

# The Veneto



From the look of it, you'd think Venice spent all its time primping. The Grand Canal's Gothic palaces generously allow visitors to bask in their reflected glory and San Marco's glittering mosaics entice the sunset to linger in Piazza San Marco. Gorgeous though it is, make no mistake: this city is a cultural powerhouse. At the height of its maritime trading empire, Venice's dominion stretched from Constantinople to Croatia, and inland to Lombardy. From Brenta river villas to fortified hill towns across the Veneto, you'll spot Venice's emblem, the winged lion of St Mark, resting on an open book.

Yet despite its fame and influence, the Veneto isn't quite an open book. With so many masterpieces, the Veneto's splendours are constantly being revealed from under the veil of restoration: Palladios in Vicenza, Giotto's in Padua, Mantegnas in Verona. Some private villas and palaces are now open to the public, offering tantalising glimpses of heaven in Tiepolo ceilings and Veronese frescoes around Vicenza and Venice.

No matter how well you know Italian food and wine, the Veneto offers unexpected delights. Several of Italy's most prized wines are available only at small wineries in the Valpolicella and Soave regions, and there's only one way to settle age-old debates over who does local seafood, wild duck, *bigoli* (wheat pasta) and *risi e bisi* (risotto with peas) best: eat your way across the Venetian countryside. Once you do, you'll be back – it may not always be visible, but the Veneto has a way of leaving its mark on you.

## HIGHLIGHTS

- Join the collective gasp at the golden mosaic domes of Venice's **Basilica di San Marco** (p355)
- Shout 'Brava!' for opera diva encores at Verona's **Roman Arena** (p393) and Venice's **La Fenice** (p357)
- See the Renaissance coming through the tears in Giotto's moving **Scrovegni Chapel frescoes** (p383)
- Let the spirits move you from white to red in Verona's legendary **wine country** (p397)
- Compare Titian's radiant colours and Tintoretto's lightning-strike brushstrokes in **I Frari** (p360) and **Scuola Grande di San Rocco** (p360)
- Villa-hop like a 1600s Venetian socialite along the **Brenta Riviera** (p381)
- Walk through Alpine wildflower meadows and craggy peaks in the **Dolomites** (p399)



■ POPULATION: 4.83 MILLION

■ AREA: 18,378 SQ KM

## REGIONAL ITINERARY

## VILLAS &amp; VINO

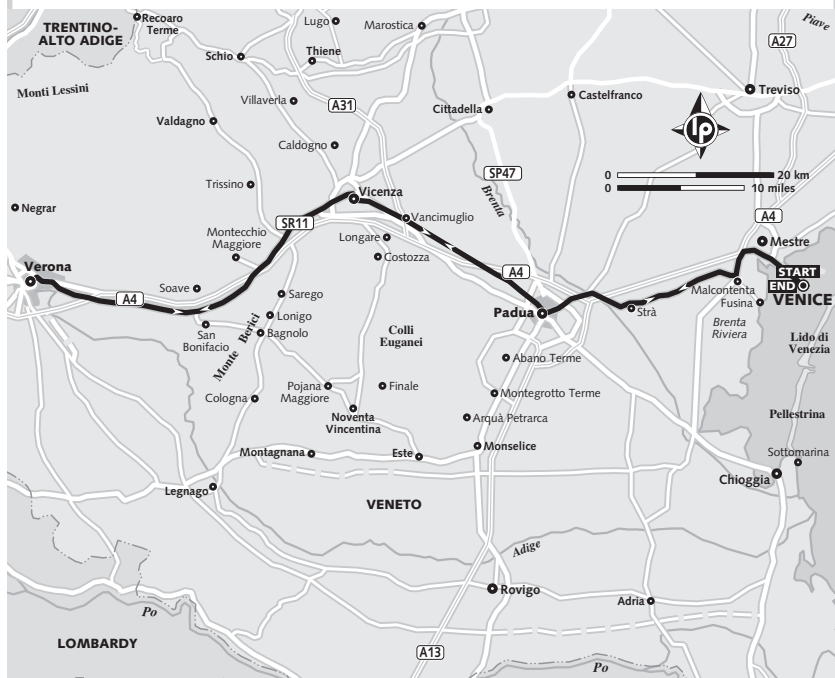
## Three days / Brenta Riviera / Venice

Drift along the **Brenta Riviera** (p381) on an easy bike ride or in a *burchiello* (flat-bottomed boat), stopping by the grand Veneto villas along the riverbanks like a Venetian socialite c 1600. Don't miss Palladio's '**La Malcontenta**' (Villa Foscari; p381), the Tiepolo frescoes of **Villa Pisani Nazionale** (p381) and the Shoemakers' Museum at 18th-century **Villa Foscari Rossi** (p382).

Boat trips end in **Padua** (p383), where you can spend the night in a **hotel** (p387) overlooking the shrine of **St Anthony** (Sant'Antonio; p385), patron saint of miracle cures and lost and found objects. But don't miss the small wonders next door in honour of St George: the frescoed **Oratorio di San Giorgio** (p386) and the Titian-filled **Scoletta del Santo** (p386). With advance booking, you can see Padua's crowning glory: Giotto's frescoed **Cappella degli Scrovegni** (p383), or head for the historic centre to linger at a cafe in Padua's arcaded twin piazzas or tour its ground-breaking **university** (p385), including Galileo's lecture hall and the six-tiered anatomy theatre.

Hop the 15 to 30 minute train to **Vicenza** (p388) and spend the afternoon watching sunlight ripple across the soaring facades of Palladio's *palazzi* and illuminate the storybook **Villa Valmarana 'ai Nani'** (p390), covered floor to ceiling with frescoes by Giambattista and Giandomenico Tiepolo. Enjoy happy hour in the long shadow of Palladio at 12th-century wine bar **Antica Casa della Malvasia** (p391) and spend the night in the designer-chic palace **Relais Santa Corona** (p391).

Next day head to **Verona** (p392), where mornings mean Mantegnas at **Basilica di San Zeno Maggiore** (p395), afternoons call for window-shopping on Via Mazzini and coffee breaks in the **Piazza delle Erbe** (p393), and summer evenings bring opera to the ancient **Roman Arena** (p397). *Romeo and Juliet* was set on Verona's romantic balconied backstreets and you shouldn't leave town without trying the local love potion Amarone at a **bar** (p396). Bunk in for the night at nearby **Anfiteatro** (p396) if you're here for opera or head back to **Venice** (opposite) by train.



# VENICE

**pop 61,500 (city), 268,700 (total including mainland)**

Imagine the audacity of people deciding to build a city of marble palaces on a lagoon. Instead of surrendering to *acqua alta* (high water), like reasonable folk might do, Venetians flooded the world with vivid painting in Venetian reds, baroque music and modern opera, spice-route-crossroads cuisine, bohemian-chic fashions and a Grand Canal's worth of *spritz*, the signature Prosecco-Aperol cocktail.

Finally, with the world's most artistic masterpieces per square kilometre, you'd think Venetians would finally rest on their laurels for the next millennium or so. Yet in narrow *calli* (lanes) off the thoroughfares to San Marco, you'll glimpse artisans hammering out shoes that look like fanciful birds, cooks whipping up four-star dishes on single-burner hotplates and musicians lug-ging 18th-century cellos to riveting baroque concerts with punk-rock bravado. Along the Grand Canal, cutting-edge architects and billionaire benefactors are transforming dreamy *palazzi* into eye-opening showcases for contemporary art. Your timing couldn't be better: the people who made walking on water look easy are already well into their next act.

## HISTORY

A malarial swamp seems like a strange place to found an empire, unless you consider the circumstances: from the 5th to 8th century AD, Huns, Goths and sundry barbarians repeatedly sacked Roman towns along Veneto's Adriatic coast. Crafty settlers rose above their swampy circumstances, establishing *terra semi-firma* with wood pylons driven into some 100ft of silt. The lagoon islands formed a loose federation, with each community electing representatives to a central Byzantine authority in Ravenna. When the Byzantine grip slipped, Venice seized the moment: in AD 726 the people of Venice elected their first *doge* (duke), whose successors would lead the city for more than 1000 years.

Next Venice shored up its business interests. The city accepted a Frankish commission of 84,000 silver marks to join the Crusades, even as it continued trading with Muslim leaders from Syria to Spain. When the balance wasn't forthcoming from the

Franks, Venice claimed Constantinople 'for Christendom' – but sent ships loaded with booty home, instead of onward to Jerusalem. After Venice was decimated by plague, Genoa tried to take over the city in 1380. But Venice prevailed, controlling the Adriatic and a backyard that stretched from Dalmatia to Bergamo.

Like its signature landmark, the Basilica di San Marco, the Venetian empire was dazzlingly cosmopolitan. Armenians, Turks, Greeks and Germans were neighbours along the Grand Canal, and Jewish communities and other groups persecuted elsewhere in Europe found refuge and work here. By the mid-15th century, Venice was swathed in golden mosaics, imported silks and clouds of incense to cover the belching, sulphuric smells that were the downsides of a lagoon empire.

But events beyond Venice's control took their toll. The fall of Constantinople in 1453 and the Venetian territory of Morea (in Greece) in 1499 gave the Turks control over Adriatic Sea access. The Genovese gained the upper hand with Columbus' discovery of the Americas in 1492, calling dibs on New World trade routes. Portuguese explorer Vasco da Gama rounded Africa's Cape of Good Hope in 1498, opening up new trade routes that bypassed the Mediterranean – and Venetian taxes and duties.

As it lost its dominion over the seas, Venice changed tack and began conquering Europe by charm. Venetian art was incredibly daring, bringing sensuous colour and sly social commentary even to religious subjects. The city became a playground for Europe's upper crust; nunneries in Venice held soirées rivaling those in *ridotti* (casinos) and Carnevale lasted three months. Venetian nobles' illegitimate daughters were trained as musicians in *ospedaletti* (orphanages) by the likes of Vivaldi, and Venetian courtesans were widely admired tastemakers. By the end of the 16th century, Venice was known across Europe for its irresistibly catchy music and 12,000 registered prostitutes.

But when Napoleon arrived in 1797, Venice had been reduced by plague and circumstances to less than 100,000 people, and Venetian reputations as fierce partiers did nothing to prevent the French and Austrians from handing the city back and forth as a war trophy. By 1817, one-quarter of Venice's population was destitute. When Venice rallied

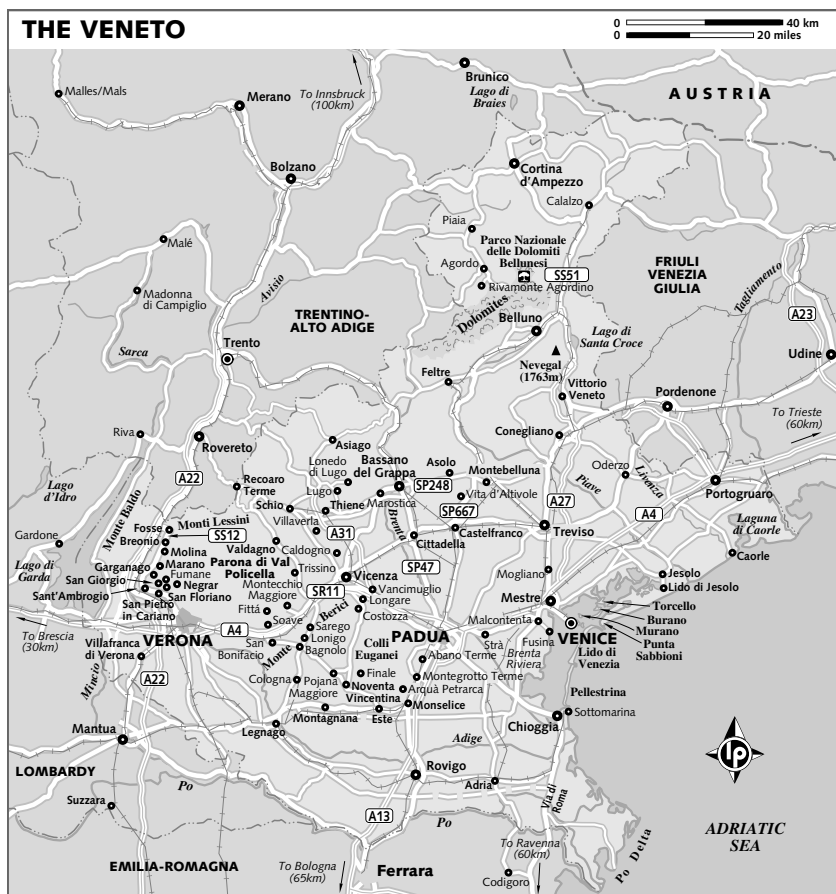
to resist the Austrians in 1848–9, a blockade left it wracked by cholera and short on food. The indignity would fester until Venice joined the independent kingdom of Italy in 1866.

The glamorous empire gradually took on a workaday aspect, with factories springing up on Giudecca and a roadway from the mainland built by Mussolini. Italian partisans joined Allied troops to wrest Veneto from Fascist control, but the tragedy of war and the shock of mass deportation of Venice's historic Jewish population in 1943–44 shook Venice to its very moorings and many Venetians left for Milan and other postwar economic centres.

On 4 November 1966, disaster struck: record floods poured into 16,000 Venetian

homes, stranding residents in the wreckage of 1400 years of civilisation. But once again, Venice's cosmopolitan nature was a saving grace: assistance from admirers poured in – from Mexico to Australia, millionaires to pensioners – and Unesco coordinated some 27 private organisations to redress the ravages of the flood.

Today, with 60,000 official residents easily outnumbered by day-trippers, Venetians may seem scarce in their own city. Yet despite dire predictions, Venice has not yet become a Carnevale-masked parody of itself or a lost Atlantis. The city remains relevant and realistic, continuing to produce new music, art and crafts even as it seeks sustainable solutions to rising water levels. Venice remains



## VENICE IN...

### Two Days

Adopt a Venetian pace and do the **walking tour** (p368) in two days instead of one, leaving more time for dining, chatting and stumbling upon hidden wonders. Stop sightseeing the first day after Punta della Dogana, spend the afternoon lolling on the sunny **Zattere** (p360), then hop the *vaporetto* (small passenger ferry) to Giudecca for a romantic dinner with waterfront views of San Marco at **I Figli delle Stelle** (p375). On day two, start at San Sebastiano, enjoy a leisurely coffee in **Campo Santa Margarita** (p360), and leave yourself time after all those Titian and Tintoretto masterpieces to explore artisans' studios in **Santa Croce** (p360), before happy hour. End the night with a *vaporetto* ride down the Grand Canal, and watch the lights turn to frenzied Tintoretto brushstrokes on the water.

### Four Days

Veer off the tourist trail and devote a third day to divine **Cannaregio** (p361) and **Castello** (p363). Tour the ghetto synagogues, then wander the *fondamente* (canalbanks) to Tintoretto's home church of **Chiesa della Madonna dell'Orto** (p363), Renaissance gem **Chiesa di Santa Maria dei Miracoli** (p363), many-splendored **Zanipolo** (p363), and serene **San Francesco della Vigna** (p364). Stop for lunch at an authentic Cannaregio *osteria* (bistro; p374), and pause at **Palazzo Querini Stampalia** (p364), for an *ombra* (glass of wine) in the Carlo Scarpa-designed garden before your Interpreti Veneziani concert. Island-hop your fourth day away, with blown-glass shopping in **Murano** (p366), lunch in **Burano** (p367) and mosaics and bucolic splendour in **Torcello** (p367).

### One Week

Now you'll get to be a regular at your favourite cafes and *osterie*, recognise the local specialities at the **Rialto Market** (p351) and find yourself striking up conversations in Venice's sociable *campi* (squares). Sign up for a **course** (p367), plan your days around a theme – Tiepolo ceilings, Lido beaches, *cicheti* (bar snacks), opera – or close your map and follow your instincts through Venice's labyrinthine *calli* (lanes). Escape for a day to the **Veneto countryside** (p381), villa-hopping or wine-tasting like a Venetian on vacation.

anchored not merely by ancient pylons, but by the people who put them there: the Venetians.

## ORIENTATION

Impossible though it seems, Venice is built on 117 small islands connected by 400 bridges over 150 canals. Across the expanse of shallow waters of the Laguna Veneta to the north are Murano, Burano and Torcello. To the east, the 10km Lido di Venezia serves as a breakwater for Venice, and to the south Palladio's white marble edifices gleam from San Giorgio Maggiore and Giudecca.

Since 1171, Venice has been divided into six *sestieri* (districts): Cannaregio, Castello, San Marco, San Polo, Dorsoduro and Santa Croce. Although you can take a train or bus into Venice and a car ferry to the Lido, the only ways to navigate Venice are on foot or by boat (see p380). Directions to Piazza San Marco, the Rialto and Accademia are signposted on yellow signs – but the best adventures

begin by ignoring those signs and wandering Venice's backstreets.

## INFORMATION

### Bookshops

**Giunti al Punto** (Map p362; ☎ 041 275 01 52; Campo San Geremia, Cannaregio 282; ☹ 9am–8pm Mon–Wed, to 10pm Thu, to midnight Fri & Sat, 10am–10pm Sun) Guidebooks and some novels in English, plus bestsellers in Italian.

**Mondadori** (Map p352–3; ☎ 041 522 21 93; Salizada San Moisè 1345; ☹ 10am–10pm Mon–Sat, 3–8pm Sun) Come for the books, stay for the CDs, mags, DVDs and literary events in this snazzy media emporium.

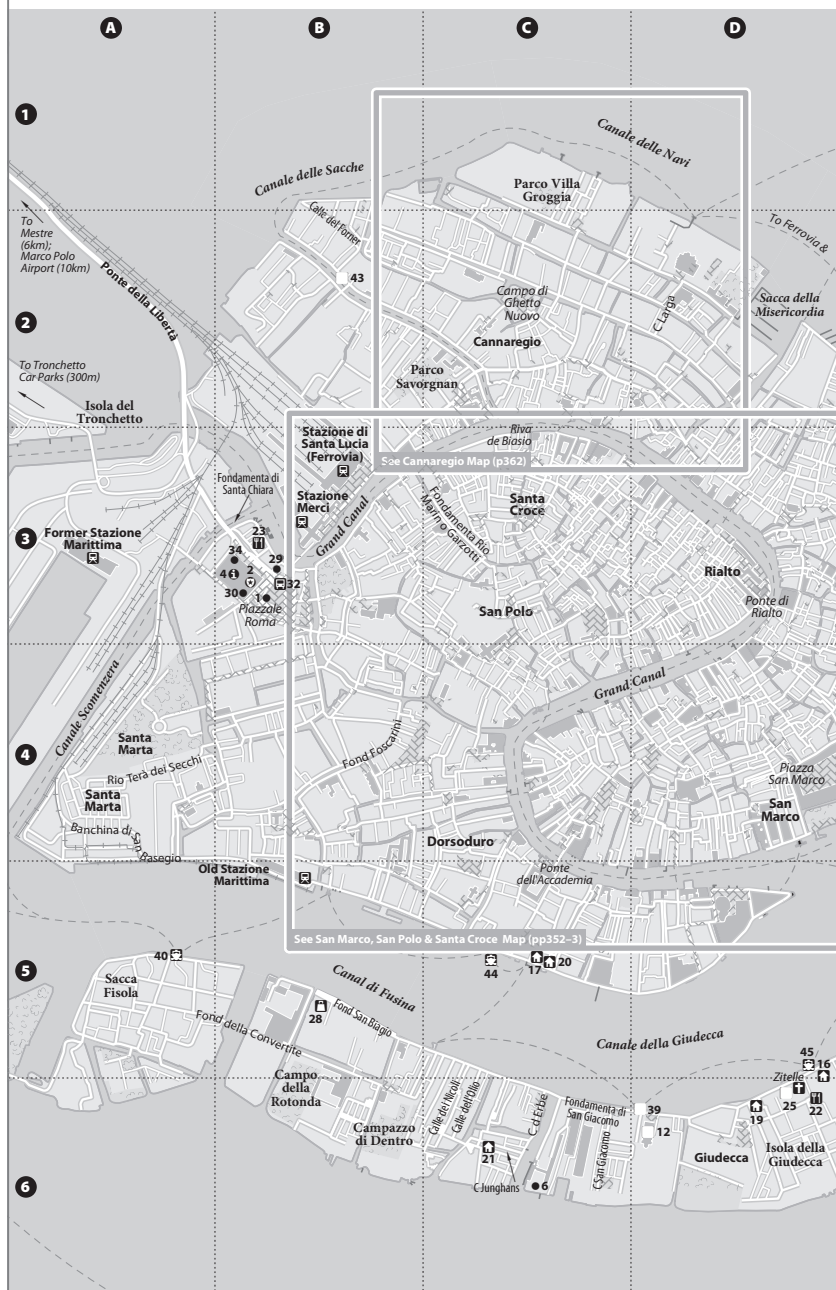
**Studium** (Map pp352–3; ☎ 041 522 23 82; Calle della Canonica 337a; ☹ 9am–7.30pm Mon–Sat, 9.30am–1.30pm Sun) Consult bibliophile staff for worthy vacation reads, page-turning history and guidebooks in English and Italian.

### Emergency

**Ambulance** (☎ 041 118)

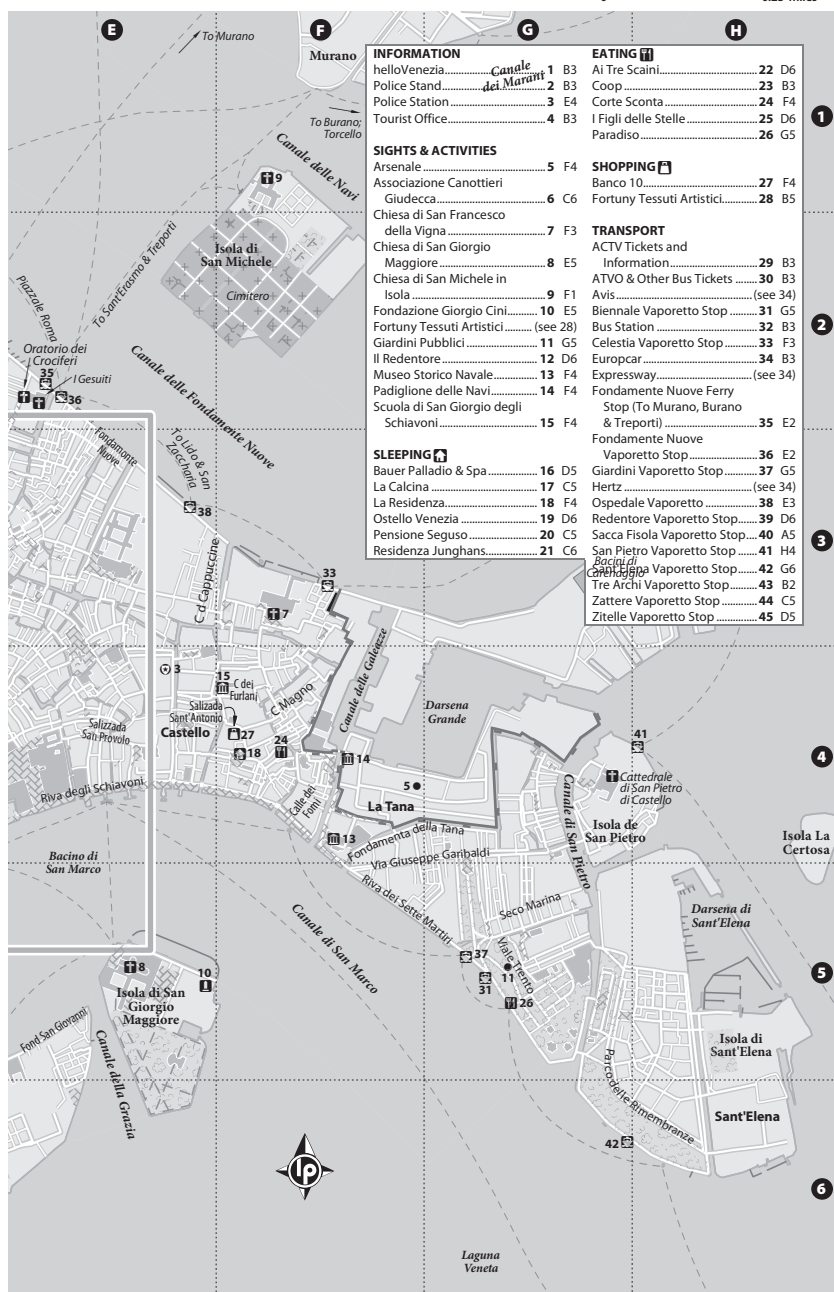
**Police station** (☎ 041 112/113) Castello (Map pp348–9, Fondamenta di San Lorenzo, Castello 5053); Piazza San Marco (Map pp352–3; Piazza San Marco 67)

## VENICE





0 500 m  
0 0.25 miles



## Internet Access

**NefGate** (Map pp352-3; ☎ 041 244 02 13; Crosera S Pantalon; per hr €6; ☎ 9.30am-7pm Mon-Sat) Good rates, a helpful staff, and mobile phone SIM cards.

**World House** (Map pp352-3; ☎ 041 528 48 71; www.world-house.org; Calle della Chiesa, Castello 4502; per hr €8; ☎ 10am-11pm) Steps from San Marco; open late.

## Laundry

**Orange Laundry** (Map pp352-3; Calle Chioverette, Santa Croce 665b; 8kg wash €4, 12kg dry €4; ☎ 7.30am-10.30pm)

**Speedy Wash** (Map p362; Rio Terà San Leonardo, Cannaregio 1520; 8kg wash €5, 15min dry €3; ☎ 8am-10pm)

## Medical Services

Information on rotating late-night pharmacies is posted in pharmacy windows and listed in the free magazine *Un Ospite di Venezia*, available at the tourist office (see below).

**Ospedale Civile** (Map pp352-3; ☎ 041 529 41 11; Campo SS Giovanni e Paolo 6777) Venice's main hospital; for emergency care and dental treatment, ask for the *pronto soccorso* (ER).

**Ospedale Umberto I** (☎ 041 260 71 11; Via Circonvallazione 50, Mestre) Vast modern hospital on the mainland.

## Money

Several bank branches with ATMs cluster around the Rialto and Piazza San Marco; several exchanges are located by the train station and San Marco.

**American Express** (Map pp352-3; ☎ 041 520 08 44; Salizada San Moisè, San Marco 1471; ☎ 9am-5.30pm Mon-Fri, to 12.30pm Sat) The ATM works with Amex cards.

**Travellex** Piazza San Marco (Map pp352-3; ☎ 041 528 73 58; Piazza San Marco 142; ☎ 9am-6pm Mon-Sat, 9.30am-5pm Sun); Rialto (Map pp352-3; Riva del Ferro 5126) To reclaim VAT from purchases over €200, bring completed forms and local receipts here.

## Post

**Post office** (Map pp352-3; Salizada del Fondaco dei Tedeschi, near Rialto; ☎ 8.30am-6.30pm Mon-Sat) Pick up stamps in this former trading centre, where German merchants once traded downstairs and struck deals upstairs in their living quarters.

## Tourist Information

Pick up *La Rivista di Venezia*, a free monthly bilingual magazine with a handy *Shows & Events* listings insert.

**Azienda di Promozione Turistica** (APT; ☎ central information line 041 529 87 11; www.turismovenetia)

it) Infopoint Giardini (Map pp352-3; Venice Pavilion; ☎ 10am-6pm); Lido (Gran Viale Santa Maria Elisabetta 6a; ☎ 9am-12.30pm & 3.30-6pm Jun-Sep); Marco Polo airport (arrivals hall; ☎ 9.30am-7.30pm); Piazzale Roma (Map pp348-9; ☎ 9.30am-1pm & 1.30-4.30pm Nov-Mar, 9.30am-6.30pm Apr-Oct); Piazza San Marco (Map pp352-3; Piazza San Marco 71f; ☎ 9am-3.30pm Mon-Sat); Stazione di Santa Lucia (Map pp352-3; ☎ 8am-6.30pm) Has several branches that can provide information on day trips, transport and events, shows and exhibits in the city.

## SIGHTS

### Grand Canal

Public transport has never seemed so glamorous as the *vaporetto* No 1 route down the shimmering 3.5km stretch of the Grand Canal from the Piazzale Roma (Map pp348-9) to San Marco. On the 45-minute commute, you'll pass some 50 *palazzi*, six churches, four bridges, two open-air markets and other landmarks recognisable from scene-stealing cameos in four James Bond films.

The Grand Canal starts with controversy: the **Ponte di Calatrava** (Map pp352-3), a luminous glass-and-steel bridge designed by modern Spanish architect Santiago Calatrava. The Calatrava Bridge is the first to be built over the Grand Canal in 75 years, and its starkly streamlined fish-fin shape is the most visually pleasing aspect of the otherwise inelegant Piazzale Roma transit depot. But with a cost estimated at triple the original €4 million estimate, ongoing work to correct a 4cm tolerance and questions about wheelchair accessibility, some Venetians are grudging in their admiration.

Past the train station is the less controversial (and less lovely) 1934 **Ponte dei Scalzi** (Map pp352-3). Just after the Riva di Biasio stop to the right is the **Fondaco dei Turchi**, the former Turkish trading centre, with a splendid double colonnade in polychrome marble topped by 13th-century Byzantine capitols and framed by watchtowers.

On the left past the Rio di San Marcuola is **Palazzo Vendramin-Calergi** (Map pp352-3), the stately Renaissance palace that now houses the city's casino (see p377). To the right after San Stae stop, the *palazzo* with a deep double arcade atop a faceted marble base is the 1623 **Ca' Pesaro**, which houses the Galleria d'Arte Moderna and Museo d'Arte Orientale (p361). On your left is **Ca' d'Oro** (Golden House; p361), a 1430 Venetian Gothic marvel with filigreed rooftop crenellation that looks like a tiara.



## MAKING THE MOST OF YOUR EURO

These passes can save you money on admissions to major Venice sights:

- **helloVenezia** (☎ 041 24 24; [www.hellovenezia.com](http://www.hellovenezia.com); ☎ call centre 8am-7.30pm) offers a VENICEcard Transport & Culture Pass (junior/senior per 3 days €66/73, per 7 days €87/96) for unlimited use of APTV *vaporetti* and buses during the given period, plus free entry to Venice's 11 civic museums (excluding the Accademia, Guggenheim, Grassi and Punta della Dogana) and 16 churches, plus reduced-price tickets to cultural events and special exhibitions.
- **Rolling VENICEcard** allows visitors aged 14 to 29 (identification required) to buy a 72-hour public transit pass for €18 and provides discounted access to monuments and cultural events for €4. VENICEcards can be purchased at the San Marco tourist office, at helloVenezia ticket booths at the Piazzale Roma and Ferrovia *vaporetto* stops, or in advance at a 15% discount online.
- **Chorus Pass** (☎ 041 275 04 62; [www.chorusvenezia.org](http://www.chorusvenezia.org); adult/child/family €9/6/18; ☎ visits 10am-5pm Mon-Fri) offers single entry to 16 Venice churches any time within one year, for sale at church ticket booths.
- **Civic Museum Pass** ([www.museiciviciveneziani.it](http://www.museiciviciveneziani.it); adult/child €18/12) is valid for single entry to 11 civic museums for six months, or the four museums around St Mark's Square plus one more (adult/child €13/7), and can be bought at the tourist office.

Next on the left is a particular point of Venetian pride: the **Pescaria** (fish market; Map pp352-3; ☎ 7am-2pm), built in 1907 on the site where fishmongers have been slinging lagoon crab for 600 years. At the neighbouring **Rialto Market** (Map pp352-3; ☎ 7am-3.30pm), Venetian vendors brag shamelessly about their *castraure* (baby artichokes), *radicchio di Treviso* (feathery red rocket), *asparagi di Bassano* (Bassano white asparagus) and other local, seasonal delights.

Tourists hang off the side of the **Ponte di Rialto** (Map pp352-3) like gargoyles to get the best photo of the 1592 engineering marvel reflected in the waters below. Antonio da Ponte beat out Palladio for the Rialto commission, and though construction costs spiralled to 250,000 Venetian ducats – some 19 million euros in today's terms – this elegant marble arc has a glow rivaling gold around sunset.

