



*An empire without border,  
a city without 'terra firma'.  
In Venice,  
besides the sparkling sea,  
between the broad & narrow canals,  
upon the windy stone-paved streets,  
within the decorated Palazzo Venart,  
time loses itself in space,  
and we are...*



1  
Ca' d'Oro



2  
Rialto Bridge



3  
Santa Maria  
della Salute



4  
Basilica  
of Saint Mark



5  
Bridge of Sighs



6  
Venetian Arsenal



7  
Le Zattere



8  
Palazzo Venart



## 1 CA D'ORO

Built during the fifteenth century at the height of the Venetian Republic's glory, with its wonderful Venetian Gothic architecture, Ca' d'Oro, the 'House of Gold', is one of the most beautiful and well-preserved palazzi in Venice. The facade is extremely intricate with closely spaced columns and "quatrefoil" openings resembling the sacred shape of the four-leaf clover. At first glance, its elegance and beauty almost reminds us of that of the Doge's Palace.

## 2 RIALTO BRIDGE

Venice has four major bridges that cross the Grand Canal, and the Rialto Bridge is the oldest and most famous of them. The original bridge built in 1181 was of wood. After several fires and collapses, in the fifteenth century the Republic decided to commission a stone bridge. To allow for larger vessels to pass beneath, the structure was composed of two steeply sloped ramps that meet together at a high central platform. The engineering of a stone bridge of such height and scale was complex and bold, making it a major architectural achievement for the period. The Rialto area has also had a central marketplace since the city's early days, and it is still crowded with fish markets, stalls selling fresh produce and shops for locals as well as others selling souvenirs.

## 3 SANTA MARIA DELLA SALUTE

Located at the junction between the Venetian lagoon and the Canale della Giudecca, this seventeenth-century dome solemnly guards the entrance to the Grand Canal. The church was built using donations from the survivors of the devastating outbreak of plague in 1630. Some of the finest works of art by the Venetian artists Titian and Tintoretto can be found in the basilica. The unique shape and location of Santa Maria della Salute makes it one of the most photographed churches in Italy.

## 4 SAINT MARK'S BASILICA

St. Mark's Basilica is a splendid structure revealing a mesmerising mix of cultures and styles, with a preponderance of Byzantine and Gothic. With its extensive gold-ground mosaics, Saint Mark's Basilica is also nicknamed the "Chiesa d'Oro" (Church of gold). Its delicate mosaics illustrate events in the life of Saint Mark, along with other biblical stories. Four life-size bronze horses and numerous marble columns of all shapes and colours adorn the exterior of the church. These were tokens of victory taken during the Sack of Constantinople in 1204 during the fourth Crusade. In Piazzetta di San Marco (the part of the square facing the lagoon), there are two large pillars topped by the patron saints of Venice of different periods: the winged lion symbolising Saint Mark, and Saint Theodore, the first patron saint of Venice, with his attribute, a crocodile.

## 5 BRIDGE OF SIGH

One of the most stories-filled bridges of Venice 378 bridges. The enclosed bridge made of white limestone connects the interrogation rooms in the Doge's Palace and the New Prison. Its English name was given by the British Poet, Lord Byron, in the 19th century, as a translation from the Italian "Ponte dei sospiri", which is suggesting that the convicts would sigh at their last view of freedom before crossing into the prison. The modern legend has it that if lovers were to pass under the bridge at sunset and seal their love with a kiss, forever love will be awarded.

## 6 THE ARSENALE

Built in 1104 by the Venetian republic, the Arsenale is one of the earliest production sites built on industrial lines. Spanning 45 hectares, the Arsenale is guarded by high walls and was supplied by a dedicated forest in the Veneto for its supplies of wood. Different areas of the Arsenale manufactured various parts of a ship, including the cordage, masts, munitions and so so. All these parts would be brought together to create a seaworthy vessel in a single day! The Arsenale is a true display of the power, technology and craftsmanship of the Venetian republic of the era. Nowadays, the Arsenale is also an exhibition space for the Biennale, one of the world's most celebrated modern art exhibitions.

## 7 LE ZATTERE

The most romantic waterside promenade in Venice runs along the Giudecca Canal where you can sip coffee or cocktails while watching vessels sailing in and out of the glittering canal.

