



**CICERONI**  
T R A V E L

## PATRICIANS & PAINTERS CONNOISSEURS' VENICE

SUNDAY 25 – FRIDAY 30 APRIL 2021 (5 DAYS)

LECTURER: TOM DUNCAN

£2665

- Discover a 'hidden' Venice
- Private visits include a remarkable palace not open to the public
- A morning spent on Torcello followed by lunch at *Locanda Cipriani*
- See the mosaics in St Mark's Basilica at night when closed to the public
- Unhurried pace with plenty of free time
- 4\* Hotel overlooks the Grand Canal mid-way between the Accademia & Rialto Bridges



Church of La Salute from the Grand Canal, Venice

### OVERVIEW

The first English travellers to appreciate Venice for all its myriad splendours were two early seventeenth century courtiers, Sir Henry Wotton and Thomas Howard, Earl of Arundel. Wotton was James I's Ambassador to Venice, probably best remembered for his description of his time in Venice: "an ambassador is an honest man sent to lie abroad for the good of his country", an ironic analysis not appreciated by his regal employer. Lord Arundel, travelling with both Lady Arundel and Inigo Jones (who acted as their *cicerone*) spent many months in the city. All shared a love of Venetian painting and architecture and together they helped open English eyes to a Venice at once both outwardly stately and inwardly splendid.

Our visit will appeal both to the novice and to travellers who, though they may know Venice (indeed, may have been several times in the past), would like to discover a Venice hidden from the casual visitor. To this end, we have arranged a wonderful series of visits, many offering exclusive and private access to places you may not have seen before. The noble palaces of Venice will be central to our visit - some are still in private ownership while others are smaller art galleries full of delights for the connoisseur.

We stay at the 4\* **Hotel Palazzo Sant' Angelo**, ideally situated on the Grand Canal mid-way between the Accademia and Ponte Rialto bridges. It is within walking distance of almost all we shall visit and excellent restaurants are easily to hand. This tour is limited to eighteen participants.

### ITINERARY OUTLINE

**Day 1:** Sunday 25 April – We fly from Heathrow to **Venice**, arriving mid-afternoon and transfer by private Water Taxi to the 4\* **Hotel Palazzo Sant'Angelo** mid way along the Grand Canal – ideal for our explorations. We have dinner in a local restaurant - wine, water and coffee are included with our group lunch and dinners.

**Day 2:** Monday 26 April – We spend the day on the island of **Torcello**, usually neglected by most visitors, put off perhaps by the logistical challenge of getting there? This need not deter us as we shall travel there and back by private motor launch. Jan Morris memorably described Torcello as existing in "a positive ecstasy of melancholia" and it is indeed a world away from the hustle and bustle of Venice. There are a few neglected palaces, the small church of **Santa Fosca** and above all, the **Cathedral**. My, what a splendid place: here we shall find some marvellous mosaics – a gentle Madonna, a not so gentle Last Judgement and much else. We then have lunch in what J. G. Links called "the unpretentious but luxurious *Locanda Cipriani*, where everything is done with taste, expertise and style". We return to Venice and the rest of the afternoon will be free. That evening we go to the **Basilica of San Marco**, the most remarkable of Venetian churches.

Originally built as the private chapel of the Venetian Doges, it has been enriched with the finest medieval mosaics in Italy, together with many other treasures. We shall visit, not in the company of vast numbers of tourists, but at night when it will be closed to the public. This is how the great Byzantine mosaics, specially lit for us, can be best appreciated – a memorable end to a memorable day. Dinner is not included and you will be given information about the local restaurants.

**Day 3:** Tuesday 27 April – We begin with an extraordinary architectural conceit, the small fifteenth century **Palazzo Contarini del Bovolo**, famed for its remarkable staircase and loggia. After a coffee break we visit privately the **Palazzo Albrizzi** close to the **Rialto Bridge** which contains what must be the most ravishing stuccoed interiors in Venice, if not the entire Veneto. Following a group lunch, we also visit privately **Ca' Venier**, a unique survivor – an untouched eighteenth-century private gambling club more or less untouched since the 'Grand Tour' period. We end our day at **Palazzo Querini Stampaglia**, given to the city in 1869 by Count Giovanni Querini. It houses that great rarity, an intact collection from an ancient noble Venetian family, still in its splendid original home. The evening will be free.

**Day 4:** Wednesday 28 April – This morning will be devoted to those two giants of late sixteenth century Venice, Palladio and Veronese. Palladio worked in Venice at the end of his life, designing two magnificent churches, **San Giorgio Maggiore** and **Il Redentore**, both of which we shall visit. For the monks of San Giorgio he also designed the adjacent monastery, now the **Cini Foundation**, which we shall visit privately. The remainder of the morning will be devoted to a true gem, the little-known church of **San Sebastiano**. The wonderful sixteenth century painter Veronese was, indeed is, much loved by the English. Where now hangs his lost portrait of the Elizabethan poet Sir Philip Sidney, painted in Venice "from the life"? The place to see Veronese at his best in Venice is *not* in the Accademia, or indeed in the Doges' Palace, but in San Sebastiano where after many years of restoration, his wonderful cycle of paintings are once again on view. This is an experience you can share with Inigo Jones, who carried back memories of this church to London, where it became the inspiration for his Banqueting House ceiling in Whitehall Palace. After lunch, not included, you will then be free for the rest of the afternoon and evening.

**Day 5:** Thursday 29 April – We cross the Grand Canal into Dorsoduro to visit the **Accademia Art Gallery**. This famous collection of mostly Venetian pictures has been completely rehung and we shall see the results, with the Bellini family, Giorgione, Titian and Tintoretto all there. After a coffee break, we continue to **San Pantalon**, not at the forefront of most visitors' itineraries and more fool them! An unremarkable, indeed unfinished, brick façade hides an interior which has probably the most extraordinary *trompe l'oeil* ceiling in the city, painted by the sadly unknown Gian Antonio Fumiani. After lunch, not included, we continue to **Ca' Rezzonico**, one of the city's finest eighteenth century palaces, now an art gallery with wonderful *Ottocento* paintings and decorative arts. Our final group dinner takes place in a charming restaurant close to La Fenice Opera House.

**Day 6:** Friday 30 April – We make a leisurely departure after breakfast by private water taxi for Venice Airport and the flight to Heathrow, arriving back in the early afternoon.

## PRACTICALITIES

**Price** £2665                      **Without Flights** £2530                      **Deposit** £395

**Single Supplement** £449 (Double/Twin Room for Sole Use)

**Upgrade** Junior Suite Canal View £895 (per room) subject to availability

**Hotel** 5 nights with breakfast in the 4\* Hotel Palazzo Sant' Angelo

**Flights** British Airways

Outward:                      **BA578** Departs London Heathrow (Terminal 5) **1300** arrive Venice **1615**

Return:                        **BA579** Departs Venice **1230** arrive London Heathrow (Terminal 5) **1350**

**Price includes** 2 dinners & 2 lunches with wine, water & coffee, all local transfers, City Tax, 3-day Vaporetto pass, entry fees & gratuities, services of Tom Duncan and our local tour manager, James Hill

**Not included** Travel to/from Heathrow, 3 dinners & 3 lunches



CICERONI TRAVEL  
2 The Square, Aynho, Banbury, Oxfordshire, OX17 3BL  
Telephone +44 (0) 1869 811167      Fax +44 (0) 1869 811188  
Email [info@ciceroni.co.uk](mailto:info@ciceroni.co.uk)      Website [www.ciceroni.co.uk](http://www.ciceroni.co.uk)

