



nileGUIDE

ALL YOU NEED TO PLAN YOUR PERFECT TRIP



stevebrownd50

Romance in the City that wrote the Book, Venice.

Mestre, Venice, 3 Days

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Guide Description



AUTHOR NOTE: Venice is possibly the most romantic city in the world, it has structures that have been around for hundreds and hundreds of years, the city exudes passion and power that anyone can feel. Embrace the feelings and enjoy Venice to its fullest, dine in the finest restaurants both local and international, wine in the surrounding areas, and live like kings and queens if only for a moment.

Itinerary Overview

things to do
restaurants
hotels
nightlife

Day 1 - Venice

DAY NOTE: Caffè Florian is a wonderful place to dine at any time of the day. It has been serving since 1720, what better place to begin your trip than a place that is over 300 years old. Your adventure to Veneto will show you the wonders of the wine process that have been occurring for over 3,000 years. You will get to try a wide variety of fine wines as well as tantalizing appetizers. Terrazza Danieli is a quaint place to dine that you will surely enjoy. After your tour you can either explore the surrounding area or enjoy the amenities at Metropole such as the pools or any of the other ones.



Caffè Florian

Historical café in Piazza San Marco



Lison-Pramaggiore Wine Region Half-Day Tour by Minivan

Day Trips



Terrazza Danieli

Top cuisine



Hotel Metropole

Hotel with a Magnificent View



Hotel Metropole

Hotel with a Magnificent View



Pizzeria/Trattoria al Vecio Canton

Pizzalicious!



Galleria dell'Accademia

Collection of Venetian Art



D'Arte e Divetro

Glass carving



Vino Vino



Doge's Palace (Palazzo Ducale)

Palace of Venetian Governors



Harry's Bar

Hemingway's favorite restaurant



Haig's Bar

Full of atmosphere

Day 2 - Venice

DAY NOTE: When you finally rouse yourself from your slumber the Ristorante Pizzeria Conca D'Oro is a fantastic place to dine, you will find outdoor dining areas from which to enjoy the views of the city. The menu is very traditional and very good. Today is about discovering all of the amazing art that this city boasts, the Galleria dell'Accademia is a good place to start. It boasts one of the worlds finest collections of Venetian Art, there are tours that can take you through the entire gallery to get the full effect. D'Arte e Divertido is an amazing collection of glass art from many artists. Vino Vino is a great place to take lunch, and yes the name is quite telling however there is also a great assortment of foods for you to enjoy. After lunch Doge's Palace is a place rich in history it has been rebuilt many times since its creation in the 10th century. This building shows the resilience and fortitude of this city and how it is always ready to carry the torch for the next generation. For another experience Harry's Bar Ernest Hemingway's favorite restaurant is a great place to dine. It has renowned service as well as great food and drinks. If you would like to continue your fun into the night Haig's Bar is just a short walk or taxi ride away. Here you will hear a romantic piano and find nostalgic patrons at this quaint bar.

Day 3 - Venice, Mestre

DAY NOTE: A great way to discover Venice is from the air, this is a great tour that can show you many things about the city that you would not normally find out, come in you get to be in a helicopter. After your perilous journey through the skies take refuge at Hotel Eliseo and enjoy some relaxing spa treatments. For lunch dine at Trattoria Dall'Amelia for a great sampling of cheeses, mushrooms and shellfish, and of course there is an excellent wine collection. A fun and interesting excursion is to Burano, the area known for lace making. There is just something about lace that is sensual and fun, so check it out for yourself. For an incredibly traditional meal dine at Gatto Negro for some of the freshest and finest fish in the area. For a romantic time after dinner Osteria alla Frasca is a great place, its outdoor canopy is a great place to spend an evening sipping on whatever beverage you so choose. When it is all said and done head to the Metropole for a well deserved rest in your heavenly bed.



Skip the Line: Venice in One Day

Canal Cruise

Itinerary Overview

things to do
restaurants
hotels
nightlife



Trattoria Dall'Amelia

Venetian cuisine for the tourist palate



Burano

Famous for its lace making



Gatto Nero

"Black Cat" loves fish



Osteria alla Frasca

Lovely canopy



Hotel Metropole

Hotel with a Magnificent View

Day 1 - Venice

QUICK NOTE

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contact:

tel: 39 41 522 4409
<http://www.caffeflorian.com/>

location:

Piazza San Marco
Venice 30124

hours:

9:30a-11p

1 Caffè Florian

DESCRIPTION: This café opened in 1720 and has a long history of feeding arts and culture and its adherents. It is easy to find, as it is bang in the middle of the piazza, underneath the Correr museum and the museum of Archeology. More refined than other cafés, the decor here is sumptuous and elegant. Summer sees outside tables and live music. The menu offers light meals, tea and cakes. Taste the best sacher torte in the city a legacy of the Austrian occupation. © wcities.com



contact:

<http://www.partner.viator.com/en/6793/tours/Venice/Lison-Pramaggiore-Wine-Region-Half-Day-Tour-by-Minivan/d522-3303WIN>

location:

Venice Veneto and Venice

Lison-Pramaggiore Wine Region Half-Day Tour by Minivan

DESCRIPTION: Discover the famous wines of the Veneto on an informative and appetizing half-day excursion by minivan. Traveling by minivan ensures you'll enjoy the benefits of a small group tour.