## 8 PALAZZO VENART

A pearl of Venice, built during the high Renaissance, and your very own palazzo in the "Serenissima".

1	Piazza
102	Campi (square)
134	Campielli (little squares)
417	Bridges
124	Islands
178	Channels
1	Grand Canal: 3.247 mt
2.500	Wells
6	Sestieri (districts)
3.000	Calli (streets)
7.000.000	Masegni, traditional paving stones
148	Churches
84	Bell towers

## DESPITE THE WATER

How the floating city works  
Sestieri and the fero of the gondola  
Elements of Venice: bell towers, bridges, squares  
The paradox of waterless Venice: the wells

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## TRADITIONAL FOOD IN VENICE

Bacari  
Spritz  
Cicchetti

## How the floating city works



*"There is no normal life in Venice, here everything and everyone floats. Not only the gondolas, launches, barges, vaporettos and sandalos, but also the buildings and the people float."*

*One floats in and out of restaurants, shops, cinemas, theatres, museums, churches and hotels.*

*One floats luxuriously with such a sense of freedom.*

*"Floatingness": this was Peggy' Guggenheim's chosen word for Venice, for the city's "essential feeling".*

### The districts of Venice are called SESTIERI

The sestieri are represented by the six front prongs of the gondola's fero da prora, the prow-head of this most typically Venetian boat. The rear-facing prong represents the island of Giudecca, while the "S" shape suggests the Grand Canal, the small arch above the last prong recalls the Rialto Bridge and the wide upper volute indicates the San Marco Basin and the corno ducale, the Doge's unique hat. In other words, the fero is a stylised miniature of the city.

**San Marco** lies at the heart of Venice; the name comes from the patron saint of the city. Here you will find most of the most famous sites in Venice and the Doge's Palace, the Republic's centre of power. The San Polo district lies around the ancient Rialto Bridge. It is the smallest but the richest in history, culture and art and full of shops, banks and markets. It takes its name from the ninth-century church of San Polo.

**Santa Croce's** name derives from that of the church overlooking the Grand Canal. The church was founded in the sixth century and demolished in 1830. A nail of the True Cross, formerly preserved there, was transferred to the church of San Pantalon.

The **Dorsoduro** district includes the south-eastern area of the city, as well as the island of Giudecca. Its name recalls its geomorphological conformation, a harder island in a place of muddy banks. Since it offered the firmest ground it was here that the first populations settled.

**Cannaregio**, in the northern part of Venice above the Grand Canal, is one of the largest and most populous areas. Some historians think the name derives from its ancient appearance, characterised by swamp and reeds, while others attribute it to "Canal Regio" or to the Latin "canaliculus" or small canal. This district houses the Venetian Ghetto.

**Castello** is the largest district in Venice and includes a great variety of urban and architectural elements. It takes its name from the ancient castle located where the Arsenale stands today. The Arsenale is where the Serenissima's ships were built.



# Elements of Venice: bell towers, bridges, squares

## CLOCK TOWER

The visit is possible only by reservation and with a special guide.

Piazza San Marco  
San Marco, Venezia  
info@fmcvenezia.it  
www.torreorologio.visitmuve.it



## BEL TOWER of SAN GIORGIO MAGGIORE ISLAND

For € 3, you can enjoy a panoramic and complete view of Venice from the other side of the Grand Canal.

**BELL TOWERS** There are 84 in Venice, but those accessible to the public are San Marco, S. Giorgio Maggiore and Torre dell'Orologio.

The Torre dell'Orologio is one of the most famous architectural landmarks in Venice, standing over an arch that leads into the main shopping street of the city, the old Merceria. It marks both a junction and a division between the various architectural components of St. Mark's Square, which was not only the seat of political and religious power but also a public space and an area of economic activity. Looking out towards the sea, the square constitutes a hub for the entire city. The Tower and its large Astronomical Clock, a masterpiece of technology and engineering, form an essential part of Venice's image. For more than 500 years, the clock has measured the flow of life and history within the city.

