



VENICE



Founded in the 5th century A.D., Venice consists of 117 small islands connected by bridges and lagoons. Vehicle traffic is non-existent, and the best way to get around is either by walking or taking the vaporetto, a sort of water bus. Venice is accessible by train from Rome (Termini) to Santa Lucia station. The journey takes around 4 hours, and a round-trip ticket will cost between 100 and 120 euro, depending on departure times. (Trains that go first to Bologna then on to Venice can cost considerably less, around 80 euro, but take considerably longer, about 7 hours.)



Biennale

Founded in 1895, the Biennale is a contemporary art festival that takes place every other year, including this year, in Venice. The festival features a variety of art forms, including painting, sculpture, film, dance, music and architecture, and utilizes a variety of venues in the city. Tickets can be bought for a single day, and students receive a discount.

St. Mark's Square

Piazza San Marco, often referred to as simply "the Piazza," is named for the church of St. Mark that defines the eastern border of the square. Other landmarks include the Clock Tower (Torre dell'Orologio) to the north, the campanile (or bell tower), and the Procuratie, a series of arcaded buildings that used to house the offices of the city's procurator but now host expensive designer shops and hugely overpriced cafes.



Doge's Palace

This was the residence of the Doge of Venice, the supreme authority of the former Republic of Venice, as well as the seat of government for many centuries. Little remains of the original 9th century building, due to fires, reconstructions, and additions over the years, but the building is well worth an hour of your time. Highlights include the Sala dello Scudo, the largest room in the palace housing two enormous globes; the Bridge of Sighs, which connects the palace to the prisons; and the prisons themselves, from which Casanova (in)famously escaped.



Let's face it, you have to...

That being said, simply accept the fact that it won't be cheap. A standard 30-minute ride will run between 80 and 150 euro, depending on the time of day and the location of the gondola stop. (Hint: stay away from gondola stops close to popular tourist areas, like St. Mark's, as the rent on those docks is higher, as is the fare. Nighttime gondola rides will also cost more than those during the heat of the day.) Gondolas can carry a maximum of six people.

