



ACADEMY  
TRAVEL

TAILORED  
SMALL GROUP  
JOURNEYS

# VENICE

CITY, REPUBLIC & EMPIRE

## OVERVIEW

Unpack your bags to explore the history, art and architecture of the city that once ruled the Mediterranean.

Discover Venice's unique history, rich art collections and local traditions on this 15-day residential tour in the company of art and architectural historian Thomas Abbott. Most visitors stay only long enough to see the city's main sites – sufficient to admire their beauty, but not to truly understand the complexity and innovation of a culture that dominated the Mediterranean for over 1,000 years.

Explore Venice as few tourists do, on daily walking and boat tours that survey its history, role as a hinge between East and West, and outstanding painting, architecture and music. On day trips to Ravenna, Padua and the Palladian villas of the Veneto, understand how the city's influence extended to the terra firma and shaped its modern aspect.

The experience is rounded out by free time for individual sightseeing and relaxation, with an unlimited pass to Venice's transport system, and expert background lectures.



## TOUR LEADER

**Thomas Abbott** is an art and architectural historian associated with the Foundation of Prussian Palaces and Gardens. He is a proficient lecturer, with extensive experience leading cultural and art tours in Europe.

## TOUR DATES

**March 5-19, 2025** | 15 Days

## TOUR PRICE

**\$11,870** per person, twin share  
**\$2,490** single supplement

## TOUR DEPOSIT

A **\$1,000** non-refundable deposit is required per person to confirm your booking on tour.

## GROUP SIZE

Maximum number of **16** in group

## ITINERARY

Venice (14 nights)

## INCLUSIONS

**14** nights' accommodation in a centrally located 4-star hotel. Private water taxi transfer Venice Airport to Hotel and return. All breakfasts, 3 lunches and 4 dinners. Best available tickets to **1** performance. Services of an expert tour leader and an experienced tour manager throughout. All ground transport, entrance fees and tipping.



## DETAILED ITINERARY

### Start & Finish

The tour starts at 2.00pm on Wednesday 5 March, at Venice's Marco Polo airport, followed by a private transfer by water taxi to our hotel. The tour ends at 12.00pm on Wednesday 19 March, with a private transfer by water taxi to Venice's Marco Polo airport.

Included meals are indicated with B, L, D.

## TOUR HIGHLIGHTS

### Private visit of St Mark's

See the splendour of St Mark's, the private chapel of the Doges, lit up at night and truly understand the splendid effect of kilos of glittering gold and luminous marble on a private, after-hours tour.

### Venice's glittering Byzantine past

Delight in world-class Byzantine mosaics, from a full day in Ravenna to Venice's earliest history in gold on peaceful Torcello.

### Outstanding medieval and Renaissance art

Admire Giotto's superlative frescoes in Padua's Scrovegni Chapel and Venetian masterpieces by Carpaccio, Bellini, Titian and Veronese in lesser-known churches and palaces.

### Palladio and the terrafirma

Discover the World Heritage-listed country villas, townhouses and churches of Andrea Palladio, his harmonious contribution to Renaissance Venice, Vicenza and the Veneto countryside.

### Venice's modern revival

Appreciate how Peggy Guggenheim, the Biennale and an impressive roll-call of patrons and artists have created Venice's modern reputation as a global art market.

### Wednesday 5 March

#### Arrive Venice, orientation

Flights arrive in Venice in the mid-afternoon. A transfer to the hotel by private water taxi will be arranged by Academy Travel. After time to check in and freshen up, we take an orientation stroll of the district around our hotel followed by an early, light dinner in a local restaurant. Overnight Venice (D)

### Thursday 6 March

#### San Marco and the Trading Empire

Our time in this extraordinary city begins with a walking tour taking us to the Castello district via the church of San Zaccaria, where we view the beautiful altarpiece by Giovanni Bellini. Dominated by the historic Arsenale, once the centre of the shipping industry which supported Venice's trading empire, the Castello district has been home to Venice's Adriatic and Greek communities for centuries. These communities helped maintain Venice's stranglehold on the Eastern Mediterranean, leaving important monuments to their status in the city, including the only cycle of Carpaccio paintings still in situ. At the icon museum of San Giorgio dei Greci, we admire the significant collection of works created by Venetian, Cretan and Cypriot artists. After a break for lunch, we visit the Scuola degli Schiavoni, the Slavic confraternal headquarters with a wonderful cycle of paintings by Carpaccio. The afternoon is at leisure before we meet again in our hotel for talk by our tour leader. Overnight Venice (B)

