



# A Venetian's Guide to Venice

Image © Diego Gaspari Bandion

Story by Mel Gee Henderson with Roberta Bocus  
Select images by renowned Italian photographer Diego Gaspari Bandion



Image © Diego Gaspari Bandion

What's the secret to staying afloat in one of the world's most expensive destinations and still have the time of your life? When in

# Venice

you can do as the Venetians do!



Venice from afar.

Each year more than 12 million eager visitors flock to this ancient, floating city. Many history buffs are drawn to her dark, mysterious side enriched with the spoils of centuries of conquest. While others just prefer to bask in her beauty and experience the magical spell and romantic allure that's been cast upon millions before them.

What began as a favourite hunting lagoon for northern Italians in pursuit of game and wildfowl later turned into a refuge for Venetians fleeing the scourge of the barbaric forces of Attila the Hun. Even up until the 6th century A.D. it had been no more than a collection of small villages in a swampy lagoon. With creativity and industry, (legendary character traits of northern Italians from Veneto), early Venetians defied their humble origins and overcame their extremely challenging living conditions. By the 13th century Venice was a ruling empire. Her growing influence so alarmed the pope, the kings of France and Spain, and the Holy Roman Emperor that they joined forces in an attempt to curtail her advancing power. Venice rose to the heights of her powerful Republic during the 16th century and her domination of the Eastern Mediterranean continued for another 200 years.



Image © Diego Gaspari Bandion

## It's love at first sight

Very little of the essential fabric of Venice has changed. Historians often claim Venice is a city frozen in time, where the past has more meaning than the present. No matter where you stay in Venice you feel as though you've stepped back in time. Venice turned its historic palazzi into designer shops and luxury hotels. You can walk through former warehouses redesigned into modern museums and convents that have been transformed into global centres for art restoration. And through it all, maintaining the façades of ancient Venice.

No matter how one arrives in Venice, it is guaranteed to be a magical experience. Whether your first glance is from the skies as you fly high above this fish-shaped floating city covered in red tiled scales or perhaps it's by sea as you feel the splash of the salty Adriatic against your face while being whisked away by your slick wooden water taxi. As you approach the banks of the historic St. Mark's basin, the grandeur and majesty of her architecture instantly captures your imagination. The closer she gets the better she looks. And like in love, one must ask, "What secrets does she hide?"

If you want to experience Venice like a Venetian be ready and willing to take in those unplanned opportunities that arise. Live in the moment.

## Canova Restaurant

If you are in the mood to be pampered, then walk to the 5-Star **Luna Hotel Baglioni** and allow Chef Roberto to mesmerize your palate. There's only one word to describe this dining experience—Blissful! Allow Chef Roberto to tease with Brawn lobster tails sautéed with aromatic salad and balsamic vinegar—just an inkling of what's to follow - like his Little Dumplings with Aubergines Cream and Julienne of Marinated Beef Fillets. You must absolutely try the Chef's Sea Bass Medallions Tarragon with waterweeds and red onions from nearby Tropea. The exquisite fragrance will surely remind you that yes, you are getting the full 5-star treatment. Your dining would not be complete without his signature Tiramisu with Venetian Baicoli cookies—a sweet ending.



## The Met

**The Met** restaurant (located at the Hotel Metropole) is a harmonious blend between east and west with an impeccable attention to detail. It is located at a romantic and charming setting inside Hotel Metropole. Michelin chef Signor Corrado Fasolato, the wonderful views of San Giorgio Island and the fascinating family art collection that surrounds you will enlighten your dining experience. Be ready to embrace the warmth and hospitality of its friendly staff lovingly led by Signora Gloria Beggiano.