The next two bends in the Grand Canal could cause architectural whiplash. On your left are two Renaissance beauties: the **Palazzo Grimani**, designed by Sanmicheli, followed by Mauro Cordussi's **Palazzo Corner-Spinelli**. When the canal swings left, look to your right at late-Gothic **Ca' Foscari**, the seat of Foscari University, famed for (naturally) its architecture program. On the left around the next bend, you'll spot avant-garde sculpture installations on the dock of 18th-century Palazzo Grassi (p358), which French magnate François Pinault transformed into a cutting-edge art museum. Opposite, Baldassare

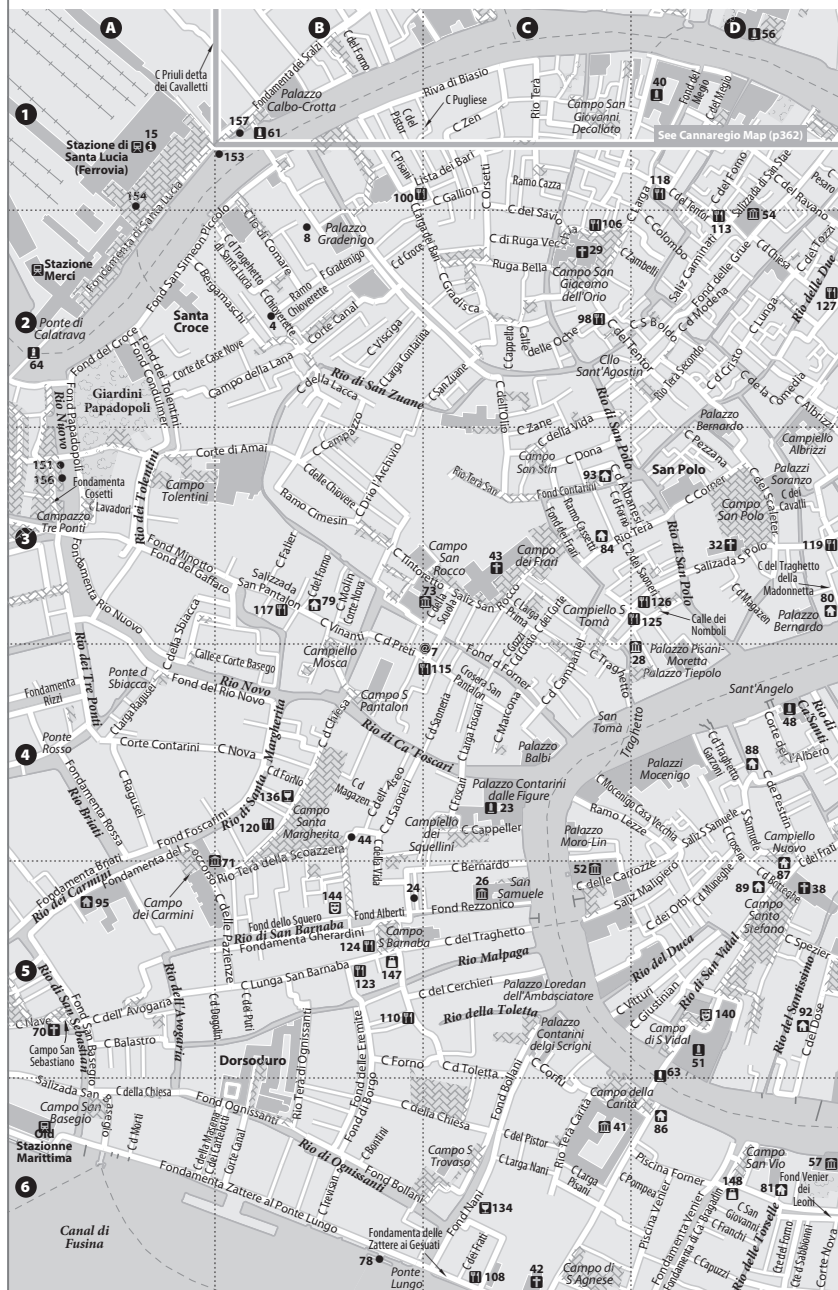
Longhena's **Ca' Rezzonico** (p360) is a baroque jewel box filled with gems of 18th-century art and Tiepolo ceilings.

The wooden **Ponte dell'Accademia** was built in 1930 as a temporary replacement for a 19th-century metal bridge, but with a high arch like a cat's back, it's a beloved landmark. Past the Accademia on the right, stone lions flank the **Palazzo Venier dei Leoni**, where American heiress Peggy Guggenheim collected ideas, lovers and art with gusto, establishing the Peggy Guggenheim Collection (p359). Two buildings down, the multicoloured marble facade of the 1487 **Palazzo Dario** is shadowed by an urban legend that anyone who lives here is destined for a terrible death – which local gossips say dissuaded Woody Allen from buying the place.





On your right, you can't miss Baldassare Longhena's Chiesa di Santa Maria della Salute (p359), with its dramatic dome and octagonal layout. The last landmark on the right is the **Punta della Dogana** (p359), a historic customs warehouse that architect Tadao Ando reinvented as a public showcase for François Pinault's contemporary art collection.

The grand finale is ahead on your left: the pink Gothic Palazzo Ducale (p356) and its adjoining **Bridge of Sighs**. Venice's historic preservation rules have prevented chain stores from taking over the waterfront, but the city has recently allowed corporate sponsors to drape palaces undergoing restoration with publicity

## SAN MARCO, SAN POLO &amp; SANTA CROCE





<b>INFORMATION</b>			
American Express & ATM.....	1	F5	
French Consulate.....	2	H3	
HelloVenezia Ticket Point..... (see 153)			
HelloVenezia Ticket Point..... (see 154)			
Infopoint Giardini.....	3	G5	
Laundry.....	4	B2	
Main Post Office.....	5	F3	
Mondadori.....	6	F5	
NetGate.....	7	C4	
Orange Laundry.....	8	B2	
Ospedale Civile.....	9	H2	
Police Station.....	10	G5	
Stadium.....	11	G4	
Telecom Office.....	12	F4	
Telecom Office.....	13	E1	
Telephones.....	14	F3	
Tourist Office.....	15	A1	
Tourist Office.....	16	F5	
Travellex.....	17	F3	
Travellex.....	18	G4	
World House.....	19	H4	
<b>SIGHTS &amp; ACTIVITIES</b>			
Basilica di San Marco.....	20	G4	
Basilica di San Marco			
Baggage Storage.....	21	G4	
Ca' d'Oro.....	22	E1	
Ca' Foscari.....	23	C4	
Ca' Macana.....	24	B5	
Ca' Pesaro.....	25	E1	
Ca' Rezzonico.....	26	C5	
Campanile.....	27	G5	
Casa di Goldoni.....	28	D4	
Chiesa di San Giacomo			
dell'Orlo.....	29	C2	
Chiesa di San Giacomo di			
Rialto.....	30	F3	
Chiesa di San Giovanni			
Elesmosinario.....	31	F2	
Chiesa di San Polo.....	32	D3	
Chiesa di San Salvador.....	33	F3	
Chiesa di San Zaccaria.....	34	H4	
Chiesa di Santa Maria dei			
Miracoli.....	35	G2	
Chiesa di Santa Maria del			
Giglio.....	36	E5	
Chiesa di Santa Maria della			
Salute.....	37	F6	
Chiesa di Santo Stefano.....	38	D5	
Fondaco dei Tedeschi.....	39	F3	
Fondaco dei Turchi.....	40	D1	
Galleria Franchetti..... (see 22)			
Gallerie d'Arte Moderna..... (see 25)			
Gallerie dell'Accademia.....	41	C6	
Gesualti.....	42	C6	
I Frari.....	43	C3	
Istituto Venezia.....	44	B4	
Museo Correr.....	45	F5	
Museo d'Arte Orientale..... (see 25)			
Museo della Fondazione			
Querini-Stampalia..... (see 55)			
Museo Fortuny.....	46	E4	
Palazzo Contarini del			
Bovolo.....	47	E4	
Palazzo Corner-Spinelli.....	48	D4	
Palazzo Dario.....	49	E6	
Palazzo Ducale.....	50	G5	
Palazzo Franchetti.....	51	D5	
Palazzo Grassi.....	52	C5	
Palazzo Grimani.....	53	E4	
Palazzo Mocenigo.....	54	D2	
Palazzo Querini-Stampalia.....	55	H3	
Palazzo			
Vendramin-Calergi.....	56	D1	
Palazzo Venier dei Leoni..... (see 57)			
Peggy Guggenheim			
Collection.....	57	D6	
Pescaria.....	58	E2	
Piazza San Marco.....	59	G5	
Piazzetta di San Marco.....	60	G5	
Ponte dei Scalzi.....	61	B1	
Ponte dei Sospiri (Bridge			
of Sighs).....	62	H5	
Ponte dell'Accademia.....	63	D5	
Ponte di Calatrava.....	64	A2	
Ponte di Rialto.....	65	F3	
Prigione Nove.....	66	H5	
Procuratie Nuove.....	67	G5	
Procuratie Vecchie.....	68	G4	
Punta della Dogana.....	69	F6	
Rialto Market..... (see 122)			
San Sebastiano.....	70	A5	
Scuola Grande dei Carmini.....	71	B5	
Scuola Grande di San			
Marco.....	72	H2	
Scuola Grande di San			
Rocco.....	73	C3	
Statue of Lion of St Mark.....	74	G5	
Statue of St Theodore.....	75	G5	
Teatro La Fenice..... (see 143)			
Torre dell'Orologio.....	76	G4	
Zanipolo.....	77	H2	
Zattere.....	78	B6	
<b>SLEEPING</b> 			
Albergo Casa Peron.....	79	B3	
Ca' Angeli.....	80	D3	
Charming House DD.724.....	81	D6	
Foresteria Valdese.....	82	H3	
Hotel Ai Do Mori.....	83	G4	
Hotel Alex.....	84	C3	
Hotel Flora.....	85	E5	
Hotel Galleria.....	86	D6	
Hotel Locanda Fiorita.....	87	D5	
Locanda Antico Fiore.....	88	D4	
Locanda Art Deco.....	89	D5	
Locanda Leon Bianco.....	90	F2	
Locanda Silva.....	91	H4	
Novocento.....	92	D5	
Oltre il Giardino.....	93	C3	
Palazzo Abadessa.....	94	F1	
Palazzo Zenobio.....	95	A5	
Pensione Guerrato.....	96	F2	
Residenza Ca' Riccio.....	97	G2	
<b>EATING</b> 			
Ae Oche.....	98	C2	
Al Ponte.....	99	H2	
Alaska.....	100	B1	
Aliani.....	101	E3	
Alla Vedova.....	102	F1	
All'Arco.....	103	E2	
Caffè Mandola.....	104	E4	
Cavatappi.....	105	G4	
Coop.....	106	C2	
Da Alberto.....	107	G2	
Da Nico.....	108	E6	
Drogheria Mascari.....	109	C2	
Enoteca Ai Artisti.....	110	B5	
Enoteca al Volto.....	111	E4	
Enoteca Mascareta.....	112	H3	
Gelateria San Stae.....	113	D2	
I Rusteghi.....	114	F3	
Impronta Caffè.....	115	C4	
La Cantina.....	116	E1	
Osteria ae Cravate.....	117	B3	
Osteria La Zucca.....	118	D1	
Pasticceria Rizzardini.....	119	D3	
Pizza al Volo.....	120	B4	
Pronto Pesce Pronto.....	121	E2	
Rialto Market.....	122	F2	
Ristorante La Bitta.....	123	B5	
Ristorante Oniga.....	124	B5	
Snack Bar Ai Nomboli.....	125	D3	
Trattoria da Ignazio.....	126	D3	
Vecio Fritolin.....	127	D2	
Vini da Arturo.....	128	E4	
<b>DRINKING</b> 			
Al Mercà.....	129	F2	
Aurora.....	130	G5	
Bacaro.....	131	F5	
Caffè Florian.....	132	G5	
Cantina do Mori.....	133	E2	
Cantinone 'Gia Schiavi'.....	134	C6	
Harry's Bar.....	135	F5	
Il Caffè Rosso.....	136	B4	
Muro Vino e Cucina.....	137	F2	
Taverna L'Olandese			
Volante.....	138	G3	
Torino@Night.....	139	F4	
<b>ENTERTAINMENT</b> 			
HelloVenezia Ticket Outlet..... (see 154)			
HelloVenezia Ticket Outlet..... (see 153)			
Interpreti Veneziani.....	140	D5	
Musica a Palazzo.....	141	E5	
Teatro Goldoni.....	142	F3	
Teatro La Fenice.....	143	E5	
Venice Jazz Club.....	144	B5	
<b>SHOPPING</b> 			
Carté.....	145	E2	
Giovanna Zanella.....	146	G3	
Madera.....	147	B5	
Marina & Susanna Sent.....	148	D6	
<b>TRANSPORT</b>			
Gondola Service.....	149	F5	
Gondola Service.....	150	H4	
Gondola Service.....	151	A3	
Gondola Service.....	152	H5	
HelloVenezia Ticket Point.....	153	B1	
HelloVenezia Ticket Point.....	154	A1	
Water Taxi.....	155	F3	
Water Taxi.....	156	A3	
Water Taxi.....	157	B1	



banners. Given the wide-ranging outcry from residents and the British Committee for the Preservation of Venice, by the time you read this, the Bridge of Sighs may have emerged from under wraparound Lancia car ads and the Palazzo Ducale should be retired from its brief, inglorious career shilling Swatches.

## Piazza San Marco

Not usually known for his powers of understatement, Napoleon was lowballing when he proclaimed Piazza San Marco (Map pp352–3) the ‘finest drawing room in Europe’. Your entrance to Piazza San Marco is heralded by live orchestras at 18th-century cafes under Napoleonic porticos flanking the square – but no amount of pomp, circumstance and decadent hot chocolate can prepare you for the otherworldly spectacle of the **Basilica di San Marco** (St Mark’s Basilica; Map pp352–3; ☎ 041 522 56 97; www.basilicasanmarco.it; Piazza San Marco; basilica entry free, access to Pala d’Oro/Loggia dei Cavalli & Galleria/Tesoro €2/4/3; ☎ 9.45am–5pm Mon–Sat, 2–4pm Sun & holidays).

Luminous angels trumpet the way into San Marco in glittering mosaics above vast portals. Inside, the soaring stone structure still sets standards for razzle-dazzle, from the intricate geometry of 12th-century polychrome marble floors to 11th-to-15th-century mosaic domes glittering with millions of gilt-glass *tesserae* (tiles).

This showstopper took a brains trust of Mediterranean artisans almost 800 years and grand larceny to complete. Legend has it that Venetian merchants smuggled the corpse of St Mark out of Egypt in AD 828; the arrival of St Mark’s body in Venice is depicted in mosaics dating from 1270 on the left of the facade. Riots and fires thrice destroyed exterior mosaics and weakened the basilica’s underlying

structure, so Jacopo Sansovino and other church architects grafted on supports and every precious marble available by purchase or pillage. Occasionally higher purpose got clouded over in construction dust: St Mark’s bones were misplaced twice. Church authorities in Rome took a dim view of Venice’s tendency to glorify itself and God in the same breath, but Venice finished San Marco in its own East-meets-West style: Eastern onion-bulb domes, a Greek cross layout, Gothic arches and Egyptian marble walls.

The roped-off circuit of the church is free and takes about 15 minutes. In niches flanking the main door as you enter the narthex (vestibule) are the glittering **Apostles with the Madonna**, who looks stunning for her age: at more than 950 years old, these are the oldest mosaics in the basilica. Another medieval masterpiece is the **Dome of Genesis**, which depicts the separation of sky and water and angels with surprisingly abstract, conceptual motifs that anticipate modern art by 650 years. The golden central dome is the 13th-century **Cupola of the Ascension**, where you’ll note angels swirling overhead and dreamy-eyed St Mark on the pendentive (dome support).

Alabaster chalices, icons and other Crusades booty in the **Tesoro** (Treasury; admission €3; ☎ 9.45am–5pm Mon–Sat Apr–Oct, to 4pm Mon–Sat Nov–Mar, 2–4pm Sun & holidays) can’t quite compare to the bejewelled **Pala d’Oro** altarpiece (admission €2; ☎ 9.45am–5pm Mon–Sat Apr–Oct). Tucked behind the high altar that towers above St Mark’s sarcophagus, this hidden treasure contains almost 2000 emeralds, amethysts, sapphires, rubies, pearls and other gemstones. More impressive still are the minuscule saints’ portraits and lively biblical scenes in vibrant cloisonné, begun in Constantinople in AD 976 and elaborated by Venetian goldsmiths in 1209.

San Marco was officially the doge’s chapel until 1807, and the doge’s far-reaching influence is highlighted by gilt bronze horses upstairs in the **Galleria** (Museo di San Marco; admission €4; ☎ 9.45am–5pm Mon–Sat, 2–4pm Sun & holidays). Through the Galleria you can access the **Loggia dei Cavalli**, where reproductions of the bronze horses gallop off the balcony over Piazza San Marco.

Note that you’ll need to be dressed modestly (ie knees and shoulders covered) to enter the basilica, and large bags must be left around the corner off Piazzetta San dei Leoni at Ateneo di San Basso, where you’ll find free one-hour **baggage storage** (Map pp352–3; ☎ 9.30am–5.30pm).

## CHEAP THRILLS ON THE GRAND CANAL: TRAGHETTI

A *traghetto* is the gondola service locals use to cross the Grand Canal where there is no nearby bridge. It costs just €1, but be prepared for a balancing act: all passengers are expected to stand for the duration of the gondola ride across the canal. *Traghetti* typically operate from 9am to 6pm, although some routes finish by noon; for major *traghetto* crossings, consult maps on pp352–3 and p362.

The basilica's 99m-tall **Campanile** (Bell Tower; Map pp352-3; ☎ 041 522 52 05; www.basilicasanmarco.it; admission €8; ☎ 9am-9pm Jul-Sep, to 7pm Apr-Jun & Oct, 9.30am-3.45pm Nov-Mar) has been rebuilt twice since its initial construction in AD 888. Critics have called the tower ungainly, but when it suddenly collapsed in 1902, Venetians rebuilt the tower exactly as it was, brick by brick. Due to ongoing stabilisation efforts, the Campanile may not be accessible on your visit.

Next door to the basilica, the splendour and intrigue of the Venetian Republic are captured in the **Palazzo Ducale** (Ducal Palace; Map pp352-3; ☎ 041 271 59 11; www.museicivichevneziani.it; Piazzetta di San Marco 52; adult/child incl Museo Correr & 1 civic museum of choice €13/8; ☎ 9am-7pm Apr-Oct, to 5pm Nov-Mar). Don't be fooled by its Gothic elegance: this building was all business, from medieval carved stone capitals depicting key Venetian guilds along the arcade to Giovanni and Bartolomeo Bon's 15th-century **Porta della Carta** (Paper Door), the bulletin board for government decrees facing the piazza. The building was damaged by fire in 1577, but Antonio da Ponte (who designed the Ponte di Rialto) restored it.

Entering through the colonnaded courtyard, you'll spot Sansovino's **statues of Mars and Neptune** flanking the **Scala dei Giganti** (Giants' Staircase), which Antonio Rizzo built as a suitably grand entrance for Venice's dignitaries and is currently undergoing restoration. Climb the **Scala dei Censori** (Stairs of the Censors) and Sansovino's lavish gilt stucco-work **Scala d'Oro** (Golden Staircase), and emerge into 3rd-floor rooms covered with gorgeous propaganda.

In **Sala delle Quattro Porte** (Hall of the Four Doors), ambassadors awaited ducal audiences under a Palladio-designed ceiling

frescoed by Tintoretto, showing Justice presenting sword and scales to Venice's Doge Girolamo Priuli. Other convincing shows of Venetian superiority include Titian's 1576 *Doge Antonio Grimani Kneeling before Faith and Tiepolo's 1740s Venice Receiving Gifts of the Sea from Neptune*, where Venice is a gorgeous blonde casually leaning on a lion. Special delegations waited in the **Anticollégio** (Collegio Antechamber), where Tintoretto drew not-so-subtle parallels between Roman gods and Venetian government: *Vulcan and Cyclops Forging Weapons for Venice*, *Mercury and the Three Graces* rewarding Venice's industriousness with beauty, and *Minerva Dismissing Mars* in a Venetian triumph of savvy over brute force. Also in the room is a vivid reminder of diplomatic behaviour to avoid: Veronese's *Rape of Europe*.

Few were granted audience in the Palladio-designed **Collegio** (Council Room), with Veronese's quintessentially rosy view of Venice in his 1578-82 *Virtues of the Republic* ceiling panels. Tintoretto attempted similar flattery in *The Triumph of Venice* on the ceiling of the adjoining **Senato** (Senate Hall), but his dark palette hints at the shadowy side of Venetian politics. The **Trial Chambers of the Council of 10** featuring Veronese's ceiling panel of *Juno Bestowing her Gifts on Venice* is positively glowing, while in the dark, carved-wood corner is the slot where accusations of treason were slipped to Venice's dreaded secret service.

On the 2nd floor, the cavernous 1419 **Sala del Maggior Consiglio** (Grand Council Hall) features the doge's throne with a 22m by 7m backdrop of *Paradise* by Tintoretto's son Domenico that's more politically correct than pretty: heaven is crammed with 500 prom-

## STATE SECRETS REVEALED: ITINERARI SEGRETI

The Ducal Palace's darkest secrets can be found through a passageway disguised as a filing cabinet in the **Sala del Consiglio dei Dieci** (Chamber of the Council of 10), festooned with happy cherubim and Veronese's optimistic *Triumph of Virtue over Vice*. Fascinating 1½-hour **Itinerari Segreti** (Secret Tours; ☎ 041 520 90 70; adult/student/child under 6yr €16/7/free; ☎ tours in English 9.55am, 10.45am & 11.35am, Italian 9.30am & 11.10am, French 10.20am, noon & 12.25pm) guide visitors into the cramped, unadorned Council of 10 headquarters, upstairs to a trial chamber lined with top-secret files, and into a windowless room with a single rope, used in perversely imaginative ways to extract information. To Venice's credit, the room was largely disused by the 17th century – but the same cannot be said for the studded cells of the **Piombi**, Venice's notorious attic prison. In 1756, Casanova was condemned to five years' confinement here on charges of corrupting nuns and a more serious suspicion of spreading Freemasonry – but after a few months, he slipped past the guards.



inent Venetians, including several Tintoretto patrons. Veronese's political posturing is more elegant in his oval ceiling panel *The Apotheosis of Venice*, where gods marvel at Venice's coronation by angels, with foreign dignitaries and Venetian blondes rubbernecking from the balcony below. In the wall frieze depicting the first 76 doges of Venice, note the black space: Doge Marin Falier would have appeared there had he not lost his head for treason in 1355.

Only the Itinerari Segreti access the Council of 10 headquarters and Piombi attic prison (see the boxed text, opposite), but visitors can take a detour on the doges' dark side from the Sala del Maggior Consiglio. Stop by the chamber featuring ominous scenes by the master of apocalyptic visions, Hieronymus Bosch, then follow the path of condemned prisoners across the covered **Ponte dei Sospiri** (Bridge of Sighs; Map pp352–3) to Venice's 16th-century **Prigione Nove** (New Prisons), its dank cells covered with graffitied protestations of innocence. Exiting through the arcade, you'll spot two freestanding columns by the waterfront bearing **statues** of the Lion of St Mark and St Theodore that serve no apparent purpose: these were once used in public executions.

Napoleon was determined to bring a lighter note to Piazza San Marco, razing the church of San Geminiano on the west end of the piazza to make room for a ballroom. To extend his royal palace, Napoleon incorporated the **Procuratie Nuove** (Map pp352–3), the building along the south end of the piazza planned by Jacopo Sansovino and completed by Vincenzo Scamozzi and Baldassare Longhena – but the job wasn't finished until the 19th century, just in time for the Habsburgs to move in.

The **Museo Correr** (Map pp352–3; ☎ 041 240 52 11; www.museicivichevneziani.it; Piazza San Marco 52; adult/child incl Palazzo Ducale & 1 civic museum of choice €13/8; ⌚ 10am–7pm Apr–Oct, 9am–5pm Nov–Mar) has since taken over the royal digs with all its trophies, including ancient maps, Greco-Roman statuary and splendid medieval paintings. Stride through these salons towards the Palazzo Ducale and at the end you'll reach Jacopo Sansovino's spectacular 16th-century **Libreria Nazionale Marciana**, with representations of wisdom by Veronese and Titian. Temporary shows in the **Neoclassical Ballroom** on such themes as futurism and Italian architecture are hit-and-miss, but Antonio Canova's 1777 statues of star-crossed lovers *Orpheus*

and *Eurydice* are permanent scene-stealers. Museum entry grants access to the Correr's **Caffé dell'Art**, which offers €5 DOC Veneto merlot in an anteroom frescoed with splendid grotesques, with an emperor's view of Basilica di San Marco.

The north side of the piazza is the **Procuratie Vecchie** (Map pp352–3), the former residence of the caretakers of St Mark and the basilica, designed by Mauro Codussi. The standout feature here is the recently renovated 1497 **Torre dell'Orologio** (Clock Tower; ☎ 041 520 90 70; www.musei.civichevneziani.it; Piazza San Marco; adult/VENICEcard-holders €12/7; child 6yr & up only; ⌚ visit by prebooked tour only, in English 10am, 11am & 1pm Mon–Wed, 1pm, 2pm & 3pm daily, in Italian noon & 4pm daily, in French 1pm, 2pm & 3pm Mon–Wed). Legend has it that the inventors of the gold-leafed timepiece tracking lunar phases and astrological shifts were assassinated, so that no other city could boast a similar engineering marvel. Tours head up the tower's steep, claustrophobia-triggering spiral staircase to the terrace, where the **Two Moors statues** strike the hour on a bell. Three kings and an angel emerge on Epiphany and the Feast of the Ascension (p880).

## Around San Marco

While day-trippers settle for photographic binges in Piazza San Marco, overnight visitors sing Venice's praises to the skies after a performance at **Teatro La Fenice** (Map pp352–3; ☎ 041 528 37 80; reservations 041 24 24; www.teatrolafenice.it; Campo San Fantin 1965; tours adult/student & senior €7/5; ⌚ vary). Venice ushered in the age of opera in the 17th century, hiring as San Marco choirmaster Claudio Monteverdi, the father of modern opera, and opening La Fenice ('The Phoenix') opera house to much fanfare in 1792. Rossini and Bellini had staged operas at the house, which was the talk of Europe when the building went up in flames in 1836.

Venice without opera was unthinkable and within a year, the opera house was rebuilt in grand form. Verdi premiered *Rigoletto* and *La Traviata* at La Fenice, and international greats Stravinsky, Prokofiev and Britten composed for the house. But La Fenice was again reduced to ashes in 1996; two electricians found guilty of the arson were apparently behind on their repair work. A painstaking €90 million replica of the 19th-century opera house reopened in late 2003, and though architectural reviews were mixed – some critics had lobbied for a more avant-garde design – the reprise

performance of *La Traviata* was a sensation. The house remains packed in opera season; book ahead online for performances and tours. See also pp378.

For avant-garde architecture, don't miss **Palazzo Grassi** (Map pp352-3; ☎ 041 523 16 80; www.palazzograssi.it; Campo San Samuele 3231; adult/student €15/6; ☎ 10am-7pm), a baroque palace that since 2005 has been home to the world-class contemporary art collection of French billionaire François Pinault. Giorgio Masari's 1749 neoclassical palace became a glorious anachronism in the hands of minimalist architect Tadao Ando, whose movable panels and strategic pools of light allow viewers to focus on modern art without eclipsing frescoed ceilings and marble arcades. Expect sublime curation and shameless namedropping: Pinault parks sculpture by art stars like Jeff Koons on a dock out front, and in 2009 celebrated his marriage with Salma Hayek at the Grassi among A-list guests Bono, Charlize Theron, Ed Norton and Javier Bardem.

San Marco isn't the only church of note in the neighbourhood. Gothic **Chiesa di Santo Stefano** (Map pp352-3; ☎ 10am-5pm Mon-Sat, 1-5pm Sun) has a bell tower that leans disconcertingly, and a vast wood-ribbed *carena di nave* (ship's keel) ceiling that looks like an upturned Noah's Ark. Enter the cloisters **museum** (admission €3 or Chorus Pass ticket) to see Canova's 1808 funerary stelae featuring gorgeous women dabbing their eyes with their cloaks, Tullio Lombardo's wide-eyed 1505 saint whom Titian is said to have referenced for his Madonna at I Frari, and three brooding Tintoretto canvases: *Last Supper*, with a ghostly dog begging for bread; the gathering gloom of *Agony in the Garden*; and the abstract, mostly black *Washing of the Feet*.

Another church offering awe through the ages is **Chiesa di Santa Maria del Giglio** (Map pp352-3; Campo di Santa Maria del Giglio; admission €3 or Chorus ticket; ☎ 10am-5pm Mon-Sat, 1-5pm Sun), with a 10th-century Byzantine layout, a baroque facade featuring maps of European cities c 1678 and three intriguing masterpieces. Hiding behind the altar is Veronese's *Madonna with Child*, with Tintoretto's four evangelists flanking the organ and a small painting of Mary with St John and a charmingly chubby baby Jesus in the Molin Chapel by Northern Renaissance master Peter Paul Rubens.

Romantics swarm the Piazza San Marco at sunset, but if you can't wait for a snog until

then, head to **Palazzo Contarini del Bovolo** (Map pp352-3; ☎ 041 532 29 20; Calle Contarini del Bovolo 4299; entry to open courtyard free; ☎ 10am-6pm). This 15th-century *palazzo* is a hidden jewel of Renaissance architecture with an external spiral *bovolo* (snail-shell) staircase that's closed for restoration and a shady courtyard that offers privacy and stirring views of the staircase.

Fashionistas get happily lost in the **Marzarie** (Map pp352-3), a maze of boutique-lined byways connecting Piazza San Marco to the Rialto. For a high-fashion detour, visit **Museo Fortuny** (Map pp352-3; ☎ 041 520 90 70; www.museicivicheveneziane.it; Campo San Beneto 3958; adult/VENICEcard-holder €8/5; ☎ 10am-6pm Wed-Mon), the not-so-humble home studio of outrageous art nouveau Spanish-Venetian designer Mariano Fortuny y Madrazo. Salons swagged with Fortuny's printed textiles host rotating exhibits by modern artisans, who are inevitably upstaged by Fortuny's 1910 sketches of bohemian goddess frocks that could rule red carpets today.

## Dorsoduro

Minds blown by San Marco require a bracing espresso, restorative gelato and possibly a Hail Mary before taking on the **Gallerie dell'Accademia** (Map pp352-3; ☎ 041 522 22 47, bookings 041 520 03 45; www.gallerieaccademia.org; Campo della Carità 1050; adult/EU citizen 18-25yr/child under 12yr & EU citizen under 18yr or over 65yr €6.50/3.25/free, video/audio guide €6/4; ☎ 8.15am-2pm Mon, to 7.15pm Tue-Sun; last entry 45min before closing). Behind the serene walls of the former Santa Maria della Carità convent expanded by Palladio, these galleries contain more murderous intrigue, forbidden romance, shameless politicking and near-riots than the most outrageous Venetian parties.

To guide you through the ocular onslaught, visits are loosely organised by style, theme and painter from the 14th to 18th centuries, beginning with Paolo Veneziano's c 1350 *Coronation of Mary*, which shows Jesus bestowing the crown on his mother with a gentle pat on the head as an angelic orchestra performs overhead. For sheer, shimmering gore, there's no topping Carpaccio's *Crucifixion and Glorification of the Ten Thousand Martyrs of Mount Ararat* in room 2 – Harry's Bar was quite correct in naming its bloody raw-beef dish after this painter.

Andrea Mantegna's 1466 haughtily handsome *St George* and Giovanni Bellini's sweet-faced *Madonna and Child* haloed by neon-red

cherubs highlight Venice's twin artistic tendencies: high drama and glowing colour. Rooms 6 to 10 include such Renaissance masterpieces as Tintoretto's *Creation of the Animals*, a fantastical bestiary that suggests that God put forth his best efforts inventing Venetian seafood (no arguments here), and one of Titian's last efforts possibly finished posthumously by Palma il Giovane: a 1576 *Pietà* where form is secondary to emotion, with smears of paint Titian applied with bare hands.

Accademia's scene-stealer dominates room 10: Paolo Veronese's controversial *Feast in the House of Levi*, originally called *Last Supper* until church Inquisition leaders condemned Veronese for showing drunkards, dwarfs, dogs and Reformation-minded Germans cavorting amid the apostles. Veronese refused to change a thing about his painting besides the title, and Venice stood by this act of artistic defiance against Rome. Follow the exchanges, gestures and eye contact among the characters here, and you'll concede that not one Moorish trader, stumbling servant, gambler or bright-eyed lapdog could have been painted over without losing an essential piece of the Venetian puzzle.