The Lison-Pramaggiore DOC wine area is set in the easternmost part of the Veneto, only a short distance from Venice. Vines have been grown here for at least 3,000 years, and perhaps even back to prehistoric times.

On this relaxing morning tour you will visit one of the local family-run vineyards in this rich agricultural area, and see how they these superlative wines are produced today.

A variety of wines are produced, including Pinot Bianco, Pinot Grigio, Merlot, Chardonnay and Sauvignon.

Together with a wine tasting you will enjoy homemade appetizers from the family-run 'cantina', and of course there is the opportunity to stock up on a bottle or two of 'vino italiano'. © Viator



viator

contact:

tel: 39 41 522 6480
fax: 39 41 520 0208
http://danieli.hotelinvenice.com/main_en.htm

location:

Riva degli Schiavoni
Venice Castello 4196

hours:

Noon-3p, 6p-10p M-Su

2 Terrazza Danieli

DESCRIPTION: This restaurant, which belongs to Hotel Danieli, is located in Riva degli Schiavoni in the San Marco basin. © wcities.com



wcities

contact:

tel: 041-520-5044
fax: 041-522-3679
www.hotelmetrople.com

location:

Castello 4149
Venice VE 30122

3 Hotel Metropole

DESCRIPTION: Vivaldi lived here from 1704 to 1738, when it was the chapter house of La Pietà church next door and he was its violin and concert master. The quirky palazzo that has evolved from that church building is now a member of the Romantik hotel association -- and aptly so. The owner has tried to outfit his hotel as a Victorian-style home, packed with quirky collections of curios (fans, purses, bottle openers, crucifixes, cigarette cases), and its public salons are tucked with cozy bars and sitting niches. Personalized service is taken very seriously here; there are 67 staff members for 72 rooms. Accommodations vary widely in true Romantic style; you may find such details as Burano glass lamps and Murano chandeliers, inlaid wood furnishings, Romantic-era watercolors and prints, or even twisting marble columns and frescoed putti behind the bed. Since every room is different, the true choice here is picking a room overlooking the Bacino San Marco, or at least the side canal where water taxis pull up, rather than the courtyard housing the lovely garden restaurant enlivened by nightly keyboard music. To the rates below, you'll have to add 104€ (\$135) for that bacino view, but they make it up to you by offering free car parking (to everyone, not just lagoon-side renters) if you let them know you need it before 8pm the day you arrive. © Frommer's

Hotels.com

Day 2 - Venice

QUICK NOTE

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contact:

tel: 041-520-5044

fax: 041-522-3679

www.hotelmetropole.com

location:

Castello 4149

Venice VE 30122

1 Hotel Metropole

Hotels.com

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contact:

tel: 041-528-5176

www.alveciocanton.com

location:

Castello 4738a

Venice 30122

hours:

2 Pizzeria/Trattoria al Vecio Canton

DESCRIPTION: Good pizza is hard to find in Venice, and I mean that in the literal sense. Tucked away in a northeast corner behind Piazza San Marco on a well-trafficked route connecting it with Campo Santa Maria Formosa, the Canton's wood-paneled taverna-like atmosphere and great pizzas are worth the time you'll spend looking for the place. There is a full trattoria menu as well, with a number of pasta and side dishes



Photo courtesy of Pizzeria/Trattoria al Vecio Canton

Thurs-Mon noon-2:30pm;
Wed-Mon 7-10:30pm

(contorni) of vegetables providing a palatable alternative. ©
Frommer's

contact:

tel: +39 41 522 2247
<http://www.turismovenezia.it/eng/dynalay.asp>

location:

Dorsoduro 1050
Venice 30121

hours:

9a-2p M, 9a-7p Tu-Sa, 9a-8p
Su

3 Galleria dell'Accademia

DESCRIPTION: Containing the world's finest collection of Venetian paintings, the Galleria dell' Accademia houses works of art by Mantegna, Bellini, Carpaccio, Titian, Tintoretto, Veronese, Tiepolo and Canaletto – arranged for the most part in chronological order from room to room. A sophisticated tour through Byzantine, Gothic, Pre-Renaissance, High Renaissance, and Baroque art, the Galleria dell'Accademia is easily reached by crossing over the wooden Academia Bridge, having been named after the Galleria itself, residing on the Grande Canal. © NileGuide



wcities

contact:

tel: +39 41 52 0789
<http://www.elmoro.com/UK/GALLERIE.htm>

location:

2671 Campo San Maurizio -
San Marco
Venice 30124

hours:

9a-12:30p & 3p-7p Tu-Sa

4 D'Arte e Divetro

DESCRIPTION: Glass sculpture is a speciality here; objects d'art, sculptures, vases and glasses from the current collection are displayed, as well as pieces from other collections. © wcities.com



contact:

tel: 041-241-7688
www.vinovino.co.it

location:

San Marco 2007
Venice

hours:

Daily 11:30am-11:30pm

5 Vino Vino

DESCRIPTION: Vino Vino is an informal wine-bar archetype serving simple, well-prepared food, but its biggest pull is the impressive selection of local and European wines sold by the bottle or glass. The Venetian specialties are written on a chalkboard but are also usually displayed at the glass counter. After placing your order, settle into one of about a dozen wooden tables squeezed into two storefront-style rooms. Credit the high-quality food to the fact that Vino Vino shares a kitchen (and an owner) with the eminent and expensive Antico Martini restaurant a few doors down. It's also a great spot for a leisurely self-styled wine tasting (around 3€/3.90 per glass), with great cicchetti bar food. At dinner the food often runs out around 10:30pm, so don't come too late. © Frommer's