Left and above: Hotel Baglioni

## Grand Canal Restaurant

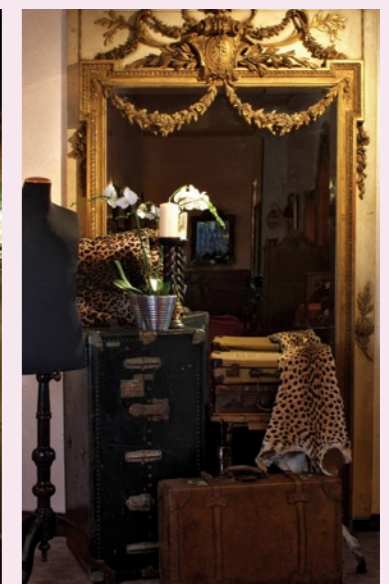
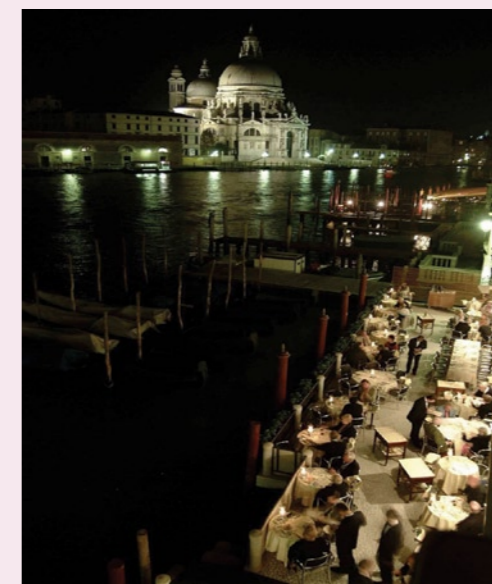
Located at the Hotel Monaco & Grand Canal, you'll immediately enjoy the sun kissed terrace of the **Grand Canal Restaurant**. Its exquisite sea view, filtered with nature's light as it dances across the water reflects differently depending on the time of day. And it is accompanied by the buzz of Gondoliers' music and rhythmic strokes as they navigate their way through the Grand Canal, adding to the vibrant spirit of this Venetian favourite. The legendary service of Guido combined with his happy staff have earned them the local reputation of being "the soul of the Grand Canal Restaurant".

## Ridotto

Should you choose to be in Venice during the colder months of the year, you may opt instead to enter the world of a Venetian Palazzo by dining in the beautiful **Ridotto**. In the era of Venetian decadence, it was once the centre for aristocrats to gather for theatre, gambling, elaborate formal balls, and last but not least "casanovian" love affairs. Because of its popularity not only among locals, but also with tourists make sure you plan in advance as a reservation is definitely required.

## Harry's Bar

Much has already been written about the legendary and duplicated **Harry's Bar**—after all it was Ernest Hemingway's favourite hangout. A true draw, not only for writers, but also amongst the aristocracy, celebrities, politicians as well as those just wishing to bask in their presence. Remember that Harry's is an honest bar, so beloved for its signature beverages as well as its simplicity and cozy setting. Because of the proximity of the tables to one another be prepared to make new friends. It's unavoidable. After a round or two of Harry's favourite drink - the Bellini- you'll feel that Italian amici spirit just come alive! If you would like



to bring home a little souvenir of your memorable experience- one you can taste, just visit Cipriani Food, a little shop close to the Rialto Bridge where you can find those unique products that made Harry's Bar legendary.

## AI Nomboli

**AI Nomboli** is the Venetian version of a sandwich shop. It has been in the Mirella family for three decades displaying a giant "biblical tablet-shaped" menu offering every variety of gourmet sandwiches imaginable. And, if you're truly feeling adventurous, AI Nomboli is happy to let you design your own delicacy. They may even name it after you.



pizzeria in Northern Italy. Sixty years of southern Italian recipes and traditions are combined with a warm, yet casual atmosphere. And let's not forget to mention the biggest smile from Massimiliano himself - a member of the last generation of the Costa family, who will indulge your palate to a slice of the one and only original pizza of Venice.



## Gelateria Alaska

How can you possibly wonder through these quaint alleyways of Venice without savouring an exquisite, true Italian gelato? Not just any gelato, but an original creation of one of the few real gelato artisans left, Carlo Pistacchi. It's absolutely worth the walk. You'll be tempted to return and reward yourself with another scoop or two. Also, while you're savouring that gelato, it may be a perfect time to get off the beaten path and enjoy some shade in Campo San Giacomo dall'Orto, the local favourite playground for

## Pizzeria Conca d'Oro

It's hard to imagine, but the natives say that **Pizzeria Conca d'Oro** is the very first

kids. The sounds of the children's laughter and chatter will surely delight you -a welcome contrast to the beckoning call of Venice merchants.



ly located in Campo Santa Margherita, a fun, popular square where you'll find the young, hip Venetian crowd meeting and drinking a Spritz, the hottest aperitif of the moment.



Venetians gather for any reason, for every reason, or no reason at all. And what's at the centre of every gathering? Delicious food...lots and lots of food



lo's guidebook, **Il Milione**, the restaurant is known for using age-old generation-tested, secret recipes to reveal the hidden delectable Venetian treasures that tempt your palate bite after bite - like the Carpaccio of Swordfish or the Marinated Salmon served with fresh orange slices. Maybe you'll prefer the delicate Risotto with sautéed shrimp and zucchini, or the superb Tagliolini with spider crab. "Ahh, delizioso" is a common reaction overheard at Il Milion. Everything is made from the freshest ingredients, hand picked personally at the local market every morning by the chef/restaurateur, Signor Roberto himself. And you'd never forgive yourself if you forget to order the unforgettable Panna Cotta del Milion.

