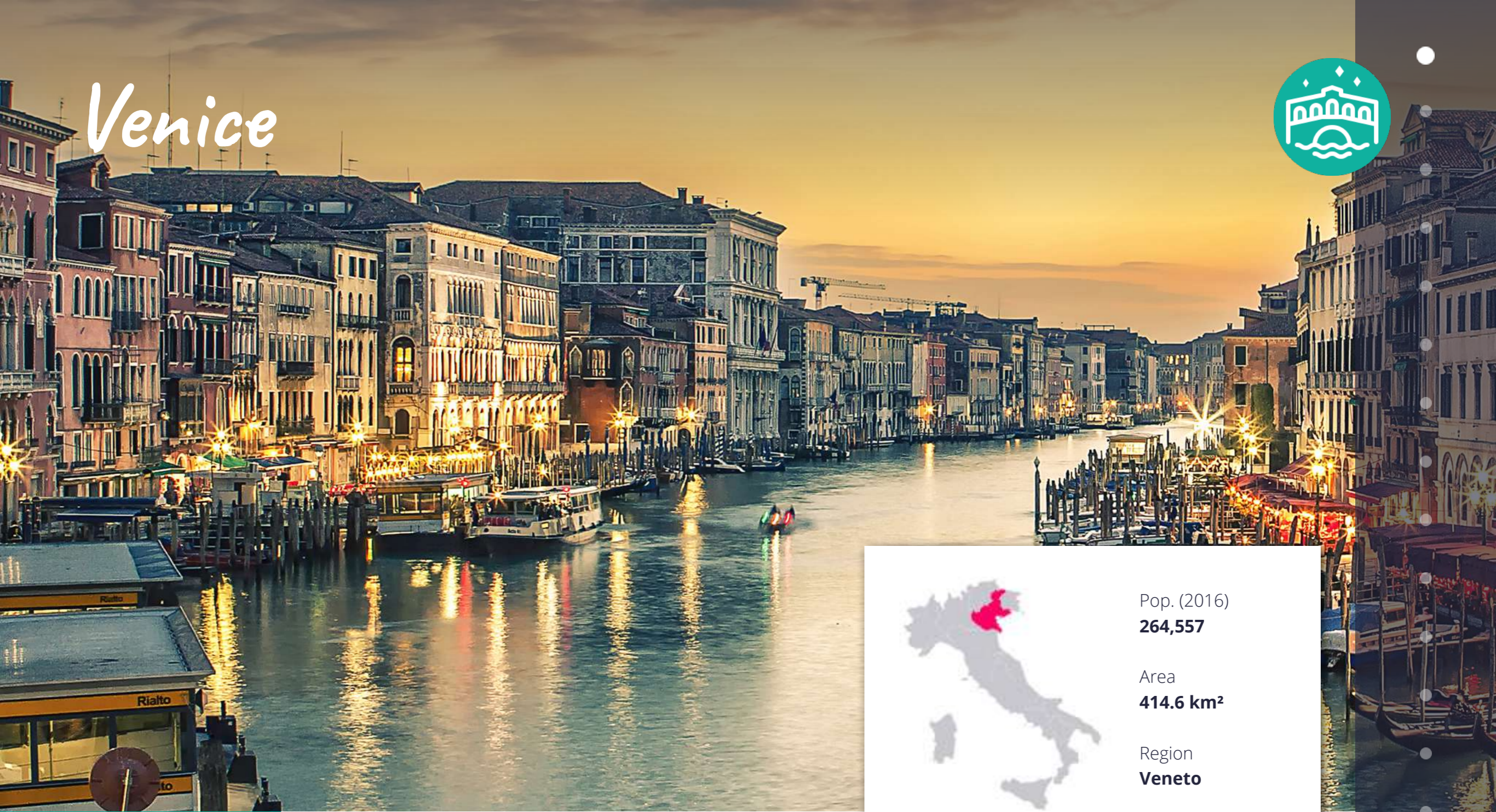


Venice



Pop. (2016)
264,557

Area
414.6 km²

Region
Veneto

ITALIARAIL

italy
magazine

Venice: famous across the globe not for any particular monument or artwork, but simply for what it is — a city serenely perched on the surface of the water that surrounds it. Millions visit every year, and millions more dream of doing so. This guide will equip you with inspiration and insider tips, making sure you have the ultimate Venetian adventure.