## BRIDGES

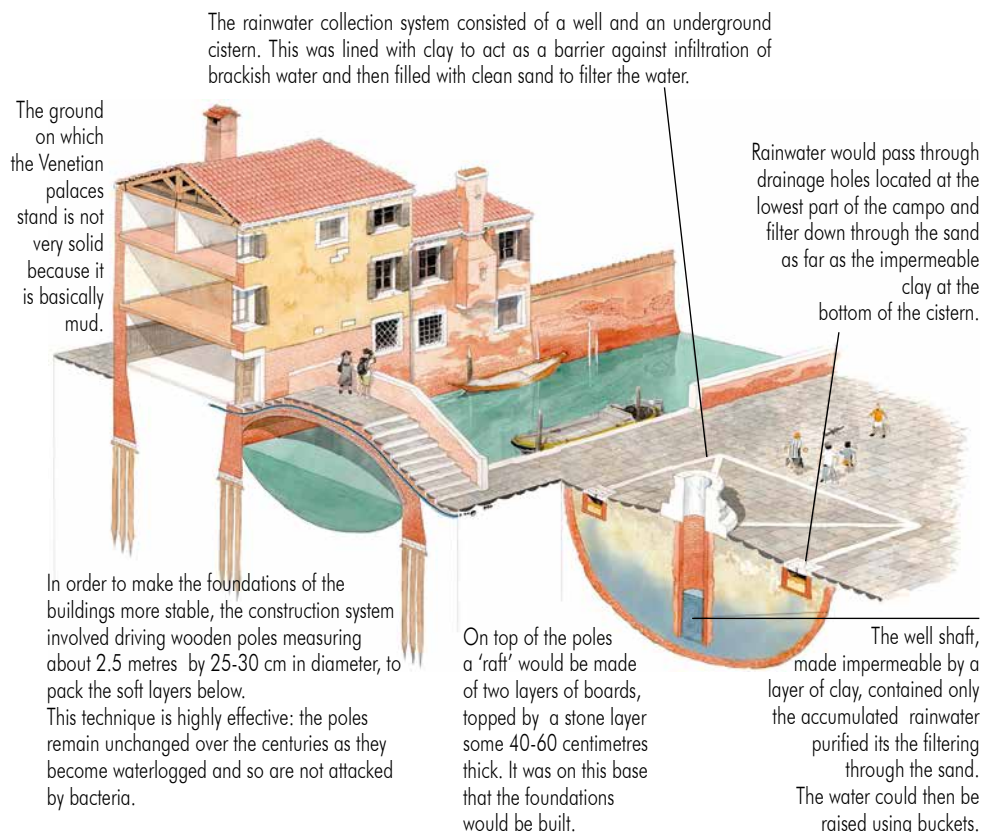
In Venice there are 417 bridges, of which 72 are private. There are 300 bridges built of stone, 60 of iron, and the remaining 57 of wood.

In the past, until the sixteenth century, Venice's bridges were without steps to enable them to be ridden over on horseback. The Ponte del Diavolo in Torcello and a private one next to Rio di San Felice are the only two bridges left without parapets.

## CAMPI

The squares in Venice are called Campi (literally, 'fields'), because they were once used as vegetable gardens. For their part, the campi in front of churches were often used as campo-santi (graveyards). Subsequently, wells were dug in the campi, from which rainwater could be drawn, filtered by layers of sand.

# How the Serenissima works: the Wells



Venice's wells represent an extraordinary water system and ornament.

In Venetian society, the "tagliapiera" or stone-cutter was an esteemed figure; their guild served as the basis of Venetian Masonry and their works remained "sculpted" in the city. The first, great expressions of these stone-cutters were the wells.

"Venice is in water and has no water" wrote Marin Sanudo in the sixteenth century. The function of the wells was to assure a supply of fresh water to a city built on water.

The wells were fed by cisterns which, in Venice alone, were filled with layers of sand to filter the rainwater and make it drinkable.

The well in Venice was therefore a vital and decorative asset but at the same time a further element that makes the city unique and special.

It is estimated that in Venice there are still about 2500 wells, while at the time of the Serenissima they might have totalled 7000 to 8500.



# The Venetian Scuole and San Rocco

## SCUOLA GRANDE

09:30 - 17:30

Closed New Year and Christmas.

CHURCH 09:30 - 17:30

New Year, Easter and Christmas

9:30 - 12:30.

