

# WHAT COULD GO WRONG?

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In March of 2006, my sisters and I decided to take my mother with us to the Amalfi coast, in Italy. It was decided to find a house to rent, and after much deliberation, we found a nice place near Sorrento. Thus, we set off, 5 ladies and nine pieces of luggage. My mother always travels with two small suitcases, with her medications in the one that she carries on the plane. At DIA security, mom's carry-on was not allowed on for some reason, so we had to check it. Her coat was also in the case.

As we neared Paris, where we were to transfer to Naples, we were very far behind schedule, and since we knew we only had one hour to transfer, we were prepared to make other arrangements, but we argued against being put up for the night and taking the flight the next day, as we were meeting the owner of the house later that day.

We were finally put on a plane to Turin, then to Naples, but since we were now going to be very late, my sister called the owner on the pay phone, to inform her of our new time.

Upon arrival in Naples, we found only two of the suitcases – no sign of the others. Neither of the ones we had were with mom's medicine. We were told it was necessary to return to Naples tomorrow as they had probably been on the next flight from Paris – which we were supposed to take.

Somehow, we missed the freeway, so our trip to Sorrento was through picturesque villages, with small roads, and very nice – except when an SUV ahead of us would just stop – the driver getting out to run into the store, or bar. This happened so many times that our 40-minute trip turned into a couple of hours. On one of these forced stops, we did take our chance to shop for some supplies – my mother got a few bottles of wine, as she was a bit perturbed by now.

Upon arrival, we managed to get a few instructions from the owner as she was now very late returning to her home. "Don't touch this switch." And she was off.

The next day was rainy and cold, and since most of us only had our travel outfits and carry-ons, we needed to get our suitcases, so back to Naples – on the freeway this time, only to miss the turnoff to the airport and wind up in downtown Naples, in horrendous traffic. Using my limited Italian and lots of sign language, we got to the airport, only to learn no luggage. We insisted on looking at the lost luggage and found one piece, the one with mom's coat and medicines, but the rest were nowhere to be found. Multiple claims were filed and we headed back to Sorrento.

Another day we decided to check out our area. Someone had parked behind us, and in maneuvering, we hit the gate and scraped the car. It was sure a good thing we had full coverage insurance!

We took a trip to Pompeii, and toured the grounds, and bought tee-shirts, to have something to wear. Returning home, we got in the wrong lane and wound up going through the lane for trucks and those with passes. No one was there and we just drove on – laughing hysterically!

Upon returning to the house, we learned that I had turned the heat on high rather than off, and now we had no heat, as it used up all the gas. Then we learned no hot water – my sister had hit that special switch during the night, thinking it was a lite switch, and even though she had switched it back on, the hot water was now off.

One night for dinner, we found a nice place and the owner decided he would order for us – we had about 15 platters of food, of every type in front of us! Locals were so friendly, and we were so happy to have these memories to share with each other! Leaving, we scraped the very high curb.

The next morning, we were planning on heading to Amalfi coast and Positano, which is the reason we had come. One sister could not find her camera! We drove back to the restaurant, and sure enough, it was sitting in the corner!! After a while we found someone coming in to cook, and they let us in to retrieve the camera – so we were a bit late in getting going, but no problem! (we heard that phrase so many times that week!)

The drive was everything we had hoped! Lots of pull overs for photos and lovely weather. But the drivers were crazy and at one point, my sister was yelling, "Go ahead and hit me – I still have one good fender!!" At one of the many shops, another sister learned her credit card had been declined – it

turned out that the phone call in Turin had been routed through Rome, and the credit card company had called her husband, whereupon he said to cancel it as we were not going to Rome and it had probably been stolen. Luckily, we all helped her out!

After one week, we headed back to Naples, and it was a good thing we had not found our luggage – where would we have put it!!?? Upon returning our car, the guy took our keys and then looked at the car and started yelling! My sister just said, “No problem, we took the full coverage.”