Photo courtesy of Vino
Vino

contact:

tel: +39 041 271 5911
fax: +39 041 528 5028
<http://www.museciviciveneziani.it/frame.asp>

location:

San Marco 1
Venice 30124

hours:

Nov-Mar Daily 9a-5p; Apr-Oct
Daily 9a-7p

6 Doge's Palace (Palazzo Ducale)

DESCRIPTION: Located next to the Basilica di San Marco, the Doge's Palace has been the symbol of Venice's political life and public administration for hundreds of years. The building has been continuously evolving into its present form since 1340, even though its foundations date back to the early Middle Ages (10th century). Considered a masterpiece of the gothic style, it has been destroyed many times, most notably during the fire of 1106. It was rebuilt by Barbarossa in 1177 and modified over the time by the different Dogi reigning in Venice. More than a palace, the Palazzo Ducale is an extensive infrastructure, comprising the apartments of the doge (often used as an exhibition space), the government quarters and the palace of justice. When visiting the palace, many parts are worth the detour. In the Museo dell'Opera, you'll see the remaining pieces of the building's medieval facades as well as a collection of sculptures dating from the 14th and 15th Centuries. Before heading towards the Doge's apartments, you'll enter the magnificent courtyard. Take some time to walk alongside the Loggias to enjoy the various angles of the Palazzo. In addition to the Institutional Chambers and the Prisons, take some time to see the great collection of weapons and armaments in the Armoury. © NileGuide



wcities

contact:

tel: 39 41 528 5777
fax: 39 41 520 8822
<http://www.turista.it/buongusto/harrys/index.htm>

location:

Calle Vallaresso, 1323
Venice 30124

hours:

10:30a-10:55p

7 Harry's Bar

DESCRIPTION: This is one of Venice's best restaurants and for good reasons. Saying that the service is excellent is an understatement and the menu features only the freshest and best quality ingredients. The Risottos and the Creamy Cod are popular menu selections. The bar maintains the same high caliber, and has excellent Martinis. The space is somewhat small and cozy, so it is recommended that reservations are made in advance, especially in September. © wcities.com



wcities

contact:

tel: 39 41 528 9456

location:

San Marco 5277
Venice 30124

hours:

11.30a-3p, 7p-2a

8 Haig's Bar

DESCRIPTION: This historic piano bar and restaurant is a short walk from the ruins of the La Fenice Theatre. It is sophisticated and elegant and its vaguely English atmosphere draws in a nostalgic clientele in the evenings. During the day it attracts crowds of tourists as a run of the mill restaurant. The cuisine is typically Venetian and includes 'cichetti' (small nibbles) as an antipasto, sardines, hard boiled eggs, grilled vegetables, baby octopus salad. There are also pasta dishes and main courses are mostly based on fish. The desserts are also quite good. In the evening cocktails are served creating a slightly American atmosphere. © wcities.com

Day 3 - Venice, Mestre

QUICK NOTE

DAY NOTE: A great way to discover Venice is from the air, this is a great tour that can show you many things about the city that you would not normally find out, come in you get to be in a helicopter. After your perilous journey through the skies take refuge at Hotel Eliseo and enjoy some relaxing spa treatments. For lunch dine at Trattoria Dall'Amelia for a great sampling of cheeses, mushrooms and shellfish, and of course there is an excellent wine collection. A fun and interesting excursion is to Burano, the area known for lace making. There is just something about lace that is sensual and fun, so check it out for yourself. For an incredibly traditional meal dine at Gatto Negro for some of the freshest and finest fish in the area. For a romantic time after dinner Osteria alla Frasca is a great place, its outdoor canopy is a great place to spend an evening sipping on whatever beverage you so choose. When it is all said and done head to the Metropole for a well deserved rest in your heavenly bed.

contact:

<http://www.partner.viator.com/en/6793/tours/Venice/Skip-the-Line-Venice-in-One-Day/d522-2635V1DAY>

location:

Venice Veneto and Venice

Skip the Line: Venice in One Day

DESCRIPTION: First time in Venice? You'll see all the highlights of this magical city on this combined walking and boat tour. Plus, you'll skip the long lines at St. Mark's Basilica – don't waste time waiting in lines when you're on vacation!

Your comprehensive introduction to Venice begins with a two-hour walking tour highlighting all the important monuments, from San Marco Square to the Rialto Bridge. You'll learn the history behind the famous landmarks, including the basilica's Byzantine heritage and the adjoining prisons of the Doge's Palace. Plus, you'll visit the famed basilica of St. Mark's without having to stand in long queues!

Leaving the crowds behind, you'll enter a labyrinth of narrow passageways, alleys, canals and delicate bridges. Highlights include Campo Santa Maria Formosa, Marco Polo's House, an old merchant's warehouse and the most beautiful well-head in Venice, before finishing the tour near the Rialto Bridge. Next, enjoy a relaxing cruise along the Grand Canal of Venice. Along the way you will learn the history of the stunning palaces and churches that line the famous canal, as well as anecdotes about the famous people who have resided on Venice's most important 'street'. Savoring a glass of sparkling prosecco wine, you'll also enjoy a fascinating tour of the minor canals of Venice. Enjoy free time between the Venice Walking Tour and Grand Canal Boat Tour. Exact times vary depending on the season. Most walking tours conclude approx. 1:10pm (except Sunday at 4:00pm) and boat tours start between 4:30pm and 5:30pm.