The admission fee is used for the restoration and conservation of the artistic heritage of the Scuola and Church, as well as for the institute's various charitable activities.

Campo San Rocco, 3052  
San Polo, Venezia  
[scuolagrandesanrocco.it](http://scuolagrandesanrocco.it)



In the second half of the thirteenth century, many confraternities were founded in central and northern Italy, composed of laymen who gathered in the name of Christ, the Virgin or a patron saint for purposes of worship and mutual aid. In Venice these brotherhoods were called scuole. Their members belonged to the bourgeoisie, the class of non-patrician citizens residing in the city active in trades and professions. In many cases they were extremely wealthy but were excluded from the Republic's oligarchic government and the scuole thus provided them with a prestigious role within Venetian society. For their part, nobles could be members of a scuola but not hold office.

Until the fall of the Republic, the scuole played a notable role in the religious life and charitable assistance in the city, constituting a real welfare system, initially provided for its members, but then extended to the entire population.

## Scuola Grande di San Rocco

Founded in 1478, this Scuola is located in the heart of Venice. The popularity of the cult of Saint Roch, whose remains had been in the possession of the brotherhood since 1485, contributed to the latter's rapid expansion to the point of making it the richest Scuola of the city. It was decided to build a new and monumental headquarters and engage Tintoretto to decorate it with what has become his most celebrated pictorial cycle, illustrating episodes from the Old and New Testaments.

It is the only one of the historic Scuole Grandi to have survived the fall of the Republic in 1797. It is a unique site, with over 60 paintings preserved in their original setting in a building that has undergone scarcely any alteration since its construction.

The confraternity is still active today, carrying out its traditional charitable duties.

# Basilica of Santa Maria Gloriosa dei Frari



## CHURCH

Monday-Saturday: 9.00 -18.0  
Sunday: 13.00 - 18.00

The admission fee serves as a contribution for the restoration, surveillance and permanent illumination of the works of art.

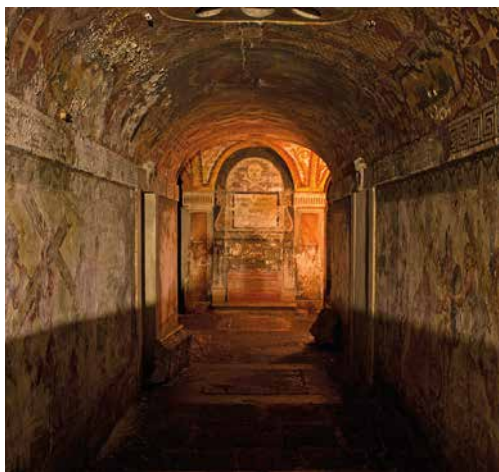
Campo dei Frari,  
San Polo 3072, Venezia  
[basilica@basilicadeifrari.it](mailto:basilica@basilicadeifrari.it)  
[www.basilicadeifrari.it](http://www.basilicadeifrari.it)

This is the largest and one of the most interesting churches in Venice. It stands at the heart of the Sestiere of San Polo and is dedicated to the Virgin Mary. Among the masterpieces are Titian's "Assumption of the Virgin", an oil painting seven metres tall, Giovanni Bellini's "Frari Triptych" and a sculpture by Antonio Canova.

## The crypt of the church of San Simeone Piccolo

Hidden away beneath the church of San Simeone Piccolo is there is an eerie cemetery filled with human bones, the walls covered with eighteenth-century frescoes inspired by the themes of death, the Last Judgment and Christ's Passion. Squeezed between houses and palaces, the church dates back to 967 with the first structure built of wood and straw.

Circular in plan, sober and simple, the church contains a small treasure: the ancient crypt frescoed with scenes from the Old Testament and a Via Crucis.



# Church of San Pantalon

## CHURCH

Closed at lunchtime

Dorsoduro 3703, Venezia  
 sanpantalon@gmail.com  
 www.sanpantalon.it



### Church of San Pantalon

The ceiling boasts the largest painting on canvas in the world, depicting the martyrdom and glory of San Pantalon, painted by Giovanni Antonio Fumiani. He took more than twenty years to realise this colossal work between 1680 and 1704, and legend has it that the painter died falling from the scaffolding while he was giving the final touches to the work.

