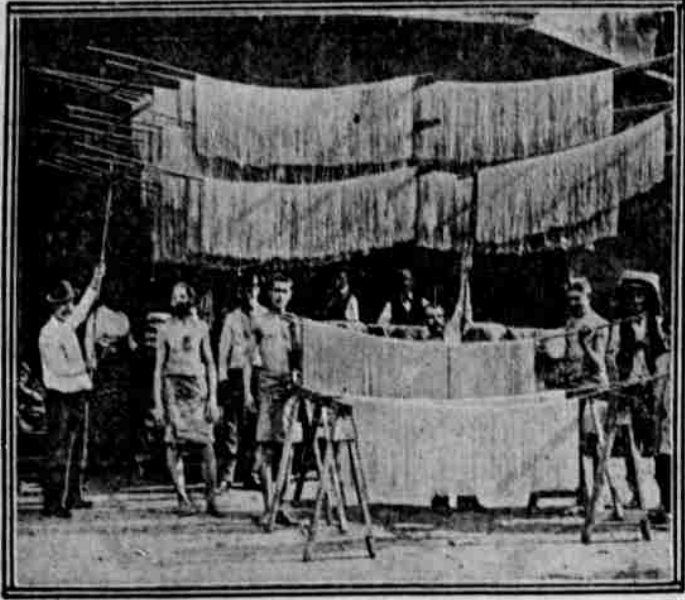


NAPLES



Macaroni Factory in Naples.

(Prepared by the National Geographic Society, Washington, D. C.)

NAPLES, Italy's largest southern city, cannot boast the architectural beauty of the northern cities, but its people, whether rich or poor, are strikingly beautiful physically. From the storied heights that sweep in a magnificent amphitheater around the brilliant bay the old city struggles downward in a picturesque huddle of densely-packed houses and other buildings, tortuous streets full of color and bubbling with the nervous activity of the South, black canyons of stone stairs, often slippery with damp and dirt, across which the teeming houses gossip and quarrel in neighborly wise.

Nowhere are fisherfolk more picturesque in habit and costume; nowhere is there so salty a dialect, spiced with such quaint and startling phrases and exclamations. Bare and brown of leg, dressed in ragged, parti-colored motley, a stout canvas band about each sinewy body for hauling in the net without cutting the hands to pieces, they bring ashore their shimmering silver quarry right along the widest, finest promenade in the city—the handsome Via Caracciolo. Across that broad street the charming Villa Nazionale, not a house, but a public park, wholly conventional in design, contains an aquarium which may fairly be considered the most remarkable in the world for both the variety and interest of its funny and monstrous exhibits and the thoroughness of its scientific work. To it many of the great universities of the world contribute annually for the privilege of sending special investigators in zoology.

The commercial activity of this second report of Italy clings close about the skirts of the enormous royal palace—500 feet long on the bay side and 95 feet high—and the naval basin and dockyard. Every smell and sound of a thriving seaport may be smelled and heard, multiplied generously; every flag seen on the ships that ride at anchor near the stone wharves.

On the streets men of every race mingle tongues and costumes and manners; Babel itself was only mildly confused compared with this jumble of Naples; and throughout all the throng play the street musician, the macaroni enter—that is a trade, and a satisfying one, apparently—the pirate cabman, the guide, and the baggage-smasher—all seeking whom they may plunder with a gracious twinkle of humid black eyes.

Street Singers Are Numerous. Street singing is an especially Neapolitan institution, and when for the first time one hears beneath his window the more often than not off-key versions of the snappy, lilting, inexpressibly infectious Neapolitan songs, he is enchanted, and throws pennies freely. After a week or so of it as a steady diet, day and night, he inclines much more toward heavy crockery!

The entire Neapolitan littoral is volcanic, from Vesuvius on the east to the storied tufa heights of Cumae on the west. Between Cumae's ruins and Naples lie those famed and mystic Phlegraean fields of our school days, which nobody remembers anything about. They have always been a theater of tremendous volcanic activity, but the disturbances here have no connection, curiously enough, with Vesuvius; also, the two areas are wholly different in geological character and formation.

