LOCAL CURRENCY The unit of currency in this port of call is the euro. There are 8 euro coins denominated in 2 and 1 euros, along with 50, 20, 10, 5, 2, and 1 cent pieces. Every euro coin carries a common European face. On the obverse, each Member State decorates the coins with their own motifs. No matter which motif is on the coins they can be used anywhere inside the Member States. There are 7 euro notes. In different colors and sizes, they are denominated in 500, 200, 100, 50, 20, 10, and 5 euros. The notes are uniform throughout the euro area; unlike coins, they have no national side. All euro notes are legal tender in all countries of the euro area.

POST OFFICE AND TELEPHONE FACILITIES The main Post Office is located in the area of the Rialto Bridge.

The Telephone (Telecom) Office is also located in the vicinity of the Rialto Bridge. Public phones accept coins or phone cards from the Telecom Office, Post Office or Tobacconists. You can also place a call with your personal calling card using the following access codes.

AT&T: 800172444 / MCI: 800905825 / Sprint: 800172405

TOURIST INFORMATION The Tourist Information **(B)** (APT) Office is located in the far left corner of Piazza San Marco, at Ascensione 71/F.

TRANSPORTATION The main mode of transport in Venice is the Vaporetto, water buses that run up and down the Grand Canal and around the City. There are a number of different lines, their schedules posted at the landing stages. The fare is standard and quite reasonable.

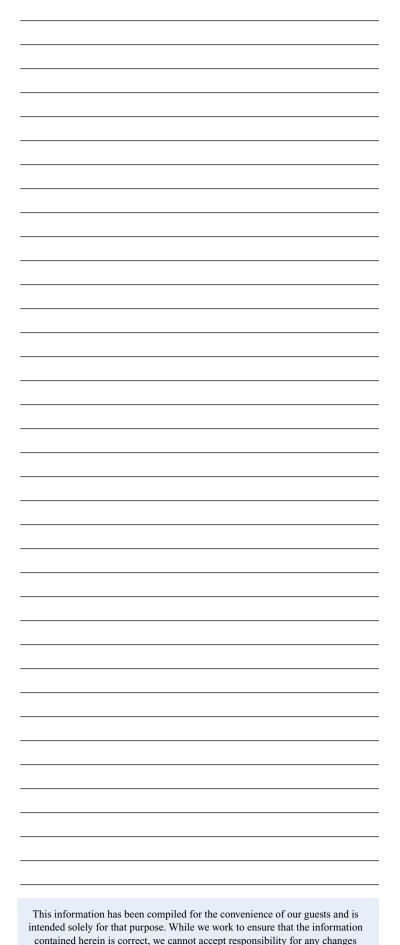
The Gondola is the main attraction, but a Gondola ride can be quite expensive, an alternative is a Traghetto, a two-man Gondola that ferries people across the Grand Canal at various places, look for the sign.

Taxis are available for fares outside the City and the majority will accept U.S. Dollars.

USEFUL WORDS

Yes • Si No • No Good Day • Buon Giorno Good-bye • Ciao Thank-you • Grazie You're Welcome • Prego

NOTES



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GENERAL INFORMATION Situated in a lagoon on Italy's north-eastern Adriatic Coast, Venice is one of the most beautiful, romantic and best loved cities in the world. This truly unique city, a maze of waterways, walkways, narrow streets and small squares, is built on approximately 117 islets which are separated by 177 canals and spanned by some 400 bridges. The buildings are supported by literally millions of poles driven into the marshy sediment.

A 3 mile bridge reaches across the lagoon connecting Venice to the mainland, while a narrow sandbar, the famous Lido, forms a natural breakwater which protects Venice from the force of the Adriatic Sea. There are, of course, no cars or buses in the main city and transport for visitor or Venetian alike, is either on foot, by Vaporetto (water bus), private launch, water taxi or the traditional, graceful Gondola.