The painter skilfully continued the perspective of the church's architecture into his painting, creating a unique visual illusion that draws the viewer's eyes upwards and inwards. The painting covers an area of 443 square metres, with hundreds of characters crowded into the space.

**San Giacomo dell'Orio**, one of the oldest churches in the city, was founded in 976 and rebuilt in 1200, and was one of the starting points of the "Camino de Santiago". Within, there are splendid paintings by Paolo Veronese, Lorenzo Lotto and Palma il Giovane. The wooden ceiling is shaped like an upturned ship's hull, and the church also boasts a splendid fresco in the right-hand chapel near the altar.

**The Church of the Tolentini**, in Santa Croce, with its finely decorated interiors and nave, is a little treasure housing the tomb of Doge Francesco Morosini. The cannon ball set in the facade is there to commemorate the artillery shell fired by the Austrians in 1849, which broke through the dome above the high altar, fortunately without great damage.

**The Church of San Stae**, The Church of San Stae (the name is an abbreviation for Saint Eustachius), is a fundamental location for an understanding of early eighteenth-century Venetian painting, and also offers a strikingly coherent architectural whole.

# Island of San Giorgio



## CHURCH:

9.00-12.50 and 14.30-18.30  
(summer time);  
14.30-17.00 (winter time).  
+39 041 5227 827

## BELL TOWER:

9.30-12.50 and 14.30-18.00  
A lift leads to the belfry offering  
an incomparable view  
of Venice, the S. Marco basin  
and the surrounding lagoon.

## GIORGIO CINI FOUNDATION

+39 041 5205 558

At the time of the early doges, the island was called Isola dei Cipressi and its few inhabitants worked in a salt flat and windmill. In 790 a church was built dedicated to Saint George and called San Giorgio Maggiore to distinguish it from San Giorgio in Alga.

In 982 the doge Tribuno Memmo donated this island to the Benedictines to build a monastery. From that year onwards, San Giorgio in Isola increased in importance, with building continuing over the years. However, a terrible earthquake in 1223 devastated the church and monastery. The reconstruction was long and laborious. In 1433 San Giorgio provided refuge for Cosimo I de' Medici during his exile from Florence. It was he who commissioned the construction of the great library, destroyed by fire two centuries before. The sixteenth century was the most prosperous period for the Island of San Giorgio, with the construction of the first of the monastery's two cloisters: "degli Allori" and "dei Cipressi".

The construction of today's church of San Giorgio began in 1566 using a neoclassical design by the great architect Andrea Palladio, with work continuing until his death (1580). The church was completed by Baldassarre Longhena in 1610, with the inclusion of the sumptuous Appartamento degli Abati and the Library.

With the fall of the Venetian Republic in 1797, the island of San Giorgio lost much of its importance; it was transformed into a "free port" until 1929, and fell into a state of neglect and decay. Only in 1951 was it returned to its former role in art and culture thanks to Count Vittorio Cini who established his Foundation in memory of his young son, Giorgio. S. Giorgio in Isola returned to new life, hosting exhibitions, shows, conferences and awards. The park was rearranged with three gardens including the Borges' Labyrinth.

In the church, there are remarkable paintings by Carpaccio, Palma Giovane, Sebastiano Ricci, Bassano, Tintoretto and the funeral monument of Doge Leonardo Donà.



# Lazzaretto Novo and San Lazzaro degli Armeni

## LAZZARETTO NUOVO

Guided tours with small voluntary donation, April-October,  
+39 041 2444 011  
[www.lazzarettonuovo.com](http://www.lazzarettonuovo.com)



## SAN LAZZARO DEGLI ARMENI

The island can be easily reached by public transport from Venice, vaporetto - line 20 departing from San Marco to San Zaccaria