### Friday 7 March

#### Venice and the lagoon

To understand Venice is to understand the geography of the lagoon itself and how the region was shaped from its earliest days. This morning we take a local ferry to the colourful island of Burano, a vibrant working community supported by its fishing fleet and renowned for its lacemaking traditions, before continuing to the peaceful island of Torcello. The most ancient settlement within the



Colourful houses of Burano



Ravenna

Venetian lagoon and once the main city of the region, Torcello was eclipsed by nearby Venice in the 13th century. Our visit here includes the ancient basilica of Santa Maria Assunta, founded in 639 and considered one of the most important sites of medieval Italy thanks to the extraordinary 12th-century mosaics, including a spectacular *Last Judgement*, which grace its interior. We end our visit with a relaxed lunch at Torcello's legendary Locanda Cipriani, founded in 1935, where we enjoy a splendid Venetian menu amongst rustic beauty once enjoyed by luminaries such as Ernest Hemingway, before returning to our hotel by water taxi. Overnight Venice (B, L)

### **Saturday 8 March** **Venice and the East**

Today we travel to Ravenna, capital city of the Western Roman Empire following the sacking of Rome then seat of the Byzantine government in Italy from the 5th to the 8th centuries. Here we can see Roman architectural forms blended with earlier examples of the extravagantly beautiful gold-ground Byzantine mosaics which will illuminate Venice's San Marco centuries later. Joining our coach at Tronchetto we stop en route at the Abbey of Pomposa, an imposing Romanesque structure with a massive campanile and stunning frescoed interiors. Arriving in Ravenna we have a break for lunch before a full afternoon enjoying the city's extraordinarily rich historic, architectural and artistic legacy including the UNESCO World Heritage-listed mausoleum of Galla Placidia and the churches of Sant'Apollinare in Classe, San Vitale, and Sant'Apollinare Nuovo. Returning to our hotel this evening, there is time to freshen up before we enjoy a light dinner in a local restaurant. Overnight Venice (B, D)

### **Sunday 9 March** **State-Sponsored Art**

After a relaxed start to the morning, we make our way to Santa Maria Formosa in the Castello district, the site of the first church dedicated to the Virgin Mary, built in the 7th century. We then continue to Santi Giovanni e Paolo where we visit the tombs of Venice's doges and admire Verrocchio's magnificent equestrian statue of Bartolomeo Colleoni. After a break for lunch we return to our hotel for a second talk by our tour leader then make our way to the Doge's Palace for a guided tour. The palace, whose layout reflects the complex structure of the Venetian government itself, is decorated with large canvases by Tintoretto, Veronese and others. There is also the option of visiting the Museo Correr, whose collection reflects the culture, history and art of Venice and includes a number of significant works by Bellini, Antonello da Messina and Canova. Evening at leisure. Overnight Venice (B)

### **Monday 10 March** **Merchants of Venice**

This morning we visit the Rialto Markets, once Europe's premier trade and finance hub, and still a bustling complex



Titian's Assumption of the Virgin



Teatro La Fenice

of narrow alleyways with shops supplying fresh produce to the merchants and residents of Venice. From here we make our way across to the Fondaco dei Tedeschi, located at the foot of the Rialto Bridge. Originally a trading post and living quarters for German merchants in the city, this historic building became a customs house under Napoleon and a post office under Mussolini before its latest incarnation as an upmarket shopping centre. After a break for lunch we have a private tour of Venice's ghetto district and its synagogues, discovering the fascinating history of the ghetto and the important role its Jewish residents played in Venice. The later afternoon is at leisure, but we meet again this evening for a talk in our hotel. Overnight Venice (B)

