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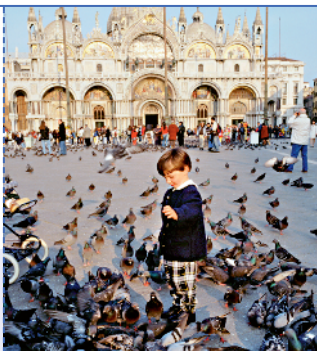
The Best **Full-Day** **Tours**



The French novelist **Marcel Proust** said of his first trip to Venice, “My dream became my address.” You may feel the same way as you walk into the Piazza San Marco and begin to explore the city. Not far from the piazza are uniquely Venetian palaces and churches. Top off your tour with a cruise along one of the world’s most storied waterways, the Grand Canal. **START: Piazza San Marco.**

1 ★★★ Piazza San Marco. The heart of the city for more than 1,000 years combines the very old (the basilica) with the relatively new (the 16th- and 17th-c. Procuratie Vecchie and Procuratie Nuove on the north and south sides of the square), yet still manages to be harmonious.

2 ☞ Caffè Florian. You’ll pay dearly for your cappuccino on the terrace, but you’ll never sip coffee in more atmospheric surroundings. **Piazza San Marco.** ☎ 041-5205641. See p 113.



A child feeds the pigeons in Piazza San Marco.

3 ★★ Bacino Orseolo. One of the city’s eight gondola stations is a good place to get a close look at these uniquely Venetian craft—or to board one. ⌚ 15 min. **Fondamenta Orseolo. San Marco/Vallaresso.**

4 ★ San Moisè. In a city of beautiful churches, this baroque extravaganza stands out as one of the ugliest. ⌚ 30 min. **Campo San Moisè.** ☎ 041-5285840. Daily 3:30–7pm. **San Marco/Vallaresso.**

5 ★★ La Fenice. The aptly named opera house (Fenice means Phoenix) has burned several times, most recently in 1996, and risen from the ashes looking just as it has for centuries. Several Verdi operas, including *Rigoletto* and *La Traviata*, premiered in the sumptuous, newly restored house, and Maria Callas is among the stars who have graced the stage. ⌚ 15 min. **Campo San Fantin.** www.teatrolafenice.it. See p 122 for tour and ticket information. **Vaporetto: Santa Maria del Giglio.**

Inside Venice’s glorious opera house, La Fenice.





In the **1A Museo Correr**, maps, coins, costumes, and, best of all, paintings by Vittore Carpaccio (room 38) and Jacopo Bellini (room 36) recall the days of the Republic. See *p 31*, *bullet 1*. Bronze moors strike the hour on the **1B Torre dell'Orologio**; during Ascension and Epiphany the Magi make an hourly appearance at this clock tower accompanied by a procession of angels. In the **1C Piazzetta dei Leoncini**, marble lions stand guard over what was once a marketplace. The Byzantine **1D Basilica di San Marco** inspired 19th-century man of letters John Ruskin to exhale into his journals, "The crests of the arches break into a marble foam, and toss themselves into the blue sky in

flashes and wreaths of sculpted spray"; less poetical observers will be similarly moved. See *p 23*, *bullet 1*. **1E Palazzo Ducale**, the palace where the doges lived and ruled, is majestic but has a touch of whimsy as well. See *p 37*, *bullet 1*. The city's tallest structure, the **1F Campanile**, affords stunning views. See *p 44*, *bullet 2*. Two columns, one topped by a winged lion and the other by St. Theodore, frame the **1G Piazzetta San Marco**, the seaside extension of Piazza San Marco. One of Venice's great Renaissance monuments, the **1H Biblioteca Marciana** was completed in the 16th century to house a precious hoard of Greek and Latin manuscripts. 🕒 4–5 hr.

6 ★ Santo Stefano. Beyond a 15th-century sculpted portal by Bartolomeo Bon is a wooden ceiling whose shape resembles the inverted hull of a ship and two works by Tintoretto in the sacristy. ⌚ 30 min. *Campo Santo Stefano.* ☎ 041-5225061. *Sacristy 2€. Church daily 9am–7pm; sacristy Mon–Sat 10am–5pm, Sun 1–5pm. Vaporetto: San Samuele.*

7 ★★ Palazzo Grassi. One of the last of the great palaces to be built in Venice dates from 1749 and was stunningly converted in the 1980s into the city's venue for traveling art shows and other special exhibitions. *San Marco 3231, San Samuele.* ☎ 041-5231680. *www.palazzograssi.it. Prices and times vary by exhibition. Vaporetto: San Samuele.*

8 ★ Palazzo Mocenigo. One of the largest and grandest houses in Venice is actually four palaces that a succession of prominent residents combined over the centuries. Lord Byron lived here in 1818–19 with enough pets to populate a small zoo, an army of servants, and his mistress. He often swam home across the lagoon from outings on the Lido. ⌚ 10 min. *Not open to the public. Calle Mocenigo. Vaporetto: San Stae.*