At this point you're only halfway through Venice's contributions to art history – but don't skip rooms 16 to 18, which feature Canaletto's sweeping views of Venice and Giorgione's 1508 *The Storm*, a highly charged scenario involving a nursing mother, a passing soldier and a bolt of summer lightning. Adjoining portrait galleries can scarcely contain larger-than-life Venetian characters, including Giorgione's decidedly un-Botoxed *Old Woman*, Lorenzo Lotto's 1525 soul-searching *Portrait of a Young Scholar*, Rosalba Carriera's brutally honest self-portrait c 1730, and Giambattista Piazzetta's saucy socialite in his 1740 *Fortune-Teller*. Room 20 reprises Gentile Bellini and Vittore Carpaccio, with multicultural crowds of Venetian merchants embedded in Venetian versions of *Miracles of the True Cross*, before the grand finale: Titian's 1534–9 *Presentation of the Virgin*, with the young Madonna dutifully trudging up an intimidating staircase as onlookers point to her example.

For a refreshingly modern take on Venice, head to **Peggy Guggenheim Collection** (Map pp352–3; ☎ 041 240 54 11; [www.guggenheim-venice.it](http://www.guggenheim-venice.it); Palazzo Venier dei Leoni 701; adult/senior over 65yr/student with ID

to 26yr/child under 10yr €10/8/5/free; ☎ 10am–6pm Wed–Mon). After tragically losing her father on the *Titanic*, heiress Peggy Guggenheim befriended Dadaists, dodged Nazis and amassed avant-garde works by 200 modern artists at her palatial home on the Grand Canal. Peggy's Palazzo Venier dei Leoni became a modernist shrine, chronicling surrealism, Italian futurism and abstract expressionism, with a subtext of Peggy's romantic pursuits – the collection includes key works by Peggy's ex-husband Max Ernst as well as Jackson Pollock, among Peggy's many rumoured lovers. Peggy collected according to her own convictions rather than for prestige or style, so her collection includes inspired folk art and lesser-known local artists alongside Kandinsky, Picasso, Brancusi, Mondrian and Dali. Wander around works by Moore, Giacometti and Ernst in the **sculpture garden**, where the city of Venice granted Peggy honorary dispensation to be buried alongside her pet dogs in 1979.

Dominating the entrance to the Grand Canal is Venice's monumental sigh of relief: **Chiesa di Santa Maria della Salute** (Map pp352–3; ☎ 041 522 55 58; [www.marcianum.it/salute](http://www.marcianum.it/salute), in Italian; Campo della Salute 1b; sacristy admission €1.50; ☎ 9am–noon & 3–5.30pm), built by survivors of Venice's 1630 plague atop at least 100,000 pylons as thanks for salvation. Baldassare Longhena's unusual octagonal church is an inspired design that architectural scholars have compared to Greco-Roman temples and Jewish Kabbala diagrams, and is the site of Venetians' annual pilgrimage to pray for health (see p369). Inside, you'll spot Tintoretto's surprisingly upbeat *The Wedding Feast of Cana* en route to the **sacristy**, which features no less than 12 Titians, including a vivid self-portrait in the guise of St Matthew and his earliest known work, the precocious vermilion *Saint Mark on the Throne* from 1510.

At the tip of Dorsoduro, Venice's old customs house has just undergone a three-year reinvention by architect Tadao Ando as Venice's splashiest contemporary art space: the **Punta della Dogana** (☎ 199 13 91 39; [www.palazzograssi.it](http://www.palazzograssi.it); admission adult/12–18yr, senior or disabled/under 11yr €15/10/free, or with ticket to Peggy Guggenheim within 3 days of visit/combined ticket with Palazzo Grassi €12/20; ☎ 10am–7pm Wed–Mon). **Fortuna**, the weather vane atop Punta Dogana, swung Venice's way when bureaucratic hassles in Paris convinced billionaire art collector François Pinault to transfer his world-class collection to the Palazzo

Grassi (p358) and create a gallery extension at the Punta della Dogana. The inaugural show traced the creative process of Takashi Murakami, Jeff Koons, Cindy Sherman and other contemporary artists, from rough drafts to end products, installed in converted warehouses flooded with light through polished-concrete channels and water gates – astute homages to Carlo Scarpa's designs for Palazzo Querini Stampalia (p364).

The sunny side of Dorsoduro is the **Zattere** (Map pp352–3), a promenade that runs along the Canale della Giudecca from Punta della Dogana to the old Stazione Marittima (ferry terminal). Stop for ice cream and a gasp at **Gesùati** (Map pp352–3; ☎ 041 523 06 25; Fondazione delle Zattere 918; admission €3 or Chorus Pass ticket; ☎ 10am–5pm Mon–Sat), a high-baroque church designed by Giorgio Massari and crowned with Tiepolo's 1737–39 ceiling frescoes of St Dominic amid sunny skies so convincing you'll wonder whether you're wearing enough sunscreen. On the right side of the nave, Venetian virtuoso of luminosity Sebastiano Ricci's 1730–33 *Saints Peter and Thomas with Pope Pius V* provides a contrast to Tintoretto's 1565 *Crucifixion*, with deep reds and greens amid the gathering gloom.

At the end of the Zattere is a hidden jewel of Venetian art: **San Sebastiano** (Map pp352–3; ☎ 041 528 24 87; Campo San Sebastiano 1687; admission €3 or Chorus Pass ticket; ☎ 10am–5pm Mon–Sat), with floor-to-ceiling masterpieces by Paolo Veronese completed over three decades. Veronese's horses rear over the frames of the coffered ceiling; the organ doors are covered with vivid Veronese masterworks; and in Veronese's *Martyrdom of Saint Sebastian* near the altar, the bound saint defiantly stares down his tormentors amid a Venetian crowd of socialites, turbaned traders and Veronese's signature frisky spaniel.

Two baroque beauties wait in the wings off Campo Santa Margarita, Dorsoduro's happy-hour hot spot. Baldassare Longhena's **Ca' Rezzonico** (Museum of the 18th Century; Map pp352–3; ☎ 041 241 01 00; www.museicivichevneziani.it; Fondazione Rezzonico 3136; adult/student & child €6.50/4.50; ☎ 10am–6pm Wed–Mon Apr–Oct, to 5pm Wed–Mon Nov–Mar) palace showcases 18th-century art in lavish music salons, sumptuous boudoirs, even a **pharmacy** with medicinal scorpions. The **Throne Room** ceiling highlights Tiepolo's sensuous beauty and shameless flattery, showing gorgeous Merit ascending to the Temple of Glory clutching the Golden Book of Venetian

nobles' names – including Tiepolo's patrons, the Rezzonico family. Other collection highlights include the **Pietro Longhi Salon** of socialite satires, Rosalba Carriera's wry society portraits and Emma Ciardi's moody canal views; check the schedule downstairs for Venice Chamber Music Orchestra concerts in the **ballroom**. Last entry is an hour before closing.

Tiepolo and Longhena unleashed star power on the **Scuola Grande dei Carmini** (Map pp352–3; ☎ 041 528 94 20; Campo Santa Margherita 2617; adult/senior & student €5/4; ☎ 9am–5pm Mon–Sat, to 4pm Sun Apr–Oct, to 4pm Nov–Mar), a shelter run by Carmelite nuns. Longhena designed the stairway to heaven, glimpsed in Tiepolo's nine-panel ceiling of a resplendent Virgin in Glory upstairs; ask downstairs about occasional performances by the **Venice Opera** (www.venice-opera.com) staged here.

## San Polo & Santa Croce

Art historians are torn between two Venetian loves: Titian's colour and Tintoretto's drama. You can see why in San Polo, which features legendary masterpieces by Venice's Renaissance titans on the same block. **I Frari** (Map pp352–3; Campo dei Frari, San Polo 3004; admission €3 or Chorus Pass ticket; ☎ 9am–6pm Mon–Sat, 1–6pm Sun) is a soaring, sombre Italian-brick Gothic church featuring puzzlework marquetry **choir stalls**, Canova's vast **pyramid mausoleum** in the nave and Bellini's achingly sweet *Madonna with Child* triptych in the **sacristy** – yet visitors are drawn to the small altarpiece like moths to an eternal flame. This is Titian's 1518 *Madonna of the Ascension*, capturing the moment the radiant Madonna reaches heavenward, finds her footing on a cloud and escapes this mortal coil in a swirl of Titian red cloak. Both inside and outside the painting, onlookers below gasp and point out the ascending Madonna to one another. Titian was lost to the plague at 90 in 1576, but legend has it that in light of his immortal contribution to I Frari, strict rules of quarantine were bent to allow his burial here.

Just around the corner, you'll swear the paint is still fresh on the 50 action-packed Tintoretto's painted from 1575 to 1587 for the **Scuola Grande di San Rocco** (Map pp352–3; ☎ 041 523 48 64; www.scuolagrandisanrocco.it; Campo San Rocco, San Polo 3052; adult/18–26yr/under 18yr €7/5/free; ☎ 9am–5.30pm from Easter–Oct, 10am–5pm Nov–Easter). Everyone wanted the commission to paint this building dedicated to the patron saint of the

plague-stricken, so Tintoretto cheated a little: instead of producing sketches like his rival Veronese, he painted a splendid ceiling panel and dedicated it to the saint, knowing such a gift couldn't be refused or matched by other artists. Tintoretto covered the ceilings upstairs in the **Sala Grande Superiore** with Old Testament scenes that read like a modern graphic novel – you can almost hear the swoop! overhead as an angel dives down to feed an ailing Elijah. Unlike Venetian colourists, Tintoretto concentrated on dynamic lines for his New Testament wall scenes: against the shadowy backdrop of the Black Death, Tintoretto highlights his subjects in lightning streaks of hope. Downstairs, the assembly hall illuminates the story of the Virgin Mary, starting on the left wall with the *Annunciation* and ending with the *Ascension* opposite – dark and cataclysmic, compared to Titian's glowing version at I Frari.

Along the well-beaten path between I Frari and the Rialto is a brick 9th-century Byzantine church many travellers speed past without noticing. In **Chiesa di San Polo** (Campo San Polo 2118; admission €3 or Chorus Pass ticket; ☎ 10am–5pm Mon–Sat) Tintoretto's *Last Supper* captures apostles alarmed at Jesus' announcement that one of them will betray him, and Giandominico Tiepolo (son of baroque ceiling maestro Giambattista) shows Jesus tormented by jeering onlookers in his disturbing *Stations of the Cross*. Outside is a cheerier view of humanity in vast **Campo San Polo**, where kids play tag, lovers smooch on benches and outdoor theatre and movies are held in summer.

West of Campo San Polo is **Campo San Giacomo dell'Orio**, where Venetian grandparents enjoy happy hour unfazed as children career towards canals on tricycles (Venetian kids learn to swim early). In the centre of the action is 13th-century Romanesque **Chiesa di San Giacomo dell'Orio** (Map pp352–3; Campo San Giacomo dell'Orio, Santa Croce 1457; admission €2.50; ☎ 10am–5pm Mon–Sat, 1–5pm Sun), with a couple of artistic oddities: a wooden crucifix by Veronese and a rare work by Lorenzo Lotto, *Madonna with Child and Saints*.

Through the warren of alleyways lined with artisans' workshops north of Campo San Polo lies Renaissance **Ca' Pesaro** (Map pp352–3; ☎ 041 72 11 27; www.museiciviveneziani.it; Fondamenta de Ca' Pesaro, Santa Croce 2076; adult/senior, student & child €5.50/3; ☎ 10am–6pm Tue–Sun Apr–Oct, to 5pm Tue–Sun Nov–Mar), an eccentric museum featuring modern art and Asian antiques

in a Longhena-designed 1710 *palazzo*. The **Galleria d'Arte Moderna** begins with the flag-waving early days of the Biennale, showcasing Venetian landscapes, Venetian painters (notably Giacomo Favretto) and Venetian socialists embodying mythological virtues. But savvy Biennale collectors soon diversified, snapping up pivotal works such as Gustav Klimt's 1909 *Judith II (Salome)* and Marc Chagall's *Rabbi of Vitebsk* (1914–22). The De Lisi Bequest in 1961 added Kandinskys and Morandis to the modernist mix of de Chiricos, Mirós, Kandinskys and Moores. Upstairs, step back in time through the phalanx of samurai warriors at the quirky **Museo d'Arte Orientale**, an 1887–89 souvenir-shopping spree across Asia that Prince Enricodi Borbone preserved for posterity. The prince reached Japan when Edo art was discounted in favour of modern Meiji, and Edo-era swords, netsukes and a lacquerware palanquin are standouts in this collection of 30,000 *objets d'art*.

Costume dramas unfold in nearby **Palazzo Mocenigo** (☎ 041 72 17 98; www.museiciviveneziani.it; Salizada di San Stae 1992; admission €2.50–4; ☎ 10am–5pm Tue–Sun Apr–Oct, to 4pm Tue–Sun Nov–Mar), a swanky Grand Canal palace with displays of original baroque costumes: necklines plunge in the **Red Living Room**, lethal corsets come undone in the **Contessa's Bedroom** and deep red procurators' robes hide deep pockets and expanding waistlines in the **Dining Room**.

For foodies, the star attractions of San Polo are the Rialto Market and Pescaria (p351) – but tempting bars and boutiques line the way to the Ponte di Rialto (Map pp352–3) along the Grand Canal.

Comedians, writers and theatre buffs pay their respects at 15th-century **Casa di Goldoni** (Map pp352–3; ☎ 041 275 93 25; www.museiciviveneziani.it; Calle dei Nomboli, San Polo 2794; adult/senior, student & child €2.50/1.50; ☎ 10am–5pm Mon–Sat Apr–Oct, to 4pm Mon–Sat Nov–Mar), where Venice's greatest playwright and master of delicious social satire, Carlo Goldoni, was born in 1707. Highlights are 18th-century marionettes and chronicles of Goldoni's madcap career shifts from doctor's apprentice to lawyer to comedian – but don't miss chamber-music concerts held here (see the website for the schedule).

## Cannaregio

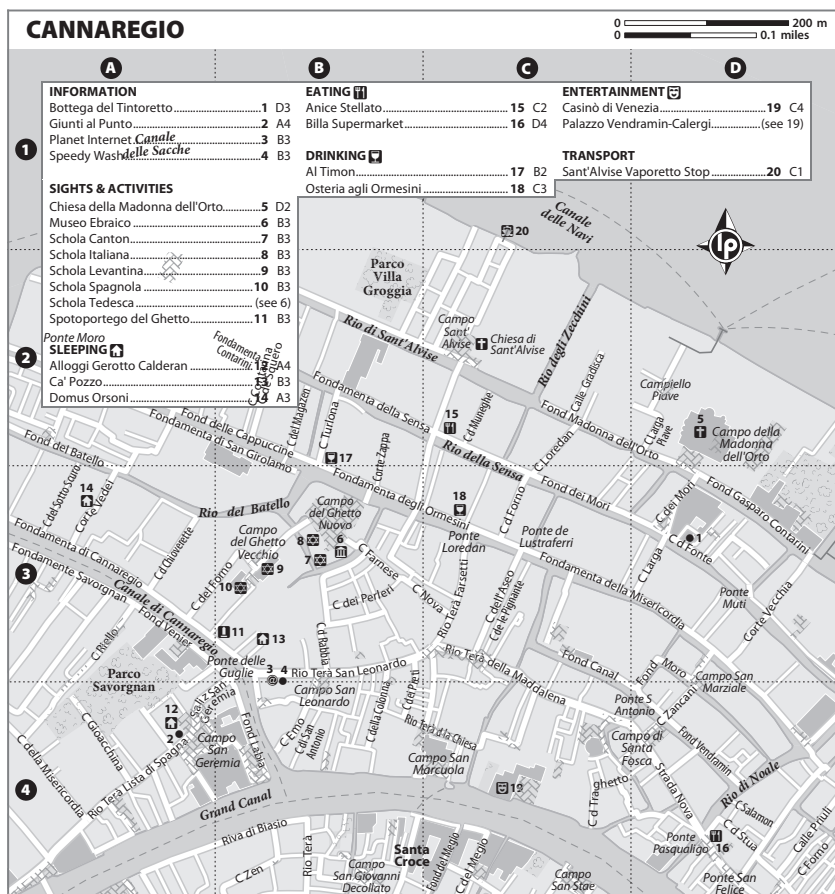
To see what a pedestrian rush hour looks like, join the crowds speed-walking along the



thoroughfare connecting Piazzale Roma to Piazza San Marco via the Ponte di Calatrava (p350) around 9.30am or 6.30pm – but to see how Venice lives out of the fast lane, duck into the narrow back lanes off this boulevard. Behind the shopfront scenes in Cannaregio are sunny *fondamente* (canal banks), authentic *osterie* (bistros) and the unofficial heart of Venice's maritime empire: the **Ghetto** (Map p362). This area in Venice was once a *getto* (foundry), but its role as the designated Jewish quarter from the 16th to 18th centuries gave the word a whole new meaning.

In accordance with the Venetian Republic's 1516 decree, Jewish artisans and lenders stocked and funded Venice's commercial enterprises by day, while at night and on

Christian holidays they were restricted to the gated island of the **Ghetto Novo**. When Jewish merchants fled the Spanish Inquisition for Venice in 1541, there was no place to go but up: around the **Campo del Ghetto Nuovo** (Map p362), additional storeys atop existing buildings housed new arrivals, synagogues and publishers. After Napoleon lifted restrictions in 1797, Ghetto residents gained standing as Venetian citizens. However Mussolini's 1938 race laws were throwbacks to the 16th century, and in 1943 most of the 1670 Jews in Venice were rounded up and sent to concentration camps; only 37 returned. Today Venice's Jewish community numbers around 400, including a few families living in the Ghetto.





A starting point to explore this pivotal community in Venetian arts, architecture, commerce and history is the **Museo Ebraico** (Map p362; ☎ 041 71 53 59; www.museoebraico.it; Campo del Ghetto Nuovo, Cannaregio 2902b; adult/student €3/2, tours incl admission €8.50/7; ☎ 10am-7pm Sun-Fri except Jewish holidays Jun-Sep, to 6pm Sun-Fri Oct-May). English-language tours leave every half-hour starting at 10.30am, and take you inside three of the seven tiny synagogues in the Ghetto, including the **Schola Canton** (Map p362), **Schola Italiana** (Map p362) and either the **Schola Levantina** (Map p362) during the summer or the **Schola Spagnola** (Map p362) in winter.

Across the iron bridge from the Campo del Ghetto Nuovo is the **Fondamenta degli Ormesini**, sleepy by day and lively at night with authentic *osterie*. A short stroll away is one of Venice's best-kept secrets: the 14th-century **Chiesa della Madonna dell'Orto** (Map p362; Campo della Madonna dell'Orto 3520; admission €3 or Chorus Pass ticket; ☎ 10am-5pm Mon-Sat, 1-5pm Sun), the elegantly spare 1365 brick Gothic cathedral that was Tintoretto's parish church. The Renaissance master is buried here in the corner chapel and saved some of his best work for the apse: *Presentation of the Virgin in the Temple*, with throngs of star-struck angels and mortals vying for a glimpse of Mary, and his 1546 *Last Judgment*, where lost souls attempt to hold back a teal tidal wave while an angel rescues one last person from the ultimate *acqua alta*.

Another hidden gem is the multicoloured marble **Chiesa di Santa Maria dei Miracoli** (Map pp352-3; Campo dei Miracoli 6074; admission €2.50; ☎ 10am-5pm Mon-Sat, 1-5pm Sun), built by the neighbourhood to house Niccolò di Pietro's Madonna icon when it miraculously started weeping

c 1480. Pietro Lombardo's early Renaissance design was ahead of its time, dropping trendy Gothic grandiosity for relatable, human-scale architecture. Completing this monument to Venetian community and ingenuity, Pier Maria Pennacchi filled 50 wooden ceiling panels with portraits of saints and prophets dressed as Venetians.

Along the Grand Canal, you can't miss the stunning 15th-century **Ca' d'Oro** (Golden House, House of Gold; Map pp352-3; ☎ 041 522 23 49; www.cadoro.org, in Italian; Calle di Ca' d'Oro 3932; adult/EU student under 26yr/EU citizen under 18yr or over 65 €5/2.50/free; ☎ 8.15am-2pm Mon, to 7.15pm Tue-Sun), its lacy Gothic facade resplendent even without original gold-leaf details that gave the palace its name. Ca' d'Oro was donated to Venice to house the **Galleria Franchetti** (Map pp352-3), Baron Franchetti's art collection, plus a jackpot of bronzes, tapestries and paintings plundered from Veneto churches by Napoleon and reclaimed by Venice. Collection highlights include Andrea Mantegna's teeth-bearing, arrow-riddled Saint Sebastian altarpiece; Pietro Lombardo's tender *Madonna and Child* in glistening Carrara marble; pieces of Titian frescoes saved from the outside of the Fondaco dei Tedeschi (home to the main post office; see p350); and a faded but still-sensuous nude fresco fragment by Giorgione.

## Castello

You'll know you've crossed from Cannaregio into Castello when you spot Bartolomeo Colleoni galloping out to meet you. The bronze equestrian statue commemorates one of Venice's more loyal mercenary mainland commanders, and marks the entrance to the supsize Gothic **Zanipolo** (Chiesa dei SS Giovanni e

## LOCAL VOICE: ROSANNA CORRÓ

**Cannaregio calm** I find design inspiration right at my doorstep [in Cannaregio]: ancient walls with peeling plaster, the reflection of light on the water, Madonna dell'Orto (above). The ratio is about five Venetians for every three tourists, and it's peaceful and sunny along the *fondamente* (canal banks).

**Travel papers** The tradition of *carta marmorizzata* (paper marbling) was brought to Venice from Japan via Turkey and Florence, and it evolved every step of the way. I started out as a book restorer and I had access to private collections of ancient books with incredible marbled end papers. When I studied these ancient methods, I saw new possibilities too, things I could bring to the tradition as a Brazilian and Venetian with a modern sensibility.

**Capturing Venice's mood** No two sheets turn out the same, because each depends on the temperature of the water, the humidity of the air, the mood of that day. If I can capture that moment on paper, I'm happy.

*Rosanna Corró is the avant-garde Venetian paper artisan at Cartè (p379)*

Paolo; Map pp352-3; ☎ 041 523 59 13; Campo SS Giovanni e Paolo; admission €2.50; ☎ 9.30am-6pm Mon-Sat, 1-6pm Sun), built by the Dominicans from 1333 to 1430 to rival the Franciscans' I Frari (p360). I Frari may nudge past Zanipolo with soaring grace, but Zanipolo makes up the difference with the sheer scale and variety of its masterpieces. In the **Cappella del Rosario**, off the north arm of the transept, Paolo Veronese's ceiling depicts the rosy Virgin ascending a staggering staircase to be crowned by cherubs, while angels flip with the joy of it all. The chapel dome on the southwest end of the nave boasts Giambattista Lorenzetti's *Jesus the Navigator*, where Jesus scans the skies like a Venetian sea captain. Nearby is Guido Reni's baroque painting *San Giuseppe*, showing Joseph exchanging tender, adoring looks with baby Jesus. Zanipolo contains 25 **doges' tombs** by such notable sculptors as Nicolo Pisano and Tullio Lombardo, and the vast 15th-century Murano **stained-glass window** is currently undergoing restoration to illuminate designs by Bartolomeo Vivarini and Girolamo Mocetto.

Zanipolo's austere brick facade is almost overwhelmed by the neighbouring lavish Renaissance polychrome marble facade by Pietro Lombardo that once fronted the **Scuola Grande di San Marco** (Map pp352-3), confraternity of Venice's patron saint, and is now the grand entry to Venice's hospital. **Campo SS Giovanni e Paolo** is a prime spot for a coffee or to kick off a *giro d'ombra*, a roving happy hour.

One Prosecco here leads to another in nearby **Campo Santa Maria Formosa**, almost directly south of here via narrow lanes. Savvy locals take their drinks with a twist of high modernism in the Carlo Scarpa-designed garden or Mario Botta-designed cafe of 16th-century **Palazzo Querini Stampalia** (Map pp352-3). Enter through the Botta-designed bookshop to get a free pass to the cafe, or buy a ticket to wander through the upstairs **Museo della Fondazione Querini Stampalia** (☎ 041 271 14 11; www.querinistampalia.it; in Italian; Campiello Querini Stampalia 5252; adult/student & senior €8/6; ☎ 10am-8pm Tue-Thu, to 10pm Fri & Sat, to 7pm Sun). Contemporary-art installations add an element of the unexpected to silk-draped salons preserved in period splendour since 1868, and concerts and lectures held in the baroque music room on Fridays and Saturdays draw Venetian hipsters and old-timers alike.

East of Campo SS Giovanni e Paolo you'll spot the bell tower of the **Chiesa di San Francesco**

**della Vigna** (Map pp348-9; ☎ 041 520 61 02; Campo San Francesco della Vigna 2787; ☎ 8am-12.30pm & 3-7pm). Designed and built by Jacopo Sansovino with a facade by Palladio, this enchanting Franciscan church is one of Venice's most underrated attractions. Madonna positively glows in Bellini's 1507 *Madonna and Saints* in the Capella Santa off the cloisters; swimming angels and strutting birds steal the scene in Antonio da Negroponte's c 1460-70 *Virgin Enthroned*; and Pietro Lombardo's lifelike lions seem ready to pounce right out of the 15th-century marble reliefs in the Capella Giustiniani left of the altar.

The **Arsenale** (Map pp348-9) was founded in 1104 and soon became the greatest medieval shipyard in Europe, home to 300 shipping companies employing up to 16,000 people, and capable of turning out a new galley in a day. Venice's navy remained unbeatable for centuries, but now arty types invade the shipyards during Venice's art and architecture **Biennales** (p369). **Giardini Pubblici** (Map pp348-9) is the main site of the art Biennale, with curators and curiosity-seekers swarming national showcases ranging from Carlo Scarpa's daring 1954 raw-concrete-and-glass **Venezuelan Pavilion** to Peter Cox's awkward 1988 **Australian Pavilion**, frequently mistaken for a construction trailer. In even years between art Biennales, you can wander the gardens and admire the facades of the Secessionist-era **Austro-Hungarian Pavilion**, glittering with mosaics; the timber-beamed, retro-'70s ski lodge **Canadian Pavilion**; and the postmodern **Korean Pavilion**, in an ingeniously converted electrical plant.

**Museo Storico Navale** (Map pp348-9; ☎ 041 520 02 76; Riva San Biagio 2148; admission €3; ☎ 8.45am-1.30pm Mon-Fri, to 1pm Sat) is a four-storey, 42-room monument to Venice's maritime history, featuring full-scale boats including the ducal barge, Peggy Guggenheim's not-so-minimalist gondola, ocean liners and WWII battleships. Museum admission includes the **Padiglione delle Navi** (Ships Pavilion; Map pp348-9) on Fondamenta della Madonna, near the Arsenale entrance.

When 15th-century Venetian Paris Hiltons showed more interest in sailors than saints, they might have been sent for a stint at the convent adjoining **Chiesa di San Zaccaria** (Map pp348-9; ☎ 041 522 12 57; Campo San Zaccaria 4693; ☎ 10am-noon & 4-6pm Mon-Sat, 4-6pm Sun). Here Venice's wayward daughters passed their time in prayer, with breaks for concerts and

scandalous masked balls. The wealth showed on this church is evident: note the gilt polyptych in the Golden Chapel downstairs and the Gothic facade by Antonio Gambello with Codussi's Renaissance embellishments. The treasury of art includes Bellini's melancholy *Virgin Enthroned with Jesus, an Angel Musician and Saints*, Tiepolo's version of the flight into Egypt in a Venetian boat, and Antonio Vivarini's 1443 painting of St Sabina, keeping her cool as angels buzz around her head like lagoon mosquitoes.

Venice's religious tolerance and cosmopolitan nature shows in Castello, where Turkish merchants, Armenian clerics and diverse Balkan and Slavic residents mingled and were considered essential contributors to Venetian commerce and society. The 15th-century **Scuola di San Giorgio degli Schiavoni** (Map pp348-9; ☎ 041 522 88 28; Calle dei Furlani 3259a; admission €3; ☹ 2.45-6pm Mon; 9am-1pm & 2.45-6pm Tue-Sat, 9am-1pm Sun) is dedicated to patron saints George, Tryphone and Jerome of Dalmatia, and its Slavic confraternity so influential that Vittore Carpaccio painted the lives of the saints on the ground floor.

## Giudecca

Originally known as the *spina longa* (long fishbone) because of its shape, Giudecca has survived many trials without losing its spirit. Venice's Jewish community lived here prior to the creation of the Ghetto, but Giudecca isn't related to the word 'Jewish' (*hebrei* in Italian). Giudecca is likely derived from *Zudega*, from *giudicato*, or 'the judged,' the name given to rebellious Venetian nobles banished to Giudecca.

The banishments backfired: Giudecca became fashionable, and Venetians built weekend garden villas on the island. Many were abandoned during times of plague and war, and were eventually displaced by 19th-century industry. But Giudecca never lost its fashion sense: at **Fortuny Tessuti Artistici** (Map pp348-9; ☎ 041 522 40 78; www.fortuny.com; Fondamenta San Biagio 805; ☹ 9am-1pm & 2-6pm Mon-Fri, 9-11am & 2-6pm Sat & Sun), Marcel Proust waxed poetic over silken cottons printed with boho-chic art nouveau patterns. Visitors can browse 260 textile designs in the gated showroom, but fabrication methods have been jealously guarded in the garden studio for a century.

Today Giudecca is entering its third act, with brick factories converted into artists'

lofts, galleries taking over the **Fondamenta San Biagio**, and the convent-orphanage designed by Palladio around his classical white-marble **Zitelle** church is now the high-end Bauer Palladio spa hotel (p372). Giudecca's restaurants are among Venice's most reasonable, and vaporetti 41, 42, 82 and N (night) make Giudecca an easy stop between San Marco and Dorsoduro.

Even from afar, you can't miss Palladio's 1577 **Il Redentore** (Chiesa del SS Redentore; Map pp348-9; Campo del SS Redentore 194; admission €3 or Chorus Pass ticket; ☹ 10am-5pm Mon-Sat, 1-5pm Sun), a triumph of white marble along the Grand Canal celebrating the city's deliverance from the Black Death. Inside over the portal, Paolo Piazza's strikingly modern 1619 *Gratitude of Venice for Liberation from the Plague* shows the city held aloft by angels in sobering shades of grey. Survival is never taken for granted by Venetians, who walk across the Giudecca Canal on a shaky pontoon bridge from the Zattere to give thanks during the **Festa del Redentore** (Feast of the Redeemer; p369).

## San Giorgio Maggiore

Solar eclipses are only marginally more dazzling than Palladio's white Istrian marble marvel, the 1565-80 **Chiesa di San Giorgio Maggiore** (Map pp348-9; ☎ 041 522 78 27; Isola di San Giorgio Maggiore; ☹ 9.30am-12.30pm & 2.30-6.30pm Mon-Sat May-Sep, 9.30am-12.30pm & 2.30-4.30pm Oct-Apr). Sunglasses are advisable upon approach of *vaporetto* 82 to the gleaming classical facade, with massive columns supporting a triangular tympanum that owes more to ancient Roman temples than the bombastic baroque trendy in Palladio's day. Inside, ceilings billow over a generous nave, with high windows distributing filtered sunshine and easy grace. The black, white and red inlaid stone floor draws the eye towards the altar, flanked by two Tintoretto masterworks: *Collecting the Manna* and *Last Supper*. Take the lift (€3) to the top of the 60m-high bell tower for a stirring panorama that takes in Giudecca, San Marco and the lagoon beyond.

Behind the church alongside the marina, a defunct naval academy has been converted into a shipshape gallery for the **Fondazione Giorgio Cini** (Map pp348-9; ☎ 041 271 02 80; www.cini.it; Isola di San Giorgio Maggiore; adult/senior & student/student 7-12yr/child under 7yr €12/10/8/free; ☹ 10am-6.30pm Mon-Sat). After escaping the Dachau internment camp with his son Giorgio, Vittorio Cini

returned to Venice on a mission to save San Giorgio Maggiore, which was a ramshackle mess in 1949. Cini's foundation bought and restored the island into a cultural centre, and the gallery hosts noteworthy shows ranging from Peter Greenaway video art inspired by Veronese paintings to avant-garde Japanese typography.

