

EATING





GREG ELMS

THE EATING SCENE

While chefs in Seattle and Sydney fuss about with fusion, Neapolitan cooks remember what their mamas taught them: keep it simple, seasonal and fresh.

See Naples and diet. These city streets are a foodie's promised land. Market crates heave with voluptuous peppers, lobsters wriggle in plastic tubs, delis burst with spicy salami and the scent of freshly fried *pesce* (fish) fills the air. Street stalls sell Italy's best (and cheapest) fast food – from golden *arancini* (large rice balls stuffed with meat sauce) and *crocchè* (fried mashed-potato balls filled with mozzarella) to *pizza fritta* (deep-fried pizza stuffed with ham, mozzarella or seaweed) and *frittatine di pasta* (deep-fried pasta balls stuffed with minced pork, béchamel sauce and peas).

Home cooking rules, especially at family-run trattorie and *osterie* (casual-dining restaurants similar to trattorie), where classics such as *pasta e fagioli* (pasta and beans stew) and *spaghetti alla vongole* (spaghetti with clams) are filling, delicious and affordable. Some of the oldest and best lie tucked away in the dark streets of the centro storico (historic centre) and Quartieri Spagnoli.

HOW MUCH?

Eating out in Naples is generally cheaper than in Venice or Rome, with many restaurants catering to locals rather than tourists. For really cheap eats, go for street food, pizza or simple pasta dishes. Make sure you check the drink prices; a beer can easily cost €3 to €4 at fancier restaurants. Also, be wary when ordering fish that has to be weighed; ask for a quote *before* it hits the flame. Most restaurants will add an additional *coperto* (bread and cover charge) to your bill; this can range from €1.50 to €3 per person.

All of the eating options listed here are rated using three budget categories: € (€1 to €15), €€ (€15 to €30) or €€€ (€30+). Unless otherwise specified, 'meals' denotes the average cost of a first and second course plus dessert per person, excluding wine and cover charge.

THE BEST...

Sfogliatella Pintauro (p121)
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Sfogliatelle

JEAN-BERNARD CABRILET

When not devouring the above, Neapolitans can be found huddled around bar counters and café tables scoffing down local pastries such as *sfogliatella* (a flaky pastry filled with sweet, cinnamon-infused ricotta) to *babà* (sponge soaked in rum). The croissantlike *cornetto* (filled with Nutella, cream or jam) is a popular way to start the day and end a big night out, with hordes of partied-out clubbers stopping off at late-night bars for a freshly baked batch. As for the city's gelato, it's mostly made on site and is lip-lickingly good.

Restaurants usually open for lunch from noon to 3pm and for dinner from 7pm to around 11pm. Many restaurants in the commercial centro storico close on Sunday, while others will close on Monday. Roughly half of Naples' restaurants close in August.

Where opening times are listed in reviews, this indicates that they vary from the usual opening times. Where no opening hours appear, assume that the standard hours given here apply.

Booking a table is generally not possible in a simple trattoria or pizzeria, although it is advisable at midrange to top-end restaurants, especially over the weekend.

Always check your bill carefully – if it includes a service charge of 10% to 15%, don't feel obliged to tip. If generosity gets the better of you, a tip of between 5% to 10% is appreciated, although Neapolitans often don't bother to leave anything at all.

The best news, however, is that smoking is now banned in Italian restaurants. Somewhat surprisingly, the usually do-as-I-please Neapolitans have generally accepted (and respect) this law.

For more information about specific food and drinks, see p53.

Do not be fooled by the dodgy décor, either – here, the emphasis is on food, not fashion. Of course, glammed-up options do exist, many concentrated around the old fishing quarter of Santa Lucia, where fresh *zuppa di pesce* (fish soup) is served with a side of bobbing boats.

As for the city's most famous export, pizza, it's the real deal; soft and thin in the middle and deeper around the edge. The margherita is the undisputed classic, simply topped with oil, basil, tomatoes and buffalo mozzarella. The pizza *marinara* has no seafood: its fishy name stems from its popularity with fisherfolk. Always go for the Vera Pizza sign, with its Punchinello (Punch) figure, a designation awarded to places that make their pizzas to strict traditional methods.



Tucking in at Da Michele pizzeria (p118)

GREG ELMS

CENTRO STORICO & MERCATO

Start your culinary adventure on the corner of Via dei Tribunali and Via San Paolo, with its daily fruit-and-vegetable stalls. Wander down Tribunali in either direction for a nonstop feast of tiny pizzeria, snack stalls, bakeries and heavenly scented delis. In Mercato, head straight to the market at Porta Nolana (see the boxed text, p140) for glistening fish, fresh pasta, small goods and minisized pizzas.