9 ★ Palazzo Fortuny. The last resident was textile designer and photographer Mariano Fortuny. The 15th-century palazzo now displays his distinctive work. ⌚ 1 hr. *Campo San Beneto. See p 37, bullet 3. Vaporetto: San Angelo.*

10 ★★ Scala Contarini del Bòvolo. A beautiful spiral staircase (bòvolo, or snail, in Venetian dialect) climbs five stories from a lovely



Fanciful loggia of the Palazzo Ducale.

courtyard. At the top is a panoramic view over the rooftops of Venice. ⌚ 30 min. *Corte di Contarini del Bòvolo.* ☎ 041-5217521. *Apr–Oct daily 10am–6pm; Nov–Mar Sat–Sun 10am–4pm. Vaporetto: Rialto.*

11 ★ San Salvador. The handsome white interior provides refuge from the busy Mercerie, one of Venice's main shopping streets, as well as the chance to view some excellent paintings: Two Titians, a *Transfiguration* and an *Annunciation*, and Carpaccio's *Disciples at Emmaus*. ⌚ 30 min. *Campo San Salvador.* ☎ 041-2702464. *Mon–Sat 9am–noon, 3–6pm; Sun 4–6pm. Vaporetto: Rialto.*

12 ★★★ Grand Canal trip. A cruise up one of the world's most beautiful waterways is the ideal way to end a long day of touring. Get off at the Ferrovia stop for the return trip. ⌚ 1½ hr. *See p 18 for what to look for on the Grand Canal; see p 161 for details on the vaporetto. Vaporetto: San Marco/Vallaresso.*

The Best of Venice in Two Days



Now it's time to explore the quarters across the Grand Canal from San Marco. This is not a quiet neighborhood amble: Some of Venice's greatest masterpieces are here, and you'll discover one remarkable church and treasure-filled museum after another.

START: Salute

1 ★★ Santa Maria della Salute. Saint Mary of Health was begun in 1630, an offering of thanks to the Virgin Mary for bringing an end to a plague outbreak that killed a third of the city's population. The massive white-marble church by architect Baldassare Longhena commands the entrance to the Grand Canal, and its high domes mimic those of San Marco across the water and suggest the Madonna's crown. A suitably impressive collection of paintings hang in the round, marble interior, including Tintoretto's *Wedding at Cana* and Titian's *St. Mark Enthroned with Saints*. The Virgin is honored on the high altar with a Byzantine icon and a wonderfully dramatic marble sculptural group by Giusto Le Corte—an old hag representing the plague flees from a torch-bearing angel as the Virgin and a noblewoman, in the role of Venice, look on. 🕒 **30 min.** **Campo della Salute.** ☎ **041-5225558.** **Sacristy:** 1.50€. **Apr–Sept daily 9am–noon, 3–6:30pm; Oct–Mar daily 9am–noon, 3–5:30pm.** **Vaporetto: Salute.**

2 ★★ La Dogana da Mar. The 17th-century Customs house at the tip of the Dorsoduro resembles the hull of a ship and was once a mandatory stop for all ships entering Venice. On the roof, a statue of Fortune stands over a gold globe, and looking out to sea from the landing stage it's easy to imagine the time when Venetians felt they were indeed the lucky rulers of the waves. 🕒 **30 min.** **Vaporetto: Salute.**

3 ★★ Palazzo Cini. Industrialist Vittorio Cini (1885–1977) spent



The church of Santa Maria della Salute.

much of his fortune collecting religious art from Tuscany, and his small, intimate palace is filled with works by Sandro Botticelli, Piero della Francesca, and others. 🕒 **45 min.** **Campo Carità.** ☎ **041-5222247.** **See p 37, bullet 4.** **Vaporetto: Accademia.**

4 ★★★ Peggy Guggenheim Collection. The American heiress spent much of her life collecting contemporary art, living up to her pledge to “buy a picture a day.” In 1949 she found a home for herself and her paintings, the Palazzo Venier dei Leoni, that is as surreal as some of the paintings she preferred. Only the ground floor of the 18th-century palace was completed, providing distinctive surroundings for a collection that includes Giorgio De Chirico's *The Red Tower*, Rene Magritte's *Empire of Light*, and



Heavenly Bodies, a painting by Rufino Tamayo, in the Peggy Guggenheim Collection.

works by Jackson Pollock (whom Guggenheim discovered), Max Ernst (whom she married), and many others. The shady garden is filled with sculpture as well as the graves of Guggenheim and her dogs. The

Giovanni Bellini's Madonna of the Red Cherubs, in the Gallerie dell'Accademia.



waterside terrace provides sweeping views up and down the Grand Canal. 🕒 1 hr. **Palazzo Venier dei Leoni.** ☎ 041-2405411. www.guggenheim-venice.it. 10€. Wed–Mon 10am–6pm. Vaporetto: Accademia.