## Tuesday 11 March

### Venetian Fine Art | La Fenice Opera

Venice holds many exceptional collections of fine art, and our morning begins at the Galleria dell'Accademia, the main gallery of Venetian painting from the Middle Ages to the 18th century, displaying important works by Bellini, Carpaccio, Giorgione, Titian, Tintoretto, Tiepolo and others. After a break for lunch, we continue to the Frari, a simple and elegant church whose outstanding collection of painting and sculpture includes Titian's *Assumption of the Virgin*. We finish at the nearby Scuola Grande di San Rocco, whose lay confraternity engaged Tintoretto to decorate its interior, which he did so with a virtuosic rendering of episodes from the Old and New Testament. This evening we attend a performance at Venice's legendary Teatro La Fenice (schedule permitting). This gilded theatre has risen from the ashes three times and some of the most famous operas in the world have premiered on its stage. Overnight Venice (B)

### Performance details

Venue: Teatro La Fenice, Venice

Program: To be advised

Performers: To be advised

## Wednesday 12 March

### Padua

Today we travel the short distance to the town of Padua, a prosperous centre whose prestigious university, founded in the 13th century, has welcomed Galileo, Copernicus, Dante and Petrarch and provided the intellectual base of Venetian society. We begin our visit with Giotto's masterpiece depicting the lives of Christ and the Virgin Mary at the breathtaking Scrovegni Chapel. The style in which this fresco cycle is painted is considered to signal the start of the emerging Renaissance. Our visit is followed by a walking tour of the city's historic centre, ending in the Piazza delle Erbe, home to a daily produce market, where we have lunch. In the afternoon we visit the stunning Baptistery of Saint John, whose interior is brought gloriously alive by stunning 14th-century frescoes by Giusto de Menabuoi then continue to the historic centre of the University of Padova, the Palazzo



Scrovegni Chapel Padua



Villa Capra Rotonda

Bo, home to the one of the oldest anatomical theatres in the world. Returning to Venice the evening is at leisure. Overnight Venice (B, L)

### Thursday 13 March

#### Free Day

Today is free for you to relax or to explore Venice independently. Your tour leader is happy to assist with advice. We meet again late this afternoon for a talk in our hotel. Overnight Venice (B)

### Friday 14 March

#### Art and Life in the Baroque

Taking a vaporetto from San Marco to Salute, we begin our morning at the imposing Santa Maria della Salute on the Grand Canal. One of the city's emblematic landmarks, the dome of La Salute dominates the landscape and inside we find works by Titian and Tintoretto. We continue to San Zaccaria where we visit the Church of the Pietà, with its ceilings beautifully frescoed by Tiepolo. After a break for lunch we make our way to San Polo, a small district situated within the upper curve of the Grand Canal and one of the most beautiful neighborhoods in Venice. Here our walking tour includes a visit to the Ca Rezzonica Museum, overlooking the Grand Canal, displaying paintings by the Venetian painters of the 18th century, the museum itself is a notable example of Venetian baroque and rococo architecture and interior decoration of the period. Returning to our hotel we meet for a talk by our tour leader. The rest of the evening is at leisure. Overnight Venice (B)

### Saturday 15 March

#### Palladio on Terrafirma

In the 16th century, amid declining trade, the Venetian aristocracy sought to recreate the life of the ancients in the countryside, abetted by the architecture of Palladio, who offered elegant variations on the villa in the classical style. Today we travel to the mainland to enjoy a full day visiting some of Palladio's civic buildings and fine country villas. We begin at his beautifully symmetrical Villa Capra La Rotonda, then continue on to the Villa Valmarana, located in the hills near Vicenza and decorated with frescoes by father and son Giambattista and Giandomenico Tiepolo. After a pause for lunch in Vicenza we explore the important Palladian civic buildings in the city before visiting his final work, the Teatro Olimpico, completed after Palladio's death. We return to Venice via the Villa Barbaro at Maser, whose interior is frescoed by Paolo Veronese and decorated with the elegant stucco of Alessandro Vittoria. We enjoy a light dinner on arrival back in Venice. Overnight Venice (B, D)

### Sunday 16 March

#### Modern Art in Venice

Venice in the 20th century became an international centre of modern art and its Biennale, founded in 1895, remains one