ANTICA GASTRONOMIA FERRIERI

MAP PP280-1 SNACK BAR €

☎ 081 554 01 65; Piazza Garibaldi 82-88; snacks from €2; ☎ daily; 📄 Garibaldi

Opposite Stazione Centrale, this snack bar draws everyone from surly Russian maids to cautious American backpackers. Side by side they scoff down moreish snacks such as herb focaccia and *pagnottello*, a hybrid pizza/bread roll filled with aubergine, tomatoes and ricotta. There's a self-service restaurant upstairs.

ANTICA TRATTORIA DA CARMINE

MAP PP280-1 TRATTORIA €€

☎ 081 29 43 83; Via dei Tribunali 330; meals €17; ☎ lunch & dinner Wed-Sat, lunch only Tue & Sun, closed Mon; 📄 Dante

This homely haven houses the rarest of native species: the patient waiter. Beneath vintage Neapolitan photographs, he guides the indecisive through keep-the-faith classics such as juicy grilled squid and a delectable *penne alla sorrentina* (penne, mozzarella and tomatoes). Propose a toast to the well-priced house wine.

top five CENTRO STORICO & MERCATO

Bellini (right)

Campagnola (right)

Da Michele (right)

Europa Mattozzi (right)

La Sfogliatella (opposite)

AVELLINESE MAP PP280-1 TRATTORIA €

☎ 081 28 91 64; Via Silvio Spaventa 31-35; meals €15; ☎ daily; 📄 Garibaldi

Energy-boosting serves of pasta, meat and fish dishes. Go for the latter (unless it's Monday); there's a fish market around the corner. The service is brisk and businesslike and there's an outdoor terrace. The district is a little dodgy so don't wave that Prada handbag around after dark.

BELLINI MAP PP280-1 RISTORANTE €€€

☎ 081 45 97 74; Via Santa Maria di Costantinopoli 79-80; meals €30; ☎ lunch daily, 7.30pm-1am Mon-Sat; 📄 Dante

Bellini sets the scene for *lurve*, with its candlelit terrace, cobbled streetscape and vintage cummerbund waiters. Get acquainted with just-caught fish or tuck into obscenely copious bowls of pasta – the *linguine ai frutti di mare* (pasta with fresh seafood) is heroic.

CAMPAGNOLA MAP PP280-1 TRATTORIA €€

☎ 081 45 90 34; Via dei Tribunali 47; meals €16; ☎ lunch only; 📄 Dante

Hidden out the back of a wine shop, Campagnola looks like a poker room – sallow light and a wizened owner dealing out cards to his chums. The diners? Mostly an afterthought. So why do the famished keep flocking? Try the *spaghetti alla maccheronata* (fresh tomatoes, basil and *pecorino* cheese) and you'll see. Expect weekend queues.

DA MICHELE MAP PP280-1 PIZZERIA €

☎ 081 553 92 04; Via Cesare Sersale 1; pizzas from €3.50; ☎ Mon-Sat 11am-11pm, closed Sun; 📄 R2 to Corso Umberto

King of the pizza brat pack, vintage Da Michele keeps things plain and simple: unadorned marble tabletops, brisk service and two types of pizza – *margherita* or *marinara*. Both are superlative and guaranteed to turn you into a pizza snob. Just show up, take a ticket and wait your turn.

EUROPA MATTOZZI

MAP PP280-1 RISTORANTE €€

☎ 081 552 13 23; Via Campodisola Marchese 4; meals €29; 📄 R2 to Corso Umberto I

This celebrated low-key classic has been on the scene for over a century. Adorned with colourful wall plates and prints, its elegant, well-versed staff serve up gems such as

buffalo mozzarella with marinated octopus and fried zucchini, and nourishing pasta with parsley and chickpeas.

IL CAFFÈ ARABO MAP PP280-1 CAFÉ €

☎ 081 442 06 07; Piazza Bellini; snacks from €3; ☎ daily; 📄 Dante

Arab by name, Arab by nature. This funky bolthole dishes out good-value falafel, hummus, *fuul* (a bean-based dip) and kebabs. Heartier fare includes a vegetarian couscous and a brave attempt at curry (more like a mild vegetable stew). The wine is the cheapest on the piazza.

INTRA MOENIA MAP PP280-1 CAFÉ €€

☎ 081 29 07 20; Piazza Bellini 70; snacks from €8; ☎ daily; 📄 Dante

Lattes and literature live side by side at this free-thinking café/bookshop/publishing house. It's a hit with the left-leaning and artistically inclined, who feed their souls on the *misto di formaggi* (mixed cheese platter) and fruit salad with honey and muesli. The house wine costs €4 a glass.

LA CANTINA DELLA SAPIENZA

MAP PP280-1 TRATTORIA €€

☎ 081 45 90 78; Via della Sapienza 40; meals €17; ☎ Mon-Sat, lunch only; 📄 Cavour

No culinary acrobatics here, just pared-down classics such as *parmigiana di melanzane* (slices of baked aubergine with decadent layers of tomato and parmesan) and *pizza bianco*, topped with nothing more than a drizzle of extra-virgin olive oil and crunchy sea salt. *Babà* fans take note – there's a different type baked each day.