## The Lido

When Karl Lagerfeld was looking for an appropriate location for Chanel's 2009 resort couture collection, the choice was obvious: the Lido. Only 15 minutes by *vaporetti* 1, 51, 52, 61, 62, 82 and N from San Marco, this island has brought glamour to beaches since the late 19th century, when Venice's upper crust escaped hot, crowded Venetian summers for the Lido's breezy **Liberty villas**. Thomas Mann's melancholy novel *Death in Venice* was set in turn-of-the-century Lido, and you'll spot wrought-iron balconies and seaside resorts that date from those elegantly decadent days.

**Lido beaches** (deposit/chair/umbrella & chair/hut €5/6/11/17; ☎ most beaches 9.30am-7pm May-Sep) remain a major draw, especially on the Adriatic side, where cleaner water makes for maximum sun-umbrella density on sunny days. The tanning crowd thins out and rates drop a couple of euros after 2pm, but to avoid amenities fees and throngs of weekenders, rent a bicycle by the *vaporetto* stop at **Lido on Bike** (☎ 041 526 80 19; www.lidoonbike.it; Gran Viale 21b; single/double/family bikes per hr €3/7/14, tandem €6-18, per day single/tandem €9/8; ☎ 9am-7pm, weather permitting) and head south to **Alberoni** and other pristine, windswept beaches. Mind the traffic – after a few days in Venice, cars brought here via ferry from Tronchetto may come as a shock.

The biggest event on the Lido social calendar arrives each September, when starlets and socialites attempt to blind paparazzi with Italian couture at the **Venice International Film Festival** (see p369). Events are held at the 1930s **Palazzo del Cinema**, which looks like a Fascist airport and when stripped of its red carpet, C+S Associates' 2003 'Wave' entrance begs for a skateboard.

## San Michele

En route to Murano from the Fondamenta Nuove, *vaporetti* 41 and 42 stop at Venice's **city cemetery**, established on Isola di San Michele under Napoleon. Until then, Venetians had been buried in parish plots across town – not

the most salubrious solution, as Napoleon's inspectors realised. Today goths, incorrigible romantics and music lovers pause here to pay respects to Ezra Pound, Sergei Diaghilev and Igor Stravinsky. Architecture buffs stop by to see the Renaissance **Chiesa di San Michele in Isola** (Map pp348–9) begun by Codussi in 1469, and cemetery extensions in the works by David Chipperfield Architects, based on the firm's completed **Courtyard of the Four Evangelists**: a rather gloomy bunker, with a concrete colonnade and basalt-clad walls engraved with the Gospels.

## Murano

Venetians have been working in crystal and glass since the 10th century, but due to the fire hazards of glass-blowing, the industry was moved to the island of Murano (off Map pp348–9) in the 13th century. Woe betide the glass-blower with wanderlust: trade secrets were so jealously guarded that any glass-worker who left the city was guilty of treason and subject to assassination. Today they ply their trade at workshops along Murano's **Fondamenta dei Vetrai** marked by 'Fornace' (Furnace) signs, secure in the knowledge that their wares set a standard that can't be replicated elsewhere. To ensure glass you buy in Venice is handmade in Murano and not factory-fabricated elsewhere, look for the heart-shaped seal guarantee.

Since 1861, Murano has displayed its glass-making prowess at the **Museum of Glass** (Museo del Vetro; ☎ 041 73 95 86; www.museiciviciveneziani.it; Fondamenta Giustinian 8; adult/EU senior & student 6-14yr/with Civic Museum Pass or VENICEcard & child under 6yr €5.50/3/free; ☎ 10am-6pm Thu-Tue Apr-Oct, to 4pm Thu-Tue Nov-Mar). Downstairs, 3rd-century iridescent Roman glass is featured alongside Maria Grazia Rosin's 1992 postmodern detergent jug in impeccably blown glass. Upstairs, technical explanations detail the process for mosaics and Venetian trade beads, while displays range from 17th-century winged goblets to Carlo Scarpa's 1930 octopus.

Murano's glass-making is also showcased in the 12th-century Virgin Mary apse mosaic at **Chiesa dei SS Maria e Donato** (☎ 041 73 90 56; Campo San Donato; ☎ 9am-noon & 3.30-7pm Mon-Sat, 3.30-7pm Sun). The church was rededicated to San Donato after his bones were brought here from Cephalonia, along with four bones from a dragon he supposedly killed behind the altar. Save the church visit until after the museum and shops close around

5pm to 6pm, before hopping *vaporetto* 41 or 42 back to Venice – Murano is deserted at night.

## Burano

After you binge on Venice's Gothic ornament, Burano (off Map pp348–9) brings you back to your senses with a shock of colour. The 40-minute LN ferry ride from the Fondamente Nuove is packed with photographers who bound into Burano's backstreets, snapping away at green stockings hung to dry between pink and orange houses. Either some secret colour-theory ordinance requires locals to choose skivvies to complement their home decor schemes, or Burano is naturally the most artistically inclined fishing village in the Mediterranean basin.

Burano is traditionally famed for its lace, but at this writing the **Museo del Merletto** (Lace Museum; ☎ 041 73 00 34; [www.museiciviciveneziani.it](http://www.museiciviciveneziani.it); Piazza Galuppi 187) remained closed for restoration, and much of the stock for sale in Buranelli boutiques was imported – be sure to ask for a guarantee of authenticity.

## Torcello

On the pastoral island of Torcello (off Map pp348–9), a three-minute T line ferry-hop from Burano, sheep outnumber the 20 or so human residents. But this bucolic backwater

was once a Byzantine metropolis of 20,000 and has the stunning mosaics to prove it inside **Santa Maria Assunta** (☎ 041 296 06 30; Piazza Torcello; cathedral/bell tower €4/2, incl both & museum across piazza €6; ☎ 10.30am–6pm Mar–Oct, 10am–5pm Nov–Feb), founded in the 7th century and rebuilt in the 11th. The Madonna rises like the sun in an eastern apse shimmering with gold mosaics, while on the western wall, a mosaic Last Judgment shows the Adriatic as a sea nymph ushering souls lost at sea towards St Peter, who's jangling the keys to Paradise like God's own bouncer. Climb the **bell tower** for a long view over the lagoon and animals that no longer have to fear Ernest Hemingway's hunting parties. Last entry to the church/bell tower is half an hour before closing.

Time permitting before the last T ferry departure, head across the piazza to take a peek at bronzes and stone relics from Torcello's Byzantine heyday at the quirky **Torcello museum**.

## ACTIVITIES

A gondola ride offers a view of Venice that is anything but pedestrian, with glimpses through water gates into *palazzi* courtyards. Official daytime rates are €80 for 40 minutes or €100 from 7pm to 8am, not including songs (negotiated separately) or tips. Additional time is charged in 20-minute increments

### VENEXIANÂRSE (BECOME VENETIAN)

High praise is reserved for those who weren't born Venetian, yet make a brave (or at least entertaining) attempt to blend in. Pick up a few Venetian tricks of your own and while you're at it, buy a round of drinks. Look at that: you're an honorary Venetian.

- Cook a seafood feast fresh from the Pescaria (p351) with sommelier Sara Sossiga's wine pairings at **Venice Table** ([www.venicevenetogourmet.com](http://www.venicevenetogourmet.com); per 2–8 people incl meal & wine €130).
- Learn Italian and pick up a few choice words in Venetian at **Istituto Venezia** (Map pp352–3; ☎ 041 522 43 31; [www.istitutovenezia.com](http://www.istitutovenezia.com); Campo Santa Margherita, Dorsoduro 3116a; 4hr per day 1-week intensive €160).
- Make your own masterpiece with painting, etching and sculpture courses at Tintoretto's original studio: **Bottega del Tintoretto** (☎ 041 72 20 81; [www.tintorettovenezia.it](http://www.tintorettovenezia.it); Fondamenta dei Mori 3400; 5-day 30hr course incl lunches & materials €360).
- Become an opera diva or perform a benefit concert with **Friends of Venice** (☎ 079 7696 9804; [www.friendsofvenicedub.com](http://www.friendsofvenicedub.com); 7-day course UKE250).
- Row across the Giudecca Canal standing up, Venetian style, with instructors from **Associazione Canottieri Giudecca** ([www.canottierigiudecca.com](http://www.canottierigiudecca.com); Fondamenta del Ponte Lungo, Giudecca 259; per hr €10).
- Create Carnevale masks in a 2½-hour workshop at **Ca' Macana** (Map pp352–3; ☎ 041 522 97 49; [www.camacana.com](http://www.camacana.com); Calle delle Botteghe, Dorsoduro 3172; workshop depending on class size about €60; ☎ workshops 3pm Wed & Fri).



(day/night €40/50). You may negotiate a price break in overcast weather or around midday, when other travellers get hot and hungry. Agree on a price, time limit and singing in advance to avoid surcharges.

Gondole cluster at *stazi* (stops) along the Grand Canal, at the train station (☎ 041 71 85 43), the Rialto (☎ 041 522 49 04) and near major monuments (eg I Frari, Ponte Sospiri and Accademia), but you can also book a pickup at a canal near you (☎ 041 528 50 75).

## WALKING TOUR

Yours truly, Venetian *bea vita* (good life) begins with cappuccino overlooking the Piazza San Marco in the company of griffons at the frescoed cafe of the **Museo Correr** (1; p357). Duck into Napoleon's ballroom to pay respects to Canova's star-crossed lovers Orpheus and Eurydice, then cross the square to join the crowds in a collective gasp under the gold domes of the **Basilica di San Marco** (2; p355). Brave the boutiques lining your 15-minute walk west from the piazza to the **Ponte dell'Accademia** (3; p351), clearly marked by yel-

low signs and designer shopping bags. Across the bridge is the **Gallerie dell'Accademia** (4; p358) where you must choose a point of focus – Titian reds, self-portraits, Veronese spaniels – or lose entire days. Emerge from the past and drift into the future amid contemporary art stars at the new **Punta della Dogana** (5; p359). Wander up the **Zattere** (6; p360) for gelato at **Da Nico** (7; p376), then binge on Veronese at **San Sebastiano** (8; p360). Follow Calle Lunga San Barnaba to a leisurely lunch of Venetian seafood classics at **Ristorante Oniga** (9; p373), then pass artists, fishmongers and arguing philosophy students as you cross **Campo Santa Margarita** (10; p360) towards Crosera San Pantalon, where signs point the way to **Scuola Grande di San Rocco** (11; p360). If you weren't

### WALK FACTS

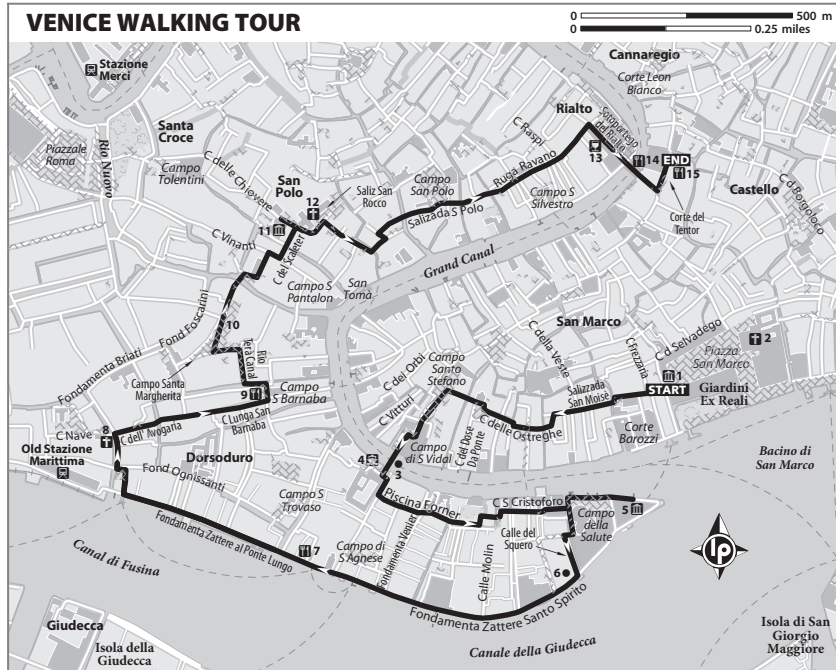
**Start** Museo Correr

**Finish** I Rusteghi (Rialto)

**Distance** 7km

**Duration** over six hours, excluding lunch, drinks and artistic inspiration

## VENICE WALKING TOUR





awake before, Tintoretto's stormy scenes upstairs should do the trick – and just down the block, Titian jolts the senses with his red-hot Madonna altarpiece at **I Frari** (12; p360). After all that heart-racing artistic action, it's time for a drink: follow the signs for the **Rialto** for Prosecco and artichoke-prosciutto *crostini* along the Grand Canal at **Al Mercà** (13; p377), and cross the **Rialto** (14; p351) as the sun sets for boar salami and big reds at **I Rusteghi** (15; p373). *Sanacapána!* (Cheers!)

## VENICE FOR CHILDREN

Adults think Venice is meant for them; kids know better. This is where every fairy tale comes to life, with attic prisons inside pink palaces (p356), dragon bones hidden in church walls (p366), glass-blowers breathing life into pocket-sized sea monsters (p379), and fish balancing on their tails as though spellbook (p351): top that, JK Rowling.

To wear out hyperactive parents, ruthless kids make them climb the **Torre dell'Orologio** (p357) or the **Chiesa di San Giorgio Maggiore bell tower** (p365). Kids might occasionally indulge their adults with a **gelato** (p375), a push on the swings at the **Giardini Pubblici** (p364), or a nap on a **Lido beach** (p366). But if parents are very good, they might be allowed a Prosecco in the **Campo San Giacomo dell'Orto** or **Campo San Polo** (p360), and the chance to learn how tag is played in Venice.

## TOURS

APT tourist offices (see p350) offer guided tours ranging from the classic gondola circuit (€39 per person) to a 'spicy tour' with tales of Casanova dalliances and society scandal in the Rialto's former red-light district (€20 per person).

**Laguna Eco Adventures** (☎ 329 722 62 89; [www.lagunaecoventures.com](http://www.lagunaecoventures.com); 2.5-8hr trips per person €40-150) Sail away in a Venetian *sampierota*, a narrow twin-sailed boat that skims along the blue lagoon to Lido beaches, desert islands or Venice's canals at sunset. Reserve ahead and check forecasts: trips are subject to weather conditions.

**Terra e Acqua** (☎ 347 420 50 04; [www.terraeacqua.com](http://www.terraeacqua.com); 4-9hr trips per person incl lunch €70-120) Take a wild ride through the lagoon with skipper Cristina della Toffola, spotting rare lagoon wildlife, admiring architectural gems of Burano and Torcello, and mooring for a tasty fish-stew lunch and generous cocktails. Customised trips accommodate up to 10 people on a sunny, sturdy *bragasso* (Venetian barge), making trips sociable and easygoing for landlubbers.

**Venicescapes** ([www.venicescapes.org](http://www.venicescapes.org); 4-6hr tours incl book 2 adults/additional adult/under 18yr US\$150-275/50/25) Intriguing walking tours run by a nonprofit historical society (proceeds support Venetian historical research) include 'A City of Nations', exploring multiethnic Venice through the ages, and 'A Most Serene Republic', revealing how Venice kept the peace through politics and espionage.

## FESTIVALS & EVENTS

**Carnevale** ([www.carnevale.venezia.it](http://www.carnevale.venezia.it)) Ten days and nights of masquerade madness in February before Lent, or until your liver twitches and wig itches. Don't miss the Grand Canal flotilla, *fritelle* (rum-raisin doughnuts) or the Calcio Storico fancy-dress football match in Piazza San Marco. Join costume parties in the streets or at La Fenice's Masked Ball (tickets start at €200).

**Festa di San Marco** ([www.comune.venezia.it](http://www.comune.venezia.it)) Join the celebration of Venice's patron saint on April 25, when Venetian men carry roses in processions through Piazza San Marco, then bestow them on the women they love.

**Vogalonga** ([www.turismovenetia.it](http://www.turismovenetia.it)) A show of endurance each May, this 32km 'long row' starts with 1000 boats launching outside the Palazzo Ducale, loops past Burano and Murano, and ends with cheers, sweat and enormous blisters at Punta della Dogana.

**Venezia Suona** ([www.veneziasuona.it](http://www.veneziasuona.it)) Hear medieval *campi* (squares) and baroque palaces echo with music from around the world over a glorious June weekend.

**La Biennale di Venezia** ([www.labiennale.org](http://www.labiennale.org)) Venice's international showcase for the arts and architecture has been a showstopper for a century. In odd years the Art Biennale usually runs from June to November and in even years the Architecture Biennale kicks off in September, but every summer the Biennale features avant-garde dance, theatre, cinema and music.

**Festa del Redentore** ([www.turismovenetia.it](http://www.turismovenetia.it)) Walk on water across the Giudecca Canal to Il Redentore via a wobbly pontoon bridge the third Saturday and Sunday in July, then watch the fireworks from the Zattere.

**Venice Film Festival** ([www.labiennale.org/en/cinema](http://www.labiennale.org/en/cinema)) The only thing hotter than a Lido beach in August is this star-studded event's red carpet, usually rolled out the last weekend in August through the first week of September.

**Regata Storica** ([www.comune.venezia.it](http://www.comune.venezia.it)) Never mind who's winning, check out all the cool gear: 16th-century costumes, eight-oared gondolas and ceremonial barks feature in a historical procession re-enacting the arrival of the Queen of Cyprus.

**Festa della Madonna della Salute** ([www.turismo.venezia.it](http://www.turismo.venezia.it)) If you'd survived plague, floods and Austrian invasion, you'd throw a party too: every 21 November since the 17th century, Venetians cross a pontoon bridge across the Grand Canal to give thanks at Chiesa di Santa Maria della Salute and splurge on sweets.

## SLEEPING

Waking up in a *palazzo* to the sound of a gondolier calling 'Oooooeeeee!' around a canal bend is an unforgettable experience and more affordable than you might think. Many Venetians are opening historic homes as B&Bs, and **APT tourist board** ([www.turismo.venezia.it](http://www.turismo.venezia.it)) lists 230 B&Bs, 275 *affittacamere* (rooms for rent) and 280 apartments to rent in Venice proper; more can be found at [www.guestinitaly.com](http://www.guestinitaly.com), [www.veniceapartment.com](http://www.veniceapartment.com) and **Craigslit Venice** (<http://venice.it.craigslit.it>); see also p874. But don't get your hopes up for eggs and bacon. Venetian laws have strict rules for dining establishments that prohibit B&Bs serving much beyond packaged croissants.

The best rates are in Venice's low season, typically November, early December, January and the period between Carnevale and Easter, but you might swing deals in the heat of July–August. For 400 more options, see [www.lonelyplanet.com](http://www.lonelyplanet.com). For still more choices, try [www.veniceby.com](http://www.veniceby.com) or the Venice Hoteliers Association website, [www.veneziassi.it](http://www.veneziassi.it).

## Camping

**Marina di Venezia** (☎ 041 530 25 11; [www.marinadivenezia.it](http://www.marinadivenezia.it); Via Montello 6, Punta Sabbioni; camping 2 people, car & tent €31.50, 6-person bungalow €56–149; ☹ late Apr–Sep; (P) (Q) (S)) On the Litorale del Cavallino, this marina complex includes a private beach, shops, cinema, minigolf, playground, pools, scuba instruction and air-conditioned bungalows – all a *vaporetto* ride from Fondamente Nuove (Cannaregio).

**Campeggio Fusina** (☎ 041 547 00 55; [www.camping-fusina.com](http://www.camping-fusina.com); Via Moranzani 79, Località Fusina; per person/tent/car €8–9.50/8.50/5; (P) (Q) (S)) A camping village with bonus amenities: laundry, minimarts, bicycle hire, free bed linens and hot showers, a sparsely attended gym and a booming beer garden. Take the Linea Fusina *vaporetto* into Venice (Zattere stop).

## San Marco

**Hotel Locanda Fiorita** (Map pp352–3; ☎ 041 523 47 54; [www.camorosini.com](http://www.camorosini.com); Campiello Nuovo 3457a; incl breakfast s/d €50–160/50–170, without bathroom €40–90/50–140; (Q) (Q) (S)) Take breakfast outdoors on this lovely hidden *campo*, and you'd never guess bustling Campo Santo Stefano is around the corner. Rooms are traditional, with timber ceilings and damask bedspreads; ask for spacious No 1 overlooking the *campo* or No 10 with a private terrace.

**Locanda Antico Fiore** (Map pp352–3; ☎ 041 522 79 41; [www.anticofiore.com](http://www.anticofiore.com); Corte Lucatello 3486; d €70–140; (Q) (Q) (S)) Local colour is the draw in this cosy B&B in a quiet courtyard, from the arty mother-daughter owners to the eight Venetian-styled guestrooms spread out over the top two floors. Ask for the top-floor green canal-view room or the sweet yellow room tucked under eaves.

**Hotel Ai Do Mori** (Map pp352–3; ☎ 041 528 92 93; [www.hotelaidomori.com](http://www.hotelaidomori.com); Calle Larga San Marco 658; d €75–150, d without bathroom €50–105) Artists' garrets in an enviable location at bargain rates. Book well ahead to score an upper-floor room with wood-beamed ceilings, parquet floors and views over the basilica. Rooms with a view cost the same, so ask for No 11 with a private terrace overlooking Piazza San Marco.

**Locanda Art Deco** (Map pp352–3; ☎ 041 277 05 58; [www.locandaartdeco.com](http://www.locandaartdeco.com); Calle delle Botteghe 2966; d incl breakfast €80–180; (Q) (S)) Rakishly handsome, cream-coloured guestrooms with comfy beds in custom wrought-iron bedsteads, and parquet floors. Take your breakfast in the loft under the rafters, ask helpful hotel staff to arrange in-room massages and private gondola tours, and toss back a *spritz* in adjoining Campo Santo Stefano like a flapper escaping Prohibition.

**our pick Hotel Flora** (Map pp352–3; ☎ 041 522 53 44; [www.hotelflora.it](http://www.hotelflora.it); Calle Bergamaschi 2283a; d €130–340; (Q) (Q) (S)) Down a lane from glitzy Calle Larga XXII Marzo, this garden retreat quietly outclasses brash top-end neighbours. Guestrooms feature antique carved beds piled with soft mattresses and fluffy duvets, but prime options include the opulent gilded No 3 and No 32, which opens onto the garden.

**Novecento** (Map pp352–3; ☎ 041 241 37 65; [www.novecento.biz](http://www.novecento.biz); Calle del Dose 2683/84; d €140–260; (Q) (Q) (S)) World travellers put down roots in nine bohemian-chic rooms with Turkish kilim pillows, Fortuny wall coverings and 19th-century scallop-shell carved bedsteads. Guests linger over breakfast in the garden under an Indian sun parasol, take hotel-arranged cooking courses and mingle around the honesty bar.

## Dorsoduro

**Pensione Seguso** (Map pp348–9; ☎ 041 528 68 58; [www.pensioneseguso.it](http://www.pensioneseguso.it); Fondamenta Zattere ai Gesuati 779; incl breakfast s/d €50–160/70–190, without bathroom €40–122/65–180) An authentic *pensione* in a 1500 mansion worthy of a Donna Leon mystery novel, with antique hat racks, spooky mirrors, lead-glass windows, even staff dressed in traditional maids' outfits

with white aprons. Almost all 34 rooms have canal views and 24 have ensuite bathrooms; there's a restaurant just for guests and the staff will pack you a picnic upon request.

**Hotel Galleria** (Map pp352-3; ☎ 041 523 24 89; [www.hotelgalleria.it](http://www.hotelgalleria.it); Campo della Carità 878a; incl breakfast d from €60-195, s/d without bathroom €40-85/50-135) Bargain-hunter's Holy Grail: a family-run hotel in a 17th-century mansion smack on the Grand Canal, steps from Ponte dell'Accademia, with updated bathrooms. Nos 7 and 9 are small doubles overlooking the Grand Canal, No 8 has Liberty furnishings with Grand Canal views and No 10 sleeps five, with an original frescoed ceiling and two Grand Canal-facing windows.

**Palazzo Zenobio** (Map pp352-3; ☎ 041 522 87 70; [www.collegioarmeno.com](http://www.collegioarmeno.com); Palazzo Zenobio; s/d/tr/q €65/100/120/140, without bathroom €30/56/80/100) A gilded 1690 palace that formerly housed a school for Venice's Armenian community recently opened its doors to scholars and guests for a nominal fee. Accommodation is spare but the palace's trompe l'oeil frescoed ceilings are splendid and its overgrown formal garden among Venice's largest and loveliest.

**La Calcina** (Map pp348-9; ☎ 041 520 64 66; [www.lacalcina.com](http://www.lacalcina.com); Fondamenta Zattere ai Gesuati 780; s/d €90-120/110-250; ☎) An idyllic seaside getaway, with a roof terrace, ground-floor restaurant and several antiques-filled guestrooms facing the Giudecca Canal and Palladio-designed Redentore church. To channel your inner writer, request No 2, where John Ruskin stayed while he wrote *The Stones of Venice* in 1876.

**Charming House DD.724** (Map pp352-3; ☎ 041 277 02 62; [www.thecharminghouse.com](http://www.thecharminghouse.com); Ramo de Mula 724; incl breakfast d €220-500; ☎ ☎ ☎) Hole up in your own art-filled, modernist-chic Venetian bolt-hole, with lavish breakfast buffets in the library and a movie-viewing room. Guestrooms are designer-sleek yet cosy; splash out for the superior double with a bathtub and balcony overlooking Peggy Guggenheim's garden.

## San Polo & Santa Croce

**Pensione Guerrato** (Map pp352-3; ☎ 041 528 59 27; [www.pensioneguerrato.it](http://www.pensioneguerrato.it); Ruga due Mori, San Polo 240a; incl breakfast d €45-160, without bathroom €40-95; ☎) In a landmark that once served as a hostel for knights heading off on the Third Crusade, updated guestrooms haven't lost their sense of history – ask for one with frescoes or glimpses of the Grand Canal.

**Albergo Casa Peron** (Map pp352-3; ☎ 041 71 00 21; [www.casaperon.com](http://www.casaperon.com); Salizada San Pantalon 84; incl breakfast s/d €50-100/60-100, without bathroom €30-50/50-85) In true Venetian style, rooms are hidden in a maze of staircases and corridors, paintings cover the walls salon-style, and for an eccentric touch, resident parrot Pierino greets guests in the lobby. Rooms are basic but personable; No 5 features a terrace overlooking I Frari.

**Hotel Alex** (Map pp352-3; ☎ 041 523 13 41; [www.hotelalexinvenice.com](http://www.hotelalexinvenice.com); Rio Terà, San Polo 2606; d €60-112, tr €80-150, q €100-190, without bathroom s €35-54, d €40-84, tr €60-114, q €80-144, all incl breakfast) Along a secret local shortcut between I Frari and Campo San Polo, this hotel offers spare, sunny rooms with lacquered furnishings and updated bathrooms on three floors; some upper rooms have a balcony or terrace overlooking two canals.

**Ca' Angeli** (Map pp352-3; ☎ 041 523 24 80; [www.caangeli.it](http://www.caangeli.it); Calle del Traghetto de la Madonnetta, San Polo 1343; d €80-250; ☎) Brothers Giorgio and Matteo inherited this Grand Canal mansion and converted it into a hotel and antique showplace, with original Murano glass chandeliers, namesake angels dating from the 16th century and a restored Louis XIV sofa in the canalside reading room. Spacious room 1 has Grand Canal views and a whirlpool bath; No 5 has a superb terrace. Breakfasts are made with organic products and served in the dining room on antique plates.

**our pick Oltre il Giardino** (Map pp352-3; ☎ 041 275 00 15; [www.oltreilgiardino-venezia.com](http://www.oltreilgiardino-venezia.com); Fondamenta Contarini, San Polo 2542; d €150-420; ☎ ☎) Live the designer dream in guestrooms brimming with historic charm and modern comforts: marquetry composers desks and flatscreen TVs, candelabra and colourful minifridges, 19th-century poker chairs and babysitting services. Light fills all six high-ceilinged bedrooms, and though Turquoise is sprawling and Green occupies a private corner of the walled garden, Grey has a sexy wrought-iron bedframe under a cathedral ceiling.

## Cannaregio

**Alloggi Gerotto Calderan** (Map p362; ☎ 041 71 55 62; [www.casagerottocalderan.com](http://www.casagerottocalderan.com); Campo San Geremia 283; dm/s/d/tr/q €25/50/90/105/120; ☎) Cheap and chipper, handily located over a bookshop near the train station in lively Campo San Geremia. Rooms are compact with clean bathrooms, in-room internet access and twee coverlets; some rooms have traditional Venetian rosebud-painted headboards and bowlegged bedstands.

**Residenza Ca' Riccio** (Map pp352-3; ☎ 041 528 23 34; [www.cariccio.com](http://www.cariccio.com); Rio Terà dei Birri 5394a; incl breakfast s €70-90, d €95-130; ☹ ☹) Down the street from Casanova's house in a convenient yet hidden location is the Riccio family's lovingly restored 14th-century residence. Seven rooms on the two top floors look out onto a courtyard, and feature simple wrought-iron beds, wood-beamed ceilings, terracotta tiled floors and whitewashed walls.

**Locanda Leon Bianco** (Map pp352-3; ☎ 041 523 35 72; [www.leonbianco.it](http://www.leonbianco.it); Corte Leon Bianco 5629; d from €100) Turner used to paint at this canalside hotel, and you can see what he saw in the place: sloping *terrazzo alla Veneziana* (Venetian marble) floors, heavy wooden doors and hulking antique furniture. Three rooms overlook the Grand Canal and No 4 is a corner room with wraparound postcard views, but bring your earplugs for canalside rooms: the Rialto Market opposite starts at 4am.

**Domus Orsoni** (Map p362; ☎ 041 275 95 38; [www.domusorsoni.it](http://www.domusorsoni.it); Corte Vedei 1045; incl breakfast s €80-150, d €100-250; ☹ ☹) Five stylish rooms sprawl out over this low Venetian house in a tranquil back lane. Breakfast is served in the garden by the Orsoni mosaic works, located here since 1885 – hence the mosaic fantasias glittering across guestroom bathrooms, walls and headboards.

**Ca' Pozzo** (Map p362; ☎ 041 524 05 04; [www.capozzovenice.com](http://www.capozzovenice.com); Sotoportego Ca' Pozzo 1279; s/d €155/300; ☹ ☹) Biennale-bound travellers find a home away from home-design catalogues in this design shrine near the historic Ghetto. Several guestrooms come with balconies, two are built to accommodate disabled guests, and spacious No 208 could house a Damien Hirst entourage.

**Palazzo Abadessa** (Map pp352-3; ☎ 041 241 37 84; [www.abadessa.com](http://www.abadessa.com); Calle Priuli 4011; d €145-325; ☹ ☹) Evenings seem enchanted in this opulent 1540 Venetian *palazzo*, with owner Maria Luisa fluffing pillows, plying guests with cake between meals and fulfilling wishes like a fairy godmother. Sumptuous guestrooms feature plush beds, handmade silk-damask walls and 18th-century antique vanities; go for baroque and ask for one with original ceiling frescoes, and enjoy cocktails in the garden until you're whisked off to the opera in the hotel's boat.

## Castello

**Foresteria Valdese** (Map pp352-3; ☎ 041 528 67 97; [www.diaconiavaldese.org/venezia](http://www.diaconiavaldese.org/venezia); Palazzo Cavagnis, Castello 5170; incl breakfast dm €22, d from €78) Holy hostel:

this rambling palace retreat owned by the Waldensian church has 1st-floor guestrooms with 18th-century frescoes by Bevilacqua, and one floor up guestrooms have canal views. Dorm beds are available only for families or groups; book well ahead.

**Locanda Silva** (Map pp352-3; ☎ 041 522 76 43; [www.locandasilva.it](http://www.locandasilva.it); Fondamenta del Rimedio 4423; incl breakfast s €45-80, d €60-130) Along a quiet canal five minutes' walk from Piazza San Marco, this family-run hotel has 23 cheerful, gleamingly clean guestrooms with plain blond-wood furniture. Ask for sunny canalside rooms, and lounge on the giddy rooftop terrace peeking at San Marco's campanile.

**La Residenza** (Map pp348-9; ☎ 041 528 53 15; [www.venice.laresidenza.com](http://www.venice.laresidenza.com); Campo Bandiera e Moro 3608; s/d €50-100/80-180; ☹ ☹) Sleep like the dead in the comfort of this grand 15th-century mansion, presiding over a *campo* that was once the site of public executions. Generously sized rooms are furnished in standard Venetian style, with lacquered wardrobes and beds with striped bedspreads. The upstairs reception is a chandelier-lit salon garlanded with 18th-century stucco, with a grand piano guests occasionally play at happy hour.