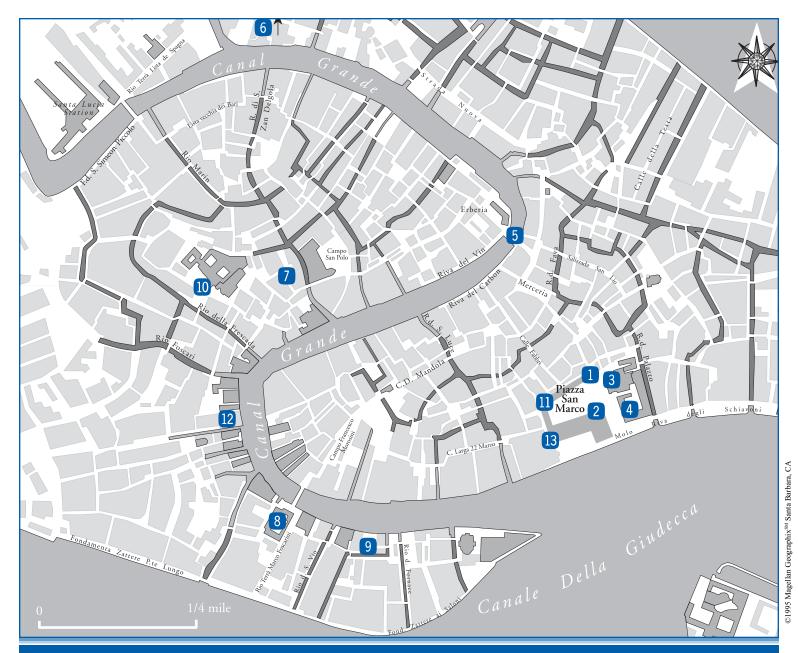
Venice was the home of Marco Polo and later in history, that of Casanova who was imprisoned here. Many famous people have visited Venice, including Kings, Queens, Emperors and Popes. Lord Byron, Charles Dickens, Ruskin, Mark Twain, Henry James and Ernest Hemingway, among others, all stayed in Venice. Vivaldi worked here as a Concert Master and Richard Wagner stayed in Venice while composing Tristan and Isolde, and numerous artists have immortalized its charm and beauty. Today tourism is a very important industry for the City, followed by maritime and port services.

HISTORY Venice began in the 5th century A.D. when Barbarian invasions caused mainland inhabitants to seek sanctuary in the lagoon that was to protect Venice from foreign invasion for nearly 1,000 years. As the communities expanded, the islands became connected by bridges and Venice gradually grew into a powerful, prosperous and independent city state. The citizens concentrated their energies on commerce and in the 9th century began a profitable trade with the Muslims for spices, silk and incense to sell in Europe.

In 1095 Venice became a point of departure for the Crusades and the City out-fitted ships and arranged transport and equipment for the Crusaders. By 1204 the Republic of Venice had captured Constantinople, becoming a powerful empire that controlled the West's trade in luxuries and spices. By the 15th century Venice maintained kingdoms in Greece, Cyprus, Crete and Corfu and her fleets were very important in the Adriatic and the Mediterranean.

However, by 1508 Venice was in decline, Constantinople had been taken by the Turks earlier, cutting off the lucrative eastern trade routes and, with the discovery of India by Portuguese navigators and America by the Spanish, Venice was no longer the key player in European trade. The Republic fell in 1797 when Napoleon took over the City and soon transferred Venice to Austrian rule. In 1866 Venice joined the new united Italy. During World War II the Germans occupied the City for a short time but Venice received no major damage and was liberated in 1945.





PLACES OF INTEREST

1 Piazza San Marco (St. Mark's Square) is the center of life in Venice, a popular meeting place where people can stroll, listen to the musicians outside the coffee houses, browse in the shops in the Piazza's arcades or feed the large numbers of pigeons that congregate there.

2 Bell Tower, near the center of St. Mark's Square, is actually a copy of the original 9th century Bell Tower which collapsed in 1902. An elevator will take you to the top for magnificent views.

Clock Tower, across from the Bell Tower, was built in 1499 by Mauro Coducci. Giant Moors strike the hour on the great bell. There is also a zodiac clock on the Tower, showing the time in arabic and roman numerals.

3 St. Mark's Basilica is truly a masterpiece of Byzantine architecture. Built in 830, it was originally a chapel for the Doges. The present Basilica dates from the 11th century and contains some magnificent mosaics, precious art and rare marbles.

4 Palazzo Ducale (Doge's Palace), situated next to the Basilica, was both the residence of the Doges and the seat of government. The finest room in the Palace is the grand Council Chamber, containing paintings by Tintoretto and Veronese.

Bridge of Sighs (Ponte del Sospiri) is a baroque stone bridge built in the 17th century, connecting the Doge's Palace with the old prisons. It was named after the despair of prisoners who were led across to be executed or incarcerated.

Grand Canal is the main waterway of Venice, approximately 2 miles in length, it is lined with some 100 marble palaces, built between the 12th and 18th centuries.