LA SFOGLIATELLA

MAP PP280-1 PASTICCERIA €

☎ 081 28 56 85; Corso Novara 1; ☎ daily; 📄 Garibaldi
Diet? What diet? Lose all self-control at this buzzing *pasticcERIA*, famed for its *sfoagliatelle* and house specialities: *zeffiro all'arancia* (orange delicacy), chocolate and rum cakes, and *riccias millefeuilles* (pastry with an apple-custard filling).

LOMBARDI A SANTA CHIARA

MAP PP280-1 RISTORANTE €€

☎ 081 552 07 80; Via Benedetto Croce 59; meals €29; ☎ Tue-Sun; 📄 Dante



Spaghetti alla vongole

JEAN-BERNARD CARRELL

EATING

From J-Lo lookalikes to cantankerous *nonni* (grandmothers), Neapolitans clamber to get into this faded favourite. *Perche?* For classic pizza, hearty pasta and finger-licking seafood. Vegetarians are spoiled for choice, with satisfying salads and an artfully combined platter of courgettes, artichokes and buffalo mozzarella. Weekend queues are long, so book ahead.

PORT'ALBA MAP PP280-1 PIZZERIA €

☎ 081 45 97 13; Via Port'Alba 18; pizzas from €5, meals €15; ☎ Thu-Tue; 📄 Dante

Possibly the oldest pizzeria in the world (twas founded in 1738), this doughy stalwart sits snugly on a cobbled street of secondhand bookshops. Sit outside under Port'Alba itself and choose from a dizzying selection of pizza and pasta. Fed and full, settle the bill and head to nearby Intra Moenia (left) for laid-back coffee and culture.

TRIANON MAP PP280-1 PIZZERIA €

☎ 081 553 94 26; Via Pietro Colletta 42-46; pizzas from €3; ☎ daily; 📄 R2 to Corso Umberto I

A Neapolitan institution – film director Vittorio de Sica and comic Totò used to eat here – this few-frills pizzeria has been tossing pizzas with the best of them since 1923. Today, burly labourers, boisterous families and giggling Japanese girlfriends come to chew in communal bliss.

TOLEDO & QUARTIERI SPAGNOLI

Hit the southern end of Via Toledo for *fin de siècle* cafés and restaurants, where fellow 'sippers and suppers' might include an opera great from nearby Teatro San Carlo. To the west, Quartieri Spagnoli keeps it real with quick-eat kiosks and old-style grub in earthy trattorie.

ANTICA TRATTORIA DON PEPPINO

MAP PP284-5 TRATTORIA €€

☎ 081 551 28 54; Vico 1 Gravina 7-10; meals €25; 🚗 R1 to Via Monteoliveto

This snug spot has a head-bonking array of rustic artefacts hanging from its ceiling – brass pots, dried corn and ropes of garlic and peppers. Equally loveable are its bountiful offerings, which include hearty seafood risotto and *carne al ragù* (beef cooked slowly in a rich tomato sauce).

BRANDI MAP PP284-5 PIZZERIA €€

☎ 081 41 69 28; Salita S Anna di Palazzo 1; pizzas from €5; 🗓 Wed-Mon; 🚗 R2 to Piazza Trieste e Trento

Everything about Brandi promises a pizza slice above the ordinary, from the table-top roses to the multilingual flyers that claim this was where the pizza margherita was invented in 1889. While this claim is contestable, Brandi's huge perfect pizzas are not. Alternatively, hunker down à la carte with pasta, fish and meat choices of lofty quality (and price).

CAFFÈ GAMBRINUS MAP PP284-5 CAFÉ €

☎ 081 41 75 82; Via Chiaia 1-2; 🗓 daily; 🚗 R2 to Piazza Trieste e Trento

The grand Gambrinus is Naples' oldest and most venerable café. Oscar Wilde knocked back a few here and Mussolini had some of the rooms shut down to keep out left-wing intellectuals. It's now suitably decked out in marble, antiques and the odd mock-Grecian statue, and the snooty staff serve pricey coffees, cocktails and snacks to golden-skinned posers and smitten out-of-towners.

CAFFÈ MEXICO MAP PP280-1 CAFÉ €

☎ 081 549 93 30; Piazza Dante 86; 🗓 7am-8.30pm Mon-Sat; 🚗 Dante

Classic diner fit-out and shocking-orange espresso machine set the scene for the city's meanest coffee. Once hooked, stock up on freshly roasted beans all vintage cool in retro

top five TOLEDO & QUARTIERI SPAGNOLI

Brandi (left)

Ciro a Santa Brigida (below)

Kukai (below)

Nennella (opposite)

Scimmia (p122)



1950s packaging. There's another branch at Piazza Garibaldi 70.