5 ★★★ Gallerie dell'Accademia. A walk through the galleries can take a good part of a day and is a lesson in Venetian art, from Carpaccio to Tiepolo. If time is tight or the temptation to be outdoors exploring the city too great, at least see Room 10, where works by Titian, Tintoretto, and Veronese line the walls, and Room 21, for a look at Carpaccio's colorful action-filled *Story of Saint Ursula* cycle. 🕒 2–3 hr. **Campo Carità.** See p 34 for full details. Vaporetto: Accademia.

6 Il Chioschetto. A panino and a glass of wine, well deserved after a morning of viewing art, come with a view of the Giudecca Canal. **Zattere Ponte Luongo.** ☎ 338-1174077.

Back to Scuola

Founded in the Middle Ages, the Venetian *scuole* (schools) were guilds that brought together merchants and craftspeople in certain trades (Scuola dei Carmini: dyers), as well as those who shared similar religious devotions (Scuola Grande di San Rocco). The guilds were social clubs, credit unions, and sources of spiritual guidance. Many commissioned elaborate headquarters and hired the best artists of the day to decorate them. The *scuole* that remain in Venice today house some of the city's finest art treasures.

7 ★★ Scuola dei Carmini. The Carmelite order founded this *scuola* in the 17th century in association with the guild of dyers and hired the architect Baldassare Longhena to build their premises. The master's facades remain intact—as does much of the interior, little touched over the centuries. A painting by Tiepolo, *The Virgin in Glory Appearing to the Blessed Simon Stock*, flows over the ceiling of the salon. ⌚ 30 min. *Campo dei Carmini.* See p 32, bullet 8. *Vaporetto: San Basilio.*

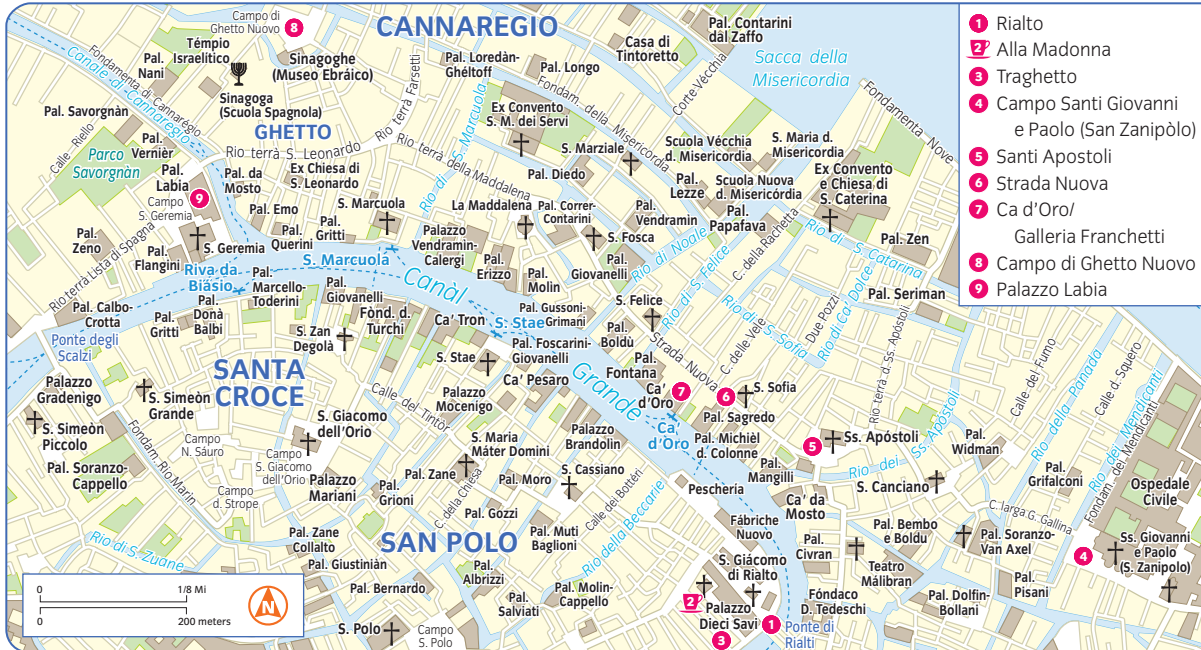
8 ★★★ Scuola Grande di San Rocco. San Rocco, the patron

saint of the sick and a Venetian favorite, was especially popular for his alleged prowess at curing the plague. The *scuola* was begun in the early 16th century to house the saint's relics. ⌚ 30 min. *Campo San Rocco.* See p 32, bullet 9. *Vaporetto: San Tomà.*

9 ★★★ Santa Maria Gloriosa dei Frari One of the largest churches in Venice is also one of the city's great treasure troves of art, with masterworks by Titian and Giovanni Bellini. ⌚ 1 hr. *Campo dei Frari.* See p 33, bullet 10. *Vaporetto: San Tomà.*

The church of Santa Maria Gloriosa dei Frari.