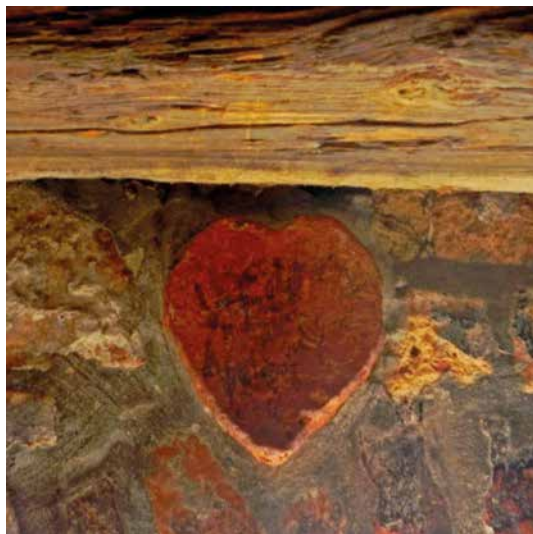
**Lazzaretto nuovo** was the Republic's first quarantine site, located close to the islands of Sant'Erasmus and Vignole, the vegetable gardens of Venice. Ships's crews suspected of being infected had to stay on this island for forty days, while their cargoes were fumigated with smoke from the burning of aromatic herbs. Today, the island is uninhabited apart from the resident caretakers and visiting archaeologists who regularly conduct excavations. Among the surviving structures is the Grande Tezon, a 100 metre-long warehouse containing old graffiti scrawled by the workers across its walls as a sort of "blog" about daily life on the island. There is also a permanent exhibition of artefacts such as tobacco pipes and pottery found during digs.

**San Lazzaro degli Armeni**, a fascinating place full of history, still retains a slow and romantic atmosphere. In 1717 the Republic of Venice allowed a group of Armenian monks fleeing from Greece, guided by the Abbot Mechitar, to occupy the monastery. The monks restored the buildings and set up a printing press to spread the Armenian language and culture, and later they also created a library. The Library of the Armenians has many rooms containing about 170,000 volumes, 4,500 of which are manuscripts (one dating back to the sixth century AD). The room containing the most precious manuscripts is in a controlled environment and is circular in shape, so that anyone standing in the middle of the room talking in a loud voice can hear a clear echo of his words.

According to legend, there is a concealed area containing a large collection of books about black magic, with texts that are said to be bound in human skin. Might it be true?

The cloister is full of flowers and roses: the museum's small book shop sells Vartanush jam made with rose petals collected at sunrise in accordance with tradition.

## Sotoportego Bragora o dei Preti



*The hidden treasures in Venice are as mysterious as the narrow canals themselves.*  
*Some of the main attractions of the city are secret treasures waiting for the more adventurous traveller.*  
*However, whether it's your first time to the Floating City or you're a seasoned visitor, there is always something special to discover.*

### A VENETIAN LOVE STORY TWIXT MAN AND MERMAID

In the covered walkway (sotoportego) near the church of San Giovanni in Bragora there is an arch beneath which we can still see a red brick heart that recalls the sad love story between Orio and Melusina.

The legend states that a fisherman named Orio lived here. One day, while fishing, he heard a voice calling for help. He was soon amazed to discover that he had caught a mermaid called Melusina in his net. The two fell in love, but she had been struck by a curse that turned her into a terrible snake every Saturday. The only way to overcome the spell was for Melusina to marry and she would then become a human.

Orio took her back to his house, wedded her, and they had three children, but after a few years Melusina fell ill and died. Orio was distraught but when he returned home one day from his fishing he saw that everything had been mysteriously tidied up. He also found a snake in the kitchen and killed it, and after that the house was always a mess, because the snake, of course, was actually Melusina who had returned from the afterlife to help her family.

In memory of this beautiful love story a red heart was placed where their home stood; when touched it makes a wished-for love come true within the year.

### CALLETTA VARISCO

This is the narrowest street in Venice and is located near Campo San Canciano: it is only 53 centimetres wide.



## Scala Contarini del Bovolo

*The unique design of this staircase sparked the imagination of many Venetian architects.*

*The palazzo is now known as “del Bovolo” to indicate a branch of the same Contarini family.*



Corte Contarina del Bovolo, 4303  
Venezia  
+39 041 3096 605

### **PALAZZO AND SCALA CONTARINI DEL BOVOLO**

The most impressive spiral staircase in Venice.

Over the past five hundred years, this palazzo has had several owners. It also had many tenants who lived, not always in luxury, in the rooms of this “Fontego house” of evident late Gothic style.