5 Rialto Bridge (Ponte di Rialto) spans the Grand Canal at Torcello was one of the most prosperous islands in the lagoon about its midway point, built in 1588 by Antonio da Ponte. during the 5th and 6th centuries, but as the size and importance The double row of shops that line the bridge are a great tourist of Venice grew, Torcello declined, and it is now almost attraction. deserted. All that remains today is its Cathedral which has several fine Byzantine mosaics, a few shops and restaurants. 6 Ghetto – this was the first Jewish Ghetto, giving its name to all other confined Jewish communities. The word comes from Padua, located a short distance from Venice on the mainland the verb 'gettare', to cast, as there was originally a foundry is known for its university and the Sant' Antonio Church. The on this area, near the present day Campo del Ghetto. In 1492 remains of St. Anthony can be found here. Beautiful palaces, many Jews were expelled from Spain and central Europe squares and markets add to the splendor of this city. and came to Venice. In 1516 a decree moved all Jews to the **SHORE EXCURSIONS** To make the most of your visit Venice area of the 'New Ghetto'. As the settlement grew, it spread, and its surroundings we suggest you take one of our organized reaching the 'Old Ghetto' by 1541 and even further by 1633 Shore Excursions. For information concerning tour content and to the 'Newest Ghetto'. The buildings here are unusual as they pricing consult your Shore Excursion Brochure or contact the are mostly 7 stories high, the City's highest buildings. Five Shore Excursion Desk. synagogues are to be found in the area, the oldest being the German Synagogue which was built in 1528 and now houses LOCAL CUSTOMS Bargaining: There is little or no the Jewish Museum. opportunity to bargain in Venice. Tipping: Restaurant bills generally include a service charge but **7** Frari Church (Chiesa di S. Maria Gloriosa dei Frari) is it is customary to leave an additional 10%. considered by many to be the most splendid church after St. Mark's, and contains two masterpieces by Titian, as well as his *Local Cuisine:* Rice is more popular in Venice than pasta tomb. and risottos quite common. Fegato alla Veneziana is a local specialty; thin strips of calves liver grilled with onions, served 8 Galleria dell'Accademia (Gallery of Fine Arts), located with Polenta; the main accompaniment, either maize or cornmeal on the Grand Canal by the Accademia Bridge, contains a marvelous collection of Venetian art by Canaletto, Guardi, cakes. Fish is plentiful, try Pasticcio di Pesce; a Fish Pie. Bellini and others, such as Tintoretto and Titian. Drink Specialties: There are several good wines produced in the region surrounding Venice, perhaps the best known reds are 9 Guggenheim Collection – American; Peggy Guggenheim Valpolicella, Bardolino, Cabernet and Merlot. Soave, Pinot, Tocai bought the Palazzo Venier dei Leoni on the Grand Canal in 1951, to house her collection of modern art. Included are and Verduzzo are the best known white wines produced locally. works by Picasso, Chagall and Klee. Bottled water is recommended. **10** Great School of San Rocco (Scuola Grande di San Rocco) SHOPPING FACILITIES Shops are generally open from 9:00 is located at Campo San Rocco. This building was once one of am – 12:30 pm, 3:30 p.m – 7:30 pm Monday through Saturday. the great Venetian charitable guilds, and houses 56 Tintoretto Many of the more touristic stores open on Sunday. paintings in its opulent interior. The main shopping area of Venice stretches from Piazza **11** Museo Correr, housed in a section of the buildings around San Marco to the Rialto Bridge. There are a maze of small St. Mark's Square, it is the City Museum of Art and Venetian shopping streets leading off one another, with everything from History. souvenirs to high-fashion boutiques. The most interesting of local crafts being Venetian glass, the theatrical carnival masks **12 Museum of 18th Century Venice** is housed in a 17th and hand-made lace. Prices in Venice are relatively high. Century palace called 'Ca Rezzonico' on the Grand Canal, and contains Venetian furnishings and paintings. Some tourist orientated stores may accept U.S. Dollars, most accept major credit cards. **Beyond Venice** Value Added Tax (VAT), is added to most purchases. Non-Murano has been the island of Venetian glass-making since E.C. visitors who spend over a certain amount may be entitled the 13th century and visitors can see some of the several to re-claim some or all of the tax paid, however, regulations hundred furnaces which produce today's Venetian glass. The and conditions governing the refund of VAT are subject to Museo Vetrario is located on Murano, displaying some 4,000 change and RCCL cannot guarantee the cooperation of local glass exhibits. authorities.

Burano is another island in the lagoon with a colorful fishing village, now a well-known center for lace-making, an industry originally started by the fishermen's wives.