## 947 Restaurant

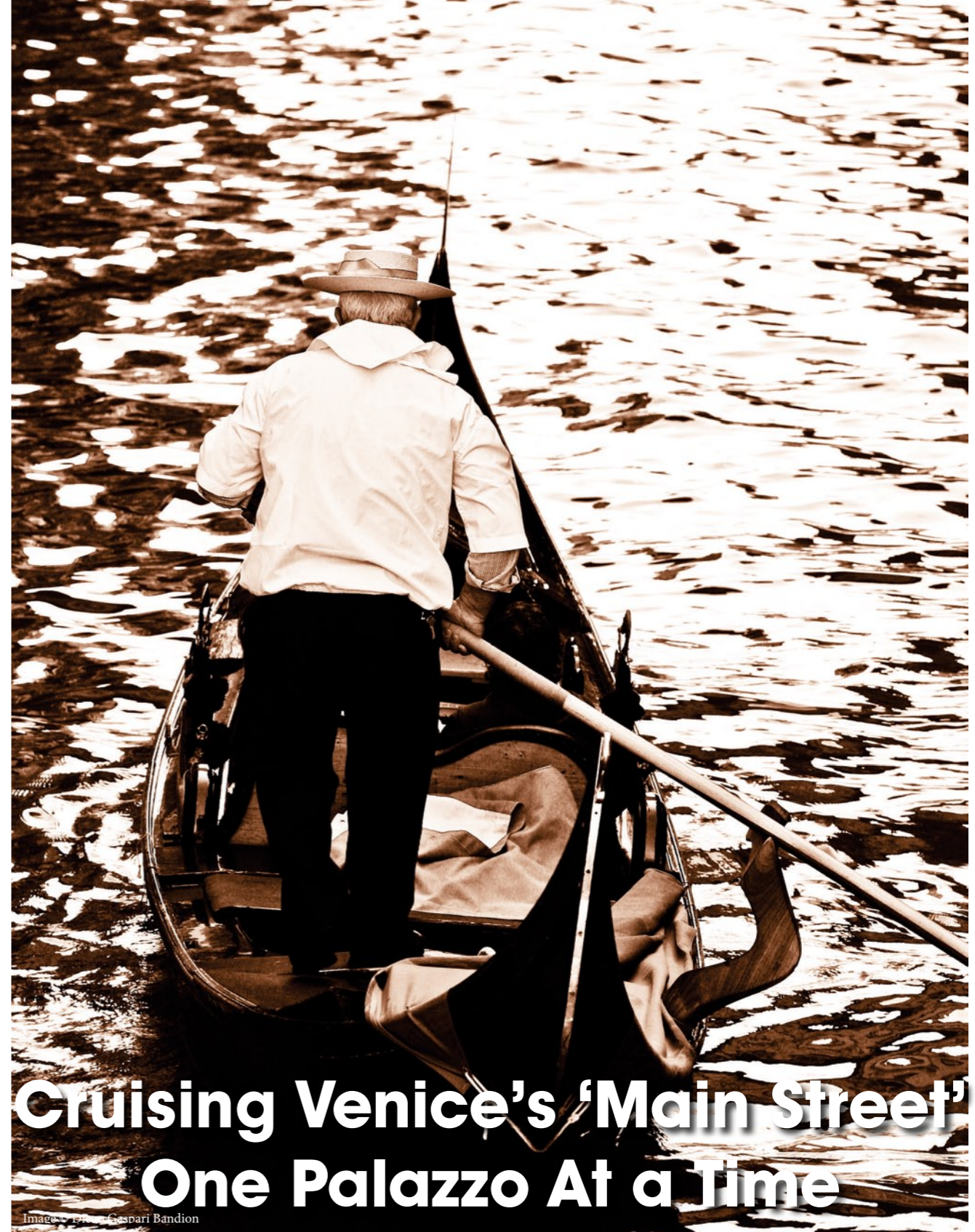
If you are looking for an elegant, romantic, and exclusive retreat, this is the place! **947 Restaurant** is the essence of luxury and Italian glamour. It's a hot, new cuisine concept all the young locals love—"Mediterranean fusion." It is surely a perfect place to end a day of Venice exploration with your special someone in the city of love.