Now it's time to see everyday Venice, beginning at its busy marketplace and moving on to explore neighborhoods where Venetians go about their daily business. Along the route, too, are more of the notable churches, palaces, galleries, and monuments with which the city is so liberally laced. **START: Rialto**

1 ★★ Rialto. Begin the walk in the markets and alleys of the Rialto. The name comes from *rivoaltus*, or “high bank,” a geographic asset when settlers in the early ninth century were searching for dry ground to establish the city's first market. The Rialto has been a commercial center ever since, the place where things happen. Ships from around the globe once docked at the Fondaco dei Tedeschi—the Renaissance-style structure that now houses the main post office—and other neighborhood warehouses, and it was here that the Grand Canal was first spanned: The Ponte dei Rialto is still the most used and appealing bridge across the canal. ⌚ 30 min. See p 43, bullet 5A, for details on the Rialto markets; see p 48, bullet 2, for details on the Ponte di Rialto. *Vaporetto: Rialto.*

2 Ⓜ Alla Madonna. For an authentic taste of the Rialto markets, take a seat in this busy room and enjoy a seafood lunch. *Calle della Madonna.* ☎ 041-5223824. See p 98.

3 ★ Traghetto. Enjoy the walk over the Ponte dei Rialto, then retrace your steps and make the crossing in one of the *traghetti* that run between the banks of the canal. A *traghetto*—basically, a large, plain gondola—provides a poor man's gondola ride (one-way passage is just .50€), but comes with a challenge—by tradition, passengers remain standing during the ride. ⌚ 10 min. *Near the Rialto, traghetti run from Fondamente del Vin to Riva del Carbone (Mon–Sat 8am–2pm) and the Pescaria to Santa Sofia (Mon–Sat 7:30am–8:30pm; Sun 8am–7pm).*

4 ★★ Campo Santi Giovanni e Paolo (San Zanipòlo). Bartolomeo Colleoni, a 15th-century mercenary, rides across one of Venice's most beautiful squares astride an equestrian monument by Verrocchio. The namesake basilica is the final resting place of 25 doges, entombed in marble splendor. ⌚ 45 min. *Vaporetto: Fondamenta Nuove.*

A traghetto traverses the waters of the Grand Canal.



5 ★ Santi Apostoli. Venetian legend has it that the 12 apostles appeared to Saint Magnus and told him to build a church where he saw 12 cranes. The church's bell tower, a 17th-century addition, is topped with an onion dome and is a much-beloved landmark. Giambattista Tiepolo's rendering of Saint Lucy near the altar is eye-catching indeed—the martyr's eyes lie on the floor next to her, but she seems to be smiling all the same. 🕒 30 min. **Campo Santi Apostoli.** ☎ 041-5238297. Mon–Sat 7:30–11:30am, 5–7pm. **Vaporetto: Ca' d'Oro.**

6 ★ Strada Nuova. One of the few straight paths in Venice (Via Garibaldi, see p 59, bullet **14**, is another) is a modern invention, laid out in the 1860s to facilitate foot traffic to and from the then-new railway station.

7 ★★★ Ca' d'Oro/Galleria Franchetti. A 15th-century palazzo just off the Strada Nuova still bears the trappings of a cushy Renaissance lifestyle and is filled with works by Venetian masters. 🕒 1 hr. **Calle Ca' d'Oro.** See p 39, bullet **8.** **Vaporetto: Ca' d'Oro.**

Tiepolo's 18th-century fresco, The Meeting of Antony and Cleopatra, in the Palazzo Labia.



The church of Santi Giovanni e Paolo.

8 ★★ Campo di Ghetto Nuovo. The Ghetto was once the only part of Venice where Jews were allowed to live. This large square and surrounding neighborhood occupy an island that was closed off at dusk and still feels remote. The houses on the square are higher than most in Venice, having been built with additional stories to accommodate a population that expanded steadily as the Jewish community prospered in trade and banking. 🕒 15 min. **Vaporetto: Ponte de Guglie.**

9 ★★ Palazzo Labia. One of the grandest palaces in Venice is set back from the Grand Canal—a sign that the Labias, a clan of Spanish traders, were never accepted by Venetian nobility. Giambattista Tiepolo painted a magnificent fresco of *Anthony and Cleopatra* for the Banqueting Hall in honor of the marriage of Maria Labia. 🕒 30 min. **Fondamenta Labia.** ☎ 041-5242812. Wed–Fri 3–4pm, by appointment only (call or ask your hotel to make arrangements). ●