Venice



What you need to know before you go

If it's your first trip to Venice you should definitely strive to arrive by boat. Consult a map for the nearest stop to your hotel and take the Alilaguna (€27 return) from the airport. Otherwise the airport bus will take you to Piazzale Roma, the bus station, for €8 or €15 return.

The railway station is right on the Grand Canal; Vaporetto (waterbus) tickets are available at kiosks opposite the main entrance. Waterbuses are reliable and generally on time. Single day passes cost €20, two days €30 etc. They are good value if you plan to see as much as possible.

Don't drive across the causeway into Venice: you'll have to leave your car in the hugely expensive car park. Instead, if you're arriving by car, look out for the large car parks before you get to the causeway and then take a bus.

The iconic Venetian gondolas are quite expensive and you need to agree on a price beforehand. The going rate is about €85 for a half hour ride. A €2 traghetto (ferry) across the Grand Canal is an alternative to the authentic gondola experience without the cost. These ferry boats are gondolas, but slightly longer and rowed by two men.

ITALIARAIL

italy
magazine

Venice



When to go

If possible, time your trip to avoid high season, when it's extremely hot and crowded, and Carnival time in February, which is fun but also very busy. Venice is particularly lovely in winter when it can be quite cold. Mists create a mysterious and enchanting atmosphere and the narrow alleyways are almost deserted. The best months for visiting are probably late September and October, and April through to early June.

ITALIARAIL

italy
magazine

Venice



How to pack

The most important item to pack for Venice is a comfortable pair of sturdy walking shoes, as you'll be doing a lot of walking as well as going up and down bridges. You will also want to consider bringing waterproof footwear in case of flooding, which is all too common.

Venice can be very hot and humid in summer; light, loose clothing, sunglasses and a sun hat are essential. Many people are surprised by how cold Venice can be in winter. Remember that the Dolomite mountains aren't far away — the icy alpine air influences Venice's weather. There are also fairly frequent storms in all seasons, so rain jackets and umbrellas are always useful.

ITALIARAIL

italy
magazine

Venice



The Grand Canal and Rialto Bridge

Constantly swarming with boats of all types, the three-kilometre-long Grand Canal is the most important thoroughfare in Venice. It paints a vivid picture of the singular way this city works. Everything is water-based, whether you're transporting people and goods or providing any conceivable service — from funerals to garbage collection.

The number 1 vaporetto travels the length of the Grand Canal in a leisurely way, zig-zagging from side to side with plenty of time for you to enjoy the views of beautiful palaces along its border.

Probably the loveliest palazzo on the Grand Canal is the Ca' d'Oro, famous for its delicate gothic façade and so named because of its former gilded decoration. Other notable palazzi are now museums (Ca' Rezzonico, and Ca' Pesaro for example), or they have become municipal buildings and private residences.

ITALIARAIL

italy
magazine

Venice



The islands

Venice itself is made up of many small interconnecting islands, but there are others further away in the Lagoon that make for enjoyable and interesting visits.

The Lido is the largest island. You can get there via a vaporetto, then travel the whole length of the island by bus.

San Michele serves as Venice's cemetery. You can consult a plan to visit the graves of the many famous people buried there.

Murano is where Venetian glass is made. You can visit the furnaces, watch glass-blowers in action, and visit the Glass Museum.

Burano is a lace-making centre and a photographer's dream, with its kaleidoscope of brightly coloured fishermen's cottages.

Torcello was the original island where the Venetians settled when driven from the mainland from the 7th to 13th Centuries.

ITALIARAIL

italy
magazine

Venice



Festivals in Venice

As if it didn't attract enough people in its own right, Venice also regularly plays host to prestigious festivals and exhibitions.

The two Biennales — one for art, the other architecture — take over much of the city, often in places not generally open to the public. Of the two, the Art Biennale is better known, occupying the two major sites of the Giardini and the Arsenale as well as many palazzi all over the city.

The Carnival is Venice's winter festival, marking the days of feasting leading up to Lent. Both locals and tourists dress up and wear masks, and there are happenings and traditional street food all over the city — especially in St Mark's Square.

ITALIARAIL

italy
magazine

Venice



Venice for kids

Most people will tell you that there's nothing for kids in Venice. Nothing could be further from the truth. Of course there's the novelty of catching a water bus from a floating bus stop, but that's just the beginning.

The Natural History Museum is a good bet, especially on a rainy day. It's very well thought out and displayed, with plenty to grab kids' attention.

Take them to the church of San Pantalon. The amazing ceiling will make an instant impression with clusters of angels, cherubs and assorted prophets carrying the saint heaven-wards.