## Giudecca

**ostello Venezia** (Map pp348-9; ☎ 041 523 82 11; [www.ostellionline.org](http://www.ostellionline.org); Fondamenta della Croce 86; dm incl breakfast €21-26; ☹ ☹) check-in 1.30-11.30pm, check-out 9.30am) Serene canal views make hostel bunks seem miles away from the mad crowds and inflated prices of San Marco, yet it's just a *vaporetto* hop away. Sheets, blanket and a pillow are provided in the bunk price, but you'll need to arrive promptly after 1.30pm opening time to claim that perfect bunk by the window; reserve ahead for one of two viewless private rooms.

**Residenza Junghans** (Map pp348-9; ☹ ☹) 041 521 08 01; [www.residenzajunghans.com/home.htm](http://www.residenzajunghans.com/home.htm); Terzo Ramo della Palada 394; s/d €40/70) Save cash and wax nostalgic about school in this bargain modern dorm residence with instant camaraderie, Ikea desks and school-marmish rules: payment in advance, quiet after 11pm and locked gates at 1.30am. Ask for deals by the week.

**Bauer Palladio & Spa** (Map pp348-9; ☹ ☹) 041 520 70 22; [www.palladiohotelspa.com](http://www.palladiohotelspa.com); Fondamenta della Croce 33; d €210-490) Splash out in a serene, Palladio-designed former cloister with San Marco views, private solar-powered boat service and a superb spa. These premises once housed nuns and orphans, but now offer heavenly comfort in 37 rosy, serenely demure guestrooms, many

## CICHETI: VENICE'S BEST MEAL DEALS

Even in unpretentious Venetian *osterie* (bistros), most dishes cost a couple of euros more than they might elsewhere in Italy – not a bad markup, considering all that fresh seafood and produce brought in by boat. But *cicheti*, or Venetian tapas, are some of the best foodie finds in the country, served at lunch and around 6pm to 8pm with wine by the glass. *Cicheti* range from basic bar snacks (spicy meatballs, fresh tomato and basil bruschette) to wildly inventive small plates: think white Bassano asparagus and plump lagoon shrimp wrapped with pancetta at All'Arco (below), or *crostini* with soft local salami and truffle pecorino at I Rusteghi (below). Prices start at €1 for tasty meatballs to €3 to €6 for gourmet fantasias with fancy ingredients, typically devoured standing up or perched atop stools at the bar. For *cicheti* with ultrafresh ingredients at manageable prices, seek out *osterie* along side lanes and canals in Cannaregio, Castello, San Polo and San Marco.

with garden terraces or Giudecca Canal views. Head downstairs for local, organic breakfast buffets and ecofriendly spa treatments like the milk, honey and rose bath (€90) with complimentary sauna, Jacuzzi and marble steam-room access.

## EATING

### Restaurants & Osterie

#### SAN MARCO

**Enoteca al Volto** (Map pp352-3; ☎ 041 522 89 45; Calle Cavalli 4081; *cicheti* €2-3; ☎ 11am-2pm & 5-9pm Tue-Sat) Join the bar crowd working its way through the vast selection of wine and *cicheti*, or come early for a table in the snug wood-beamed backroom for seaworthy bowls of pasta with clams or thick steaks with a sailor-size glass of Amarone.

**our pick I Rusteghi** (Map pp352-3; ☎ 041 523 22 05; Corte del Tentor 5513; mini-panini €2-5; ☎ 10.30am-3pm & 6-9pm Mon-Sat) Outstanding wine selections and *cicheti* featuring exceptional meats – boar salami, pancetta and velvety cured *lardo di Colonnata* that will win you over to lard. Ask fourth-generation sommelier-owner Giovanni to choose your wine, and he'll give you a long look to suss out your character before presenting a sensual Tocai or heady Refosco you won't find elsewhere.

**Cavatappi** (Map pp352-3; ☎ 041 296 02 52; Campo della Guerra 525/526; *cicheti* €2-4, meals €8-15; ☎ 11.15am-4pm Tue-Sat & 7-10pm Fri & Sat) A sleek charmer strong on seasonal *cicheti* and artisanal cheeses, wines by the glass, and that rarest of San Marco finds: a tasty sit-down meal under €10. Get the pasta or risotto of the day and sheep's cheese drizzled with honey for dessert.

**Vini da Arturo** (Map pp352-3; ☎ 041 528 69 74; Calle dei Assassini 3656; meals €85; ☎ 7-11pm Mon-Sat) Everyone in this corridor-sized restaurant comes for the same reason: the steak, studded with green peppercorn, soured in brandy and mustard,

or rare on the bone. A butter knife and credit card are all you need to make short work of an exceptional cut.

#### DORSODURO

**Impronta Café** (Map pp352-3; ☎ 041 275 03 86; Calle Crosera 3815; meals €8-15; ☎ 11am-11pm Mon-Sat) Join Venice's value-minded jet set for Prosecco, espresso and bargain polenta-salami combos. Architectural diagrams of cooking pots and a Buddha presiding over the bar add sly humor to the hipster scene.

**Enoteca ai Artisti** (Map pp352-3; ☎ 041 523 89 44; [www.enotecaiartisti.com](http://www.enotecaiartisti.com); Fondamenta de la Toletta 1169a; meals €10-20; ☎ noon-4pm & 6.30-10pm Mon-Sat) Heartwarming pastas, seasonal *bruschette* (toast with toppings) and inspired cheeses are paired with wines by the glass by your oenophile hosts. The glass shopfront makes great people-watching, but space is limited, so book ahead for groups larger than two.

**Ristorante Oniga** (Map pp352-3; ☎ 041 522 44 10; [www.oniga.it](http://www.oniga.it); Campo San Barnaba 2852; meals €30-35; ☎ noon-3pm & 7-10pm Wed-Mon) Purists come for chef Annika's exemplary Venetian seafood platters, while gourmet adventurers order quirky seasonal inventions like ravioli with ricotta, broccoli and poppyseeds.

**Ristorante La Bitta** (Map pp352-3; ☎ 041 523 05 31; Calle Lunga San Barnaba 2753a; meals €35-40; ☎ 7-10pm Mon-Sat) The daily menu is presented on a miniature artist's easel, and the rustic fare looks like a still life and tastes like a dream: gnocchi is graced with pumpkin and herbs, and guinea fowl wades in mascarpone sauce. La Bitta doesn't offer wine by the glass, but it'll cut you a deal on a half-bottle.

#### SAN POLO & SANTA CROCE

**our pick All'Arco** (Map pp352-3; ☎ 041 520 56 66; Calle dell'Arco, San Polo 436; *cicheti* €1.50-4; ☎ 7am-5pm Mon-Sat)



Maestro Francesco and his son Matteo invent Venice's best *cicheti* daily with Rialto Market finds, and if you ask nicely and wait patiently, they'll whip up something special for you on the spot – baby artichoke topped with *bottarga* (dried caviar paste), or tuna tartare with mint, strawberries and a balsamic reduction. Even with copious Prosecco, hardly any meal here tops €20 or falls short of four stars.

**Pronto Pesce Pronto** (Map pp352-3; ☎ 041 822 02 98; Rialto Pescheria, San Polo 319; *cicheti* €3-8; ☎ 11am-7.30pm Mon-Sat) Next to Venice's fish market is this designer deli, specialising in artfully composed *crudi* (aka 'Venetian sushi') and well-dressed seafood salads. Grab a stool and a glass of Prosecco with your tangy *folpetti* (baby octopus) salad and plump prawn *crudi*, or enjoy it dockside on the Grand Canal.

**Osteria La Zucca** (Map pp352-3; ☎ 041 524 15 70; www.lazucca.it; Calle del Tentor, Santa Croce 1762; small plates €5-10; ☎ 12.30-2.30pm & 7-10.30pm Mon-Sat) Vegetablecentric seasonal small plates bring spice-trade influences to local produce: zucchini with ginger zing, curried carrots with yoghurt, and rice pudding with San Erasmo strawberries. Roast lamb is respectable here too, but the veggies have star quality.

**Ae Oche** (Map pp352-3; ☎ 041 524 11 61; www.aeoche.com; Calle del Tintor 1552a; pizzas €7-13; ☎ noon-2.30pm & 7-10.30pm Mon-Fri, noon-2.30pm & 7-11.30pm Sat & Sun) Architecture students and budget-minded foodies converge here for wood-fired pizzas and ale at excellent prices. Extreme eaters order the lip-buzzing *mangiafuoco* ('fire-eater') with hot salami, Calabrese peppers and Tabasco, while Palladio scholars stick with the classic white *estiva*, topped with rocket, seasoned Grana Padano cheese and cherry tomatoes.

**Osteria Ae Cravate** (Map pp352-3; ☎ 041 528 79 12; Salizada San Pantalon, Santa Croce 36; meals €15-30; ☎ 9.30am-4pm & 6-11pm Tue-Sun) A mosquito-motif tie loosened by a ravenous British entomologist is Bruno's favourite of the many *cravate* (neckties) hanging from the ceiling, all donated by diners in thanks for fresh pasta. Try the rustic handmade ravioli, and leave room for house-baked desserts.

**Trattoria da Ignazio** (Map pp352-3; ☎ 041 523 48 52; Calle Saoneri 2749, San Polo 36; meals €30-50; ☎ noon-3pm & 7-11pm Mon-Sat) Dapper waiters serve simply prepared grilled lagoon fish and pasta made in-house ('of course') with a proud flourish, on tables bedecked with yellow linens and orchids. On sunny days and warm nights the

neighbourhood converges beneath the garden grape arbour.

**Vecio Fritolin** (Map pp352-3; ☎ 041 522 28 81; www.veciofritolin.it; Calle della Regina, Santa Croce 2262; meals €40-60; ☎ noon-2.30pm & 7-10.30pm Tue-Sun) Order the langouste and zucchini spaghetti that packs in Italian slow foodies, or choose today's special with confidence – all produce here is hand-picked daily at the Rialto markets and desserts are made in-house. Budget gourmets: stop by for €10 fish-fry takeaway.

## CANNAREGIO

**Al Ponte** (Map pp352-3; ☎ 041 528 61 57; Calle Larga Gallina 6378; *cicheti* €1.50-4; ☎ 11am-3pm & 7-11pm Wed-Sun) Early arrival, Venetian relatives and a magic spell might get you a table at this red-doored pub '*al ponte*' (on the bridge). Otherwise, join the crowd standing at the bar for decadently marbled salami *panini*, baby octopus salad and other local, seasonal treats.

**La Cantina** (Map pp352-3; ☎ 041 522 82 58; Campo San Felice 3689; *cicheti* €2-6; ☎ 11am-9.30pm Tue-Sat) Talk about slow food: even the *cicheti* here are made to order, so grab a stool and house-brewed Morgana beer while you await fresh, seasonal bruschette and hearty bean soups.

**Da Alberto** (Map pp352-3; ☎ 041 523 81 53; Calle Larga Gallina 5401; meals €15-25; ☎ noon-3pm & 6-11pm Mon-Sat) All the makings of a true Venetian *osteria* – hidden location, casks of wine, chandeliers that look like medieval torture devices – plus fair prices, seasonal *cicheti*, crispy Venetian seafood fry, and a silky *panna cotta* with strawberries.

**Alla Vedova** (Map pp352-3; ☎ 041 528 53 24; Calle del Pistor 3912; *cicheti* €1-3.50, meals €15-40; ☎ noon-2.30pm & 7-10.30pm Mon-Wed, 7-10.30pm Fri-Sun) Culinary convictions run deep at this venerable Venetian *osteria*: you won't find *spritz* or coffee on the menu, or pay more than €1 for Venetian meatballs at the bar. Call ahead to claim a wooden table that has weathered a thousand elbows in postpasta stupors.

**our pick Anice Stellato** (Map p362; ☎ 041 72 07 44; Fondamenta della Sensa 3272; meals €25-40; ☎ 11am-3pm & 7-11pm Wed-Sun) If finding this obscure corner of Cannaregio seems like an adventure, wait until dinner arrives: pistachio-encrusted lamb fillet, wild sea bass with aromatic herbs, and perfectly fried *moeche* (soft-shelled crab) gobbled whole. Tin lamps and recycled-paper placemats on communal tables keep the focus on local food and local company – all memorable.



## CASTELLO

**Enoteca Mascareta** (Map pp352-3; ☎ 041 523 07 44; Calle Lunga Santa Maria Formosa 5138; meals €30-45; ☎ 7pm-2am Fri-Tue) Hang out by the outdoor bar for *cicheti* and a glass of organic wine for under €10, or head inside for appetiser platters of meats and cheeses that could pass for a meal.

**Corte Sconta** (Map pp348-9; ☎ 041 522 70 24; Calle del Pestrin 3886; meals €35-55; ☎ 11.30am-3.30pm & 6-10.30pm Tue-Sat) Seek out this vine-covered *corte sconta* (hidden courtyard) for imaginative house-made pasta and ultrafresh, visually striking seafood: crustaceans arranged on a platter like paint on an artist's palette, black squid-ink pasta topped with bright orange squash and tender scallops, and roast eel looping like the river Brenta on the plate.

## GIUDECCA

**Ai Tre Scaini** (Map pp348-9; ☎ 041 522 47 90; Calle Michelangelo 53; meals €15-25; ☎ noon-3pm Fri-Wed, 7-10pm Tue, Wed, Sat & Sun) Belly laughs hurt after generous plates of pasta and seafood here, but that doesn't stop the neighbourhood from lingering over lunch in the garden, or date-night dinners with wine flowing straight from the barrel.

**our pick** **I Figli delle Stelle** (Map pp348-9; ☎ 041 523 00 04; www.igfiglidellestelle.it; Zitelle 70; meals €15-35; ☎ noon-3.30pm & 7pm-midnight Tue-Sat, noon-2.30pm Sun) Declarations of love at Venice's most romantic restaurant are slightly suspect: are you sure that's not Chef Luigi's velvety, heartwarming pasta and soup talking? A creamy fava-bean soup with chicory and fresh tomatoes coats the tongue in a naughty way, and the mixed grill for two with *langoustine*, sole and fresh sardines is a commitment – though given the cuisine and waterfront views of San Marco, this is a surprisingly cheap date.

## LIDO

**Trattoria La Favorita** (☎ 041 526 16 26; via Francesco Duodo 33; meals €20-35; ☎ noon-3.30pm & 7.30-11pm Wed-Sun, 6-10pm Tue, closed Jan-mid-Feb) Spider crab *gnochetti*, fish risotto and *crudi* at noncelebrity prices make La Favorita earn its name. Book ahead for the wisteria-filled garden, where songbirds refuse to be outsung by the ring tones of movie moguls here for the Venice International Film Festival.

## BURANO

**our pick** **Al Gatto Nero** (☎ 041 73 01 20; www.gattonero.com; via Giudecca 88; ☎ noon-3.30pm & 7.30-10pm Tue-Sun)

Once you've tried the homemade *tagliolini* with spider crab, whole grilled fish and perfect housebaked Burano biscuits, the ferry ride to Burano seems a minor inconvenience – a swim back here from Venice would be worth it for that decadent *langoustine* risotto. Call ahead of the steady stream of visiting dignitaries and star chefs, and plead for canalside seating.

## Cafes

In prime tourist zones, the price of coffee at a table seems more like rent, so take your coffee standing on side streets or splash out and relax on a *campo*, or in the fabulous cafes of the Museo Correr (p357), Palazzo Querini Stampalia (p364) or the Piazza San Marco. A €6 music surcharge is often added to the bill in Piazza San Marco – might as well get your money's worth and do the tango.

**Caffè Florian** (Map pp352-3; ☎ 041 520 56 41; www.caffeflorian.com; Piazza San Marco 56/59; drinks €8-12; ☎ 10am-midnight Thu-Tue Apr-Oct, to 11pm Thu-Tue Nov-Mar) Florian adheres to rituals established in 1720: lovers canoodle over breakfast in plush banquettes indoors, uniformed waiters serve gooey hot chocolate on silver trays, and the orchestra strikes up a dance number as fading sunlight illuminates San Marco's portal mosaics.

**Paradiso** (Map pp348-9; ☎ 335 622 30 79; Giardini della Biennale 1260, Castello; ☎ 9am-7pm) Curators woo shy artists on mod couches and star architects hold court under sun umbrellas, fuelled by a steady stream of coffee and cocktails for less than you'd expect in this prime waterfront location – this is the only cafe within reach of anyone in stilettoes at the Biennale.

**our pick** **Pasticceria Rizzardini** (Map pp352-3; ☎ 041 522 38 35; Campiello dei Meloni 1415, San Polo; ☎ 7.30am-8pm Wed-Mon) 'From 1742' reads the modest shopfront sign, and inside you'll find the secrets to the survival of this standing-room-only cafe-bakery: killer *krapfen* (doughnuts), wagging *lingue di suocere* (mother-in-law's tongues) and suggestively sprinkled *pallone di Casanova* (Casanova's balls). Act fast if you want that last slice of tiramisu.

## Gelaterie

**our pick** **Alaska** (Map pp352-3; ☎ 041 71 52 11; Calle Larga dei Bari, Santa Croce 1159; gelato €1-1.60; ☎ 9am-1pm & 3-8pm) Day-trippers in San Marco may settle for vanilla ice milk, but Venetians head to Alaska for outlandish organic gelato: one

glorious scoop of Venetian roasted pistachio, or two of vaguely minty *carciofi* (artichoke) with tangy lemon.

**Gelateria San Stae** (Map pp352-3; ☎ 041 71 06 89; Salizada San Stae, Santa Croce 1910; gelato €1-2; ☎ 11am-9pm Tue-Sun) Simple flavours are anything but at San Stae, where signature ingredients cover Venetian trade routes from Piedmont hazelnut to Madagascar vanilla.

**Da Nico** (Map pp352-3; ☎ 041 522 52 93; Zattere, Dorsoduro 922; gelato €2.50-8; ☎ 7am-10pm Fri-Wed) Gelato to go is half-price at the bar, but sunny days are meant for lazing away dockside with Da Nico's *gianduiotto*, a slab of hazelnut gelato submerged under *panna* (whipped cream), or *panna in ghiaccio*, frozen whipped cream sandwiched between cookies.

## Quick Eats

Avoid the sad congealed pizza slices around Piazza San Marco and the Rialto, and grab *cicheti* at *osterie*, *panini* at cafes and bars, and hot pizza slices until late in Campo Santa Margherita.

**our pick** **Snack Bar Ai Nomboli** (Map pp352-3; ☎ 041 523 09 95; Rio Terà dei Nomboli, San Polo 271c; panini €2-3; ☎ 8am-8pm Mon-Sat) Two scrumptious *panini* here make a filling lunch, and three is a feast deserving of Bardolino by the glass. Proper crusty rolls are filled with local cheeses, respectable salami, roast beef, roast vegetables and sprightly greens, plus condiments ranging from spicy mustard to wild-nettle sauce.

**Pizza al Volo** (Map pp352-3; ☎ 041 522 54 30; Campo Santa Margherita 2944; pizza slice €2-4; ☎ noon-1am) Peckish night owls run out of options fast in Venice once restaurants start to close at 10pm – but slices here are cheap and tasty, with a thin yet sturdy crust that won't collapse on your bar-hopping outfit.

**Caffé Mandola** (Map pp352-3; ☎ 041 523 76 24; Calle della Mandola, San Marco 3630; panini €3-7; ☎ 9am-7pm Mon-Sat) Carbo-load before the opera or between museums with fresh focaccia loaded with tangy tuna and capers or lean *bresaola*, arugula and seasoned Grana Padano cheese. Stools are generally available except when you need them most, at lunch and happy hour.

## Self-Catering

The Rialto Market (Map pp352-3) offers superb local produce next to the legendary Pescaria (Map pp352-3), Venice's 600-year-old fish market. In backstreets nearby there are bakeries, small groceries and two notable gour-

met shops: **Aliani** (Map pp352-3; ☎ 041 522 49 13; Ruga Vecchia di San Giovanni, San Polo 654), with cheeses, cured meats and gourmet specialities from balsamic vinegar aged 40 years to *bottarga*; and **Drogheria Mascari** (Map pp352-3; ☎ 041 522 97 62; Ruga degli Spezieri 381; ☎ 8am-1pm & 4-7.30pm Mon-Tue & Thu-Sat, 8am-1pm Wed), a dazzling emporium lined with copper-topped jars, spices and truffles galore, as well as an entire backroom of speciality Italian wines.

For basic grocery needs, **Billa Supermarket** (Map p362; Strada Nova, Cannaregio 3660; ☎ 8.30am-8pm Mon-Sat, 9am-8pm Sun) fits the bill, but the deli selection is better at **Coop** (☎ 041 296 06 21; ☎ 9am-1pm & 4-7.30pm Mon-Sat) Campo San Giacomo dell'Orto 1492 (Map pp352-3; Piazzale Roma (Map pp348-9).

## DRINKING

Boozing hot spots are around the Rialto Market area, Campo Santa Margherita in Dorsoduro, Campo Zanipolo and Campo Maria Formosa in Castello, and Fondamenta degli Ormesini in Cannaregio. Happy hour begins at 6pm with an *ombra* (small glass of wine) or *spritz*, the Venetian cocktail of Prosecco and bittersweet Aperol. For a successful *giro di ombra* (roving happy hour), sample fine Veneto wines for as little as €1.50 and *cicheti* at the bar while they're fresh.

**Aurora** (Map pp352-3; ☎ 041 528 64 05; www.aurora.it; Piazza San Marco 48-50; ☎ noon-2am Wed-Sun, cocktails from 6.15pm) Historic cafe by day, chilled lounge with local DJs and art openings by night. Local musicians and €2 cocktails bring life to San Marco on Sunday nights, and sporadic Thursday art events draw shy artists out of their garrets.

**Harry's Bar** (Map pp352-3; ☎ 041 528 57 77; www.cipriano.com; Calle Vallaresso, San Marco 1323; ☎ noon-11pm) Aspiring auteurs throng the bar frequented by Ernest Hemingway, Charlie Chaplin, Truman Capote, Orson Welles and others, enjoying a signature €18 Bellini (fresh peach juice and Prosecco) with a side of reflected glory. Despite the basic bistro decor, this is one of Italy's most expensive restaurants – stick to the bar to save financing for your breakthrough film.

**Cantinone 'Gia Schiavi'** (Map pp352-3; ☎ 041 523 00 34; Fondamenta Nani 992; ☎ 8.30am-8.30pm Mon-Sat) Good lungs and steady hands are instrumental to make your order heard over Cantinone's happy hour and transport *cicheti* and *ombre* or *pallottoline* (small bottles of beer) outside to the canal without spilling on the boisterous throngs of students, gondola builders and Accademia art historians.

**Il Caffè Rosso** (Map pp352-3; ☎ 041 528 79 98; Campo Santa Margherita, Dorsoduro 2963; ☎ 7am-1am Mon-Sat) Sunny piazza seating is the place to recover from last night's revelry and today's newspaper headlines, until the cycle begins again at 6pm with *spritz* cocktails and standing-room-only student crowds.

**Muro Vino e Cucina** (Map pp352-3; ☎ 041 523 74 95; Campo Bella Vienna, San Polo 222; ☎ 4pm-2am Mon-Sat) A snazzy aluminium bar with see-and-be-seen picture windows, without velvet ropes. Wines by the glass start at just €2 and cocktails from €5, and low tables out in the *campo* are more happening than any VIP lounge.

**Al Mercà** (Map pp352-3; ☎ 393 992 47 81; Campo Bella Vienna, San Polo 213; ☎ 9-3pm & 4-9pm Mon-Sat) Discerning drinkers throng this upbeat bar for top-notch Prosecco and DOC wines by the glass at €2 to €3.50, and *cicheti* start at just €1 for meatballs and mini-*panini*. Arrive by 6.30pm for the best selection and easy bar access, or mingle with crowds of stragglers stretching to Grand Canal docks.

**Al Timon** (Map p362; ☎ 346 320 99 78; Fondamenta degli Ormesini, Cannaregio 2754; ☎ noon-3pm & 6pm-2am Tue-Sun) Pull up your director's chair along the canal and watch the motley parade of drinkers and dreamers headed here for a massive range of *crostini* (open-face sandwiches) and quality hooch until the wee hours.

**Cantina do Mori** (Map pp352-3; ☎ 041 522 54 01; Sotoportego dei do Mori, San Polo 429; ☎ 8.30am-8pm Mon-Sat) A 15th-century watering hole, with gleaming, gargantuan copper pots and incongruously dinky, dainty sandwiches called *francobolli* (postage stamps). Come early for the best selection of *cicheti* (€3 to €4) and local gossip (free).

**Osteria agli Ormesini** (Map p362; ☎ 041 71 58 34; Fondamenta degli Ormesini, Cannaregio 2710; ☎ 6.30pm-2am Mon-Sat) While the rest of the city is awash in wine, beer is the drink of choice here, with 120 mostly foreign brews. The scene spills into the street over happy-hour *panini* – but try to keep it down, or the neighbours get testy.

**Bacaro** (Map pp352-3; ☎ 041 296 06 87; Salizada San Moisè, San Marco 1345; ☎ 9am-2am) Good looks and smarts too: backed by the Benetton family, this bar is a shimmering mosaic oval that reflects well on you and the clever company you'll be keeping, once the literary crowd migrates here after Mondadori book-signings upstairs.

**Torino at Night** (Map pp352-3; ☎ 041 522 39 14; Campo San Luca, San Marco 4592; ☎ 8pm-1am Tue-Sat) Eclectic, loud and funky as it wants to be, Torino livens

up staid San Marco with €2 to €4 drinks and the odd live band, spontaneous singalong, or marathon DJ session of vintage reggae on vinyl.

**Taverna L'Olandese Volante** (Map pp352-3; ☎ 041 528 93 49; San Lio, San Marco 5658; ☎ 10am-2pm & 5pm-12.30am Mon-Sat, 10am-2pm Sun) Go home happily hoarse after another chaotic night at the Flying Dutchman, where study-abroad students mingle easily and laugh loudly with local eccentrics over cheap beer.

## ENTERTAINMENT

In Venice, you can purchase tickets for major events at **helloVenezia ticket outlets** (☎ 041 24 24; [www.hellovenezia.com](http://www.hellovenezia.com)), located near key *vaporetto* stops (pp352-3). For blockbuster events like the Biennale or La Fenice operas, you'll need to book ahead online at the appropriate website or [www.vivaticket.it](http://www.vivaticket.it) – though you might luck into last-minute discounts at **Weekend a Venezia** (<http://en.venezia.waf.it>).

To find out what's on the calendar in Venice during your visit, drop by the APT tourism office (p350) to pick up this month's printed *Eventi* brochure, or click on the Calendar button at [www.comune.venezia](http://www.comune.venezia). Other sites with worthwhile entertainment listings:

- **A Guest in Venice** ([www.aguestinvenice.com](http://www.aguestinvenice.com)) Hotelier association provides information on upcoming exhibits, events and lectures.
- **Venezia da Vivere** (The Creative Guide to Contemporary Venice; [www.veneziadavivere.com](http://www.veneziadavivere.com)) The guide to what's hip and happening in Venice now: music performances, art openings, nightlife, new designers and more.
- **Venice Explorer** (<http://venicexplorer.net>) Provides calendar listings and locator maps for Venice venues, bars and attractions.

## Casinos

No opera can match the drama that's been unfolding at Venice's **Casinò di Venezia** (Map p362; ☎ 041 529 71 11; [www.casinovenetia.it](http://www.casinovenetia.it); Palazzo Vendramin-Calergi, Cannaregio 2040; admission €5; ☎ 3pm-2.30am Sun-Thu, 3pm-3am Fri & Sat) since the 16th century: Richard Wagner survived the 20-year effort of composing his stormy *Ring* cycle only to expire at the casino in 1883. To take on the high-stakes tables here, jackets are required and strong constitutions advisable.

## Cinemas

**Summer Arena** (Campo San Polo; ☎ Jul-Aug) July and August see open-air concerts, films and

theatre performances in Campo San Polo, but watch this space year-round for anything from kiddie carousels, political rallies and impromptu silent rave sessions to DJ-designed MP3 playlists.

**Multisala Astra** (☎ 041 526 57 36; Via Corfu 12, Lido 30126; adult/senior/student €7/6/5; ☎ shows 5.30-10pm) When you start feeling the burn on the beach, catch a show in this air-conditioned, recently remodelled cinema. Subtitled art-house films share the marquee with blockbusters dubbed into Italian.

## Theatre, Opera & Classical Music

**our pick Teatro La Fenice** (Map pp352-3; ☎ 041 78 66 11; www.teatrolafenice.it; Campo San Fantin, San Marco 1965; tickets €20-1000) Tours are possible with advance booking (☎ 041 24 24), but the best way to see La Fenice is with the *loggione*, opera buffs who pass judgment on productions from on high in the top-tier cheap seats. In the opera off-season, look for symphonies and chamber-music concerts.

**Interpreti Veneziani** (☎ 041 277 05 61; www.interpretiveneziani.com; Chiesa San Vidal, San Marco 2862; adult/student & senior €24/19; ☎ doors open 8.30pm) Everything you knew of Vivaldi, from elevators and mobile ring tones is proved fantastically wrong by Interpreti Veneziani, who play Vivaldi on 18th-century instruments as a soundtrack for living in this city of intrigue – you'll never listen to *The Four Seasons* again without hearing summer storms gathering over the lagoon, or the echoing footsteps over footbridges in a winter's-night intrigue.

**Teatro Goldoni** (Map pp352-3; ☎ 041 240 20 14; www.teatrostabileveneto.it; Calle Teatro Goldoni, San Marco 4650b; tickets €7-30; ☎ box office in season 10am-1pm & 3-7pm Mon-Wed, Fri & Sat, 10am-1pm Thu) Named after the city's greatest playwright, this theatre's dramatic range runs from Goldoni comedy to Shakespearean drama (mostly in Italian), plus ballet and concerts.

**Musica a Palazzo** (Map pp352-3; ☎ 340 971 72 72; www.musicapalazzo.com; Palazzo Barbarigo-Minotto, Fondamenta Barbarigo o Duodo, San Marco 2504; tickets €45; ☎ doors open 8pm) In salons overlooking the Grand Canal with splendid Tiepolo ceilings, the soprano's high notes might make you fear for your wineglass. The drama unfolds over 1½ hours of selected arias from Verdi to Rossini, with 70 guests trailing singers in modern dress as they pour their hearts out in song, progressing from receiving-room overtures to heart-breaking finales in the bedroom.

## Live Music Clubs

**Venice Jazz Club** (Map pp352-3; ☎ 041 523 20 56; www.venicejazzclub.com; Ponte dei Pugn, Dorsoduro 3102; tickets incl drink €20; ☎ doors open 7pm) Jazz is alive and swinging in Dorsoduro, where the resident Venice Jazz Club Quartet improvises funky tributes to Miles Davis and Charles Mingus and grooves on Italian jazz standards. Drinks are steep, so starving artists booze beforehand and arrive at 8pm for free cold-cut platters.

**Aurora Beach Club** (Map pp352-3; ☎ 041 526 80 13; www.aurora.st; Piazzale Bucintoro Lungomare D'Annunzio, Lido 20x; ☎ 9am-2am May-Sep) Days flow into nights at this beach venue with four-poster sunbeds, a free library, sports and chill-out zones for daytime use, plus live music sets, cocktail bars, open-air cinema and DJ sets to keep you dancing until you face-plant in the sand.

## SHOPPING

Retail therapy approaches delirium in Venice. A single visit to Murano can mysteriously max out carry-on limits with fragile glassware, and a visit to the Rialto Market and neighbouring gourmet shops like Drogheria Mascari (p376) induces foodies to stash bottles of wine and jars of mountain honey in their checked baggage. But Venice's ultimate shopping triumphs are unique finds at surprisingly reasonable prices, handcrafted by artisans in tiny backstreet studios (see opposite).

## GETTING THERE & AWAY

**Air**  
Most flights arrive and depart from **Marco Polo airport** (VCE; off Map pp348-9; ☎ 041 260 92 60; www.veniceairport.it), 12km outside Venice, east of Mestre. Ryanair's budget flights to/from London Stansted, Dublin, Shannon and Paris currently use **San Giuseppe airport** (TSF; ☎ 0422 31 51 11; www.trevisoairport.it), about 5km south-west of Treviso and a 30km, one-hour drive from Venice. Low-cost airlines are a benefit to travellers, but a burden on the environment and Venice's air quality; to travel with a cleaner conscience, consider a carbon-offset program (see p21).

Airport bus services link both airports with Venice's Piazzale Roma and Mestre, and the Alilaguna fast ferry runs from Marco Polo airport. ATVO's Eurobus connects to Treviso's San Giuseppe airport. For more details, see p380.