## Enoteca Millevini

Looking to find a place to taste and buy the finest Italian wines? Maybe you're looking for that special one-of-a-kind vintage, beautifully boxed and ready for gift giving? **Enoteca Millevini** is the answer. Offering a large wine tasting selection, and convenient-

## il Milion

How about partaking in some real Venetian delicacies in the oldest Osteria still in operation today? Named after Marco Po-



# Cruising Venice's 'Main Street' One Palazzo At a Time

**B**ecause of the enormous wealth of art and architecture found in Venice, one can easily be dazzled by the "Wow Factor", as many Venetians call the tremendous impact their "floating museum" often has upon first time visitors. But don't worry; this is the part of the tour where you can relieve those aching feet. Remember those carefree days of youth spent cruisin' Main Street in your first automobile? Well, here's an opportunity for you to do the same—a la Venice style! We combine Venice's signature trademark—the Gondola, and match it with an expert Gondolier. By checking around with your concierge or even the locals at the restaurants, you can find a Gondolier that is both an expert on navi-

gating the canals in his ancient watercraft, and additionally, well versed on Venetian history and architecture as well. You may even learn a lot of fun, juicy stories often left out by those more professorial, umbrella-carrying tour guides.

But just two words of caution. First, negotiate the Gondolier's price before you board because they are expensive. But then again, how could one possibly leave Venice without riding on a Gondola? Second, be sure you select the time of day during low tide. Otherwise, you may miss out on touring exceptional neighbourhoods that are not accessible during high tide. Many artists will also tell you, Venice's luminosity differs depending on the time of day. If you are in search of the perfect photo moment—be sure to schedule accordingly.

## Cruising the Grand Canal

Your Gondolier will likely follow the course of this ancient riverbed, the Grand Canal, as it sweeps through the heart of Venice. It is perfect for viewing the parade of palaces that were built over a span of nearly 500 years, and bordering the winding waterway are some of the finest architecture of the Venice Republic. Almost every palazzo bears the name of a once-grand family of old Venetian aristocracy. Although the years may have taken their toll on now faded frescoes, aged marble and worn building foundations frayed by the tides, the Grand Canal is still as French Ambassador, Charles VII stated in 1495, "the most beautiful street in the world."

Here are just a few of the must see sites and required stops you can expect to make during your Venice version of 'Main Street Cruisin.'

## Ca'd'Oro

The most famous of the palazzos is the

**Gothic Ca' d'Oro**, whose façade once glittered with gold. Ca' d'Oro houses paintings, frescoes and sculpture from the collection of Baron Giorgio Franchetti who bequeathed the palace and all the contents to the State. Franchetti is one Baron who could honestly admit, "All that glitters is gold!"

## Palazzo Sagredo

Next to Ca' d'Oro is **Palazzo Sagredo** which passed from the Morosini to the Sagredo family in the early 18th century. The façade shows characteristics of both Veneto-Byzantine and Gothic Styles. In May 2007, this historic palazzo and National Monument were elegantly restored and turned into the Ca' Sagredo Hotel. Each suite features masterpieces from the most important Venetian painters of the 17th and 18th centuries: Giambattista Tiepolo, Sebastiano Ricci, Nicolo Bambini just to name a few. This palazzo is definitely worth a Gondola stop. Better yet, book a night or two in its Presidential Suite and you'll feel like a true Venetian aristocrat. Or you may opt for a smaller, intimate alcove suite from the top floor of the Palazzo that offers a bird's eye view of the Venice skyline. If you open your window early in the morning you can hear the echo of activity vibrate across the Grand Canal at the historic Rialto Market.

## Rialto Market

For centuries, Venetians have gained the reputation for being expert merchants and there is no better place to experience it than the **Rialto Market**. Be prepared to get up early if you wish to savour this "scene from a movie" experience. Step back in time as you witness what has occurred for centuries before—the Venetian mercantile system. The trading buzz builds as the morning light reflects off the shiny scales, and watch the old Italian ladies expertly bargain with their favourite fisherman. The outcome? Just ask

the locals. These Italian women know how to cook and with their fresh buys of the day it's a tasty home-cooked meal. And in the next aisle—row after row of the freshest fruits and vegetables coming directly from the island of Sant'Erasmus, the garden isle of Venice. By the way, no need to stress about carrying too many bags over the Rialto Bridge. Do as the natives and hop on the Traghetto di Santa Sofia, the little gondola utilized by the locals daily enabling them to cross the Grand Canal at various points for mere pennies a day!

## Palazzo Fontana Rezzonico

On the other side of Ca' D'Oro is **Palazzo Fontana Rezzonico**, the birthplace of Count Rezzonico (1693), the fifth Venetian pope, and now home of Museo del '700 Veneziano, containing masterpieces from 18th Century artists. In 2001, Ca' Rezzonico, reopened after extensive renovations to the joy of all the locals who revere Ca' Rezzonico as one of the most important museums in Venice. The renovations took seven years and cost a whopping 23 billion lire.