St. Mark's Basilica is free of charge to enter and we guarantee that you'll skip any long lines as part of this tour. Venice is subject to flash floods and occasionally the Basilica is closed to the public (without notice) because of high water or festivities. © Viator



viator

contact:
tel: 39 41 91 3955
fax: 39 41 544 1111
<http://www.doforni.it/>

location:
Mestre Via Miranese, 113
Mestre 30173

hours:
Lunch: noon-3p Th-Tu,
Dinner: 6p-10p Th-Tu

1 Trattoria Dall'Amelia

DESCRIPTION: This is one of the best known restaurants in Venice, and is easy to reach by land or by sea. The ambience is refined, but not pretentious; and is furnished in a classic style. The service at this restaurant is impeccable. The cuisine incorporates influences from all over the region, from excellent fish to Montello mushrooms and cheeses. Specialties include a Bigoli Pasta with shellfish and a prawn and marrow flan. The wine list is excellent, and includes many rare vintages. © wcities.com



Photo Courtesy of Trattoria Dall'Amelia

contact:
<http://www.turismovenezia.it/eng/dynalay.asp>

location:
Laguna Nord
Venice 30012

hours:
Open 24 Hours

2 Burano

DESCRIPTION: The 40 minute boat ride to reach the fairytale island of Burano is all worth it when walking through the brightly colored blue, purple, green and pink houses and calm canals lined with rowboats. Burano is most known for the exquisite hand-made lace which adorns many of the shops at the heart of the island, and at times one can watch the masters at work inside the small stores. How those little old Venetian ladies produce such intricate masterpieces, one will never know! The restaurants and bakeries of Burano make the visit to this island complete, when stopping off for a quick snack ask for the Bussolai (pronounced: boos-ohl-eye) fresh out of the oven which also come with a dipping wine specifically used for these tasty cookies specific to the island. (Although the friendly Burano waiters will probably recommend this unique item before you even ask.) © NileGuide



wcities

contact:
tel: 39 41 73 0120
<http://www.gattonero.com/en/>

location:
Fondamenta Giudecca, 88
Venice Veneto 30100

hours:
Noon-3p, 6p-10p Tu-Su

3 Gatto Nero

DESCRIPTION: Anyone who knows Italy will know that the 'Gatto Nero' (Black Cat) is a name which is typical of the old osterie. This is a typical osteria where you can eat excellent fish. © wcities.com



Gatto Nero

contact:
tel: 39 41 528 5433

location:
Cannaregio 5176
Venice 30131

4 Osteria alla Frasca

DESCRIPTION: This tavern is situated close to the jetty at the Fondamente Nove in Corte della Carità. It has a lovely canopy which creates a cool shade in the summertime. The outdoor atmosphere in summer is ideal and the food is good all year round. Because of its location it is patronised mainly by Venetians who enjoy good food with no frills. Service is polite and welcoming. The food is based mainly on traditional fish dishes and is served with a lovely crisp house white. During the warmer weather clients usually sit around chatting until the early hours. © wcities.com

contact:

tel: 041-520-5044

fax: 041-522-3679

www.hotelmetrople.com

location:

Castello 4149

Venice VE 30122

5 Hotel Metropole

Hotels.com

DESCRIPTION: Vivaldi lived here from 1704 to 1738, when it was the chapter house of La Pietà church next door and he was its violin and concert master. The quirky palazzo that has evolved from that church building is now a member of the Romantik hotel association -- and aptly so. The owner has tried to outfit his hotel as a Victorian-style home, packed with quirky collections of curios (fans, purses, bottle openers, crucifixes, cigarette cases), and its public salons are tucked with cozy bars and sitting niches. Personalized service is taken very seriously here; there are 67 staff members for 72 rooms. Accommodations vary widely in true Romantic style; you may find such details as Burano glass lamps and Murano chandeliers, inlaid wood furnishings, Romantic-era watercolors and prints, or even twisting marble columns and frescoed putti behind the bed. Since every room is different, the true choice here is picking a room overlooking the Bacino San Marco, or at least the side canal where water taxis pull up, rather than the courtyard housing the lovely garden restaurant enlivened by nightly keyboard music. To the rates below, you'll have to add 104€ (\$135) for that bacino view, but they make it up to you by offering free car parking (to everyone, not just lagoon-side renters) if you let them know you need it before 8pm the day you arrive. © Frommer's

Venice Snapshot

Local Info

Connected by nearly 400 bridges over 117 bodies of land and with 150 winding canals to top it off, the City of Bridges is a myriad of waterways and cobblestone paths that will take you on an adorable journey through this fragment of Italy's unique history. Traffic-free streets give the city an amazing air of quiet sophistication, marked by plazas and extraordinary Catholic churches, it's no wonder Venice is one of Italy's most sought-after travel destinations.

Along the northeast coast of Italy, in the region of Veneto, the city of Venice is divided in half by what you might call "Main Street," a waterway known as the Grand Canal, a romantic lovers' paradise. Gondola taxis take visitors from one island to another, often tagging on a little singing for an extra buck or two. Still, the price is worth it as this is one of the most unique cities in the world which, despite huge influxes of tourists each year, maintains a sense of dignity and culture unlike any other.

