

Italy’s lost Roman road reopens after 2,200 years

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HERCULANEUM, Campania — A 260-kilometre road built by ancient Rome to link the capital with the deep south has reopened to travellers this week, after lying largely forgotten for six decades.

The Strada Regia delle Calabrie follows the route of the old Roman consular road between Capua and Regium, passing through Campania, Basilicata and Calabria. It connects 45 towns, three national parks and five UNESCO World Heritage sites.

The route was used for centuries by armies, officials and travellers, including Charles V of Habsburg, Giuseppe Garibaldi, and retreating German forces in 1943. It fell out of use after a motorway opened in 1962, cutting off the villages that once served as postal stations along the way.

Rediscovering a forgotten route

Architect Luca Esposito spent eight years walking the entire road, using historical maps and period records to reconstruct its path.

“We are putting 2,200 years of history, 260 kilometres, eight years of study, 45 cities and small villages, 15 ancient postal stations, five UNESCO sites, three national parks, and 40 nineteenth-century taverns into a single network,” Esposito said. “The goal is to give value to this immense heritage that is still hidden.”

Source: https://italynow.co.uk/italys-lost-roman-road-reopens-after-2200-years/



Herculaneum ruins *(Credits: Italy Now)*

The route was formally launched at the Reggia di Portici, with a published guide and digital maps to follow, along with an expansion into Basilicata and Calabria.

A strategy to spread tourism

The launch came as Campania prepares for the 2027 America's Cup and an expected rise in international visitors. Officials hope the road will draw tourism away from the region's crowded coastline and into its depopulating interior, where 70% of Campania's 550 municipalities have fewer than 5,000 residents.

"There is an interior territory where every kind of tourism is possible: outdoor, experiential, gastronomic, wellness," said regional tourism councillor Vincenzo Maraio.

Rosario Santanastasio, national president of Archeoclub d'Italia, said the project reflects a wider need to disperse visitor numbers as global tourism grows. "We cannot send them all to the same places," he said.

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