## Ca' Pesaro

On the same side as the Rialto Market and just across from Ca' Rezzonico, is the huge stately Baroque palace, **Ca' Pesaro**, which today houses the Gallery of Modern Art and the Oriental Museum. It was built by Leonardo Pesaro, who revelled in bold ornamentation and left no surface uncarved. Elaborate garlands, swags, cherubs, grotesque masked and rosettes adorn the main facade.

These are just a few samplings of the stately Palazzi that stretch along the Grand Canal—about an hour's worth of Gondola cruisin' so it shouldn't break the bank. And with the money saved after your Gondola touring experience, you may find yourself inspired to bring home a few treasures of your own.



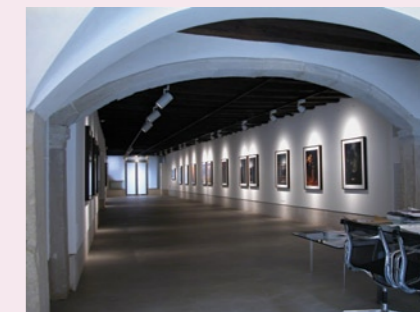
## Contini Art Gallery

Internationally renowned art collector, Mr. Stefano Contini makes contemporary art available for the most discerning buyer. Classic masters like Chagall, Miro, Picasso, Giacometti and Magritte are perfectly complemented by the new generation of famed artists, Botero, Fabrizio Plessi, Sandro Chia and Julio Larraz. But be prepared to pull out your Platinum or Black Centurian card.



## Jarach Gallery

Jacopo Jarach brings the Art of Photography to Venice. Hidden in a 13th century "corte", this gallery reveals internationally renowned artists like Gabriele Basilico, Marina Ballo Charmet, Guido Guidi and Robert Polidori brilliantly displayed in a minimalist and elegant environment.



that is truly a Venetian secret located right next to the home of famed lover, Giacomo Casanova. Amongst her fans is art collector and former Russian President Gorbachev.

## Studio d'Arte Mirabilia di Gigi Bon

Aristocratic, beautiful and brilliant, just a few of the adjectives often used to describe Gigi Bon, an artist deeply in love with the essence of everything Venetian - its fascinating history, particularly its legends and myths. Gigi Bon brings it all to life in each of her unique, one-of-a-kind creations. Gigi Bon, alias "the Rhino Lady" because of her long obsession with rhinos, welcomes you to her world of Mirabilia, a Renaissance workshop

## Massimo Micheluzzi

A true Venetian glass art collector cannot leave without a piece from this genuine Murano glass artisan, Massimo Micheluzzi. Micheluzzi enjoys a large following throughout the world, amongst private as well as commercial entities. Many Venice frequent visitors return to his little workshop to find that flawless one-of-a-kind design to add to their collection. Their unique shapes, colours and textures make it so hard to choose just one.



Image © Diego Gaspari Bandion

## Priceless Venice Moments

For many travellers, it isn't the acquisition of objects they find most thrilling in Venice. But rather, it is the emotional experience of sharing part of their lives with Venetians. If you are lucky enough to join in a wedding in Venice's historic St. Mark's Basilica at Piazza San Marco you can experience a centuries old tradition. Sometimes because of its museum-like environment, visitors often forget that there are real families that live and thrive in Venice.

What's the most valuable advice gleaned from the local Venetians? If you want to experience Venice like a Venetian - be ready and willing to take in those unplanned opportunities that arise. Live in the moment. After being made to feel like you're family - don't be surprised if you get an invitation to a wedding, a birthday, or even a baby's baptism. What you will quickly discover as you begin to see Venice from a native's perspective is that it is all about the family and friends who altogether form one big extended family. They gather for any reason, for every reason, or no reason at all. And what's at the centre of every gathering? Delectable food...lots and lots of food! So sit back and enjoy being a Venetian native (even if it is just for a day), and savour being treated like one.

You may even have the lucky break of running into one of Italy's most revered composers—like Italy's beloved Maestro Ennio Morricone. Venice is an absolute favourite venue for many renowned artists - from pop rock to classical. They, too, are seduced by the beauty and magnificence of the Piazza San Marco. It has been reported that Pink Floyd drew such an enormous crowd that it almost sunk the Piazza San Marco. If you ever get the opportunity, don't hesitate to erase what's on your agenda to take in one of these musical concerts. It is truly the absolute icing on the cake and like a Venetian torta, it can only leave you wanting for more. Not bad really, just admit it. Like Casanova, you'll want to return to the place where your love affair blooms.