Multi-colored marble pillars and onion-like domes are hardly comparable when it comes to the great basilicas of the world and St. Mark's Basilica is a classic. Floor-to-ceiling mosaics and numerous museums along the main plaza are not to be missed. Of course, feeding the pigeons and snapping photos against this majestic backdrop is an obligation for first timers.

Nearby at Murano Island you can take in the traditions of glass blowing with a demonstration performed by artisans who have been passing down the technique for generations. Beautiful hand-made jewelry and sculpture are also available for purchase for those who simply can't resist.

Further into the lagoon you'd best be advised to literally get lost. Part of the excitement of this city is exploration and the best way to do it is simply by walking. Cross bridges, peek into antique stores, stop off for some delicious gelato, and simply follow the winding paths. Few places in the world are built to such a human scale, allowing you to use your most basic means of transportation, your feet, to really appreciate the city.

Each year for 40 days preceding Easter is the world-famous Carnevale, in which festivities dating back to 1162 crowd the streets and plazas with performers donning

costumes and masks that will delight your fantasies for years to come. Porcelain, leather, and feathers – these are things that dreams are made of, and Venice falls perfectly in line with these characteristics, a dream waiting to be explored.

© NileGuide

History

According to official historical accounts, one of the first important events in the history of Venice was the election of the first doge, a type of magistrate, by the Byzantines in 697. His name was Paoluccio Anafesto. The domination of Byzantium is much talked about but has little factual basis. However, the city was already established in 811 when it moved to the Rivoalto, which is now called Rialto, from the islands around Torcello and Malamocco. Agnello Partecipazio was the doge at this time. The remains of San Marco were brought to the city in 829, rescued by two fishermen.

The city had more or less taken on its current appearance by 1000, when it was governed by Pietro Tribun. The ordination of power took place in 1177, when Alessandro III met with the Emperor Federico, to negotiate relations between the papacy, the council and the empire. However, in 1204 the situation changed when, after providing ships and equipment for the fourth crusade, Venice first received help to re-conquer Zara. This unusual crusade started out to conquer Jerusalem, but ended up sharing out the remains of the Byzantine Empire; Venice won control of a huge part of the spoils. Thanks to a commercial policy that also set up a strict military stronghold, the territories became their rightful property.

The state evolved with the decree of the Great Council in 1297. This act only permitted citizens to participate in the Council if their ancestors had served on it. As a result the number of nobles in power increased which guaranteed, in theory, that they would continue to hold power even if a rival faction took over. As a result, political struggles were poisoned by many private feuds. According to Bartolo da Sassoferrato, although it is true that the nobility were not much respected by the people, they had more respect than in other cities which were governed in the same

way. The population mostly accepted their government, and, as there was such a large population, there were few internal divisions. The majority were reasonably well off, which meant that society was fairly stable.

Struggles with the Ligurian city of Genoa were a problem until a century later, in 1380, after the war of Chioggia. At this point it was no longer a military obstacle, and even though they now had control of the eastern routes only commercial rivalry remained.

Events that took place around the middle of the 15th Century would change the fate of the Mediterranean forever. The expansion on the mainland, and the conquest of a great part of Lombardy was the driving force in successive alliances to overthrow an overwhelming power, the first of which was the definitive fall of Constantinople to the Turks. The trade routes, which were the basis of the Italian states, became insecure, and mercantile trade started to decline.

The final straw was the discovery of the American continent. The Mediterranean was on the brink of becoming a kind of lake under the threat of the Ottoman Empire. For many, it was the beginning of the end.

Although Venice had a somewhat overrated victory at Lepanto, Cyprus fell and the loss of Crete in 1669 was the ultimate insult. Thirty years later, Venice regained possession of Morea for a period of twenty years. The Turkish wars ended in 1718 with the overwhelming victory of the Turks. Venice then enjoyed its last century of freedom under the rule of the nobility; in 1797, Napoleon handed it to Austria, after feigned negotiations. In 1805 he returned to Venice and completed the domination of the city. The industrial structures were knocked down and the city became a shadow of its former self. In 1848-9, it was invaded again by the Hapsburgs, and in 1866, it was united with the Kingdom of Italy.

©

Hotel Insights

Venice attracts many different kinds of people, who come here for many different reasons. In comparison with other Italian cities, "hospitality" in Venice doesn't come cheap; this may be due to the romantic environment (Venice is known as one of

Venice Snapshot continued

world's "Cities of Love"), or the fact that because Venice has a very particular set up, transport and services are much more expensive, making the hotels more costly.

Venice is crowded throughout the year with tourists; a word of advice; however, if you visit during the Carnevale or the Film Festival, you need to book well in advance. If that doesn't ensure you a room, try the hotels in Treviso, Mestre or Padua.

San Marco

The hotels in this wonderful city have many different qualities: some have historical importance, some offer the best service and some have spawned Italian myths. Many lodgings in the vicinity of Piazza San Marco perfectly fit this category. The Bauer Hotel, the Westin Europa & Regina, the Hotel Gritti Palace and the Hotel Monaco & Grand Canal are some of the best.

Dorsoduro

Are these places a little too pricey for you? There are accommodations with lower prices and bags of charm in this primarily residential part of the city: Pensione Seguso and Pensione La Calcina. These are great options if looking to stay near the museums and attractions.

Castello

Near these hotels is Venice's Youth Hostel. If this is full there are also hundreds of rooms to rent (popular with students), economical boarding houses and establishments run by religious orders e.g. Foresteria Valdese. If looking for more private accommodation without the curfew (even though there isn't much to do in Venice after 10p), the Hotel La Residenza can offer guests the chance to be close to all.