### TOP FIVE AVANT-GARDE ARTISANS IN VENICE

- Glass – find witty statement jewellery in handblown glass at **Marina & Susanna Sent** (Map pp352-3; ☎ 041 520 81 36; [www.marinaesusannasent.com](http://www.marinaesusannasent.com); Campo San Vio, Dorsoduro 669; ☎ 10am-1pm & 3-6.30pm Tue-Sat, 3-6.30pm Mon): a double-strand necklace of large, clear glass ‘soap bubbles’, and an asymmetrical black leather collar with dollops of bright orange and red glass that looks like an artist’s palette.
- Fashion – prison orange is so over at **BANCO 10** (Map pp348-9; ☎ 041 522 14 39; Salizada Sant’Antonio, Castello 3478a; ☎ 10am-1pm & 3-6.30pm Tue-Sat): all the sleek jackets, tapestry handbags and diva dresses in this nonprofit boutique are made in a retraining program at a women’s prison on Giudecca, with remnants of sumptuous textiles donated by Fortuny and other local ateliers.
- Housewares – household items are transformed at **Madera** (Map pp352-3; ☎ 041 522 41 81; [www.maderavenezia.it](http://www.maderavenezia.it); Campo San Barnaba 2762; ☎ 10am-1pm & 3-6pm Tue-Sat) by owner-designer Francesca Meratti and other local and European designers into objects of wonder: frying pans look like clocks, spoons become tongues and a wood salad bowl curls into a wave.
- Marbled paper – Rosanna Corró (p363) of **Cartè** (Map pp352-3; ☎ 032 024 87 76; 1731 Calle di Cristi; ☎ 9am-1pm & 3-7.30pm Mon-Sat) applies modern flair to the ancient art of *carta marmorizzata* (marbled paper) in new must-haves: psychedelic paper-panel necklaces, handbound photo albums with lagoon-ripple designs and paper purses in woodgrain patterns.
- Shoes – woven, sculpted and crested like lagoon birds: each extraordinary pair at **Giovanna Zanella** (Map pp352-3; ☎ 041 523 55 00; Calle Garminati, Castello 5641; ☎ 9.30am-1pm & 3-7pm) is custom-made to treat your feet kindly as you stomp Venice’s cobblestones or film festival red carpets.

### Boat

**Minoan Lines** ([www.minoan.gr](http://www.minoan.gr)) and **Anek** ([www.anek.it](http://www.anek.it)) run regular ferries to Venice from Greece, while **Venezia Lines** ([www.venezialines.com](http://www.venezialines.com)) runs high-speed boats to and from Croatia and Slovenia in summer – but consider big-ship transport carefully. Long-haul ferries and cruise ships have an outsize environmental impact on tiny Venice and its fragile lagoon aquaculture, exposing Venice’s ancient foundations to degradation from high-speed *motoschiffi* (wakes) and leakage of wastewater from the bilge, ballast and flushing of onboard toilets. Take the lower-impact train instead, and Venice will be most grateful.

### Bus

**Azienda del Consorzio Trasporti Veneziano** (ACTV; ☎ 041 24 24; [www.actv.it](http://www.actv.it)) buses leave from the bus station (Map pp348-9) on Piazzale Roma for Mestre and surrounding areas.

**ATVO** (Azienda Trasporti Veneto Orientale; ☎ 041 520 55 30) operates buses to destinations all over the eastern Veneto. Tickets and information are available at the ticket office on Piazzale Roma.

### Car & Motorcycle

The congested Trieste–Turin A4 passes through Mestre. From Mestre, take the

Venezia exit. From the south, take the A13 from Bologna, which connects with the A4 at Padua.

Once over the Ponte della Libertà bridge from Mestre, cars must be left at the car park at Piazzale Roma or Tronchetto; expect to pay €20 or more for every 24 hours. Parking stations in Mestre are cheaper. Car ferry 17 transports vehicles from Tronchetto to the Lido.

The car-rental companies listed here all have offices on Piazzale Roma and at Marco Polo airport. Several companies operate in or near Mestre train station too.

**Avis** (Map pp348-9; ☎ 041 523 73 77)

**Europcar** (Map pp348-9; ☎ 041 523 86 16)

**Expressway** (Map pp348-9; ☎ 041 522 30 00)

**Hertz** (Map pp348-9; ☎ 041 528 40 91)

### Train

Prompt, affordable, scenic and environmentally savvy, trains are the preferred transport option to and from Venice. Trains run frequently to Venice’s Stazione Santa Lucia (signed as Ferrovia within Venice) from locations throughout Italy and major European cities; *vaporetti* (city ferries) stop right outside the station. Train tickets can be purchased at self-serve ticketing machines in the station,



online at [www.trenitalia.it](http://www.trenitalia.it), or in the UK at **Rail Europe** (☎ 0844 8484064; [www.raileurope.co.uk](http://www.raileurope.co.uk)).

Venice is linked by train to Padua (€2.90 to €15.70, 30 to 50 minutes, three to four each hour) and Verona (€6.15 to €25.20, 1¼ to 2½ hours, two each hour). Regular trains run further afield to Milan (€14.50 to €38.50, 2½ to 3¼ hours), Bologna (€8.90 to €35.20, 1¼ to 2¾ hours), Florence (€21.50 to €54.50, 2¾ to 3¾ hours) and many other major points in France, Germany, Austria, Switzerland, Slovenia and Croatia.

## GETTING AROUND

### To/From the Airport

The **Alilaguna** (☎ 041 240 17 01; [www.alilaguna.com](http://www.alilaguna.com)) Orange Line ferry costs €13 from the airport ferry dock (an eight-minute walk from the terminal) to major stops at the Fondamente Nuove, near Piazza San Marco and at Zattere, making several stops along the 70-to-80-minute ride. The faster, direct Gold Line to/from San Zaccaria (near San

Marco) takes 35 minutes, costs €25 and runs seven times daily on the half-hour.

**ATVO** (☎ 041 38 36 72; [www.atvo.it](http://www.atvo.it)) buses run to the airport from Piazzale Roma (€3, 20 minutes) about every half-hour. The trip to/from Piazzale Roma takes 65 minutes and costs €5.

### Vaporetto

The city's main mode of public transport is *vaporetto*. Tickets can be purchased from the **helloVenezia ticket booths** ([www.hellovenezia.com](http://www.hellovenezia.com)) at most landing stations. You can also buy tickets when boarding; you may be charged double with luggage.

Instead of spending €6.50 for a one-way ticket, consider buying a **VENICEcard** (p351) or a timed pass for unlimited travel within a set time period, which begins when you validate your ticket in the yellow machine located at a ferry dock. Passes for tickets for 12/24/36/48/72 hours are €16/18/23/28/33, and seven days cost €50.

### VAPORETTO ROUTES

Here are key *vaporetto* lines and major stops, subject to seasonal change:

**No 1** Piazzale Roma–Ferrovia–Grand Canal (all stops)–Lido and back.

**No 2** Circular line: San Zaccaria–Redentore–Zattere–Tronchetto–Ferrovia–Rialto–Accademia–San Marco.

**No 5** San Zaccaria–Murano and back.

**No 8** Sacca Fisola–Zattere–Redentore–Giardini–Lido

**No 13** Fondamente Nuove–Murano–Vignole–Sant'Erasmo–Treporti and back.

**No 17** Car ferry: Tronchetto–Lido and back.

**No 18** Murano–Sant'Erasmo–Lido and back (summer only).

**No 20** San Zaccaria–San Lazzaro–Lido and back.

**No 41** Circular line: Murano–Fondamente Nuove–Ferrovia–Piazzale Roma–Redentore–San Zaccaria–Fondamente Nuove–San Michele–Murano.

**No 42** Circular line in reverse direction to No 41.

**No 51** Circular line: Lido–Fondamente Nuove–Riva de Biasio–Ferrovia–Piazzale Roma–Zattere–San Zaccaria–Giardini–Lido.

**No 52** Circular line in reverse direction to No 51.

**No 61** Limited-stops, weekdays-only circular line: Piazzale Roma–Santa Marta–San Basilio–Zattere–Giardini–Sant'Elena–Lido.

**No 62** Limited-stops, weekdays-only circular line, reverse direction to No 61.

**N** All-stops night circuit: Lido–Giardini–San Zaccaria–Grand Canal (all stops)–Ferrovia–Piazzale Roma–Tronchetto–Zattere–Redentore–San Giorgio–San Zaccaria (starts around 11.30pm; last service around 5am).

**N** A second night service, aka NMU, from Fondamente Nuove to Murano (all stops) – three or four runs from midnight.

**N** A third night run, aka NLN, offers sporadic service between Fondamente Nuove and Burano, Mazzorbo, Torcello and Treporti.

**DM (Diretto Murano)** Tronchetto–Piazzale Roma–Ferrovia–Murano and back.

**LN (Laguna Nord)** San Zaccaria–Lido–Burano–Mazzorbo–Murano (Faro)–Fondamente Nuove and back.

**T** Torcello–Burano (half-hourly service) and back (7am to 8.30pm).

*Vaporetto* stops can be confusing, so check the signs at the landing dock to make sure you're at the right stop for the *vaporetto* line and direction you want. At major stops like Ferrovia, there are often two separate docks for the same *vaporetto* line, headed in opposite directions. Some lines make only limited stops, so check boat signage.

## Water Taxis

The standard **water taxi** (☎ 041 522 23 03, 041 240 67 11) between Marco Polo airport and Venice runs €60 to €90 for up to four people; ask your B&B or hotel concierge to pair you with fellow travellers to share the ride. Official rates start at €8.90 plus €1.80 per minute, €6 extra if they're called to your hotel and more for night trips, luggage and large groups. Prices can be metered or negotiated in advance.

# AROUND THE VENETO

As though Venice weren't enough of a draw, the Veneto countryside is dotted with walled medieval towns, rustic farmhouse bistros and cities brimming with Unesco World Heritage Sites. Easy day trips let you visit more villas along the Brenta Riviera than a Venetian socialite c 1600 – glimpse your own emotions mirrored in Giotto's early-Renaissance frescoes in Padua, be uplifted by Palladio's gracious architecture in Vicenza and toast star-crossed lovers Romeo and Juliet with a glass of Amarone in Verona. Wine-tasting excursions and skiing trips to the Dolomites make worthy overnight adventures, even with the timeless temptations of Venice just across the lagoon.

## BRENTA RIVIERA

Every 13 June for 300 years, summer officially kicked off with a traffic jam along the Grand Canal, as a flotilla of fashionable Venetians headed for the Brenta. Every last ball gown and poker chair was loaded onto Brenta-bound barges for dalliances and diversions that stretched until November. Hearts were won and fortunes lost; vendettas and villas endured.

The party ended when Napoleon took over the area in 1797, but 80 villas still strike elegant poses along the Brenta. Private ownership and privacy hedges leave much to the imagination, but four historic villas are now

open as museums; others may be open to organised boat and bicycle tours (see below) and splendid villas can be visited around Vicenza (see p390).

## Sights

The most romantic Brenta Riviera villa is the Palladio-designed 1555–60 **Villa Foscari** (☎ 041 520 39 66; [www.lamalcontenta.com](http://www.lamalcontenta.com); Via dei Turisti 9, Malcontenta; admission adult/student €10/8; ☎ 9am–noon Tue & Sat, closed 15 Nov–31 Mar), known as 'La Malcontenta' after a grand dame of the Foscari clan allegedly exiled here for cheating on her husband – but these effortlessly light, sociable salons hardly constitute a punishment. The villa was abandoned for years, but Giovanni Zelotti's frescoes have recently been restored to daydream-inducing splendour, from Fame in the study to the Bacchanalian bedroom with Bacchus and Cupid among trompe l'œil grapevines. Modern artists and architects have created site-specific projects here: a recent Zaha Hadid installation used Palladio's blueprint as a matrix for a 3-D fibreglass sculpture of liquid space. Groups of 10 or more can book between April and 14 November at €8 per person.

To appreciate gardening and social engineering in the Brenta Riviera, stop by nearby **Villa Widmann Rezzonico Foscari** (☎ 041 560 06 90; [www.riviera-brenta.it](http://www.riviera-brenta.it); Via Nazionale 420, Mira; adult/student €6/5; ☎ 10am–5pm Sat & Sun Nov–Mar, to 6pm Tue–Sun May–Sep). The 18th-century villa originally owned by Persian-Venetian nobility captures the Brenta's last days of rococo decadence, with Murano sea-monster chandeliers, a frescoed grand salon and an upstairs ladies' gambling parlour. Ignore the incongruous modernised bathrooms and head into the garden, where an albino peacock loudly bemoans bygone glories amid moss-covered sculptures. The gatehouse ticket counter doubles as an **APT** **Info Point** (☎ 041 42 49 73) offering brochures on the Brenta.

To keep hard-partying nobles in line, Doge Alvise Pisani provided a monumental reminder of who was in charge with the 1774 **Villa Pisani Nazionale** (☎ 041 271 90 19; [www.villapisani.beniculturali.it](http://www.villapisani.beniculturali.it); Via Alvise Pisani 7, Strà; adult/EU citizen 18–25yr/under 18yr €10/7.50/free, grounds only €7.50/5/free; ☎ 9am–6pm Tue–Sun Oct–Mar, to 8pm Tue–Sun Apr–Sep), with a labyrinthine hedge-maze and pools reflecting the doge's glory. The villa's 114 rooms saw their share of history: the gaming

rooms where the Pisani racked up debts, forcing them to sell the mansion to Napoleon; the grand bathroom with a tiny wooden throne used by Napoleon; a sagging bed where Vittorio Emanuele II apparently tossed and turned as the head of independent Italy; and the reception hall where Mussolini and Hitler met for the first time in 1934, rather ironically under Tiepolo's ceiling masterpiece depicting the *Geniuses of Peace*. Outstanding temporary exhibitions here range from contemporary sculptor Mimmo Paladino's sleeping figures in the reflecting pools to 19th-century painter Emma Ciardi's moody views of party stragglers outside Veneto villas. Last admission is one hour before closing.

Well-heeled Venetians wouldn't dream of decamping to the Brenta without their favourite cobblers, sparking a local tradition of high-end shoemaking. Today, 950 companies in the Brenta region produce 20 million pairs of shoes annually. The 'last-ing' contribution of Brenta cobblers is commemorated with a **Shoemakers' Museum** at the 18th-century **Villa Foscarini Rossi** (☎ 049 980 10 91; www.villafoscarini.it; Via Doge Pisani 1/2, Stra; adult/ages 12-18yr & over 65yr €5/2.50; ☎ 9am-1pm Nov-Mar, to 12.30pm Mon, to 12.30pm & 2.30-6pm Tue-Fri, 2-6pm Sat, 2.30-6pm Sun Apr-Oct), a multiroom dream wardrobe of 18th-century slippers, pairs worn by trendsetters Marlene Dietrich and Katherine Hepburn, and heels handcrafted in the Brenta for Yves Saint Laurent and Pucci.

## Tours

### BOAT

Seeing the Brenta by boat lets you witness an engineering marvel: the hydraulic locks system developed in the 15th century, ingeniously preventing river silt from dumping into the lagoon and turning Venice into a mudflat. Most boats move at a walking pace, but since most villas face the river, you'll be seeing them as Palladio and his contemporaries intended.

**Il Burchiello** (☎ 049 820 69 10; www.ilburchiello.it; full-day adult €66-79, 12-17yr €52, 6-11yr €37, under 6yr free, half-day adult & 12-17yr €44-48, 6-11yr €36-37, under 6yr free; ☎ half-day cruises Tue-Fri, full-day cruises Tue-Sun Mar-Oct) is a modern luxury barge that lets you watch 50 villas drift by from cushy velvet couches with a glass of Prosecco from the onboard bar. Day cruises stop at Malcontenta, Widmann and Pisani villas; half-day tours cover two villas. Full-day cruises leave from Venice

(Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday) or Padua (Wednesday, Friday and Sunday), with bus transfers to train stations.

**I Batelli del Brenta** (☎ 049 876 02 33; www.battellidelbrenta.it; half-day tours €44-48, full day €66-85; ☎ by reservation Tue-Sun Mar-Nov) offers full-day boat excursions covering three villas, nine swing bridges and five locks along the Brenta, including some cruises on restored wooden *burci* (barges); half-day trips may include optional lunches and transfers to/from Venice or Padua.

## BICYCLE

Speed past tour boats on 150km of cycling routes along the Brenta plains. **Rental Bike Venice** (☎ 346 847 114; www.rentalbikevenice.blogspot.com; Via Gramsci 85, Mira; bicycle per day city & mountain/foldable €10/14; ☎ 8am-8pm) is accessible by bus from Venice, Mestre or Padua (see website for directions) and offers city bikes with baskets, mountain bikes and handy foldable bikes to take on buses, plus roadside assistance and itinerary advice in English.

## Festivals & Events

**Dolo Mercatino dell'Antiquariato** (Antiques Market; Isola Bassa, Dolo) Redo your decor with Brenta villa finds from the region's largest antiques market, held in good weather the fourth Sunday of the month, April to October.

**StraOrganic** (www.comune.stra.ve.it) The Brenta claims bragging rights to local, organic foods and handicrafts in Stra; held last weekend in April.

**Riviera Fiorita** (www.turismovenetia.it) Party like it's 1527 with baroque costume parties at the Villa Pisani and Villa Widmann, historically correct country fairs, even gelati in baroque-era flavours; held second weekend in September.

**Venice Marathon** (www.venicemarathon.it) Run like Casanova caught in the act from Villa Pisani along the Brenta to Venice, with the final legs crossing pontoon bridges. Usually held in October, with proceeds funding clean-water projects in Africa.

## Eating

Across the road from La Malcontenta is **Ristorante da Bepi el Ciosato** (☎ 041 69 89 97; www.hotelgallimberti.it; Via Malcontenta 33, Malcontenta; meals €26; ☎ lunch & dinner), a country bistro that serves very urbane fish baked into *pasticcio di pesce* (fish pie) or wrapped in an artichoke crust. After wandering the vast Villa Pisani, you might feel ready to eat a horse – and that's one of the traditional Veneto meat specialties on the menu at nearby **Trattoria Prandin** (☎ 049 50 23

70; Via Pertile 124, San Pietro di Stra; meals €15-20; ☎ lunch & dinner), which also serves superb steak with homestyle roast potatoes.

## Getting There & Around

ACTV's **Venezia-Padova Extraurbane bus 53** leaves from Venice's Piazzale Roma (p379) about every half-hour, stopping at key Brenta villages en route to Padua. Train service from Venice stops at Dolo (€2.35 to €3.55, half an hour) en route to Padua. By car, take SS11 from Mestre-Venezia towards Padova (Padua) and take the Autostrada A4 towards Dolo/Padua.

## PADUA

pop 212,500

Although it's just 37km west of Venice, Padua looks more like Milan left in the dryer too long, with oddly shaped medieval piazzas, a student population keeping it hip, and broad boulevards lined with elegant Liberty edifices alongside creepy Fascist buildings and postwar cereal-box architecture. Milan has da Vinci's *Last Supper*, but Padua boasts the signature work by the artist da Vinci credited as his greatest influence: Giotto's Scrovegni Chapel.

Padua has certainly been through the wringer since its founding in the late 12th century BC, but restless reinvention became its trademark. Romans took over the town from Veneti tribes and renamed it Patavium, but Goths besieged the city, and Lombard invasions wiped it out in AD 602. A fire again destroyed the city in 1164, but the city made a comeback to claim Vicenza and establish Italy's third university in 1222, becoming a magnet for thinkers and artists. Padua remained rivals with Verona and repeatedly challenged the authority of Venice, which settled the matter by occupying Padua and its territories in 1405.

As a strategic military-industrial centre, Padua became a parade ground for Mussolini speeches, an Allied bombing target and a secret Italian Resistance hub based at the university. Once Padua was wrested from Fascist control in 1945, within a year there was a new industrial zone east of the city, the university was back in session and the puzzlework that is Padua began anew.

## Information

**Feltrinelli International** (☎ 049 875 07 92; Via San Francesco 7; ☎ 9am-7.30pm Mon-Fri, to 8pm Sat,

10am-1pm & 3.30-7.30pm Sun) Bookshop and publisher offering books in multiple languages and an outstanding history section.

**Ospedaliera Padova** (☎ 049 821 11 11; Via Giustiniani 1) Main public hospital.

**Police station** (☎ 049 820 51 00; Piazzetta Palatucci 5)

**Post office** (Corso Garibaldi 33; ☎ 8.15am-7.30pm Mon-Sat)

**Roadside emergency assistance** (☎ 116)

**Tourist information** ([www.turismopadova.it](http://www.turismopadova.it)) Galleria Pedrocchi (☎ 049 876 79 27; ☎ 9am-1.30pm & 3-7pm Mon-Sat); Piazza del Santo (☎ 049 875 30 87; ☎ Mar-Oct); train station (☎ 049 875 20 77; ☎ 9am-1.30pm & 3-7pm Mon-Sat)

## Sights

### CAPPELLA DEGLI SCROVEGNI

Almost 200 years before Michelangelo's Sistine Chapel and Leonardo da Vinci's *Last Supper* came Padua's Renaissance breakthrough: Giotto's moving, modern 1303-05 frescoes in the **Scrovegni Chapel** (☎ 049 201 00 20; [www.cappelladeglisrovegni.it](http://www.cappelladeglisrovegni.it); Giardini dell'Arena; admission with PadovaCard free, adult/6-17yr & senior/under 6 yr €12/8/1, night session €8/6/1; ☎ visits daily by reservation only, minimum 3 days ahead, call centre 9am-7pm Mon-Fri & 9am-6pm Sat). Medieval churchgoers were accustomed to blank stares from flat saints on Gothic thrones – but Giotto introduced biblical figures as relatable characters in recognisable settings caught up in extraordinary circumstances. Onlookers gossip as middle-aged Anne tenderly kisses Joachim, and gives birth to miracle-baby Mary;

### MAKING THE MOST OF YOUR EURO

A **PadovaCard** (per 48/72hr €15/20) gives one adult plus one child under 14 free use of city public transport and access to 12 of Padua's major attractions, including the Cappella degli Scrovegni (plus €1 booking fee; reservation essential), Musei Civici agli Eremitani, Palazzo della Ragione, Museo del Risorgimento e dell'Età Contemporanea at Caffè Pedrocchi, the cathedral baptistry and the Orto Botanico. The card grants discounts at some Padua restaurants, B&Bs and shops, plus reduced admission at 24 historic sites outside Padua, including Petrarch's House in Arquà Petrarca (see p386) and Palladio's Teatro Olimpico in Vicenza. PadovaCards are available at Padua tourist offices and monuments covered by the pass.

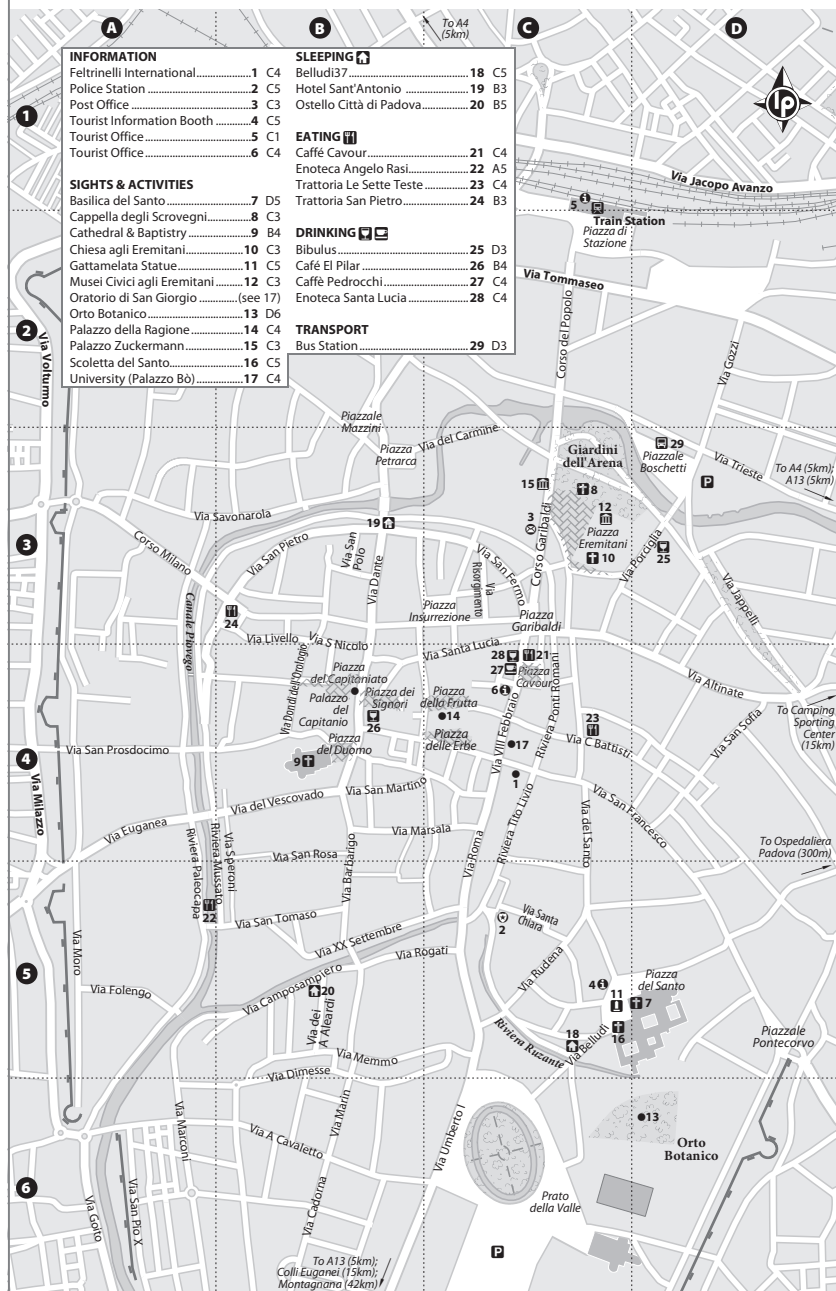
0 400 m  
0 0.2 miles

## SLEEPING

**EATING**   
Caffé Cave

DRINKING  

## TRANSPORT





exhausted new dad Joseph falls asleep sitting up in the manger as sheep and angels watch over baby Jesus; and Jesus stares down Judas as the traitor puckers up for the kiss that sealed Jesus' fate.

In a new multimedia gallery, video projections and a full-scale set allow you enter each scene and experience how Giotto ended the dark ages in a blaze of glowing colour. His humanist approach was especially well suited for the chapel Enrico Scrovegni commissioned in memory of his father, who as a moneylender was denied a Christian burial.

The chapel is a five-minute walk from the train station, but booking is required online or by phone at least three days in advance, possibly weeks ahead from April to October. Chapel visits last 15 minutes, though the 'double turn' night-session ticket (adult/child seven to 17 years and senior/child under seven years €12/6/1; 7pm to 9.20pm) allows a 30-minute stay and multimedia-room visits can last 30 to 90 minutes.

In the adjacent **Musei Civici agli Eremitani** (☎ 049 820 45 50; Piazza Eremitani 8; free with PadovaCard or Capella degli Scrovegni, museum only adult/child 7-17yr/under 7yr €10/8/free; ☎ 9am-7pm Tue-Sun), a converted monastery houses artefacts dating from Padua's pre-Roman history on the ground floor, and notable 14th-to-18th-century works from Veneto artists, from Bellini to Canova, upstairs. The showstopper is a crucifix by Giotto, showing a heartbroken Mary wringing her hands as Jesus' blood drips through the rocky earth, right into the eye sockets of a skull. On the same ticket you can visit the nearby **Palazzo Zuckermann** (Corso di Garibaldi 33; ☎ 10am-7pm Tue-Sun), home to a decorative-arts museum and a treasury of finely worked ancient coins, weapons and medals.

### CHIESA DEGLI EREMITANI

When a 1944 bombing raid demolished the extraordinary 1448-57 frescoes by Andrea Mantegna in the Capella Overtari in the **Eremitani Church** (☎ 049 875 64 10; Piazza Eremitani; ☎ 7.30am-noon & 3.30-7pm Mon-Fri, 10am-12.30pm & 4-7pm Sat & Sun), the loss to art history was incalculable. After a half-century of painstaking reconstruction, the shattered, humidity-damaged stories of Sts James and Christopher have been puzzled together, revealing extreme perspectives that make Mantegna's saints look like superheroes.

### HISTORIC CENTRE

Follow Via VIII Febbraio to the Palazzo del Bò, seat of Padua's **university** (☎ 049 827 30 47; Via VIII Febbraio; adult/student & child €5/2; ☎ tours 9.15am, 10.15am & 12.15pm Tue, Thu & Sat, 2.15pm, 4.15pm & 5.15pm Mon, Wed & Fri). This institution was founded by renegade scholars from Bologna seeking greater intellectual freedom; some of Italy's greatest and most controversial thinkers taught here, including Copernicus, Galileo, Casanova and the world's first woman doctor of philosophy, Elena Cornaro Piscopia (her statue graces the stairs). Guided tours cover Galileo's lecture hall and the world's first anatomy theatre, built for scientific autopsy in 1594 before biohazards were understood – dissected corpses were dumped into an underground stream.

Ancient Padua can be glimpsed in twin squares framed by arcades, the **Piazza delle Erbe** and **Piazza della Frutta**, separated by the triple-decker Gothic **Palazzo della Ragione** (☎ 049 820 50 06; Piazza delle Erbe; adult/child €4/2, during temporary exhibitions €8/5; ☎ 9am-7pm Tue-Sun), the city's tribunal dating from 1218.

South of the *palazzo* is the city's **cathedral** (☎ 049 66 28 14; Piazza del Duomo; ☎ 7.30am-noon & 3.30-7.30pm Mon-Sat, 8am-1pm & 3.30-8.45pm Sun & holidays), built from a much-altered design of Michelangelo's and completely upstaged by the adjoining 13th-century **baptistry** (☎ 049 65 69 14; Piazza del Duomo; with PadovaCard free, adult/child €2.80/1; ☎ 10am-6pm). This Romanesque gem is completely frescoed with Giusto de' Menabuoi's luminous biblical scenes, including a cupola depicting hundreds of male and female saints posed as though for a school graduation photo, exchanging glances and stealing awestruck looks at the Madonna.

### PIAZZA DEL SANTO

The soul of the city is the **Basilica di Sant'Antonio** (Basilica del Santo; www.basilicadelsanto.org; ☎ 6.30am-7pm Nov-Feb, to 7.45pm Mar-Oct), burial site of the town's patron saint, St Anthony of Padua (1193-1231). Along the left transept, the saint's tomb is covered with requests and thanks for miracle cures and recovery of lost objects. Under vaulted Gothic ceilings frescoed with starry skies are such notable works as the lifelike 1360s crucifix by Veronese master Altichiero da Zevio in the frescoed **Chapel of St James**, 1528 **sacristy** fresco of St Anthony preaching to spellbound fish by a follower of Girolamo Tessari and 1444-50 **high altar reliefs**

by Florentine Renaissance master Donatello (ask guards for access). Outside in the **Piazza del Santo**, Donatello's 1453 equestrian statue commemorating the 15th-century Venetian mercenary leader known as **Gattamelata** ('Honeyed Cat') is considered the first great Italian Renaissance bronze.

Two of Padua's greatest treasures hide in plain sight across the square. The **Oratorio di San Giorgio** (☎ 049 875 52 35; admission incl Scoletta del Santo €2; ☎ 9am-12.30pm & 2.30-7pm Apr-Sep, 9am-12.30pm & 2.30-5pm Oct-Mar) was frescoed in jewel-like colour by Altichiero da Zevio and Jacopo Avanzi in 1378 and briefly used as a prison by Napoleon, who apparently missed the message of St George's liberation from the torture wheel by avenging angels. Your ticket allows entry next door to the upstairs **Scoletta del Santo**, with Titian paintings that include a 1511 portrait of St Anthony calmly re-attaching his own foot, and a parable painted

by Titian's brother Francesco Vecellio showing a miser's bloody heart discovered in a treasure chest.

South of Piazza del Santo, a Unesco World Heritage Site is growing. Padua's **Orto Botanico** (☎ 049 827 21 19; adult/student & child €4/1; ☎ 9am-1pm & 3-6pm Apr-Oct, 9am-1pm Mon-Sat Nov-Mar) was planted in 1545 by Padua University's medical faculty in order to study the medicinal properties of rare plants. It also served as a clandestine Resistance meeting headquarters in WWII.