The spongy nature of the rock of the Phlegraean fields allowed the internal steam and gases to escape with relatively little resistance at numerous points; so, instead of one tremendous peak being formed, as in the case of Vesuvius, many little craters wart the ground. Thirteen still exist, among them Solfatara, belching out a vaporous combination of sulphur, hydrogen, and steam, and producing startling little special eruptions when teased with a lighted stick; dried-up Lake Agnano, with its famous, or infamous, "Dog Grotto," where about 18 inches of warm, bluish, foetid carbonic acid gas snuffs out torches even more quickly than it used to the poor dogs kept there for show purposes; and Amber Lake Avernus, in ancient times surrounded by dense forests and dark traditions, one of which declared no bird could fly across it because of its poisonous exhalations.

The Cumaean Sybil was supposed to inhabit a gloomy cavern in the south-

bank. Her room and others in the rock are probably part of the remarkable harbor works built by the Emperor Augustus. In this same region is the Monte Nuovo, 400 feet high, thrown up in three days in 1538.

Dominated by Vesuvius.

On the east Vesuvius dominates the whole splendid region. He is the Cyclops standing, blind and massive and treacherous, in the midst of his rich vineyards, olive groves, and vegetable gardens; for, though he spreads destruction in his blind rages, the fact is that this entire plain is the marvelously fertile soil that disintegrated lava and volcanic ashes make. It bears huge crops, far greater and finer than ordinary good soil can produce. Among other things, it yields the grapes whose spicy juices are so precious their wine is termed *Lacrima Christi*—Tears of Christ.

After the great eruption of A. D. 79 there were occasional eruptions which varied in intensity, until 1500, when the volcano became quiescent. The crater walls grew up thick with trees and scrub, while cattle and wild boars roamed the grassy plain inside—all but an ominous lower level of ashes and pools of hot, gaseous water. Then, in December of 1831, the whole interior was blown violently out, and 18,000 people are said to have perished. Since then Vesuvius has never been entirely quiet.

It was horrible hot mud that overwhelmed fashionable Herculaneum in 79, belched from the crater as torrents of steam, boiling water, and scoriae. Herculaneum is a rich and tempting bait to the archeologists, for from a single one of the ruins came most of those exquisite bronzes in the Naples museum, and 3,000 rolls of papyrus, part of the owner's private library.

What a contrast is Pompeii, destroyed at the same time, but by ashes! Though these gradually hardened into something like cement, they are much more easily removed than the stone at Herculaneum, and most of what we know of the details of ancient Latin life we have learned from the stark, scarred, roofless lower stories spread out before us in deathly panorama within the old city walls.

Stabiae and Capri.

Where the pretty little modern watering place of Castellammare di Stabia, with its cooling sea baths and strong mineral waters, lies snugly in a little light on the neck of the Sorrentine peninsula, Stabiae once stood. It is one of the very loveliest parts of Italy, a region of tumbled hills clothed with luxuriant groves of orange and lemon, whose golden fruit adds luster to the gleaming foliage. Enticing roads of milky white wind and wind, now between high-walled grove and vineyard; now along open, skyey heights, with the blue sea as a background hundreds of feet below, and the beetling cliff rising straight behind; now beside villa gardens, where every brilliant color on nature's palette seems to have been poured out with prodigal fullness. The air is perfumed, the skies are soft and balmy, the roads superb.

Capri, a great, twin-humped camel of an island, kneels in the blue just off the tip of the peninsula. From the away-backed huddle of white, pink, blue, cream, and drab houses along the large harbor, up the breakneck road to the fascinating town nestling among the hills, white-roofed and Moorish, and on, still higher, by the winding road or up the nearly perpendicular flights of rock stairs, which furrow the frowning crag with their sharp zigzag outlines, to Anacapri, 500 feet or so above, every step of the way breathes the pride and splendor and degradation of the island's greater days.

Here a cyclopean mass of shattered masonry in the warm emerald water tells of a Roman emperor's bath; yonder on a chimneylike cliff the sinister ruins of a stout castle keep whispers of ancient garrisons and pirates, not armed with automatic rifles or high powered artillery; and here, overlooking the sea, the vast ruins of a villa recall "that hairy old goat" Tiberius and his wastrel voluptuousness that turned fair Capri into satyrdom.

Capri today is richly dowered for sightseer, artist, historian, antiquary and geologist. On every hand are shaded walks and sequestered bowers in the thick groves of orange, lemon, laurel and myrtle; wild back grounds of tumbled rock; titanic rifts in the crest, into which the sea thrusts long, insidious blue fingers.

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