Lido

L'Hotel des Bains, in Lido, witnessed the disastrous love felt by a middle-aged Dirk Bogarde in the film *Death in Venice*? And then there's the Westin Excelsior, which has played host to numerous international screen stars during the annual Film Festival. If looking for more affordable accommodation away from the tourist-filled San Marco and the Rialto, but still close enough to all the sites and transportation, the Albergo Quattro Fontane is very popular during Film Festival season and during the summer months.

Outside the City

Still not found a place to suit you? More and more people are choosing to stay in Mestre, just across the lagoon, which is served by many buses and trains. If you choose to stay here, the sense of romance may decrease but so will the prices you pay, and rest assured, you'll find a wide choice of comfortable hotels.

If you don't mind the distance and you have a car, you could stay in Riviera del Brenta. There are several villas here, which have been transformed into princely residences. This area is also less expensive than Venice.

If you like camping then you have to go to Mestre, or Cavallino to pitch your tent or park your caravan. The sites here are well equipped and are linked to San Marco by motorboats.

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Restaurants Insights

The restaurants in Venice offer a wide variety of cuisines, ranging from international fast food to five-star Italian dishes. Many of the specialties are seafood based, and there are excellent vegetables in-season from the gardens of the Isola di Sant'Erasmus. In autumn, look out for the Torbolino: an immature Pinot Nero whose arrival announces that winter is on its way.

For a light snack try an osteria or bar which serves *cicchetti* (meaning "a pick-me-up"), usually meatballs, fried vegetables, anchovies, olives and cured meats, or even a sandwich, whose delicious dough is made from the city water.

Rialto

There are many bars and osterie close to the Rialto Market, which serve fresh food—they are subject to a quality control, which is carried out daily by the local residents. Places like Da Pinto offer high-quality Venetian dishes that cater to locals and tourists alike. Venice loves to have a good drink, as does the whole of the Veneto region. There are many popular wine bars that have become real institutions. Unnamed house wines of varying quality can be found everywhere; to be sure of a good bouquet try Do Mori. A few years ago

the Da Fiore, also in this area, was named best restaurant in the world.

San Marco

A lot of Venice's top-quality gourmet restaurants can be found in San Marco, the most prestigious area of the city. Harry's Bar is a name to remember, as are Do Forni and Antico Pignolo. One of the other cafes located in the piazza, famous for its coffees, teas, desserts and light lunches, Caffè Florian looks out onto the piazza and offers an exquisite, unforgettable experience.

Cannaregio, Santa Croce & San Polo

Situated near Piazzale Roma and the University, off the tourist trail, Campo Santa Margherita is always reasonable. This area consists predominantly of pubs, bakeries, gelaterie (ice cream shops) and pizzerias, which cater for a mostly student clientèle. In summer it's the only area that stays open until late at night, much against the will of the elderly population in this district. This is also the "artistic" quarter, where actors, directors, architects, designers and a range of other artistic types hang out. Antico Dolo is one of the most popular eateries that can be found in these districts.

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Nightlife Insights

Venice is quite a sleepy city, especially when you compare it to other major cities of the world. There are several reasons for this. The first is the high average age of its citizens is one of the highest in Italy. The second is the relative difficulty getting around. This is not a place for cars and other private means of transport, and a boat ride is not really ideal for an evening out. Finally, there is a lack of space for new development in Venice.

Cannaregio

Besides, by nature Venetians do things differently. They enjoy entertaining friends in the privacy of their own homes. As a consequence, there are very few restaurants which stay open until late—to the point where going for something to eat after the cinema would be a major feat. It is only relatively recently that some restaurants with live music have reopened: *Il Paradiso perduto*, in the Misericordia district, is noted for its ambiance and its endless disputes with local residents.

Venice Snapshot continued

Dorsoduro & San Polo

Campo Santa Margherita in the summer is an exception to this rule. The presence of hundreds of students on break transforms the square into a pleasure pavilion, with restaurants, live music and extemporaneous art exhibitions. Amongst the most popular are those at Margaret Duchamp, the Caffè Rosso and Ai Sportivi. Another exception is during the Carnevale in February. In September, Campo San Polo houses an open-air cinema, where you can sit under the stars and watch recently films at the Biennale Cinema.

San Marco & Rialto

The opening seasons of the Teatro Goldoni, the operatic-symphonic Teatro La Fenice and the Malibran) attempt to shift the winter-blues. For those who like a gamble, there are three Casinos: one on the Canal Grande, one in the Lido and the other in Mestre by the airport.

Lido

Finally, there is the Lido—an island that makes this waterlogged city go bathing-mad. But even here, whether you like it or not, the emphasis is on Thomas Mann, rather than Maracaibo. The beach is extremely beautiful, but where it is most beautiful, it is also the most expensive. Where the sand runs out, towards the Murazzi islands, the water is dirty and there are breakwaters.

Outside the City

In short, one will search in vain for nocturnal activities. There simply is not anything to do. However, if you really can't do without nightlife, you can drive to Piazzale Roma (a true Venetian would need a very good justification for doing so) and then on to Jesolo.

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Things to Do Insights

A visit to Venice can last a few hours, many months, a few years or the rest of your life; it all depends on what you want to do. It's also possible to take tours to Venice that dwell more on the surrounding area, since the actual city is not that large.