**Peggy Guggenheim**



**San Giorgio Maggiore**

of the most highly regarded showcases of contemporary visual art. Today we visit Ca' Pesaro, an important Venetian Baroque palazzo containing the city's collection of modern art, including works by Klimt, Chagall, Modigliani, the Italian Futurists and many others, much of it sourced from past biennales. After a break for lunch at campo San Giacomo, we continue on to the extraordinary Peggy Guggenheim Collection, located in one of the heiress's former residences, the 18th-century Palazzo Venier. With an unerring eye and a seemingly inexhaustible bank account, Guggenheim built an outstanding collection which includes works by Dalí, Kandinsky, Pollock, Magritte, Mondrian and Picasso. We end the day at the Punta della Dogana, an art museum belonging to the Pinault Foundation, housed in the triangular former customs building which separates the Grand Canal from the Giudecca Canal. Restored by architect Tadao Ando the museum regularly hosts temporary exhibitions. Returning to the hotel the evening is at leisure Overnight Venice (B)

### **Monday 17 March Glass in Venice**

Venetian glass has a history dating back to the 13th century and the island of Murano has been the centre of local glassmaking since furnaces were moved there from Venice around 1291, in a move designed not only to protect the city from the risk of fire but also, it is claimed, to protect the trade secrets of a highly valued and specialized trade. We visit Murano today, exploring an island whose history is inextricably linked with glassmaking but extends far beyond that. If possible, we'll visit a working furnace, then continue to the Museo del Vetro, which traces the history of glass from its earliest origins and is home to the world's largest collection of Murano glass. After our tour ends, you may like to visit the Lido, one of the two barrier islands of the Venetian Lagoon, or enjoy free time on Murano before returning to Venice. This afternoon there is the option to visit the house and studio of a Venetian printmaker or the church of San Pietro di Castello. This imposing structure, modified to a plan drawn up by Palladio in one of his earliest commissions, was the seat of the bishop and head of church of Venice for more than 1,000 years. This evening we enjoy what is undoubtedly a highlight of the tour, an exclusive after-hours private viewing of Saint Mark's Basilica without the crowds. Here, the richness of the basilica's gold-encrusted interior, an area of around 8,000 square metres of glittering mosaics, is spectacularly illuminated just for us. Overnight Venice (B)

### **Tuesday 18 March San Giorgio Maggiore and San Lazzaro degli Armeni**

This morning we travel to the island of San Giorgio Maggiore, home to a major Benedictine monastery established in the early Middle Ages, and also to Palladio's magnificent church, which forms another of the city's emblematic vistas. After a break for lunch, we then make our way to the island

## HOTELS

### Venice, Hotel Al Codega

(14 nights)

Academy Travel has been using the charming Hotel Al Codega for many years now. It enjoys a perfect position in the centre of the city – minutes from major attractions yet on a quiet enclosed square with no through foot traffic and no noise from the canals or tourists.

The hotel is small, with just 21 rooms, meaning our group will occupy the majority of the rooms. Staff at the hotel are friendly. Breakfasts are very good and there is a cosy bar to enjoy an evening drink. The hotel has free wifi throughout.

Near the hotel are countless cafes and restaurants. La Fenice opera theatre and the church of San Vidal, where there are good concerts of baroque music almost every evening, are within easy walking distance. Venice's best shops are at your doorstep, but there are also supermarkets, delicatessens and chemists for more practical needs.

[www.hotelalcodega.com](http://www.hotelalcodega.com)

## FITNESS REQUIREMENTS

### Grade Two

This tour is designed for people who lead active lives. You should be able to:

- keep up with the group at all times walk for 5-7 kilometres over the day at a moderate pace
- negotiate stairs and bridges
- negotiate challenging historic sites, which are often uneven and unstable
- stand for one to two hours in galleries and museums at a time without a break
- get on and off a boat or coach unassisted

of San Lazzaro degli Armeni, where we visit the convent of the Armenian monks, a centre of learning and enlightenment for Venice for hundreds of years. Byron stayed on the island for a time, compiling an English-Armenian dictionary, and the monastery contains an eclectic collection including some very rare manuscripts. This evening, our final in Venice, we enjoy a farewell dinner of traditional Venetian dishes. Overnight Venice (B, D)

### Wednesday 19 March

#### Departure

After a relaxed morning, we depart Venice today. A group transfer by private launch to Venice's Marco Polo airport is available for those taking mid-afternoon flights home. (B)



## ENQUIRIES & BOOKINGS

For further information or to secure a place, please contact **Sharon Williams** on 9235 0023 (Sydney) or 1800 639 699 (outside Sydney) or email:

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