenuta Vannulo** farm just outside Paestum.

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Paestum is one of the **most surprising** places we've ever visited. We loved writing this article, which allowed us to immerse ourselves in this extraordinary day. We hope we've helped you organize your visit to this exceptional archaeological site.

Of course, if you'd like to see other Greek remains, we recommend you plan a trip to Greece to visit the site of [Olympia](#), site of the first Olympic Games, the theater of Epidauros or the incredible [archaeological site of Delphi](#).

Feel free to leave us a **quick note** or **5 stars** below, to tell us if you're planning this trip, to ask any questions you may have, here or on [Instagram](#), we'll get back to you with great pleasure.

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