Tour One: San Marco

The Basilica di San Marco at the heart of the city is a must see. There is little else

that illustrates the relationship between Venice and Byzantium so perfectly. The central plan of the basilica is a Greek cross with five large domes, one of which is at the extremity of the cross, and one at the crossing of the transept. The main façade looks out over the Piazza San Marco, with four portals that lead into the body of the church. There were originally five portals, but one, facing towards the Piazzetta, has been transformed into a large window. Immediately next to the church, and in perfect harmony with its neighbor is the Palazzo Ducale. Built as a simple castle, this has evolved into a symbol of Italian architecture and engineering from the proto-modern period. It is home to art works of exceptional importance, but unfortunately has also lost many pieces to fire at different times. On the other side of the Piazzetta is the National Marciana Library, which contains treasures of Renaissance wisdom that emerged in Venice when the city was relatively free of censorship. Many texts are marked as published in Argentina, but in reality they were the work of thousands of Venetian printers, who produced them in secret. In the Counter-Reformation, the activity of these printers helped to maintain a situation of free communication between different groups. The Museo Correr, which is part of the circuit of city museums, is also in Piazza San Marco. This museum is dedicated to the history and culture of the city, but also contains other exhibits. Under the Procuratie, and above the historic Caffè Florian, is the Museo Archeologico. The Greek community meets right behind San Marco, in the Chiesa di San Giorgio dei Greci church, which is adjacent to the museum of Byzantine Icons. In the Fondaco dei Tedeschi at the foot of the Rialto Bridge you will find the Post Office, while the National History Museum is located in the Fondaco dei Turchi.

Tour Two: Castello and Dorsoduro

The Scuola di San Giorgio degli Schiavoni was started in the secular tradition of the city by the Dalmati, who defended it strenuously until the fall of the Republic. It now holds the Carpaccio cycle, which is of exceptional importance.

Art lovers shouldn't miss the Gallerie dell'Accademia, by the bridge of the same name, which houses some treasures of Venetian painting dating from the height of its splendor in the 16th Century.

Tour Three: Cannaregio

Slightly off the traditional tourist route are sites belonging to ethnic and religious minorities. The secular tolerance of the Republic allowed the persecuted a place to live peacefully in Venice. The Island of San Lazzaro degli Armeni is the center of Armenian Diaspora culture, and there is the Moorat Raphael Palace, near San Sebastian. Venice can also boast the first ghetto in history. "Ghetto" is a Venetian word, derived from "getto," referring to the cast of foundries originally in the area, who moved away for security reasons. The word "getto" became "ghetto" since Jewish immigrants from Germany had difficulty pronouncing the Italian "g." A museum and synagogues can be visited here.

Tour Four: The Islands

Don't miss out on a visit to the islands, which are an integral part of the city's history. Torcello was one of the first to be settled; it was then abandoned as it became unhealthy. There is also Murano, home of blown glass, and Burano, an island of colour and lace. Venice is not just a city of stone, if you hire a boat (although you need to be very specific about the boat you want in a city surrounded by water!) you can cruise through areas of nature for hours in the northern lagoon near Burano. Sights to see include the Convento di San Francesco del Deserto and the valleys. Travelling southwards, you will come across Chioggia and the lagoon of Cason dei sette morti (Lagoon of the Seven Dead). Enjoy oases of fauna, archaeological areas, and hidden islands.

Tour Five: Outside the City

Once back on terra firma, you can visit Brenta and its river, or take in its beautiful villas. From Malcontenta up to Vicenza and the Villa Capra Valmarana, Padovan architectural influences are visible. Pop into Padua (10-30 minutes by train) if you want and visit the Specola observatory, which belonged to Galileo, who worked for Venice as a mathematician.

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Travel Tips

Getting There

By Air

Venice Snapshot continued

The Marco Polo Airport(VCE)(+39 41 260 6111/http://www.veniceairport.com) is tucked inland, seven miles north of Venice. Major airlines include:

Aer Lingus(+1 800 474 7424/http://www.aerlingus.com)

Aeroflot(+1 888 686 4949/http://www.aeroflot.ru/eng)

Air Canada(+1 888 247 2262/http://www.aircanada.com)

Air Dolomiti(+39 045 2886140/http://www.airdolomiti.it)

Air France(+1 800 871 1366/http://www.airfrance.com)

Alitalia(+1 800 223 5730/http://www.alitalia.com)

Alpi Eagles(+39 049 979 35 11/http://www.alpieagles.com)

BMI(+1 800 788 0555/ http://www.flybmi.com)

British Airways(+1 800 247 9297/http://www.ba.com)

Cathay Pacific(+1 800 231 0856/http://www.cathaypacific.com)

Delta(+1 800 221 1212/http://www.delta.com)

Easy Jet(+871 244 2366/http://www.easyjet.com)

Finnair(+1 800 950 5000/http://www.finnair.com)

Iberia(+1 800 772 4642/http://www.iberia.com)

Jet 2(+44 207 150 0374/http://www.jet2.com)

KLM(+1 800 374 7747/http://www.klm.nl)

Lufthansa(+1 800 645 3880/http://www.lufthansa.com)

Malev(+1 800 223 6884/http://www.malev.com)

My Air(+44 2073651597/http://www.myair.com)

Northwest(+1 800 225 2525/http://www.nwa.com)

Norwegian Air Shuttle(+47 21 49 00 15/http://www.norwegian.no)