Children always enjoy taking a lift up a bell tower. Go to San Giorgio Maggiore rather than St Mark's; it's quieter and the views are better.

ITALIARAIL

italy
magazine

Venice



Eating and drinking

If you find that some restaurants and bars in Venice are overpriced, bear in mind that everything has to be brought in by boat and then trolley, a laborious and time-consuming process.

Venice is a great city for snacks. Apart from the ubiquitous pizzas sold by the slice, in a bacaro you can choose any number of tiny snacks called cicchetti. A glass of wine to accompany them is known as an ombra.

Osterie are small family-owned restaurants that serve traditional meals such as seafood pastas, sardines in saor (a kind of oil and vinegar marinade) or liver, Venice style. Ask for a sgroppino for dessert and you'll get a refreshing liquid lemon sorbet mixed with prosecco or vodka.

Bonus tip: avoid restaurants with street touts (those aggravating barkers with their non-stop sales pitches), or those with menus written in lots of different languages.

ITALIARAIL

italy
magazine

Venice



Hidden Venice: Off the beaten track

It is still possible to find parts of Venice that are quiet and almost unknown, even to regular visitors. Here are a few ideas, all of which can be found via Google and a good map.

Venice had the first **ghetto** in the world - the Cannaregio district. Jews, whilst welcome in the city, were confined to an island; at its height more than 6,000 people lived there. Today the ghetto is a quiet place where the public can visit several synagogues.

For time-travelling you can't beat the **Fortuny Museum**. Mariano Fortuny was an artist, photographer, designer and inventor (he created gorgeous pleated silk). His home in a quiet palazzo is exactly as he left it, in a 19th Century time warp.

The **Bovolo** (snail) is a lovely renaissance spiral staircase tucked away in a courtyard. There are great views from the top. On the way up you can see the newly opened Tintoretto Room with his sketch for a grand painting now in the Doge's Palace.

ITALIARAIL

italy
magazine

Venice



The essential guide to visiting Cannaregio district

If you are looking to visit Venice without the tourist crowds, and still want a culturally rich, historical and true Venetian experience, step across the Grand Canal to the Cannaregio neighbourhood. Here you will find classic Venetian canals, churches, palaces and artworks by Venetian masters... without the crowds and line-ups you'd find elsewhere. Plan ahead by reading our article on what to see and do when you visit Cannaregio.

[Read more on ItaliaRail](#)

ITALIARAIL

italy
magazine



How to eat on a budget in Venice

You don't have to spend big money to eat well in Venice. While it's true that Venice is crowded and restaurants come at a premium, there are many creative ways to eat well on a budget during your visit.

Discover food in Venice that's both delicious and affordable. Visit a market to purchase fresh fruit, and bring your food along to find a first class view while you enjoy some *cicchetti*. Read on for our tips on affordably eating delicious and affordable local food in the floating city.

[Read more on ItaliaRail](#)

Venice



An insider's guide to Venice

With more than 20 million visitors flocking to Venice each year, you need savvy insiders to open their address books to experience the city as locals do. So who better to give us the scoop on native favorites than Venice-born and raised Francesca Bortolotto Possati, a tireless advocate for her hometown (she is on the Board of Directors of Save Venice), and the CEO and owner of the famed Bauer Hotel Group.

[Read more on ItalyMagazine](#)

ITALIARAIL

italy
magazine

Venice



★ Best of Venice and Gondola Tour

Nowhere else on the planet is quite like Venice. Our two-and-a-half-hour best of Venice Tour shows off the grandeur and mystique of this once-powerful maritime republic from two entirely different perspectives. First, we'll seek out the Floating City's most sought-after sights on foot, enjoying skip-the-line entrance to spectacular Saint Mark's Basilica, as well as special access to the Basilica's terrace.

We'll also explore some lesser-known corners of the city where the essence of Venetian living is writ large, before hitting the canals for that most quintessential of Venetian experiences, an unforgettable gondola ride to explore the city's beauty from the water.

Learn more about the tour or book now!

Operates

April 1 - Nov 15
Mon-Tues &
Thurs-Sat

Duration

2h45m
(approx.)

Price

Adult (15+): \$71
Child (4-14): \$65

ITALIARAIL

italy
magazine

Venice



ITALIARAIL

italy
magazine

Venice: so much more than canals and gondolas

You can look forward to kicking off your Venetian vacation as soon as your train pulls into the station! We at ItaliaRail thank you for choosing to travel with us, and we trust that our guide will help transport you toward memorable new sights, sounds, and sensations.