## Tours

Never mind the puns: iPadova tours are free audio downloads for your iPod with accompanying PDF maps for four intriguing walking tours through Padua, while Giscover Padua downloads guide you around town via GPS. Both are available online at [www.turismo.padova.it](http://www.turismo.padova.it); click on Soundtouring.

## WORTH A TRIP: COLLI EUGANEI (EUGANEAN HILLS)

Southwest of Padua, the **Colli Euganei** (Euganean Hills) are a dreamscape of walled hilltop towns, misty vineyards, the occasional castle and bubbling hot springs. The **Padua tourist office** ([www.turismotermeeuganee.it](http://www.turismotermeeuganee.it)) offers area maps, accommodation, walking trail and transport information online. Worthy stops on a side trip from Padua include the following.

### Terme (Natural Hot Springs)

Mountain springwater bubbles up from the Prealps north of Padua, 85°C and rich in mineral salts. For listings of 100 hotels with hot-springs facilities, download the *Terme* guide ([www.turismo.termeeuganee.it](http://www.turismo.termeeuganee.it)) or stop by tourist offices in **Abano Terme** (☎ 049 866 90 55; Via Pietro d'Abano 18) and **Montegrotto Terme** (☎ 049 79 33 84; Viale Stazione 60).

### Sonnet City

Italy's great poet Petrarch (Petrarca) spent the last five years of his life in the medieval village of **Arquà Petrarca**, where you can visit his stone **house** (☎ 0429 71 82 94; Via Valleselle 4; with PadovaCard free or adult €3; ☎ 9am-noon & 3-6.30pm Tue-Sun Mar-Oct, 9am-noon & 2.30-5pm Tue-Sun Nov-Feb), add your thoughts to guestbooks signed by Rilke and Mozart and pay homage to Petrarch's embalmed pet cat. Up to three daily buses from Padua (€2.70, 55 minutes) pass through town en route to Este.

### Medieval Fortress Towns

Today Monselice, Este and Montagnana welcome visitors who arrive by SITA bus or the Padua-Montagnana train (€3.40, every one to three hours, 20 to 60 minutes) – but in medieval times, their fortifications kept out drifters, the French and door-to-door salesmen. **Monselice** is securely wrapped in five layers of 11th-to-15th-century fortifications, capped by a restored **castle** (☎ 0429 7 29 31; adult/child 6-14yr/under 6yr €5.50/3/free; Via del Santuario; ☎ 1hr guided tours 9am-noon & 3-6pm Tue-Sun Apr-Nov). West of Monselice along the Mantua road is **Este**, where a trail heading north behind Este castle's romantic ruins leads to the **Villa Kunkler**, a private home where Byron and Shelley once stayed; there's a marker out the front. About 12km west of Este rise the impressive 2km fortifications of **Montagnana**, with 24 towers and four gates.

## Sleeping

The **tourist office** ([www.turismopadova.it](http://www.turismopadova.it)) publishes accommodation brochures and lists 90 B&Bs and 60 hotels online.

**Camping Sporting Center** (☎ 049 79 34 00; [www.sportingcenter.it](http://www.sportingcenter.it); Via Roma 123, Montegrotto Terme; per person/tent €8.30/12; ☹ Mar–mid-Nov; 📍) The only campground in Padua province, this sprawling complex is 15km from the city centre via city bus M from the train station and offers access to a pool, spa facilities and shops.

**Ostello Città di Padova** (☎ 049 875 22 19; [www.ostellopadova.it](http://www.ostellopadova.it); Via dei A Aleardi 30; dm incl breakfast €19, f with/without bathroom €56-88/46-76; ☹ 7.15-9.30am & 4.30pm-midnight) Arrive early for your choice of 16 bunk beds, or reserve family rooms with four bunks. Night owls need not apply: curfew is at midnight, breakfast at 7.15 and checkout at 9.30am. Take bus 3, 8 or 12 from the train station to Prato della Valle and ask for the Ostello.

**Koko Nor Association** ([www.bbkokonor.it](http://www.bbkokonor.it); d €60-80) World travellers make themselves at home in the historic heart of Padua in these Tibetan-themed apartments, terrace rooms and artists' garrets owned by welcoming, worldly Italian families; ask about informal Italian conversation classes. Additional B&B listings outside of Padua are listed on an affiliated website, [www.bedandbreakfastpadova.it](http://www.bedandbreakfastpadova.it).

**Hotel Sant'Antonio** (☎ 049 875 13 93; [www.hotel.santantonio.it](http://www.hotel.santantonio.it); Via San Fermo 118; s €63-69, d €82-94; 📍) A calm, canal-side hotel near the historic city gate, with unfussy, airy rooms and a cafe downstairs (breakfast €7). Cheaper singles without bathroom are in the corridor.

**our pick Belludi37** (☎ 049 66 56 33; [www.belludi37.it](http://www.belludi37.it); Via Luca Belludi 37; s/d incl breakfast €55-80/120-150; 📍) A sleek boutique hotel with soul: generous beds with stirring views of Basilica di Sant'Antonio and a helpful staff quick with budget-friendly shopping advice, free drinks, biking itineraries and speciality-food-sampling walking tours.

## Eating

**Caffè Cavour** (☎ 049 875 12 24; [www.caffecavour.com](http://www.caffecavour.com); Piazza Cavour 10; pastries €1.50-3; ☹ 7.30am-midnight Wed-Mon) Pistachio macaroons, wild berry tarts and other two-bite indulgences sweeten the expressions of traffic cops bolting espresso at the curved granite bar.

**Trattoria Le Sette Teste** (☎ 049 66 47 53; Via C Battisti 44; meals €9-15; ☹ 6.30pm-midnight Mon-Sat)

Vast plates of pasta (€9) are presented here like a dare, and meaty mains and chocolatey desserts pose serious threats to after-lunch sightseeing plans around the corner at the Palazzo della Raggione.

**Osteria Dal Capo** (☎ 049 66 31 05; Via degli Obizzi 2; meals €25; ☹ lunch & dinner Tue-Sat & dinner Mon) Rub elbows with locals – literally – over dinner at tiny tables precariously piled with traditional Venetian seafood, local wines by the glass and a few inspired novelties, such as *caviale di melanzane con bufala* (eggplant caviar with *mozzarella di bufala* atop crispy wafer bread). Reservations and a sociable nature advised.

**our pick Enoteca Angelo Rasi** (☎ 049 871 97 97; [www.angelorasi.it](http://www.angelorasi.it); Riviera Paleocapa 7; meals €30; ☹ dinner Tue-Sun) Come for a glass of wine and *cicheti*, and inevitably you'll pull up a chair by the canal and stay for dinner under the lime trees. Rustic fare is reinvented with a touch of whimsy: creamed cod comes with savoury squid-ink polenta doughnuts, ricotta gnocchi is topped with a decadent zucchini mousse sauce, and cheeses are presented in the form of a clock.

**Trattoria San Pietro** (☎ 049 876 03 30; Via San Pietro 95; meals €30; ☹ Mon-Sat, closed Jul) Venice meets Milanese influences behind these kitchen doors, but the results are pure Padua: think Venetian artichokes with Milanese veal, or saffron risotto with seafood. Reserve ahead.

## Drinking

Sundown isn't official until you've had your *spritz* in Piazza delle Erbe or Piazza dei Signori.

**Café El Pilar** (☎ 049 65 75 65; Piazza dei Signori 8; ☹ 8.30am-1am Mon-Sat) 'Crush' describes the quantity of people you'll have to beat to the bar, the technique the bartender uses to make signature cocktails instead of the usual blender, and that pitter-patter you'll feel by night's end in the piazza.

**Caffè Pedrocchi** (☎ 049 878 12 31; [www.caffepedrocchi.it](http://www.caffepedrocchi.it); Via VIII Febbraio 15; ☹ 9am-10pm Sun-Wed, to 1am Thu-Sat) Since 1831, this neoclassical landmark has been a favourite of Stendhal and other pillars of Padua's cafe society for heart-poundingly powerful coffee and *caffè corretto* (coffee cocktails).

**Enoteca Santa Lucia** (☎ 049 875 94 83; Piazza Cavour 15; ☹ 7pm-midnight Mon-Sat) Taking its cue from Milan, Santa Lucia offers upscale wines by the glass for €5 to €10 with a free buffet

of local specialities and cheeses from 7pm to 10pm nightly. Occupy your battle station at the glassed-in bar for buffet forays, or head inside the stone-walled tavern for serious boozing.

**Bibulus** (☎ 049 65 41 17; Via Porciglia 32; ☎ 7am-8pm Mon-Fri, to 9.30pm Sat) This all-day hot spot near Piazza Eremitani is nicknamed 'the library' because university students practically live here, mesmerised by the orange Op Art decor, 15 wines by the glass and happy-hour buffet, all at philosophy-major prices.

## Getting There & Away

### BUS

**SITA buses** (☎ 049 820 68 11; www.sitabus.it) from Venice's Piazzale Roma (€3.50, 45 to 60 minutes) arrive at Piazzale Boschetti, 500m south of the train station. Check online for buses to Colli Euganei towns (see p386).

### CAR & MOTORCYCLE

The A4 (Turin–Milan–Venice–Trieste) passes to the north of town, while the A13 to Bologna starts south of town.

### TRAIN

The easiest way to Padua from Venice is by train (€2.90 to €15.70, 30 to 50 minutes, three or four each hour). The station is about 500m north of Cappella degli Scrovegni.

## VICENZA

pop 113,500

If Palladio's uplifting spaces are like architectural Prozac, a walking tour of historic Vicenza is a megadose that leaves you simultaneously giddy and grounded, rational and open to possibilities. No wonder Unesco declared Palladio's work in and around the city one grand World Heritage Site.

Palladio had classical foundations to build on in Vicenza, which was the ancient Roman town of Vicentia. Gothic mansions and St Mark's lion emblems appeared around town once it was absorbed by the Venetian Republic in 1404 – but Palladio valued clarity over opulence, creating a singular look for Vicenza that has remained through its changing fortunes over the centuries. Vicenza prospered with textile and computer industries after WWII, yet the city remains surprisingly unpretentious, lingering over rustic lunches of local *salumi* (cured meats), game and handmade pasta.

## Orientation

From the train station in the gardens of Campo Marzo, Viale Roma heads into Piazzale de Gasperi. From here, Corso Andrea Palladio heads through the historic town centre.

## Information

**Ospedale Civile** (☎ 0444 99 31 11; Viale F Rodolfi 37) Hospital.

**Police station** (☎ 0444 54 33 33; Viale G Mazzini 213)

**Post office** (Contrà Garibaldi 1; ☎ 8.30am–6.30pm Mon–Sat)

**Tourist office** (www.vicenzae.org) Piazza dei Signori (☎ 0444 54 41 22; Piazza dei Signori 8; ☎ 10am–2pm & 2.30–6.30pm; Piazza Matteotti (☎ 0444 32 08 54; Piazza Matteotti 12; ☎ 9am–1pm & 2–6pm)

## Sights

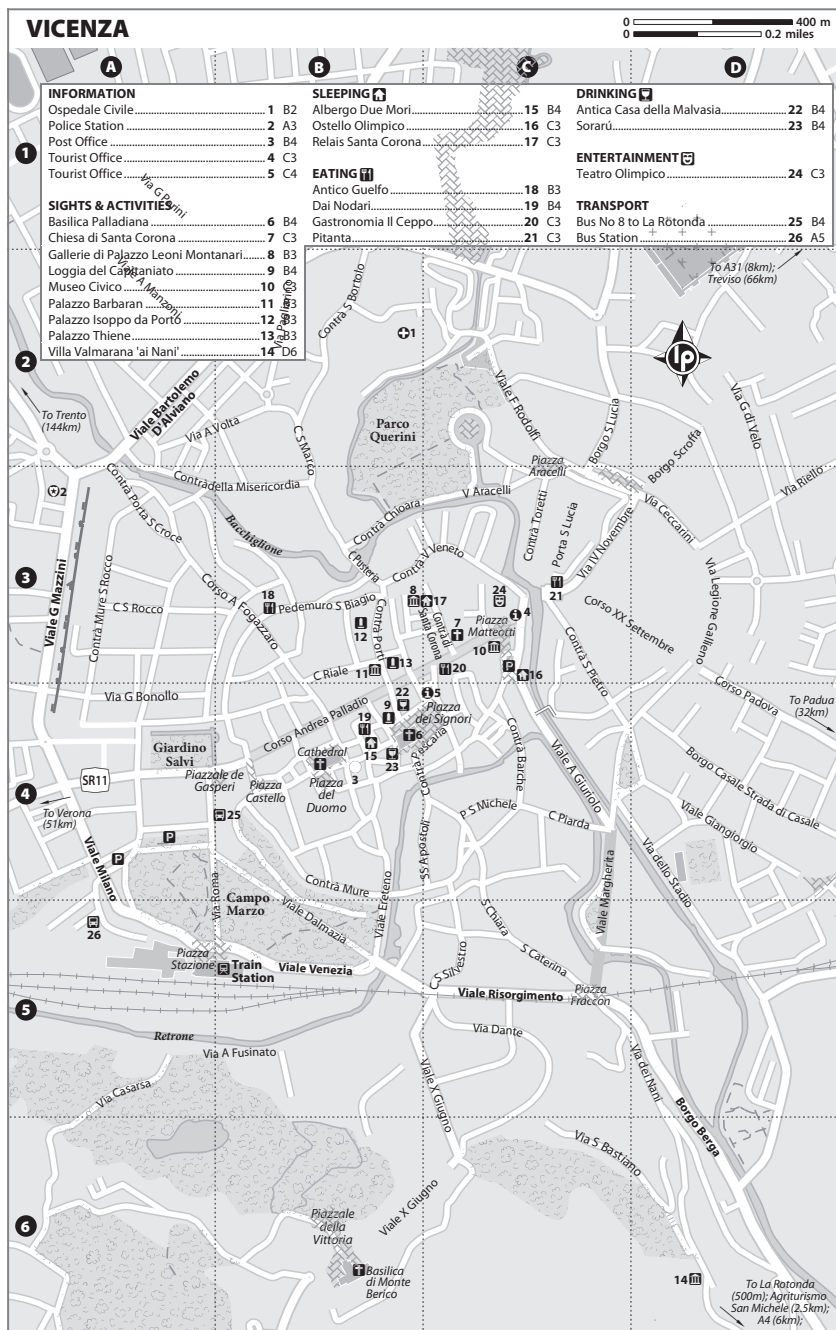
### PIAZZA DEI SIGNORI

The heart of historic Vicenza is Piazza dei Signori, where Palladio lightened the mood of government buildings with plays of light and shadow. Dazzling white Piovene stone arches frame shady double arcades in the **Basilica Palladiana** (☎ 0444 32 36 81; ☎ temporary exhibitions only), designed in 1549, while on the northwest end of the piazza, white stone and stucco grace the exposed red brick colonnade of the 1571–designed **Loggia del Capitaniato**.

### CONTRÀ PORTI

North of Corso Andrea Palladio, three Palladian beauties line Contrà Porti. The finest is the newly restored **Palazzo Barbaran** (☎ 0444 32 30 14; Contrà Porti 11; www.cisapalladio.org; admission with PalladioCard free, adult/student €5; ☎ 10am–6pm Wed–Sun), built by Palladio c 1569–70 with a stately double row of columns on the facade and a delightful double-height courtyard loggia that seems to usher in the sunlight. Frothy stuccowork and Giambattista Zelotti's frescoes of gambolling gods seem to lift the roof right off spacious ground-floor galleries. In the bathroom, take a moment to contemplate Palladio's clever use of cross-vaulting through the bathroom window.

The bank building at No 12 is **Palazzo Thiene**, begun under Palladio's supervision c 1556–58, with rustic stone arches capped by gabled windows and elegant Corinthian pilasters, drawing the eye skyward. Further along the street at No 21, you can't miss Palladio's blinding white, unfinished 1549–53 **Palazzo Isoppo da Porto**, rippling with eight inset Ionic columns on the 1st floor and





crowned with sculpture and pilasters along the attic.

### CONTRÀ DI SANTA CORONA

Two blocks east of Contrà Porti is another splendid sidestreet: Contrà di Santa Corona, named after **Chiesa di Santa Corona** (☎ 8.30am-noon & 3-6pm Tue-Sun, 4-6pm Mon). Built by the Dominicans in 1261 to house a relic from Christ's crown of thorns, this Romanesque brick church also houses three light-filled masterpieces: Palladio's 1576 Valmarana Chapel in the crypt, Paolo Veronese's *Adoration of the Magi*, much praised by Goethe, and Giovanni Bellini's radiant *Baptism of Christ*, where the holy event is witnessed by a trio of Veneto beauties and a curious red bird.

From outside it looks like a bank, but a treasure beyond accountants' imagining awaits inside the **Gallerie di Palazzo Leoni Montanari** (☎ 800 578875; www.palazzomontanari.com; Contrà di Santa Corona 25; adult/student €4/3; ☎ 10am-6pm Tue-Sun). Ascend past the nymphs along the extravagant stuccoed staircase to grand salons filled with Canaletto's misty lagoon landscapes and Pietro Longhi society satires: in *Tutors of Venier's House*, a sassy child with hand on hip wears out exasperated tutors collapsed in their chairs. Upstairs is Banca Intesa's superb collection of 400 Russian icons, gorgeously spotlighted in darkened galleries with Gregorian chants setting the scene. Each room elicits audible gasps: bright-eyed saints haloed in silver pees from 16th-century doors; 19th-century *Menologs* show 99 miniature saints with detailed heads no larger than pencil erasers; and a phalanx of bejewelled, miraculous Madonna icons makes you understand why bags must be left in ground-floor lockers.

### PIAZZA MATTEOTTI

Corso Palladio comes to a full stop with two Palladian landmarks. Behind a charming walled garden lies a Renaissance marvel: **Teatro Olimpico** (☎ 0444 22 28 00; www.olimpico.vicenza.it; combined ticket with Museo Civico adult/student/child under 15 yr €8/6/free, with PalladioCard adult €6; ☎ 9am-5pm Tue-Sun), which Palladio began in 1580 with inspiration from Roman structures. Vincenzo Scamozzi finished the elliptical theatre after Palladio's death, adding a stage set modelled on the ancient Greek city of Thebes, with streets built in steep perspective to give the illusion of depth. Since its restoration in 1934, Italian

performers have vied to make an entrance on this stage; check online for opera and classical performances, and don't miss Vicenza Jazz concerts here in May.

Save your entry ticket for access to the **Museo Civico** (☎ 0444 32 13 48; www.museicivivicenza.it; Palazzo Chiericati, Piazza Matteotti 37/39; combined ticket with Teatro Olimpico adult/student/child under 15 yr €8/6/free, with PalladioCard adult €6; ☎ 9am-5pm Tue-Sun), housed in one of Palladio's finest buildings, designed in 1550 with a colonnaded ground floor and double-height loggia flanked by vast sun porches. The lavishly frescoed ground floor includes the Sala dal Firmamento (Salon of the Skies), with Domenico Brusasorci's ceiling fresco of Diana the moon goddess in her chariot galloping across the sky to meet the sun. The upstairs painting galleries present works by Vicenza masters in the context of major works by Venetian masters (Veronese, Tiepolo, Tintoretto), Hans Memling's minutely detailed crucifix, action-packed Jacopo Bassano's, Elisabetta Marchioni's bodacious still lifes and Giambattista Piazzetta's swirling, high-drama 1729 masterpiece, *The Ecstasy of St Francis*.

### VICENZA SOUTH

Head down Viale X Giugno and east along Via San Bastiano and in about 20 minutes you'll reach the **Villa Valmarana 'ai Nani'** (☎ 0444 32 18 03; www.villavalmarana.com; Via dei Nani 8; admission adult/student/child under 12 €8/4/free; ☎ 10am-noon & 3-6pm Tue-Sun Mar-Oct, 10am-noon & 2-4.30pm Sat & Sun Nov-Feb), covered with sublime 1757 frescoes by Giambattista Tiepolo and his son Giandomenico. Giambattista painted the Palazzina wing with his signature mythological epics, while his son painted the Foresteria with fanciful themes in rural, carnival and Chinese rooms. Nicknamed 'ai Nani' (dwarfs) for the 17 garden-gnome statues around the garden walls, this estate is a wonderful spot for a summer concert; check dates online.

From 'ai Nani, a path leads to Palladio's Villa Capra, better known as **La Rotonda** (☎ 0444 32 17 93; Via Rotonda 29; admission villa/gardens €6/3; ☎ villa 10am-noon & 3-6pm Wed Mar-Nov, gardens 10am-noon & 3-6pm Tue-Sun Mar-Nov). No matter how you look at it, this villa is a showstopper: the namesake dome caps a square base, with colonnaded facades on all four sides. This is one of the architect's most admired creations, inspiring villa variations across Europe and the USA, including Thomas Jefferson's Monticello (the current owner,

Mario di Valmarana, is a retired University of Virginia architecture professor). Inside, the circular central hall is frescoed from the walls to the soaring cupola with trompe l'oeil frescoes. You can catch bus 8 (€1.50) to Vicenza out the front.

## Sleeping

Some 50 hotels in the greater Vicenza area are listed on the tourism board website ([www.vicenzae.org](http://www.vicenzae.org)), and a dozen B&Bs can be found at [www.vitourism.it](http://www.vitourism.it).

**Ostello Olimpico** (☎ 0444 54 02 22; [www.ostellovicenza.com](http://www.ostellovicenza.com); Viale Antonio Giuriolo 9; dm €20; ☎ 7.30-9.30am & 3.30-11.30pm mid-Mar–mid-Nov) A convenient HI youth hostel in a fine building by the Teatro Olimpico.

**Albergo Due Mori** (☎ 0444 32 18 86; [www.hotelduemori.com](http://www.hotelduemori.com); Contrà do Rode 26; d €80, s/d without bathroom €48/55; ☎ ☎) Right off Piazza dei Signori on a boutique-lined cobblestone street, this historic 1854 hotel was recently restored to its period charm, with Liberty-style bedsteads and antique armoires. There are fans instead of air-con and no TV, but as nods to modernity, there's disabled access and wireless.

**Ourpick Agriturismo San Michele** (☎ 0444 53 37 54; [www.agrismichele.it](http://www.agrismichele.it); Strada della Pergoletta 118, off Viale Riviera Berica; d incl breakfast €88-145; ☎) On the outskirts of town south of Palladio's La Rotonda (opposite), this 1700 country estate has been redone in minimalist-Palladian style, with spacious all-white suites overlooking vineyards, olive groves and organic orchards. Enjoy the Jacuzzi amid formal gardens, leisurely meals at the downstairs restaurant and horse riding through the estate.

**Relais Santa Corona** (☎ 0444 32 46 78; [www.relaisantacorona.it](http://www.relaisantacorona.it); Contrà Santa Corona 19; s/d incl breakfast €87/104; ☎ ☎ ☎) A boutique bargain, offering stylish stays in an 18th-century palace ideally located on a street dotted with landmarks. Guestrooms are soothing and soundproofed, with excellent mattresses, minimal-chic decor and free wi-fi.

## Eating

**Gastronomia Il Ceppo** (☎ 0444 54 44 14; 196 Corso Palladio; prepared dishes per 100g €3-5; ☎ 8am-1pm & 3.30-7.45pm Mon-Tue & Thu-Sat, 3.30-7.45pm Wed) San Daniele hams dangle over a 30ft counter filled with fresh seafood salads, housemade pastas and speciality cheese. Never mind that there's no seating: ask counter staff to pair

your selections with a local bottle from the shelves for a dream picnic across the street in the Teatro Olimpico.

**Ourpick Dai Nodari** (☎ 0444 54 40 85; Contrà do Rode 20; meals under €10; ☎ noon-3.30pm & 7-11pm Mon-Sat) Rustic fare gets hip in the heart of historic Vicenza, packing in local crowds for €7 lunches and €9 dinner menus featuring hearty chicken with wild local mushrooms, followed by Sachertorte or local-speciality cheese plates with the seasoned, grappa-washed 'Bastardo di Grappa' cheese.

**Pitanta** (☎ 0444 51 35 10; Contrà San Lucia 8; meals €7-15; ☎ 7.30am-1am Mon-Sat, 12.30-2.30pm Sun) An authentic *osteria* showing true local pride, from the Vicenza football relics on the wall to the heaping plates of local *bigoli* pasta with duck sauce for €6 with respectable house wine for €0.80.

**Antico Guelfo** (☎ 0444 54 78 97; Contrà Pedemuro San Biagio 92; meals €35-40; ☎ lunch & dinner Mon-Fri, dinner Sat) This culinary hideaway is a hit with slow foodies for its inventive daily market menu, making the most of local specialities in such dishes as Amarone risotto or buckwheat crepes with Bastardo di Grappa cheese. The chef is a specialist in gluten-free cooking, and adapts dishes to any food sensitivity.

## Drinking

**Sorarù** (☎ 0444 32 09 15; Piazzetta Palladio; ☎ 8am-8pm Mon-Sat) A splendid spot for an espresso or cocktail at the marble-topped bar, surrounded by pastries made on the premises and tempting jars of sweets stashed on carved-wood shelves.

**Antica Casa della Malvasia** (☎ 0444 54 37 04; Contrà delle Morette 5; meals €35; ☎ Tue-Sun) Purveyor of wines since 1200, when Malvasia wine was imported from Greece by Venetian merchants. Today the menu covers 80 wines, including prime Italian Malvasia and 100 types of grappa.

## Getting There & Away

**BUS**  
**FTV** (☎ 0444 22 31 15; [www.ftv.vi.it](http://www.ftv.vi.it)) buses leave for outlying areas from the bus station, located near the train station.

## CAR & MOTORCYCLE

The city is on the A4 connecting Milan with Venice, while the SR11 connects Vicenza with Verona and Padua. Large car parks are located near Piazza Castello and the train station.

## FIREWATER, IMMORTAL FAME & THE GOOD LIFE: VICENZA TO VILLA MASER

A road trip from Vicenza takes you through one of Italy's most sophisticated stretches of countryside, past landmarks of modern art and architecture, to excellent food and drink pit stops, and into Europe's most splendid villa. The drive is about an hour and a quarter each way; stop for lunch and make a day of it.

Head north on SP248 towards **Bassano del Grappa**, home to Italy's famous albino asparagus and powerful grappa spirits. From Bassano's town centre in Piazza Libertà, follow Via Matteotti to the **Ponte degli Alpini** (aka Ponte Vecchio), the covered bridge designed by Palladio, and **Poli Museo della Grappa** (☎ 0424 52 44 26; www.poligrappa.com; Via Gamba 6, Ponte Vecchio; admission free; ☹ 9am-7.30pm), where you can drink in the four-century history of Bassano's signature spirits.

On SP248, head east out of town 17km to **Asolo**, known as the 'town of 100 vistas' for its panoramic hillside location. Picturesque Piazza Garibaldi has a central **tourist office** (☎ 0423 52 90 46; Piazza Garibaldi 73; ☹ 9am-12.30pm Mon-Fri, 3-6pm Tue, Thu & Fri, 9.30am-12.30pm & 3-6pm Sat & Sun) and is framed by tight ranks of golden-hued houses. Enjoy a leisurely lunch of suckling pig with roast potatoes or *tagliatelle* with partridge sauce at the antiques-filled, family-run **Ca' Derton da Nino** (☎ 423 52 96 48; Piazza d'Annunzio 11; meals €20-30; ☹ lunch & dinner Tue-Sat). An 11km detour north of Asolo on SP6 leads to **Possagno**, birth- and resting place of Italy's master of neoclassical sculpture, Antonio Canova. Mastery didn't always come easy: you can see Canova's rough drafts in plaster at the **Gipsoteca** (☎ 0423 54 43 23; www.museocanova.it; Possagno; adult/student/child under 6yr €7/4/free; ☹ 9am-12.30pm & 3-6pm Tue-Sun), in a building completed by modernist master Carlo Scarpa in 1957.

To see Scarpa's latest, greatest work, return to Asolo and head 5km east to **San Vità d'Altivole** town cemetery, where you can't miss the 1969-78 **Brion Family Tomb** (Via del Cimitero; ☹ 9am-7pm) with its raw concrete bridge to the afterlife rising from Zen-style gardens. Follow stepping stones over water into the domed chapel, where the sarcophagi are housed. Scarpa chose to be buried standing up near his clients, along a boundary wall.

Palladio and Paolo Veronese conspired to create the Veneto countryside's finest monument to *la bella vita* at nearby **Villa Masér** (Villa Barbaro; ☎ 423 92 30 04; www.villadimaser.it; with/without PalladioCard €3/6; ☹ 10am-6pm Tue-Sat & 11am-6pm Sun Apr-Jun, Sep & Oct, 10am-6pm Tue, Thu, Sat & 11am-6pm Sun Mar, Jul & Aug, 2.30-5pm Sat & Sun Nov & Dec, 10am-5pm Sat & 11am-5pm Sun Jan & Feb). Palladio set the arched yellow villa into a verdant hillside with a fanciful grotto out the back, but inside Paolo Veronese has upstaged the master architect with wildly imaginative *trompe l'oeil* architecture. Don obligatory slippers at the door and pad through rooms designed for delight: vines climb the walls of the Stanza di Baccho; an alert watchdog keeps one eye on the door of the Stanza di Canuccio (Little Dog Room); and in a corner of the frescoed grand salon, the painter has apparently forgotten his spattered shoes and broom. Amid these party scenes, there's a tender moment: through a series of salon doors, Veronese's self-portrait gazes fondly across crowded rooms at a portrait of his niece. Before heading back to Vicenza (or onward to Venice via SP667 to Castelfranco and SR245 to Mestre), stop by the wine-tasting room by the parking lot and toast the Veneto with estate-grown DOC Prosecco.

## TRAIN

Regular trains arrive from Venice (€4.25 to €11.90, 45 minutes to 1½ hours) and Padua (€2.90 to €10.90, 15 to 30 minutes).

## VERONA

pop 264,200

Though Siena was Shakespeare's initial choice, fair Verona was where he set his scene between star-crossed lovers Romeo Montague and Juliet Capulet. As usual, the Bard got it right: romance, drama and fatal

family feuds have been Verona's hallmark for centuries.

Verona was a Roman trade centre beginning in 300 BC, with ancient gates and a grand amphitheatre to prove it – but Shakespearean tragedy came with the territory. Lombard king Alboin took over Verona in AD 569, only to be killed by his wife three years later. After Mastino della Scala (aka Scaligeri) lost reelection to Verona's commune in 1262, he rallied the troops and claimed absolute control of the city, until his murder by a conspiracy

of nobles. Under Mastino's son Cangrande I (1308–28), Verona's influence extended to Padua and Vicenza, and Dante, Petrarch and Giotto benefited from Verona's patronage and protection. But Mastino's great-grandson Cangrande II (1351–59) was a tyrant whose murder by his brother was not widely mourned – but after yet another fratricide, the Scaligeri were run out of town in 1387.

Verona was claimed by Milan and then Venice in 1404, which controlled Verona despite Scaligeri-backed uprisings until Napoleon took over in 1797. The city was passed as a war trophy to Austria and to Italy in 1866 and became a Fascist control centre from 1938–45, a key location for Resistance interrogation and transit point for Italian Jews sent to Nazi concentration camps. The city survived its tragedies to become a Unesco World Heritage Site, and today is reprising its role as a cosmopolitan crossroads.

## Orientation

Buses leave for Verona's historic centre from outside the train station, south of town. To walk to the centre, head north past the bus station and 1.5km along Corso Porta Nuova to Piazza Brà, take Via G Mazzini northeast to Via Cappello and turn left to reach Piazza delle Erbe.

## Information

**Emergency medical care** (☎ 118)

**Internet Etc** (☎ 045 800 02 22; Via Quattro Spade 3b; per hr €5.50; ☎ 2.30–8pm Mon, 10.30am–8pm Tue–Sat, 3.30–8pm Sun)

**Ospedale di Verona** (☎ 045 807 11 11; Piazza A Stefani) Hospital northwest of Ponte Vittoria.

**Police** (☎ 113; Lungadige Galtarossa 11) Near Ponte Navi.

**Post office** (Piazza Viviani 7; ☎ 8.30am–6.30pm Mon–Sat)

**Tourist office** ([www.tourism.verona.it](http://www.tourism.verona.it)); train station (☎ 045 800 08 61; ☎ 8am–7pm Mon–Sat, 9am–5pm Sun); Verona–Villafranca airport (☎ 045 861 91 63; ☎ 9am–6pm Mon–Sat, to 3pm Sun Apr–Nov, to 4pm Mon–Sat, to 3pm Sun Dec–Mar); Via degli Alpini (☎ 045 806 86 80; Via degli Alpini 9; ☎ 8.30am–7pm Mon–Sat, 9am–5pm Sun)

## Sights

### ROMAN ARENA

The pink marble Roman **amphitheatre** (Roman Arena; ☎ 045 800 51 51; [www.arena.it](http://www.arena.it); Piazza Brà; ticket office Ente Lirico Arena di Verona, Via Dietro Anfiteatro 6b; tours adult/student/child €4/3/1; ☎ tours 1.45–7.30pm Mon

& 8.30am–7.30pm Tue–Sun Oct–May, 8am–3.30pm Jun–Aug) was built in the 1st century AD and survived a 12th-century earthquake to become Verona's legendary open-air opera house, with seating for 30,000 people. See p397 for performance details.