Polish Airlines(+1 212 789 0970/http://www.lot.com)

SAS(+1 800 221 2350/http://www.flysas.com)

Sterling Airlines(+44 0870 787 8038/http://www.sterling.dk)

Swiss Airways(+1 877 359 7947/http://www.swiss.com)

TAP Portugal(+351 707 205 700/http://www.flytap.com)

Thomson Fly(+43 0192 89 598/http://www.thomsonfly.com)

United(+1 800 538 2929/ http://www.united.com)

US Airways(+1 800-622-1015/http://www.usairways.com)

Wind Jet(+39 899 65 65 05/http://www.volawindjet.it)

ATVO(+39 041 541 5180) Connects passengers between Marco Polo Airport and Piazzale Roma in Venice. Line 35-ATVO Air Terminal(blue buses) depart every 20-30 minutes and rides take about 20 minutes. Fares: EUR3 one-way, EUR5.50 roundtrip. Hours: 05:00-24:20.

ACTV(+39 041 541 5180) Line 5 departs every 30 minutes and lasts 20 minutes. Because its fares are cheaper these buses tend to be crammed with commuters, making it very cumbersome to carry and stow luggage. Fares: EUR 1. Hours: 04:05-11:10.

Alilaguna(+39 041 240 1701) The Blu line goes from Marco Polo Airport to San Marco. Rides last 60-75 minutes. Fares: EUR 12. Hours: 4:00-24:10.

Yellow taxis(+39 041 541 6363) are easy to locate outside the terminal. Rides last 15-20 minutes and generally cost EUR 40.

Water taxis, or motoscafi(+39 041 522 2303), can be found at the main dock just outside the airport's arrival hall to the left. Rides last 40 minutes and are expensive, starting at EUR 80 for two riders. Expect to pay supplements for baggage and groups exceeding four riders. Credit cards are not accepted.

Rental Car Companies

Avis(+1 800 831 2847/http://www.avis.com)

Hertz(+1 800 654 3131/http://www.hertz.com)

Europcar(+39 041 541 5654/http://www.europcar.com)

By Train

Italy's national train company, Trenitalia(http://www.trenitalia.com), serves Venice's Santa Lucia Station(+39 041 524 5346) daily. All trains to and from Santa Lucia stop at Mestre on the mainland.

By Bus

Italy lacks a national bus company, consequently independent bus lines only service their respective regions. If you travel cross-continent ride a Euroline(http://www.euroline.com) bus to Milan. From there, board an ATVO bus(+39 041 520 5530/http://www.atvo.it) to Venice's bus station at Piazzale Roma.

By Car

Autostrada 4(A4) originates in Trieste to the east and continues past Venice to Milan in the west. The Ponte della Libertà connects the mainland with Venice.

Getting Around

By Gondola

Gondolas, the symbol of Venice, are easy to locate but eye-popping expensive(a 50 minute ride starts at EUR 70). Make sure you agree to a price before boarding and don't be shy about haggling over the fare: most gondoliers initially ask for twice the going rate. Try to avoid low tide when rancid odors peak and, if possible, ride late afternoon or early evening when the Grand Canal's boat traffic significantly subsides. San Marco(+39 041 520 0685) and Rialto(+39 041 522 4904) are two of the more prominent gondola stands.

By Traghetto

If regular gondola fares exceed your budget consider boarding a traghetto. These two-man gondolas ferry people across the Grand Canal for only EUR 0.50. Rides last but a few minutes.

By Waterbus

ACTV's waterbuses, or vaporetti, offer several lines that cover the entire length of the Grand Canal. A 60 minute ticket costs EUR 6. Or opt for the popular 24-hour tourist ticket for EUR 15. Hours: 6:00-21:00, some run 24 hours. Spiffy looking powerboats known as motoscafi(+39 041 522 2303) offer quick maneuverability but

Venice Snapshot continued

charge a stiff price. For just a short ride across the Grand Canal they've been to known to charge as much as EUR 120.

By Foot

Walking is the best and most popular means for exploring Venice. There are no cars to dodge and Venice's 409 bridges make it possible to walk from end-to-end in 35 minutes.

By Car

Cars can cross the Ponte della Libertà (the small stretch of road that connects Venice with the mainland) but must then endure the impossible task of finding parking in one of Venice's two main garages. It is best to either park on the mainland in Mestre and cross on a bus or boat, or phone months in advance to reserve a parking spot. Call either Garage San Marco (+39 041 523 5101) or Isola Del Tronchetto (+39 041 520 7555).

By Bicycle

Bicycles are not permitted in Venice.
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Fun Facts

Venice

Country: Italy

Venice by the Numbers:

Population: 62,000; 1,600,000 Padova-Venice metro area

Land Area: 177 square miles

Average Annual Rainfall: 34 inches

Average January Temperature: 38 degrees F / 3 degrees C

Average July Temperature: 75 degrees F / 23 degrees C

Quick Facts:

Major Industry: Tourism

Electricity: 220 volts, 50 Hz; standard two-pin plugs

Time Zone: GMT+ 1

Country Dialing Code: 39

Area Code: 041

Did You Know?

Venice is built on 117 islands, features 150 canals and over 400 bridges.

Orientation:

Venice is situated in Italy's northeast corner known as the Veneto region, just off the coast in the Adriatic Sea. Trieste rests 97 miles to the east, Milan 165 to the west, and Rome 327 miles to the southwest.

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