# Three Charming Hotels to suit your Venetian style From Hollywood A-List to Local Favourites

**D**o you want to see what its like to live like a Venetian aristocrat living in luxury at a Palazzo along the Grand Canal? Try **Ca'Segrado!** Sleep, dine, and even dance in its grand ballroom surrounded by the great works of art from Venetians like Tiepolo, Ricci and Bambini. The minute you arrive at its majestic Grand Canal setting--its grandeur will surely take your breath away.

Maybe you would rather be in the thick of all of the action at Piazza San Marco, while still enjoying the utmost in impeccable service and luxury? **Luna Hotel Baglioni** fits the bill! They serve an exquisite array of breakfast offerings in the most artfully decorated surroundings. You might as well get used to it. After all, you're in Venice—the world's "living" art museum.

But perhaps, you would rather not pay the 5-star price, but still enjoy a 5-star location, and have access to the #1 favourite local lunch hangout, located right on the Grand Canal? **Hotel Monaco & Grand Canal** makes you feel like a regular as you leave feeling like part of the family!



## Luna Hotel Baglioni Feel the Magic of Serenissima

'A sense of arrival' at Hotel Baglioni

Reviews by Mel Gee Henderson





Salone Marco Polo

Superbly located just steps from Piazza San Marco, in the very heart of the magic of “Serenissima” – the “Most Serene Republic”, as Venice was once known, **Luna Hotel Baglioni** is the ideal choice for those wishing to be right in the center of it all. Facing St. Mark’s basin and San Giorgio’s Island the hotel enjoys its own private mooring-berth, and gondolas and motorboats are readily able to take guests to and from the entrance of the hotel. With all of the city’s most famous historical attractions, monuments, museums and luxury boutique shopping in close proximity of the hotel, your biggest worry will be how to extend your stay so you can fit it all in.

## Share In Her Romantic Past

This historic Venetian hotel dates from the 12th century. It is recorded as having given

shelter to the Knights Templar in 1118 as they journeyed to the Holy Lands during the Crusade. By 1574 it was already known

This historic Venetian hotel dates from the 12th century as having given shelter to the Knights Templar in 1118 as they journeyed to the Holy Lands during the Crusade

as Locada della Luna, or “Moon Inn”. During the 18th century the building was decorated with frescoes by pupils of Gianbattista Tiepolo, which now adorn the stately Salone

Marco Polo as well as other common areas of the Luna, where you will also note the beautiful, shimmering Murano chandeliers. Recent renovations further enhanced the splendid rooms and suites ensuring that the generations of guests who return year after year continue to enjoy the best in modern luxury and comfort. The Luna is also a popular honeymoon destination. But it is also a perfect place for those ‘not-so-newlywed’ couples to rekindle their romance.

## Impeccable Service

For hotel connoisseurs, nothing can surpass the impeccable, efficient service guests have come to expect from the superbly trained staff of the Luna Hotel Baglioni. From the moment you arrive, the enthusiastically warm staff is at your complete disposal to assist with your needs. They will organize delicious dinners in the best restaurants of Venice, organize tours of the city, reserve a personal shopper service, arrange a romantic Gondola ride (beneath a moonlit night if nature allows),

book all of your travel transfers, reserve Opera and concert tickets, and if needed, even make the baby-sitting arrangements. Relax and enjoy your peace of mind knowing that Luna’s concierges—Antonio, Enrico, Tiziano and Umberto, believe there’s no task ever too great for their multilingual team whose flawless service has become legendary.

## Distinctive Suites

Guests can choose from 139 spacious rooms, all beautifully appointed, exquisitely furnished and equipped with every modern comfort. Some of the Luna’s oversized luxurious suites feature large terraces with magnificent views of the Lagoon and St. Mark’s Basin. Marble floors, silk wall coverings and stucco ceilings embellish the deeply elegant rooms. Meticulous care and particular attention to even the smallest detail has been given to ensure each guest can bask in luxury and comfort. And, after savouring all the sights and sounds including the numerous exciting events Venice has to offer, you will find that this is exactly what your body will crave. Don’t forget to enjoy your morning coffee or evening champagne as you sit on your private terrace taking in that surreal view of St. Mark’s Basin. You will wish you could freeze-frame the moment in time as you lock it in to your bank of priceless memories.