Towards the end of the fourteenth century the palazzo was embellished with this bizarre and graceful spiral staircase, known in Venetian as *bovolo*, commissioned by Pietro Contarini, a member of the powerful Contarini family that in former years had boasted a doge, Andrea Contarini. The importance of the palazzo, which does not face the Grand Canal, results from its privileged position: it is equidistant from Rialto, the city’s economic heart, and from San Marco, the political heart of Venice.

### **LE FÓRCOLE**

Saverio Pastor is the only remer (‘oar-maker’) still in business. The *fórcola* is the Venetian gondola’s equivalent of the rowlock (or oarlock), the fulcrum on which an oar pivots. He makes *fórcole* for gondolas and other boats, and nowadays also produces them as decorative objects. [www.forcole.com](http://www.forcole.com)

### **VALESE FOUNDRY**

This is the last foundry to continue the tradition of working with brass and bronze. If you are looking for an authentic *moretto* (Moor’s head) or a lion of Saint Mark, here they still produce them by casting liquid metal in the moulds. [www.valese.it](http://www.valese.it)



## PERSONA PER HORA SECRETA

In the former Republic of Venice there were 'mouths' for secret accusations, similar to today's mailboxes, scattered throughout the city of Venice and in particular near and within the Doge's Palace, intended to collect secret complaints addressed to the Magistrates.

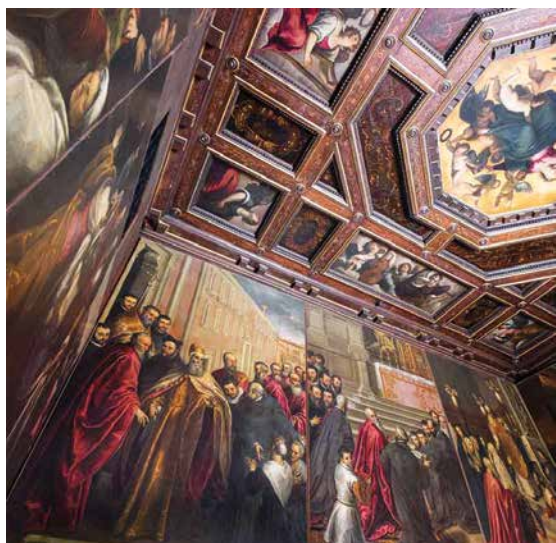
The reports were secret but could not be anonymous, under penalty of destruction. They covered all crimes, and the accusations were essential for the functioning of the institutions responsible for the state's security: the State Inquisitors and, above all, the Council of Ten.

## ORATORIO DEI CROCIFERI

Located on the left side of Campo dei Gesuiti, the Oratorio dei Crociferi was one of the first hospitals for the needy in the Republic. It was located within a twelfth-century building formed of a simple gabled structure.

Until few years ago, it was still used as a hospice for women.

The Oratorio is also linked to a significant masterpiece of the late Venetian Renaissance: a pictorial cycle by Palma il Giovane, painted between 1583 and 1592, principally at the behest of Doge Pasquale Cicogna.



## SQUERO SAN TROVASO (boatyard)

During the period of maximum splendour of the gondola in the sixteenth century, there were over 10,000 of these elegant boats gracing the waters of Venice's canals; today there are only 350. The work of the gondolier is handed down from father to son over the centuries. A typical gondola is 11 metres long, weighs 500 kg and is always black, the standard design being the result of a seventeenth-century sumptuary law against excessive ostentation. It takes two months to construct a gondola, which lasts about 15 years, even though it is painted every 40 days to maintain it.

If you walk alongside the Rio San Trovaso canal, you will see a fascinating gondola boatyard. The workers traditionally come from the nearby Dolomite mountains, renowned for the excellence of their carpenters.

**CA' MACANA handmade masks since 1984**

This workshop produces some of the world's best Venetian masks. It has revitalized the old tradition of Venetian carnival masks by creating a steady stream of new designs while remaining true to the original, authentic techniques.

From harlequin to traditional bauta masks, Ca' Macana is one of the most well-respected and famous producers of Venetian carnival masks in the world.

*www.camacana.com*

**ATELIER PIETRO LONGHI (historicals costume and accessories)**

In his latest bestseller, "Inferno", Dan Brown gives a perfect description of how visitors are welcomed at the Atelier Pietro Longhi: here we have a real artisan in a real workshop.