CIRO A SANTA BRIGIDA

MAP PP280-1 RISTORANTE €€€

☎ 081 552 40 72; Via Santa Brigida 71-74; meals €35; 🗓 Mon-Sat; 🚗 R2 to Piazza Trieste e Trento

After a night at nearby Teatro Augusteo, styled-up theatre buffs head here for classic service and soul food. Discuss the plot over *pasta e fagioli* or *pizza ai frutti di mare* (seafood pizza).

FRIGGITORIA FIORENTINO

MAP PP280-1 SNACK BAR €

☎ 081 551 27 88; Piazza Montesanto; snacks from €1; 🗓 8am-11pm Mon-Sat; 🚗 Montesanto

Slap-bang in market country, this majolica-tiled veteran serves Italian-style tempura such as crunchy deep-fried aubergines and artichokes (in season), and prosciutto-and-mozzarella-stuffed croquets. Wolf them down by the counter or dive back into the market throng.

KUKAI MAP PP284-5 SUSHI BAR €€

☎ 081 41 19 05; Via Carlo de Cesare 55-56; meals €19; 🗓 1-3pm & 7pm-midnight daily; 🚗 R2 to Piazza

Trieste e Trento Sick of spaghetti? Then join the urban-savvy for fresh sushi and real-deal *temaki*. Sip green tea and choose from a menu that a Tokyoite couldn't falter. As for the takeaway and delivery service – it's as brisk as a Bullet Train.

LA SFOGLIATELLA MARY

MAP PP280-1 KIOSK €

☎ 081 40 22 18; Galleria Umberto 1, Via Toledo 66; 🗓 Tue-Sat 8am-8.30pm, closed Mon; 🚗 CS to Via Toledo

Never short of a clambering crowd, this hole-in-the-wall kiosk serves up some of the steamiest, creamiest *sfogliatelle* in town. Start off with the minimized one for a mere €0.60 before hitting the hard stuff. Top off your sugar fix with a mini Moretto (€0.60), a dreamy chocolate *babà* filled with decadent cocoa cream.

MA TU VULIVE'A PIZZA

MAP PP280-1 PIZZERIA €

☎ 081 551 44 90; Via S Maria la Nova 46; pizzas from €3.50; 🚗 CS to Via Toledo

Lively and packed; come here for epic pizzas and heaving *calzoni*. Tuck into the salubrious *calzone Terra Mia*, stuffed with vegetables, *provola* cheese, black olives and capers (€4.70) as you eavesdrop on student conversations about politics, travel and who's hot or not. In the evening, head to nearby Piazza Santa Maria la Nova for late-night boho chilling.

NENNELLA

MAP PP280-1 TRATTORIA €

☎ 081 41 43 38; Vico Lungo Teatro 103-105; meals €10; 🗓 Mon-Sat; 🚗 Montesanto

Classic and chaotic, this legend is unmissable. Write your name and number of guests on the list by the door and wait for the boisterous manager to call you in, boot camp-style. Inside, roguish waiters shout orders across the floor, patriarchs propose toasts and Rolexed studs dine with Mafia mistresses. Tuck into crispy fried sardines, lip-smacking *spaghetti con lupine* (spaghetti with lupins) or *insalatona nennella* (rocket, bresaola and radish salad).

PINTAURO MAP PP280-1 PASTICCERIA €

☎ 081 41 73 39; Via Toledo 275; 🗓 Mon-Sat Sep-Jul; 🚗 CS to Via Toledo

Follow your nose and join the queue for the city's best *sfogliatella*. But don't stop there. This legendary *pasticcERIA* does a mean *babà* and melt-in-your-mouth *biscotti di mandorla* (almond biscuits).

EATING LA DOLCE VITA

Creamy *sfogliatella*, trickling *babà* – the Neapolitan *pasticcERIA* (pastry shop) gives new meaning to the catchphrase *la dolce vita*. There's a pastry or cake for every occasion and feast day, and no Sunday lunch is complete without a tray of fresh pastries on the dining room table. Not sure where to begin? Here's the lowdown:

Babà

A yeasty mushroom-shaped sponge soaked in sugar and rum. Look out for a cocoa version filled with chocolate cream. According to legend, it was created by French chefs for the King of Poland in the 18th century.

Cassatina

The Neapolitan version of the Sicilian cassata, this mini cake is made with *pandis Spagna* (sponge), ricotta and candied fruit, and covered in glazed sugar.

Paste Reali

Cleverly crafted miniatures of fruit and vegetables, these sweets are made of almond paste and sugar (marzipan) and gobbled up at Christmas.

Pastiera

Traditionally baked at Easter, this latticed tart is made of shortcrust pastry and filled with ricotta, cream, candied fruit and cereals flavoured with orange-blossom water.

Rafiole & Roccò

Traditional Christmas biscuits. While *rafiole* are hard and made with almonds, *roccò* are a sweeter, softer concoction of sponge and marzipan sprinkled with icing sugar.

Sfogliatella

Naples' most typical pastry comes in two types: *frolla* (shortcrust pastry) and *riccia* (puff pastry), the latter considered the most classic. Both are shell-shaped, filled with sweet ricotta and candied fruit, and baked to golden perfection.