### SHAKESPEARE'S VERONA

Off Via G Mazzini, Verona's main shopping street, is the legendary **Casa di Giulietta** (Juliet's House; ☎ 045 803 43 03; Via Cappello 23; adult/student/child €4/3/1; ☎ 8.30am–7.30pm Tue–Sun, 1.45–7.30pm Mon). Never mind that Romeo and Juliet were completely fictional characters, and that there's hardly room for two on the narrow stone balcony; romantics flock to this 14th-century house to add their lovelorn pleas to the graffiti on the courtyard causeway and rub the right breast of the bronze statue of Juliet for better luck next time. Morbid romantics seek out the **Tomba di Giulietta** (Juliet's Tomb; ☎ 045 800 03 61; Via del Pontiere 35; adult/student/child €3/2/1; ☎ 8.30am–6.30pm Tue–Sun, 1.45–7.30pm Mon), a cloister with frescoes of minor interest.

### PIAZZA DELLE ERBE

Originally a Roman forum, this piazza is ringed with cafes, buzzing with gossip and lined with some of Verona's most sumptuous buildings, including the baroque **Palazzo Maffei**, at the north end, with the adjoining 14th-century **Torre del Gardello**. On the eastern side, you can't miss the fresco-decorated **Casa Mazzanti**, former home of Verona's history-making Scaligeri clan.

Separating Piazza delle Erbe from Piazza dei Signori is the **Arco della Costa**, with a suspended whale's rib Veronese legend says will fall on the first just person to walk beneath it. Veronese cynics are quick to point out that over several centuries, it hasn't fallen once, not even on popes who have paraded beneath it. Nearby, the striped **Torre dei Lamberti** (☎ 045 803 27 26; admission by lift/on foot €3/2; ☎ 9am–7.30pm Tue–Sun, 1.30–7.30pm Mon) is a watchtower begun in the 12th century and finished in 1463, by which

### MAKING THE MOST OF YOUR EURO

**VeronaCard** (1/3 days €8/12), available at sights and tobacconists, grants access to major monuments and churches and reduced admission on minor sights, plus unlimited use of town buses.





time it was too late to notice the Venetians invading – but it does offer a panoramic city view. **Palazzo Forti** (Palazzo della Ragione; ☎ 199 1991 11; www.palazzoforti.it; adult/student €6/5; ☎ 10.30am–7pm Tue–Sun) is home to the new **Galleria d'Arte Moderna**, with 90 artworks from the 1970s to today and ambitious exhibits featuring such major modern artists as Escher and Sol LeWitt, plus well-curated photography shows in the adjoining **Scavi Scaligeri**.

## PIAZZA DEI SIGNORI

Verona's early-Renaissance landmark is the 15th-century **Loggia del Consiglio**, the former city-council building, at the northern end of this square. Next door where they could keep an eye on conspiring councillors was the **Palazzo degli Scaligeri**, once the main residence of the Scaligeri family. Through the archway at the far end of the piazza are the **Arche Scaligere** (Via Arche Scaligere; admission incl Torre dei Lamberti by lift/on foot €4/3; ☎ 9.30am–7.30pm Tue–Sun, 1.45–7.30pm Mon Jun–Sep), the elaborate Gothic tombs of the Scaligeri family, where murderers are interred not far from the relatives they'd killed.

## CHURCHES & SYNAGOGUE

A masterpiece of Romanesque architecture, the striped brick and tuffo stone **Basilica di San Zeno Maggiore** (www.chieseverona.it; Piazza San Zeno; combined Verona church ticket/single church entry €5/2.50; ☎ 8.30am–6pm Mon–Sat & 1–6pm Sun Mar–Oct, 10am–1pm & 1.30–4pm Tue–Sat & 1–5pm Sun Nov–Feb) was built in honour of the city's patron saint from the 12th to 14th centuries. Enter through the flower-filled cloister into the vast nave, lined with 12th-to-15th-century frescoes depicting Jesus, Mary Magdalene modestly covered in her curtain of golden hair and St George casually slaying a dragon atop a startled horse. Under the rose window depicting the Wheel of Fortune are meticulously detailed 12th-century bronze doors, including a scene of an exorcism with a demon yanked from a woman's mouth. Painstaking restoration is reviving Mantegna's 1457–9 *Majesty of the Virgin* polyptych altarpiece, painted with such astonishing perspective and convincing textures that you might believe there are garlands of fresh fruit hanging behind the Madonna's throne. Downstairs is a creepy crypt, with faces carved into medieval capitals and St Zeno's eerily lit corpse.

Verona's 12th-century **Duomo** (Cathedral; Piazza del Duomo; combined Verona church ticket/single church entry €5/2.50; ☎ 10am–5.30pm Mon–Sat, 1.30–5.30pm Sun Mar–Oct, 10am–1pm & 1.30–4pm Tue–Sat, 1–5pm Sun Nov–Feb) is a striking striped Romanesque building, with polychrome reliefs and bug-eyed statues of Charlemagne's paladins Roland and Oliver by medieval master Nicolò on the west porch. Nothing about this sober facade hints at the extravagant interior, frescoed over the 16th to 17th centuries with angels in the trompe l'oeil architecture. The left end of the nave is the Cartolari-Nichesola Chapel, designed by Jacopo Sansovino with a vibrant Titian *Ascension*, showing crowds astonished by the floating Madonna.

North of the Arche Scaligere stands the Gothic 13th-to-15th-century **Chiesa di Sant'Anastasia** (Piazza di Sant'Anastasia; ☎ 9am–6pm Mon–Sat, 1–6pm Sun Mar–Oct, 10am–1pm & 1.30–4pm Tue–Sat, 1–5pm Sun Nov–Feb), Verona's largest church and a showcase for Veronese art. The multitude of frescoes is overwhelming, but don't overlook Pisanello's story book-quality fresco *St George Setting out to Free the Princess from the Dragon* in the Pisanelli Chapel, or the 1495 holy-water font featuring a lucky hunchback by Paolo Veronese's father Gabriele Caliari.

Off Piazza delle Erbe to the southwest was once Verona's historic Jewish **Ghetto**. Tall buildings frame the narrow sidestreet of **Via Rita Rosani**, named for the Resistance heroine who commanded a band of partisans in Verona until 1944, when she was caught and summarily executed at 24. On the southeast side of Via Rosani is Verona's newly restored **synagogue**, where you might find the doors open to Jewish visitors and others who express a sincere interest to Signor Willis, the welcoming synagogue keeper and community historian.

## CASTELVECCHIO

Southwest from the Piazza delle Erbe along the river Adige, the 1354–56 fortress of the tyrannical Cangrande II was so severely damaged by Napoleon's troops and WWII bombings that many feared it was beyond repair. Instead of erasing the Castelvechio's chequered past with restorations, Carlo Scarpa reinvented the building in the 1960s, building bridges over exposed foundations, filling gaping holes with glass panels and balancing a statue of Cangrande I above the courtyard on a concrete gangplank. Scarpa's revived Castelvechio makes a fitting

home for Verona's **museum** (☎ 045 806 26 11; Corso Castelvecchio 2; adult/student/child €8/7/1; ☎ 8.30am-7.30pm Tue-Sun & 1.45-7.30pm Mon) showcasing frescoes, jewellery, medieval artefacts and paintings by Pisanello, Giovanni Bellini, Tiepolo, Carpaccio and Veronese, plus wonderful temporary shows ranging from Andrea Mantegna retrospectives to modernist glass.

## Sleeping

For more options, **Cooperativa Albergatori Veronesi** (☎ 045 800 98 44; www.veronapass.com) offers a no-fee booking service for two-star hotels. For homestyle stays outside the city centre, check **Verona Bed & Breakfast** (www.bedandbreakfastverona.com).

**Camping Castel San Pietro** (☎ 045 59 20 37; www.campingcastelsanpietro.com; Via Castel San Pietro 2; per adult/child/tent €7/5/7; ☎ May-Sep) Leafy camping sites with two terraces for lounging, away from the bustle of downtown. There's a minimarket, washing machines and other mod cons. Catch bus 41 or 95 from the train station.

**Villa Francescati** (☎ 045 59 03 60; www.ostellionline.org; Salita Fontana del Ferro 15; incl breakfast dm/s in family room €18/20; ☎ 7am-11.30pm) A HI youth hostel housed in a 16th-century villa on a garden estate, with helpful staff to book event tickets and recommend bars. Meals cost €10; there are no cooking facilities. Catch bus 73 (week-days) or bus 90 (Sunday and holidays) from the train station.

**Casa Coloniale** (☎ 337 47 27 37; www.casa-coloniale.com; Via Cairoli 6; incl breakfast s/d €50-70/80-110; ☎) Snag a prime berth off Piazza Erbe in this hip new B&B, where three rooms have a single stripe of bold colour marked with the room number in a kind of billiard-ball decor scheme.

**Ourpick Anfiteatro B&B** (☎ 347 24 84 62; www.anfiteatro-bedandbreakfast.com; Via Alberto Mario 5; incl breakfast s/d/tr or q €60-90/80-130/100-150) Opera divas and fashionistas rest up in the heart of the action in this recently restored 19th-century townhouse, one block from the Arena off boutique-lined Via Mazzini. Spacious guestrooms have high wood-beamed ceilings, antique armoires for stashing purchases and divans for swooning after shows.

**Albergo Aurora** (☎ 045 59 47 17; www.hotelaurore.biz; Piazza XIV Novembre 2; incl breakfast s/d €90-130/100-150, s without bathroom €58-70; ☎) Right off bustling Piazza Erbe yet cosy and blissfully quiet, this recently renovated hotel has spacious, unfussy rooms with high ceilings. Head to the sunny terrace for drinks overlooking the piazza.

## Eating

**Salumeria G Albertini** (☎ 045 803 10 74; Via Sant'Anastasia 39; ☎ 8am-2pm & 3-8pm Mon-Sat) A picture-perfect deli, featuring all the prepared pastas, cured meats, local Asiago sheep's cheese and wine you could want for an ideal picnic by the river or inside the Roman Arena.

**Corte Farina** (☎ 045 800 04 40; Corte Farina 4; pizzas €7-12; ☎ lunch & dinner Tue-Thu) Argentina meets Verona at this popular pizzeria, which also fires up *empanadas* (savoury meat-filled pastries) in its ovens. Join famished shoppers fresh from Via G Mazzini along the chic banquette, or grab a spot outdoors for street theatre two blocks from the Arena.

**Osteria Al Carro Armato** (☎ 045 803 01 75; Vicolo Gatto 2a; meals €20-30; ☎ Tue-Sun) Join the crowd on rough timber benches in this high-ceilinged, downhome Veronese *osteria* for wine by the glass and hearty local dishes such as *tagliata di manzo* (thin-sliced beef served with rocket) or *pastissada di cavallo*, Verona's legendary horse stew.

**Ourpick Al Pompiere** (☎ 045 803 05 37; www.alpompiere.com; Vicolo Regina d'Ungheria 5; meals €25-40; ☎ Tue-Sat & dinner Mon) The fireman's (*pompiere*) hat is still on the wall, but the focal points at this local hot spot are the vast cheese selection and famed house-cured *salumi* platter. Make a meal of the starters with wine by the glass, or graduate to plates of *bigoli con le sarde* (chunky spaghetti with sardines) or ravioli filled with caramelised onion. Reserve ahead.

**Bottega del Vino** (☎ 045 800 45 35; www.bottegapini.it; Vicolo Scudo di Francia 3a; meals €60-70; ☎ Wed-Mon) Wine is the primary consideration at this historic *enoteca* with backlit bottles above the bar, and your sommelier will gladly recommend a worthy vintage for your lobster *crudo* salad, Amarone risotto, or suckling pig – some of the best wines here are bottled specifically for the Bottega.

## Drinking

**Il Campidoglio** (☎ 045 59 10 59; Piazzetta Tirabosco 4; ☎ 11am-2am Tue-Sun) An island of cool in a hidden plaza up a flight of stairs off Piazza delle Erbe, this place serves cocktails strong and tall during the daily 6pm to 9pm happy hour.

**Osteria Sottoriva** (☎ 045 801 43 23; Via Sottoriva 9a; ☎ 11am-10.30pm Thu-Tue) The last of the historic *osterie* that once lined this riverside alley, Sottoriva still pours wine by the glass at fair prices (€1.50 to €3.50) to overflowing local crowds at rough-hewn tables under

the arcade, with traditional pairings of pork sausages and horse meatballs.

**Caffè Filippini** (☎ 045 800 45 49; Piazza delle Erbe 26; ☎ 8am-2am Thu-Tue) The hippest joint in town has been here since 1901, perfecting the house specialty Filippini, a killer cocktail of vermouth, gin, lemon and ice. Come for coffee in the morning, and don't expect to leave before sundown.

**Osteria del Bugiardo** (☎ 045 59 18 69; Corso Portoni Borsari 17a; ☎ 11am-10pm Tue-Sun) On busy Corso Portoni Borsari, traffic converges at Bugiardo for glasses of upstanding Valpolicella bottled specifically for the *osteria*. Polenta and *sopressa* (fresh Venetian-style salami) make worthy bar snacks for the powerful Amarone.

## Entertainment

**Roman Arena** (☎ 045 800 51 51; www.arena.it; Piazza Brà, ticket office Ente Lirico Arena di Verona, Via Dietro Anfiteatro 6b; tickets €15-150; ☎ opera season Jun-Aug) This is where Plácido Domingo made his debut, and the annual June–August opera season includes 50 performances by the world's top names. In winter months, classical concerts are held across the way at the 18th-century **Ente Lirico Arena di Verona**.

## Getting There & Away

### AIR

**Verona-Villafranca airport** (VRN; ☎ 045 809 56 66; www.aeroporto.verona.it) is 12km outside town and accessible by APTV Aerobus to/from the train station (€4.50, 15 minutes, every 20 minutes from 6.30am to 11.30pm). Flights arrive from all over Italy and some European cities, including Amsterdam, Barcelona, Berlin, Brussels, Dusseldorf, London and Paris.

### BUS

The main intercity bus station is in front of the train station, in the Porta Nuova area.

### CAR & MOTORCYCLE

Verona is at the intersection of the A4 (Turin–Trieste) and A22 motorways.

### TRAIN

The trip to/from Venice is easiest by train (from €6.15, two hours, two each hour). Verona has rail links with Padua, Vicenza, Milan, Mantua, Modena, Florence and Rome,

plus regular service to Austria, Switzerland and Germany (10 daily to/from Munich).

## Getting Around

**AMT** (www.amt.it) city buses 11, 12, 13 and 14 (bus 91 or 92 on Sunday and holidays) connect the train station with Piazza Brà. Buy tickets from newsagents and tobacconists before you board the bus (tickets one hour/day €1/3.50). Otherwise, it's a 20-minute walk to historic Verona along Corso Porta Nuova.

## VERONA'S WINE COUNTRY

A drive through Verona's hinterland is a lesson in fine wine. To the north and northwest are Valpolicella vineyards dating back to Roman times, and east on the road to Vicenza are the white-wine makers of Soave. Below are two itineraries based on your drink of choice: red or white.

### Red Wine Country: Valpolicella

The occasional Romanesque church, 16th-century villa, or tiny village punctuate this otherwise unbroken stretch of vineyards, but as you plot your visit, bear in mind that most wineries close on Sunday. By car, follow the SS12 highway northwest out of Verona, veer north onto SP4 and follow the route west towards **San Pietro in Cariano** to visit the Pro Loco Valpolicella **tourist office** (☎ 045 770 19 20; www.valpolicellaweb.it; Via Ingelheim 7; ☎ 9.30am-1pm & 1.30-5.30pm Mon-Fri, 9am-1pm Sat). Alternatively, bus 3 departs Verona's Porta Nuova for San Pietro about every half-hour (www.apv.vr.it; €2.30, 40 minutes). The tourist office offers maps for walking, biking and travelling by bus to scenic spots for wine-tasting. If you make an appointment, you can swing by **Montecariano Cellars** (☎ 045 683 83 35; Via Valena 3, San Pietro; ☎ by appointment Mon-Sat) off central Piazza San Giuseppe to sample an award-winning DOC (quality-controlled) example of the most highly prized Valpolicella red, Amarone.

Foodies detour north of San Pietro to the tiny town of Fumane for lunch in a converted 1400s barn at **our pick Enoteca Valpolicella** (☎ 045 683 91 46; Via Osan 45; meals €25-35; ☎ lunch & dinner Tue-Sat & lunch Sun), where the kitchen keeps flavours pure – risotto with wild herbs, game with polenta – so as not to compete with 700 Italian wines on the menu, including 70 local labels. The *enoteca* owners also run the delightful **La Meridiana B&B** (☎ 045 683 91 46; www.lameridiana-valpolicella.it; Via Osan 16c, Fumane; incl breakfast s/d €70/90; ☎) in a 1600s stable, with newly renovated

guestrooms – get the garden room with the barrel-vaulted stone ceiling – plus swimming at a pool 1km away and tasty breakfasts at the *enoteca*.

A few kilometres west of San Pietro, **Gargagnano** is known for Amarone and if you call ahead, you can taste DOC Amarone and lighter DOC Valpolicella reds outside Gargagnano at **Corte Leardi Winery** (☎ 045 770 13 79; www.corteleardi.com; Via Giare 15; ☞ by appointment 8.30am–7pm Mon–Fri, 9am–noon Sat & Sun). A short ride (or well-marked 5km, two-hour hike) west takes you through the hillside town of **Sant’Ambrogio di Valpolicella** and onward to the picturesque village of **San Giorgio**, with its fresco-filled, cloistered 8th-century Romanesque **Pieve di San Giorgio** (☎ 045 770 15 30; ☞ 7am–6pm). Halfway between Sant’Ambrogio and San Giorgio is **Boscaini Carlo Winery** (☎ 045 773 14 12; www.boscainicarlo.it; Via Sengia 15; ☞ 10am–noon & 1.30–7pm Mon–Sat), renowned for award-winning DOC Amarone, Valpolicella and an especially voluptuous Ripasso available only from the winery. In San Giorgio, **Trattoria Dalla Rosa Alda** (☎ 045 770 10 18; www.dallarosalda.it; meals €30–35; ☞ lunch & dinner Tue–Sat & lunch Sun) serves honest local fare, including housemade *gnocchi* and beef braised in Amarone.

## White Wine Country: Soave

You’ll never have to look far for a glass of fine white wine in the Veneto, but southeast of Verona, **Soave** serves its namesake DOC white wine in a story-book setting. This medieval town is the centre of Veneto’s wine consortium, so the best Amarone and Valpolicella also passes through Soave’s crenellated walls. Hop the Milan–Venice train from Verona to San Bonifacio (€2.35 to €3.55, 20 minutes) and catch the APTV bus (line 30), or exit the **A4 autostrada** at San Bonifacio and follow the Viale della Vittoria 2km north into town.

Soave’s fortifications encircled with 24 watchtowers aren’t intended to keep visitors away from the good stuff: they were built on a medieval base by Verona’s fratricidal Scaligeri family, who ultimately had more to fear from one another than marauding invaders. The **Castello** (☎ 045 68 00 36; adult/child €4.50/3; ☞ 9am–noon & 3–6.30pm Tue–Sun Apr–mid-Oct, 9am–noon & 3–5pm mid-Oct–Mar) is easily reached on foot (signposted) through gardens and vineyards. Cross the drawbridge on the north side of the castle and pass two courtyards to find the stairway to the Mastio, the central defensive

tower that apparently served as a dungeon: during restoration work, a mound of human bones 2m high was unearthed inside.

Just below the castle is megaproducer **Cantina del Castello** (☎ 045 768 00 93; www.cantinacas.tello.it; Corte Pittora 5; tour & tasting €8; ☞ 9am–12.30pm & 2.30–6.30pm Mon–Sat by appointment) where you can tour underground cellars and sample Soaves ranging from sparkling Brut Soave to superior dessert Recioto di Soave. Across from the church in the old town, **Azienda Agricola Coffele** (☎ 045 768 00 07; www.coffele.it; Via Roma 5; ☞ 9am–12.30pm & 2–7pm Mon–Sat by appointment) offers tastings of lemon-zesty DOC Soave Classico and nutty, faintly sweet bubbly DOCG (guaranteed-quality) Recioto di Soave. Soave is not known as a complex white, but one trailblazing winery out to change that reputation is **Suavia** (☎ 045 767 50 89; Frazione Fittà, Via Centro 14; ☞ 9am–1pm & 2–6pm Mon–Fri & 9am–1pm Sat by appointment), located 8km outside Soave via SP39 in the tiny town of Fittà. By appointment, taste its renegade DOC Monte Carbonare Soave Classico: faintly tropical, with a mineral, ocean-breeze finish.

For rustic local dishes paired with great deals on speciality wines in an 140-year-old *osteria*, head to **Al Gambero** (☎ 045 768 00 10; Corso Vittorio Emanuele 5; meals €20–30; ☞ Tue–Sun) for Soave *soppressa* with polenta or Valeggio-style tortellini tied in love knots. Fancier fare is served in a former 16th-century nunnery at **Lo Scudo** (☎ 045 768 07 66; Via San Matteo 46; meals €30–40; ☞ Tue–Sun), where meals are leisurely but you’ll want to arrive early and order fast, or miss out on daily fish specials and risotto with Verona’s zesty DOP (quality-assured) Monte Veronese cheese.

## DOLOMITES

Whether you’re into skiing, hiking, or premium Prosecco, head for Veneto’s mountain border with Trentino-Alto Adige. For more Dolomite getaways, see p342.

### Conegliano

pop 37,500

If you’re taking the train or driving to the Dolomites along the A27 north of Treviso, Conegliano is a worthy pit stop for Prosecco and self-flagellation – not necessarily in that order. Conegliano is home to Italy’s oldest school for oenology and the toast of the Veneto: Prosecco, a dry, crisp white wine made from Prosecco grapes in *spu-*

*mante* (bubbly), *frizzante* (sparkling) or still varieties. Conegliano's Prosecco was promoted to DOCG (guaranteed-quality) status in 2009, Italy's highest mark of oenological distinction.

Plot a tasting detour along the Strada di Prosecco (Prosecco Rd) from Conegliano to the Valdobbiadene at [www.coneglianovaldobbiadene.it](http://www.coneglianovaldobbiadene.it), or head to Conegliano's **APT tourist office** (☎ 0438 2 12 30; Via XX Settembre 61; ☎ 9am-12.30pm Tue-Wed, to 12.30pm & 3-6pm Thu-Sun).

Along Via XX Settembre in the centre of town, you can't miss the eye-catching **Scuola dei Battuti**, covered inside and out with 16th-century frescoes by Ludovico Pozzoserrato. This building was once home to a religious lay group known as the *Battuti* (Beaters) for their enthusiastic self-flagellation. Enter the **Duomo** through the Scuola to discover early works by Veneto artists, notably a 1492-93 altarpiece painted by noted local master Cima da Conegliano.

## Belluno

pop 35,600

Perched beneath snow-capped Dolomites, Belluno makes a scenic, strategic base to explore the mountains. The historic old town is its own attraction, with easy walks past Renaissance-era buildings in the long shadow of the Dolomites.

## ORIENTATION & INFORMATION

Buses arrive at Piazzale della Stazione in front of the train station. From here, take Via Dante (which becomes Via Loreto), then turn left down Via Matteotti into the central Piazza dei Martiri to reach the **tourist office** (☎ 0437 94 00 83; [www.infodolomiti.it](http://www.infodolomiti.it); Piazza del Duomo 2; ☎ 9am-12.30pm & 3.30-6.30pm Mon-Sat, 9am-12.30pm Sun). The office and its website offer information on skiing, hiking and other sporting activities, including current weather conditions and advisories. For more information on trekking through the Dolomites, check out [www.webdolomiti.net](http://www.webdolomiti.net) and p314.

## SIGHTS & ACTIVITIES

Belluno's main pedestrian square is the **Piazza dei Martiri** (Martyrs' Square), named after the four partisans hanged here in WWII. At the heart of the old town, **Piazza del Duomo** is framed by the early-16th-century Renaissance **Cattedrale di San Martino**, the

16th-century **Palazzo Rosso** and the **Palazzo dei Vescovi**, with a striking 12th-century tower.

Northwest of Belluno, the **Parco Nazionale delle Dolomiti Bellunesi** ([www.dolomitipark.it](http://www.dolomitipark.it)) is a splendid national park offering trails, wildflowers and crisp mountain air. Between late June and early September, hikers walking six **Alte Vie delle Dolomiti** (high-altitude Dolomites walking trails) pass Belluno en route to mountain refuges. Route 1 starts in Belluno and covers 150km of breathtaking mountain scenery to Lago di Braies in Val Pusteria to the north in about 13 days.

## SLEEPING & EATING

To explore hotel, B&B, camping and *agriturismo* options in Belluno, the Parco Nazionale and beyond, check [www.infodolomiti.it](http://www.infodolomiti.it) and [www.dolomitipark.it](http://www.dolomitipark.it).

**Ostello Imperina** (☎ 0437 6 24 51; [www.parks.it/ost/imperina](http://www.parks.it/ost/imperina); Località Le Miniere; dm incl breakfast/half-/full board €20/35/47; ☎ Apr-mid-Oct) The nearest youth hostel is in the Parco Nazionale delle Dolomiti Bellunesi, 35km northwest of Belluno at Rivamonte Agordino. The hostel is in a converted copper-mining centre dating from 1400, surrounded by 50km of hiking trails. Book ahead in April and May. To get there, take the Agordo bus (50 minutes) from Belluno.

**ourpick Azienda Agrituristică Sant'Anna** (☎ 0437 2 74 91; [www.aziendasantanna.it](http://www.aziendasantanna.it); Via Pedecastello 27, Castion; r & apt €80-120) Get away from it all in an idyllic stone farmhouse 4km outside Belluno, east of the Piave river near Ponte nelle Alpi. Recently renovated rooms have all the mod cons without losing rustic charms: iron bedsteads, creaky timber floors and beamed ceilings. Enthusiastic hosts introduce visitors to local culture through Italian classes, hands-on dairy-farming courses and nature hikes.

**Albergo Cappello e Cadore** (☎ 0437 94 02 46; [www.albergocappello.com](http://www.albergocappello.com); Via Ricci 8; s/d €45-75/90-103; ☎ P) A rosy, cosy 19th-century inn just off Piazza dei Martiri. Most guestrooms are monastery-modest, with plain pine bedsteads; splash out for doubles with Jacuzzis.

**La Taverna** (☎ 0437 2 51 92; Via Cipro 7; meals €20-30; ☎ Mon-Sat) Follow your rumbling stomach off Piazza dei Martiri to top-notch seasonal bruschetta with top-notch Prosecco at Taverna's bar. In the adjoining restaurant, carbo-load for your hike with fresh porcini *tagliolini*, or go gourmet with Taverna's seasonal house



specialities: wintertime eel with snails or springtime rabbit with zucchini flowers.

### GETTING THERE & AWAY

Trains from Venice (€5.70 to €6.15, two to 2½ hours) run here via Treviso and/or Conegliano about five times daily. You'll probably have to change along the way, which can add an hour or more to your trip.

In front of the train station on the western edge of town, **Dolomiti Bus** (☎ 0437 94 12 37; [www.dolomitibus.it](http://www.dolomitibus.it)) offers regular service to Cortina d'Ampezzo, Conegliano and smaller mountain towns.

By car, take the A27 from Venice (Mestre) – it's not the most scenic route, but avoids traffic around Treviso.

### Cortina d'Ampezzo

pop 6600 / elev 1224m

The Italian supermodel of ski resorts, Cortina d'Ampezzo is fashionable, pricey, icy and undeniably beautiful. The town's stone church spires and pleasant piazzas are framed by magnificent Alps.

### ORIENTATION & INFORMATION

The mountains encircling Cortina are (in clockwise order) Cristallo, the Gruppo di Sorapiss-Marmole, Antelao, Becco di Mezzodi-Croda da Lago, Nuolau-Averau-Cinque Torre and Tofane. To the south are Pelmo and Civetta.

**Croce Bianca** (☎ 0436 86 20 75) Emergency medical aid.

**Tourist office** (☎ 0436 32 31; [www.infodolomiti.it](http://www.infodolomiti.it); Piazzetta San Francesco 8; ☎ 9am-12.30pm & 3.30-6.30pm in season)

### ACTIVITIES

Winter crowds arrive in December for top-notch downhill and cross-country skiing facilities and stay until April, and summertime adventurers hit Cortina for climbing and hiking from June until October. Two cable cars whisk skiers and walkers from Cortina's town centre into the mountains, to a central departure point for chairlifts, cable cars and trails. Lifts usually run from 9am to 5pm daily mid-December to April and resume June to September or October.

Ski and snowboard runs range from bunny slopes to the legendary Staunies black mogul run: starting at 300m, Staunies isn't for the faint of heart or weak of knee. The Dolomiti Superski pass (p314) covers the resort;

passes for Cortina are sold at the **ski pass office** (☎ 0436 86 21 71; Via G Marconi 15; 1/2-/3-day pass €36/72/104; ☎ vary).

Other winter adventures in Cortina include dogsledding, scaling frozen waterfalls and ice skating at the **Olympic Ice Stadium** (☎ 0436 88 18 11; Via dello Stadio; adult/child incl skate rental €10/9), built for the 1956 Winter Olympics.

**Gruppo Guide Alpine Cortina** (☎ 0436 86 85 05; [www.guidecortina.com](http://www.guidecortina.com); Corso Italia 69a) runs rock-climbing courses (three-day climbing course including gear rental €270) and guided nature hikes (prices vary). In summer, the world-famous **Tre Cime di Lavarredo** peaks near Cortina are crawling with climbers and hikers – mind your sporting etiquette.

### SLEEPING & EATING

Cortina's pedestrian centre is ringed with pizzerias and cafes, which are your best bets for reasonable eats. For additional hotel, B&B, camping, *agriturismo* and *affittacamere* options in Cortina, check [www.infodolomiti.it](http://www.infodolomiti.it).

**International Camping Olympia** (☎ 0436 50 57; [www.campingolympiacortina.it](http://www.campingolympiacortina.it); adult €4.50-8, tent & car €7-9; ☎) Set up camp beneath towering pine trees 4km north of Cortina in Fiammes, with local bus service to Cortina and an onsite pizzeria.

**Hotel Montana** (☎ 0436 86 04 98; [www.cortina-hotel.com](http://www.cortina-hotel.com); per person €40-80; ☎ ☎) Right in the heart of Cortina, this vintage 1920s Alpine hotel hosts snow bunnies and Olympian curling champions alike. In winter, the hotel requires a seven-night minimum stay (Saturday-Saturday or Sunday-Sunday), but call in case of vacancies.

**Oltres B&B** (☎ 0346 520 31 75; [www.oltres.com](http://www.oltres.com); d incl breakfast Jan-Nov €60-100, Dec €100-140; ☎) According to local legend, Titian was born in this classic 17th-century farmhouse southeast of Cortina and the wildflower meadows may inspire your own masterpiece. Guestrooms are wood-panelled, cosy and quaint, but bathrooms are updated and spotless.

### GETTING THERE & AWAY

From Cortina bus station (Via G Marconi), **SAD buses** (☎ 0471 45 01 11; [www.sad.it](http://www.sad.it)) link to nearby towns, Bolzano and other Alto Adige destinations, while **Dolomiti Bus** (☎ 0437 94 12 37; [www.dolomitibus.it](http://www.dolomitibus.it)) offers service to smaller mountain towns, Belluno and other Veneto locales.

By car, take the A27 motorway from Venice (Mestre), which turns into SS51 around Belluno and heads northwest to Cortina.

© Lonely Planet. To make it easier for you to use, access to this chapter is not digitally restricted. In return, we think it's fair to ask you to use it for personal, non-commercial purposes only. In other words, please don't upload this chapter to a peer-to-peer site, mass email it to everyone you know, or resell it. See the terms and conditions on our site for a longer way of saying the above - 'Do the right thing with our content.'