In a historical building in the heart of Venice, you can, by appointment, meet Francesco Briggi, the tailor who makes all the costumes you can see in his showroom.

The costume designs are inspired by paintings in museums: Michelangelo, Raphael, Boucher, Hogarth, David and more are all interpreted with a touch of genius and creativity by Briggi.

All the creations are unique, as is the experience of seeing and wearing these works of art. The Atelier's task is to transform wish into reality.

*www.pietrolonghi.com*

**ACQUA ALTA BOOKSHOP**

This Venetian bookshop (whose name means "The High Water Bookshop") has resigned itself to the fact of frequent flooding by keeping its books in bathtubs and boats to safeguard them. Having a collection of books in a city where the roads are made of water is a hazardous idea, but the Libreria Acqua Alta has nothing to fear since all its volumes are in waterproof basins. The bookshop comprises a number of packed rooms stacked floor to ceiling with books, magazines, maps and ephemera.

The shop is so cramped that even its "fire escape" is simply a door leading directly out into a canal. To complete the look, the store has become home to more than one stray cat, able to escape any rising tides by crouching atop the stacks.

*Calle Longa S.M.Formosa 5176 / b, Venice tel +39 041 2960 841 - opening 09.00 - 20.00*

**LEGATORIA POLLIERO**

This traditional bookbinding workshop in Campo dei Frari was founded just after the war by Bruno Polliero; he was followed by his son Renato and now by Anselmo Polliero, the current owner.

Playing in the family shop as a child, Anselmo began to learn the family trade and the secrets of the fascinating, complex business of bookbinding from his father. Specializing in book restoration and bookbinding, Anselmo reproduces the authentic boards of the nineteenth century, makes marbled paper and creates custom-made leather bindings, often finely decorated in gold.

*Campo dei Frari, San Polo 2995, Venice tel +39 041 5285 130*

*polliero@hotmail.com*

## BACARI

A unique feature in Venice are the wine bars called “bacari” or “bacareti”, a sort of *osteria* or inn where you can get a glass of wine and traditional finger food called “cicchetti”.

According to one of the many legends, the term *bàcaro* comes from a gondolier’s exclamation: one day, tasting a new wine from Southern Italy, he cried “*Bon, bon! Questo xe proprio un vin de bàcaro*” “Excellent! This is truly a wine of Bacchus!”. The Venetian phrase “*far bàcara*” means to celebrate, in honour of Bacchus, god of wine. This is how the typical Venetian osterie were born, always with good wine.



## SPRITZ (aperitif)

In Venice the aperitif par excellence is the spritz. The origin of the name of this cocktail dates back to the time of the Austrian domination of Venice (the German verb *spritzen* means to splash). Nowadays this aperitif is widespread throughout north-east Italy, but until the 1980s it was not so well-known. Popular places in which to meet and enjoy a spritz in Venice are Campo Santa Margherita and Campo San Giacomo di Rialto, where there are a high concentration of bars, frequented mainly by young people.

Here is the recipe for a spritz: 1/3 white wine, 1/3 sparkling mineral water and 1/3 sweet or bitter moderately alcoholic spirits. It is then garnished with a lemon zest and an olive. Those who do not drink alcohol often but are curious to taste it, will find their head spinning after a single glass!

## CICCHETTI (snacks)

These are tasty snacks, to eat whenever you wish, quickly or at a relaxed pace.

In Venice a “cicchetto” is inextricably associated with an “ombra” (*shadow*): a glass of wine. This local institution took its name from the old habit of traders placing their stalls in the shadow of the bell tower of Saint Mark’s to keep the wine cool; even today you “go for some shade” to indicate the ritual of the mid-morning snack. There are many *bacari* where it is possible to find *cicchetti*, the composition of which varies according to the season. They may be based on fish, meat or cold cuts and can be served hot or cold, on a slice of bread or polenta.

While sipping an “ombra”, for example, you can enjoy creamed salted cod, sardines in *saor*, clams and other seafood, freshly boiled small octopuses and nervetti (veal cartilage boiled and served in vinegar and oil).

*Your memories from Venice*

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*Your sketch from Venice*

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