Torta di Ricotta e Pera

The cake of the moment, this ricotta-and-pear concoction is light, tangy and dangerously moreish. Best of all, it's available year-round.

Zeppole

Traditionally baked for the feast of San Giuseppe in March, these Neapolitan doughnuts are filled with custard and topped with bitter cherries.

SCIMMIA MAP PP280-1

GELATERIA €

☎ 081 552 02 72; Piazza Carità 4; ☎ 10am-midnight Apr-Oct & Dec, 10am-10pm Jan-Mar & Nov, closed Wed Jan & Feb; 🍷 Montesanto

The best of the much-loved Scimmia outlets. Locals flock here rain, hail or shine for creamy made-on-the-premises ice cream. Go the *zabaglione* (made with eggs and sweet Marsala wine) or a tangy orange sorbet and swing your hips to samba on the Latino-flavoured square.

TRIPPERIA FIORENZANO

MAP PP280-1

SNACK BAR/TRATTORIA €

☎ 349 781 01 46; Via Pignasecca 14; ☎ 8.30am-8.30pm Mon-Sat; snacks from €1; 🍷 Montesanto

Beneath languorous strips of hanging tripe, fifth-generation *trippaio* (tripe seller) Antonio and his son busily prepare take-home orders for hurried housewives. Behind the counter, five tables and a neon-blue shrine to Christ set the scene for sit-down adventures. Be brave and try the *zuppa di carne cotta* (tripe broth, €4) or the quintessentially Neapolitan tripe with tomato and basil. You might surprise yourself.

SANTA LUCIA & CHIAIA

Despite the over-sized yachts, hotels and limousines, dining in Santa Lucia needed cost a helipad. Head for the vintage fishing quarter of Borgo Marinaro for superlative (and justifiably priced) seafood and seductive sea and city views. To the west, savvy Chiaia offers a high-density clash of chichi cafés, slick sushi bars and homely trattorie serving *just-like-mamma* classics.

top five
SANTA LUCIA & CHIAIA

La Bersagliera (right)

Dora (opposite)

Jap-One (opposite)

La Cantinella (p124)

Umberto (p124)

ANTICA OSTERIA DA TONINO

MAP PP284-5

OSTERIA €€

☎ 081 42 15 33; Via Santa Teresa a Chiaia 47; mains €18; ☎ lunch daily, dinner Fri & Sat only 🍷 Amedeo

Popular? It's a wonder the door hasn't come off its hinges. At the front, time-pressed *signore* pick up their takeaway orders and a bottle of red. At the few packed tables, Borrelli suits, old-timers and the odd Nobel Prize winner (Dario Fo ate here) tuck into hearty grub such as *pasta ragù e ricotta*.

LA BERSAGLIERA MAP PP284-5 RISTORANTE €€€

☎ 081 764 60 16; www.labersagliera.it; Borgo Marinaro 10-11; meals €45; ☎ noon-3.30pm, 7.30pm-midnight Wed-Mon, closed 2 weeks in Jan; 🍷 C25 to Via Partenope

This harbourside diva has wined and dined the best of them – there are photos of Salvador Dali and Sophia Loren to prove it. Waterfront views and a lavish dining room set the scene for star-worthy dishes such as clam and mussel soup and *taglierini* (fine ribbon pasta) with baby octopus, black olives and tomatoes.

CASTELLO MAP PP284-5

OSTERIA €€

☎ 081 40 04 86; Via Santa Teresa a Chiaia 38; set lunches €12, meals €26; ☎ Mon-Sat; 🍷 Amedeo

It could be the *vino* lining the walls, the piles of cookbooks or Norah Jones crooning in the background, but this place feels like home. Kick back with a steamy bowl of *pappardelle* (wide ribbon pasta) with courgette flowers and mussels or *filetto al castello* (veal in a creamy courgette sauce). Equally divine is the homemade *zeppola*, a doughy pie filled with fresh berries and custard.

CIRO MAP PP284-5

RISTORANTE €€€

☎ 081 764 60 06; Borgo Marinaro 29-30; meals €35; ☎ Thu-Tue; 🍷 C25 to Via Partenope

More bobbing boats and roaming Romanian musicians. Yacht owners and envious tourists clamour for a spot on the terrace (get here early), where classic waiters serve equally classic dishes. Stick with the award-winning pizzas and fresh seafood; the linguine with crustaceans and shellfish (€18) is pricey perfection.

DA PIETRO MAP PP284-5

TRATTORIA €€

☎ 081 807 10 82; Via Lucigliana 27; meals €19; ☎ Tue-Sun; 🍷 C25 to Via Partenope

Flanked by its grander neighbours, but sharing the same five-star harbour view, Da Pietro is

simple and modest, right down to the plastic tablecloths, chalked-up daily menu and mildly harassed staff. Keep it real with spaghetti with tomato and basil, and filthy fresh bowls of mussels. A combination of competitive prices and few tables means you should expect to queue.