## Authentic Venetian Cuisine

Renowned for his mastery of exceptional authentic Venetian cuisine, **Canova Restaurant’s** award-winning Chef Roberto offers a host of superbly prepared and artistically presented dishes that will satisfy even the most discerning palate. You must try the Truffle pappardelle pasta with crab sauce. Deliziosa! Served by a skilled staff—I was particularly drawn to the graceful manner by which our waiter brought and presented each dish to the table—her ab-

solute poetic-like description almost left us mesmerized. Within Canova’s warm and elegant surroundings, complete with exquisite china and crystal glassware, it only further enhanced an already unforgettable dining experience. Don’t hesitate to ask Signor Rami Hamam, the Beverage Manager if you should require some expert guidance on the best wine to complement your cho-



sen delectable dish. And lastly, to sweeten your palate at dining’s end, I highly recommend “The great Canova dessert platter.” That way, you’ll get to taste it all—from the Strawberry mousse with gele’ and wild berries sauce; to the Gratin ricotta cheese pudding with cane sugar, vanilla sauce and ginger; to the chocolate pudding with hazelnut biscuit and passion-fruit sauce; to the Small millefeuille with mascarpone cream cheese and melo marinated in a porto wine. For us dessert connoisseurs, it was a ‘die and go to heaven’ perfect type of happy ending.

## Start Your Day in Splendour

By all means, the fine dining doesn’t really end. Remember to take in the Luna’s famous breakfast buffet—the selections are endless. But what truly makes it a magical start and reminds you, that yes, “You’re living the Venice dream?” Breakfast is served

in the Salone Marco Polo every morning where the great works of Venetian artists surround you. By this time, with all of this ‘Star’ treatment and attention you’ll be getting you can expect to feel very spoiled... maybe even a little guilty. But don’t worry. You’ll just be joining a long list of other prominent guests who felt the same. Among them, Neil Armstrong, Sean Con-

nerly, Matt Damon, Michael Douglas, President Nelson Mandela, Lionel Ritchie, John Travolta. You just never know whom you’ll meet at the Luna Hotel Baglioni. During my recent stay, I found myself conversing with beloved composer, Maestro Ennio Morricone and Signora Morricone and taking in his incomparable evening concert at Piazza San Marco. For a music and cinema lover like me, it doesn’t get much better than that. You can expect life to be full of special unforgettable surprises at Luna Hotel Baglioni. Bellissimo!

## Where to Stay

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



## Ca' Sagredo

### Five Star Luxury in a Living Museum

Classified as an Italian 'National Monument' **Ca' Sagredo** was meticulously transformed into Venice's newest 5-star luxury hotel.

After her interiors were restored with expert authenticity, Ca' Sagredo officially opened its doors to the public in May 2007.

Built during the 15th century it overlooks Venice's Grand Canal between Ca D'oro and the Rialto Bridge, where the regal stretch of Venetian Palazzi reads like the 'Who's Who' of Venetian aristocracy. Ca' Sagredo, whose soft peach color reflects on the Venetian waters below, was passed on from the Morosini family to the Sagredo family in the early 18th century. The Sagredo family was deeply passionate about art and their palazzo collection demonstrates that no expense was spared to acquire the best works from the most renowned Venetian artists of the 17th and 18th centuries—Giambattista Tiepolo, Sebastiano Ricci, Pietro Longhi, just to name a few. Breathtaking frescoes by Longhi grace the soaring walls and ceiling above the sweep-

ing 17th century staircase that is flanked by a Statue of Bacchino on either side.

It gently leads to a grand parlor offering spectacular views of Venice's Grand Canal. As you reach the top of the stairs, you can easily imagine yourself being received and

Each of the 42 individually themed suites express all the magnificence and classic features of Venetian design

welcomed by Signore and Signora Sagredo meticulously dressed in elaborate noble regalia along with other members of the Venetian aristocracy. It is like passing through five centuries of history as you glide from room to room captivated by artistic brilliance like

that of Tiepolo's "Omaggio a Venezia." It is easy to understand how one can get so caught up in all of this grandeur and nobility that you soon find yourself expecting to be treated like one—and at Ca' Sagredo they will make every effort to meet your expectations.

## Rooms & Suites

Ca' Sagredo offers 42 luxurious room and suites, most offer views of the Grand Canal or terracotta rooftop views of the Venice skyline just above Campo Santa Sofia. Each of the individually themed suites express all the magnificence and classic features of Venetian design—from original antiques, crystal chandeliers, long flowing silky drapery to sumptuous textured fabrics especially commissioned for the richly decorated beds. The lavish decorations just exude the opulence of the era when the Sagredo family enjoyed sitting at the helm of power and influence as a member of the Venetian aristocracy.

Certainly many regal events were held in the Music Ballroom, Salone da Ballo. Today, it is



often reserved for luxurious gala dinners, wedding receptions, and even fashion shows. But don't miss the chance to enjoy some splendid solo time in the Ballroom as you sit and listen to Mozart's brilliant sounds filtering through the room. Or as you wish, the Ballroom has a spectacular grand piano that is just calling out for your Venice performance debut!

