

# Italy Info

## #3 Ravello

(and Vietri Sul Mare)



**Ravello** is a picturesque hilltop village approximately 1,200 feet above sea level. It is renowned for its lush gardens, classical music culture and breathtaking views of the sea. It offers a slower pace compared to the bustling coastal towns and is home to about 2,500 inhabitants.



Bus ride after church in Salerno to Ravello with possible stop in Vietri sul Mare

17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31	Memorial Day					

## Winding road up to Ravello



Ravello began as a 5th-century refuge from barbarian invasions. By the 9th–13th centuries, it was a wealthy power within the Maritime Republic of Amalfi, known for wool production and Mediterranean trade. Its decline after Pisan attacks in the 12th century, thus preserving its quiet charm.



Ravello became a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1997. It has long been a destination for artists, writers, and musicians.

**Piazza Centrale**, the main square, is lined with cafes, shops, restaurants, an art gallery, and the entrance to Villa Rufolo.





The Cathedral Central nave contains the “Pulpit of the Gospels”, (on the right). It was created in 1272 by Nicolo di Bartolomeo from Foggia.



This is the entrance to **Villa Rufolo** off Piazza Centrale. The villa was built by a wealthy merchant in 1270. It hosted banquets for kings and nobility but fell into disrepair over time. A Scottish botanist, Sir Francis Neville Reid, bought it in 1851 and undertook extensive renovations.



You can tour the villa's buildings, but they are rather barren on the inside. The real beauty is in the gardens.



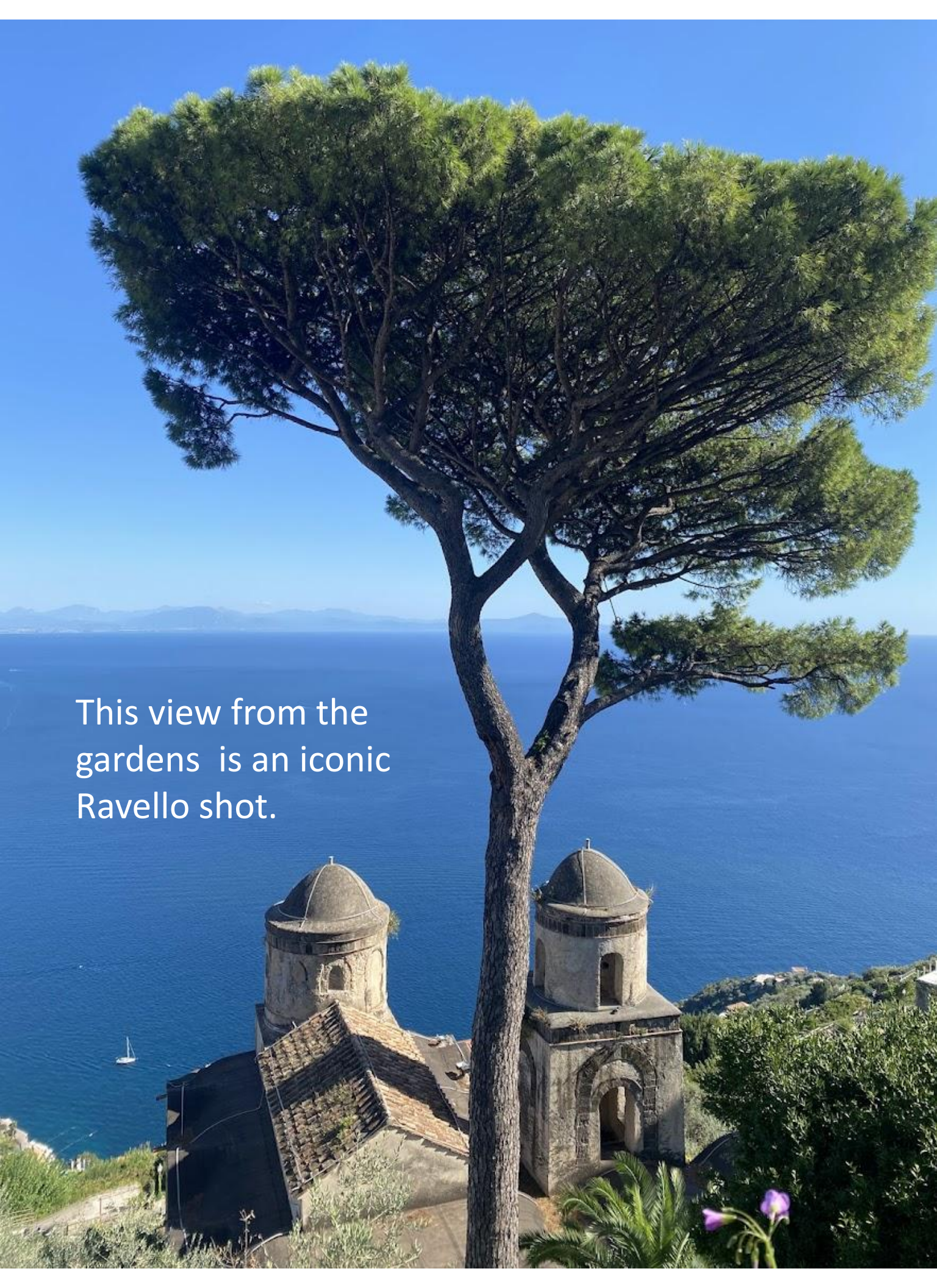




Richard Wagner visited the villa in 1880. He exclaimed, “I have found the enchanted garden of Klingsor.” It inspired him to complete his last composition, the opera Parsifal. Each summer Ravello hosts a musical festival in Wagner’s honor. It is held in the Villa’s garden with the expansive blue sea acting as backdrop.



From here you can see the coastal towns of Minori and Amalfi. Portable performance platforms cover these flower beds during the musical festival.

A large, iconic umbrella pine tree stands prominently in the foreground, its branches spreading wide against a clear blue sky. Below the tree, the view opens up to a coastal town with a church featuring two prominent domes. The sea is a deep blue, and distant mountains are visible on the horizon. The scene is a classic Ravello view.

This view from the gardens is an iconic Ravello shot.



**Villa Cimbrone** is a 10-minute walk (slightly uphill) from Villa Rufolo. It is older, dating back to the 11<sup>th</sup> century, but most of the gardens and buildings are about 100 years old. The Villa is currently in use as a luxury 5-star hotel. Virginia Woolf, Greta Garbo, Winston Churchill and John F Kennedy were guests.



The **Cimbrone Cloister**, situated right across from the ticket office, is a notable part of the villa's architectural beauty. The cloister is a medieval structure with Renaissance flourishes, showing casing pointed archways, vaulted ceilings, and a central covered well decorated with majolica tiles.





Villa Cimbrone's gardens extend over 15 acres, featuring a blend of Italian and English garden styles.









The **Avenue of Immensity** leads to the Infinity Terrace. Side paths reveal more garden gems.





Infinity Terrace with marble busts.









**Vietri sul Mare** means “ancient” (from the Latin root veteri) “by the sea”. Over centuries it became known for its skilled production of ceramics. It is still famous for this with local workshops creating hand-painted tiles, plates, and vases in rich blues, yellows, and greens, the typical colors of the surrounding sea and landscape. The town’s streets, buildings, and even staircases are adorned with ceramic decorations.



Ceramica Avallone Pasquale 1839

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A 16-minute train ride runs between Salerno and Vietri sul Mare with the last train running at 11 pm.

There is open time the last 2 days of the tour to go to Vietri sul Mare for souvenir shopping, if you like.