DI BRUNO MAP PP284-5

RISTORANTE €€€

☎ 081 251 24 11; Riviera di Chiaia 213-14; meals €36; ☎ Tue-Sun; 🍷 C25 to Riviera di Chiaia

Discerning palates saunter here for upper-crust Italian fare, a 200-strong wine list and impeccable service. Seafood is the undisputed star, with offerings such as *carpacci tagliati di pesce crudo* (raw fish drizzled in olive oil and parmesan) guaranteed to please the picky. The pasta is made from scratch, as are the desserts, which feature a can't-stop-at-one *ricotta* and pear tart.

APPETITE FOR APERITIVO

Fancy a feed for the price of a cocktail? Then hit the bars between 6.30pm and 9.30pm for *l'ora d'aperitivo* (happy hour). Italy's version of happy hour swaps cashews for class as tailored locals sip Campari, trade gossip and feast on all-you-can-eat gourmet spreads. Offerings range from steamy bowls of pumpkin risotto to mini *crostini*, olive-stuffed pastries, salami and sushi. The best *aperitivo* bars are on (or off) Vico Belledonne a Chiaia and Via Bisignano in Chiaia. Buy a drink (€6 to €12), grab a plate and fill it up... again and again. Just remember to be discreet – looking like a seasoned cheapskate is *not* a good look. Hit the spot at the following favourites:

Chandelier (see p129)

S'Move (see p130)

Grand Hotel Parker's (see p153)

Enoteca Belledonne (see p129)

Farinella (see p130)

DORA MAP PP284-5 RISTORANTE €€€

☎ 081 68 05 19; Via Ferdinando Palasciano 30; meals €45; 🍷 C25 to Riviera di Chiaia

Dishing up the best fish in town, humble Dora hides its celebrity status behind a tatty shop front on a forlorn street. Don't be fooled. Inside, an empty seat is as rare as a mediocre meal. Under hospital-bright light, loveable waiters dish up gems such as juicy char-grilled prawns, and linguine with crustaceans. The owner is known to break out in song. Book or miss out.

JAP-ONE MAP PP284-5 JAPANESE RESTAURANT €€€

☎ 081 764 66 67; Vico Santa Maria a Cappella Vecchia 301/I; meals €45; ☎ closed Sun; 🍷 C25 to Piazza dei Martiri

Giving Kukai (p120) stiff competition in the sushi stakes, this über-trendy bolthole is hidden away down a series of 'where-am-I' lane-ways. Inside, fashionistas with savvy palates nibble on faultless sashimi, nigori and tempura in a suitably minimalist setting of polished concrete, steel and cocoa-coloured furnishings.

LA CAFFETTIERA MAP PP284-5

CAFÉ €

☎ 081 764 42 43; Piazza dei Martiri 30; ☎ daily; 🍷 C25 to Piazza dei Martiri

Waiters in waistcoats serve potent espresso and cool Camparis to cross-legged businessmen and chichi shopaholics. Take a seat on the terrace (no-one can see you inside, sweetie) order a slice of the *torta di mandorla* (almond cake) and compare shopping bag sizes.



GREG ELMS



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L.U.I.S.E. MAP PP284-5 DELI €

☎ 081 41 77 35; Piazza dei Martiri 68; snacks from €1.20, meals €10; 🕒 7.30am-8.30pm Mon-Sat; 🚗 C25 to Piazza dei Martiri

This chic little deli is a gourmand's playpen – think fat cheeses and sausages, homemade foodstuffs and bottles of luscious wine. In the back room, lunching 9-to-5-ers tuck into warming osso bucco, nourishing *risotti* and homemade *gnocchi*. Busy travellers can take theirs away. Try the freshly fried *pizza frita*, crisp *arancini* and sugar-dusted *pasticcini crema amarena* (pastries filled with cherry cream).

MAKTUB MAP PP284-5 RISTORANTE €€

☎ 081 764 73 37; Vico Satriano 8C; meals €26, set lunches Mon-Fri €7.50; 🕒 Mon-Sat; 🚗 C25 to Riviera di Chiaia

Mandelins and wall plates? Try yellow paper lanterns and a gnarled tree trunk growing out of the dining room floor. Add barrel-vaulted ceiling, evening candlelight, DJ and a laid-back crowd, and you start to get the picture. Go for *scialatielli con pomodoro, zucchini e pancetta* (pasta with tomato, corgettes and bacon) and *filetto di manzo in salsa di grana Padana* (beef fillet with Grana Padana sauce) and the naughty *sbriciolona di Nutella* (chocolate salami).