## A Regal Home Away from Home

What you will discover and find most appealing about Ca' Sagredo is that even though you are surrounded by all this glamour and formality, the staff's warmth and gracious hospitality, combined with their willingness to meet your every need no matter what the time of night or day, makes you feel right at home. This was particularly true during breakfast time when all the guests could partake in the large buffet. However, if you had a craving for another Italian delicacy, the staff quickly

worked to bring it to you. That also applied to "special order" teas as well. Suddenly you remember, 'I feel so at home because Ca' Sagredo (so aptly name, Ca' is used for casa, meaning house or home) was in fact a home—a very beautiful home!

## Room 409: Whether reading or writing—the perfect refuge

If you're an avid reader or perhaps a writer seeking to find a quiet refuge where inspiration can flow readily while you enjoy the ultimate in luxury and comfort, you will want to book Room 409, an alcove style suite overlooking the Grand Canal. With rooftop windows that open wide—you are likely to see and hear birds singing as

they bask in the morning sunshine. If the morning church bells awaken you—that's perfect, as it will give you an opportunity to catch a glimpse of all the colorful activity happening across the Grand Canal at famed Rialto Market!

The Ca' Sagredo is also a perfect "home" for those passionate art aficionados who not only enjoy viewing art, but wish to be living with art. At Ca' Sagredo you are surrounded by it. It is a "living museum" so embrace and enjoy Venetian brilliance at your fingertips.

### Where to Stay

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



## Grand Wedding Traditions Live On

Story by Mel Gee Henderson and Roberta Bocus

Married in front of St. Mark's. When the dream comes just close your eyes and hold your breath

The bride smiles as she recalls the unusual rather humorous conversation she'd had with her Papa just days prior. Originally the plan was that they would schedule their wedding to take place in one of the many beautiful churches that can be found in almost every piazza—the center of every Venice Square. After all, in Venice, there are no bad choices. Then the call came from their family Priest that would change all of that. “How would you like to get married in the crypt of Saint Mark's Basilica?” ask the Priest. They could barely contain their excitement as her Papa exclaimed, “Why would you want to be married in a ‘regular’ church when you can be married in front of Saint Mark!” Her Papa enthusiastically added, “He is one of the top four (Saints)!”

The bride and groom exchanged their solemn vows before family and friends, and Saint Mark as her father would later proudly say. Exiting the beautiful grand archway of the Basilica, the warm glow of the Venetian sunset framed the couple in a golden sheen against the white marble. As the

“I definitely feel like the Princess of Venice who found her handsome Prince!”

guests showered the newlyweds with the traditional ‘blessings of rice’ it seemed only

fitting that high above the center of the Basilica, stand the statues of ‘St. Mark and Angels’ as if to crown them with blessings. The church bells resonating across Piazza San Marco, reminded us that amidst the throngs of curious tourists dispersed throughout this historic square, two lives, two families, have been joyfully united. Once again, as in generations past, the remarkable Venetian legacy and traditions replay themselves.

## The Gondolier

The gondola, traditionally adorned for the occasion in lovely, delicate fresh-picked flowers, glides quietly through the canals giving the bride and groom a chance to reflect and catch their breath before they arrive at the scene of their grand wedding

celebration. The magical ballroom of the **Hotel Monaco & Grand Canal** is a favorite and historic gathering place for many Venetian occasions. Grand stairs lit by candles illuminated the steps as beautifully attired guests made their way up to the Ridotto Salone. The guests dined on delicious traditional Venetian delicacies complemented by the finest Italian wines.

## Romance on the Grand Canal

The Hotel Monaco & Grand Canal, a traditional Venetian Palazzo with a harmonious blend of classic and contemporary art design, is not only a fabulous setting for life's joyous celebrations, but also the perfect place, post wedding, when it is finally time to retreat and surrender to comfort and understated luxury. The Hotel's mantra, “By the time you leave, you will feel like family.” And, it is exactly that feeling of family and “home away from home” our newlyweds wanted to maintain after their gloriously hectic week of wedding preparations and celebration.

The Hotel Monaco & Grand Canal not only created an amazingly beautiful and unforgettable wedding celebration, but every step was carefully planned to ensure the newlywed's suite would match their expectations. They've chosen not to reveal too much about their exquisite night except to say, “I definitely feel like the Princess of Venice who found her handsome Prince!”

To book your magical celebrations and suites:

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## Where to Stay

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## Where to Dine

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### Alaska Gelateria

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30135 Venezia - Italy  
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### Osteria Il Milion

Corte prima al milion  
San Giovanni Grisostomo 5841  
30170 Venezia - Italy  
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### Enoteca Millevini

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30100 Venezia - Italy  
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### Restaurant The Met

Riva degli Schiavoni 4149  
30122 Venezia - Italy  
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## Where to Dine

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