MOCCIA MAP PP284-5 PASTICCERIA €

☎ 081 41 13 48; Via San Pasquale a Chiaia 21-22; 🕒 Wed-Mon; 🚗 C25 to Riviera di Chiaia

With gleaming displays of dainty strawberry tartlets, liqueur-soaked *babà* and creamy gelato (try a watermelon and peach combo), no-one is safe at this chichi pastry peddler – blow-waved matriarchs, peckish professionals or waif-thin Chiaia princesses. The *caprese* (chocolate and almond cake) is the best in town.

UMBERTO MAP PP284-5 RISTORANTE €€

☎ 081 41 85 55; Via Alabardieri 30-31; meals €25; 🕒 10.30am-3.30pm & 7.30pm-midnight; 🚗 C25 to Piazza dei Martiri

Gluten-intolerant diners can feast on allergy-friendly fare, such as a refreshing orange, almond and fennel salad and perfectly pan-fried swordfish with cherry tomatoes, olives and capers. The cheaper gourmet pizzas include a fabulous *prosciutto crudo*, rocket, mozzarella and parmesan combo.

LA CANTINELLA MAP PP284-5 RISTORANTE €€€

☎ 081 764 86 84; Via Cuma 42; meals €51; 🕒 Mon-Sat; 🚗 C25 to Via Partenope

Fussy foodies flock here for sophisticated twists on classic dishes. At crisp linen tables they savour the likes of beef fillet with Marsala sauce and pork liver served with Saracen flour flan (€28), and encrusted pork with apples and Parma ham drizzled in an Armagnac sauce (€24). Desserts are equally luxe, and the lengthy and interesting wine list yields some excellent quaffs.

LA FOCACCIA MAP PP284-5 SNACK BAR €

☎ 081 41 22 77; Vico Belledonne a Chiaia 31; focaccias from €1.60; 🕒 11am-3pm Tue-Sun; 🚗 C25 to Piazza dei Martiri

The young, the hip and the just-plain-starving cram into this funky red spot for fat focaccia squares stacked with lip-smacking combos such as aubergine, *pecorino* cheese and smoked ham.

VOMERO, CAPODIMONTE & LA SANITÀ

Don't let Vomero's building-block air foul you – the streets around Piazza Vanvitelli harbour some soulful restaurants, trattorie and snack bars. Less packed with options is La Sanità, though its tangle of backstreets hides one or two gems. If you're heading to Capodimonte, pack a picnic or opt for one of the options listed here.

ACUNZO MAP P283 TRATTORIA €€

☎ 081 578 53 62; Via Domenico Cimarosa 64; meals €18; 🕒 Mon-Sat; Funicular Centrale to Fuga

Old-school cooking, heady aromas, vintage décor and one very satisfied clientele. Tuck into simple, satisfying classics such as the homemade *gnocchi*, paper-thin pizzas topped with cherry tomatoes, mozzarella and fresh rocket leaves, or the hearty *calzoni* stuffed with beans.

top five
VOMERO,
CAPODIMONTE & LA SANITÀ

Acunzo (above)
Angolo de Paradiso (right)
Donna Teresa (right)
Antica Cantina de Sica (right)
Starita (p126)



Fried nibbles for sale at Friggitoria Vomero

JEAN-BERNARD CABRIET

ANGOLO DE PARADISO MAP P283 PIZZERIA €

☎ 081 556 71 46; Via Michele Kerbaker 152; 🕒 Tue-Sun; pizzas from €3; 🚗 Vanvitelli

Beneath the ubiquitous row of old photographs, time-tested regulars tackle steamy hot pizzas served by affable pin-striped wait staff. Indecisive taste buds can have it all with the pizza Paradiso (€5); five good-sized slices with toppings such as Neapolitan sausage, salami, aubergine and spinach. The wine is dangerously cheap.

ANTICA CANTINA DI SICA MAP P283 RISTORANTE €€

☎ 081 556 75 20; Via Bernini 17, meals €29; 🕒 Wed-Mon; 🚗 Vanvitelli

Rustic yet chic (think softly lit vaulted ceilings, dark wooden furniture and bottle-lined honeycomb walls), Antica Cantina serves up classic Neapolitan fare made with salutary attention to detail. Among the winners are the *pasta patata e provola* (pasta, potato and *provola* cheese) and the *ziti alla genovese* (pasta with rich onion and meat sauce). Ditch the *vino locale* for a bottled wine instead – it's cheaper.

DONNA TERESA MAP P283 OSTERIA €

☎ 081 556 70 70; Via Michele Kerbaker 58; meals €14; 🕒 Mon-Sat; 🚗 Vanvitelli

This swing-a-cat-sized dining room – there are only eight tables – has an epic reputation for solid home cooking. Mamma Teresa's photo looks on approvingly as diners tuck into classics such as *spezzatini al ragù* (meat stew) and *salsicce al sugo* (sausages with tomato sauce). The menu is limited, changes daily and pulls in the hordes, so book or go hungry.

FRIGGITORIA VOMERO MAP P283 SNACK BAR €

☎ 081 578 31 30; Via Domenico Cimarosa 44; snacks from €1; 🕒 Mon-Sat; Funicular Centrale to Fuga

This worn corner snack bar keeps punters happy with superb *frittura* such as deep-fried aubergines, potatoes and *zeppole*. Located opposite the funicular, it's a good place to stock up before legging it to Castel Sant'Elmo.

I GIARDINI DI CAPODIMONTE MAP P286 RISTORANTE €€

☎ 081 744 51 36; Via Capodimonte 19; meals €25; 🕒 daily; 🚗 24 to Via Capodimonte

Like a merciful mate, this shady terraced number waits at the top of the steep steps

leading from Tondo di Capodimonte. Be good to yourself with a bowl of *gnocchetti al limone* (gnocchi with lemon; €7) or the decadent *risotto allo champagne* (champagne risotto). Gurgling fountain and sultry Neapolitan song complete the soothing picture.

STARITA MAP P286 PIZZERIA €

☎ 081 557 46 82; Via Materdei 28; pizzas from €4;
🕒 Tue-Sun; 📍 Materdei

They don't get more Neapolitan than this pizzeria. Set in a washing-strung street, the giant fork and ladle hanging on the wall were used by Sophia Loren in *L'Oro di Napoli* – the kitchen made the *pizze fritte* (fried pizzas) sold by the actress in the film. Get indecisive over the 53 pizzas or trust in the owner's favourite, *fiorilli e zucchini* (€5.50), with its zucchini, zucchini flower and *provola* topping.

MERGELLINA & POSILLIPO

These two seaside places get packed out with large noisy families at weekends, especially on Sunday in summer. As well as the restaurants listed here, Mergellina is ice cream heaven. The best places boast the longest queues. Posillipo will give you a taste of the Amalfi Coast; the seafood restaurants are comparable in quality to those in Mergellina but are generally cheaper.

A LAMPARA MAP P287 RISTORANTE €€€

☎ 081 575 64 92; Via Discesa Coroglio 79; meals €30;
🕒 Thu-Tue; 📍 140 to Via Posillipo

Short of spruiking it on a street corner, permantanned locals pledge allegiance to this homely haven, where the *ravioli alla bolognese* is an education in bolognese brilliance. Enjoy it on the voyeuristic streetside terrace. The wine list brims with decent local drops, and the summertime Sunday buffet draws a preppy league of loyal fans – so get in early.

CIBI COTTI MAP PP284-5 TAVOLA CALDA €

☎ PHONE; Via F Galliani 30; meals €7; 🕒 12-4pm daily; 📍 Mergellina

The gruff old chap in the Godfather sunglasses is Vittorio and deep down he's a softie. His little white-tiled eatery is an in-the-know gem, tucked away in a raffish market arcade. Conversations bounce from table to laminex table as regulars feed on simple, filling and supercheap choices such as *sardine fritte* (fried sardines) and rice with octopus, rocket and cherry tomatoes.

top five

EAT STREETS

Borgo Marinaro (Map pp284–5) Docked yachts, legendary restaurants and languid waterside supping. Dress up and fall in love all over again.

Via Santa Teresa a Chiaia (Map pp284–5) This street may take a little squinting to locate on the map, but persevere – it's home to some of the city's best restaurants and trattorie.

Via dei Tribunali (Map pp280–1) It's all here: cafés, pasticcerie, delicatessens, pizzeria and restaurants in one electric old-town strip.

Piazza Bellini (Map pp280–1) OK, not strictly a street, but this chilled-out bohemian hot spot is perfect for late-night drinking, nibbles and deep conversation.

Via Toledo (Map pp280–1) Need a sugar fix? Naples' retail epicentre is home to some wickedly tempting *pasticcerie* and cafés.

DI GIROLAMO GIUSEPPE

MAP PP284-5 SNACK BAR €

☎ 081 66 44 98; Via Mergellina 55E; pasta from €1;
🕒 8am-3pm & 5-11pm daily; 📍 Mergellina

Run by charming elderly gentlemen in retro diner hats, this loveable nook serves up tasty grub at rock-bottom prices. *Pizza a taglio* (pizza by the slice) combos include mozzarella and spinach, and pumpkin tomato basil and olives. There's also *pizza frita*, focaccia and ready-to-eat plates of pasta. Plonk yourself down on a bar stool and fill up to the sounds of Burt Bacharach.

SALVATORE

 MAP PP284-5 RISTORANTE €€€

☎ 081 68 18 17; Via Mergellina 4A; meals €35;
🕒 Thu-Tue; 📍 Mergellina

The key to happiness? Balmy nights, bay views and filthy-fresh seafood. You're guaranteed at least the last two at this buzzing favourite, with its *dolce vita* terrace and blingy indoor chandeliers. Culinary clichés make way for *cecinielle* (fried fish patties), comforting *minestra in brodo* (thick noodle broth) and *calamaretti con uva passa* (baby squid with pine nuts and raisins). Owner Tonino is a serious wine buff.

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