

TRANSPORT

Things Change...

The information in this chapter is particularly vulnerable to change. Check directly with the airline or a travel agent to make sure you understand how a fare (and ticket you may buy) works and be aware of the security requirements for international travel. Shop carefully. The details given in this chapter should be regarded as pointers and are not a substitute for your own careful, up-to-date research.

Flights, tours and rail tickets can be booked online at www.lonelyplanet.com/travel_services.

AIR

Venice is one of Italy's smaller air-traffic centres (there are big plans for expansion). Direct flights from major European centres and New York are available, alongside internal flights from the rest of Italy.

Look out for budget-airline deals from carriers like UK-based Easy Jet and Ryanair, which between them put on cheap flights from a growing list of UK and other European airports respectively to Venice's Marco Polo airport and Treviso's San Giuseppe airport. These and an array of other budget airlines work on a first-come, first-served basis: as flights fill, the price of a ticket rises.

Within Italy air travel is generally expensive. In the northern half of the country it makes more sense to go by train. Alitalia and Air One are the main airlines serving Venice. Most direct flights into Venice come from Rome and Milan, with a handful from Naples, Olbia and Palermo.

Most airlines, especially the budget ones, encourage you to book on their websites. Useful general sites to search for competitive fares are www.planesimple.co.uk, www.cheapflights.co.uk, www.lastminute.com, www.whichbudget.com, www.edreams.com, www.opodo.com and www.expedia.com.

Airlines

Airlines don't bother with shopfront offices in Venice, so you'll need to go online, call the following numbers or try a travel agent (see

p259). More than 40 airlines serve more than 60 destinations direct to/from Venice.

Air Dolomiti (EN; ☎ in Italy 199 400044; www.airdolomiti.it) Airline with flights from Frankfurt and Munich to Venice and Verona, as well as Vienna to Verona.

Air One (AP; ☎ 199 207080; www.flyairone.it) Flights from throughout Italy.

Alitalia (AZ; ☎ 06 2222; www.alitalia.it, in Italian) Flights from Rome, Milan and other Italian centres, as well as from many European hubs.

Alpi Eagles (E8; ☎ 899 500058; www.alpieagles.com) Has flights from many Italian cities, as well as Athens, Barcelona, Bucharest and Tirana (Albania).

BMI (BD; ☎ 0870 607 0555; www.flybmi.com) Flights to Venice from London Heathrow.

British Airways (BA; ☎ in UK 0870 850 9850, in Italy 199 712266; www.britishairways.com) From the UK.

Delta (DL; ☎ in USA 800 241 4141, in Italy 848 780376; www.delta.com) Direct flights from New York.

EasyJet (U2; ☎ in UK 0871 244 2366, in Italy 899 234589; www.easyjet.com) Flights from London Gatwick, Bristol and East Midlands.

Flybaboo (BBO; ☎ in Switzerland 0848 445445; www.babooairways.com) Flights from Geneva to Venice.

Germanwings (4U; ☎ in Germany 0900 191 9100, in Italy 199 404747; www15.germanwings.com) Flights between Cologne and Verona.

Jet2 (LS; ☎ 0871 226 1737; www.jet2.com) Budget airline that flies from Leeds and Manchester to Venice.

MyAir (8I; ☎ 0931 41 99 37; www.myair.com) A budget Italian airline with flights between Venice and destinations in Bulgaria, France, Morocco, Romania and Spain.

Qantas Airways (QF; ☎ in Australia 13 13 13, in Italy 848 350010; www.qantas.com.au) Flights from Australia to Italy in codeshare.

Ryanair (FR; ☎ in Ireland 0818 303030, in UK 0871 246 0000, in Italy 899 678910; www.ryanair.com) Flights from Brussels, Dublin and Shannon, Frankfurt (Hahn), Girona (for Barcelona), Liverpool, London (Stansted), Paris (Beauvais) and Rome to Treviso. Ryanair also flies to Brescia airport, reasonably handy for Verona.

Sky Europe (NE; ☎ in Hungary 06 1777 7000, in Italy 166 205304; www.skyeurope.com) Flights to Venice from Budapest and to Treviso from Budapest, Cracow and Vienna.

Sterling.dk (DM; ☎ in Denmark 70 10 84 84, in Italy 02 6963 3595; www.sterling.dk) Flights from Copenhagen to Venice.

Transavia (HV; ☎ in Netherlands 0900-0737, in Italy 02 6968 2615; www.transavia.com) Low-cost flights from Amsterdam to Treviso and Verona.

Tuifly (X3; ☎ in Germany 0900 109 9595, in Italy 199 192692; www.tuifly.com) Flights from Berlin and other German cities to Venice.

US Airways (US; ☎ in USA 800 622 1015; www.usairways.com) Direct flights from Philadelphia to Venice.

Vueling (VY; ☎ in Spain 902 333933, in Italy 800 787788; www.vueling.com) Flights from Barcelona and Madrid.

Wind Jet (IV; ☎ 899 809060; www.volawindjet.it) Flights to Venice from Catania and Palermo.

Airports

Venice's **Marco Polo airport** (VCE; ☎ 041 260 92 60; www.veniceairport.it) is 12km outside Venice and just east of Mestre. Some flights, notably those of low-cost airline Ryanair, use Treviso's minuscule **San Giuseppe airport** (TSF; ☎ 0422 31 51 11; www.trevisoairport.it), about 5km southwest of Treviso and 30km (about an hour's drive through traffic) from Venice.

Arrivi (arrivals) at Marco Polo airport is on the ground floor, where you will also find an Azienda di Promozione Turistica (APT) office, numerous car-hire outlets, hotel-booking agencies, bureaux de change, *deposito bagagli* (lost luggage) and *bagagli smarriti* (lost luggage).

CLIMATE CHANGE & TRAVEL

Climate change is a serious threat to the ecosystems that humans rely upon, and air travel is the fastest-growing contributor to the problem. Lonely Planet regards travel, overall, as a global benefit, but believes we all have a responsibility to limit our personal impact on global warming.

Flying & Climate Change

Pretty much every form of motor transport generates CO₂ (the main cause of human-induced climate change) but planes are far and away the worst offenders, not just because of the sheer distances they allow us to travel, but because they release greenhouse gases high into the atmosphere. The statistics are frightening: two people taking a return flight between Europe and the US will contribute as much to climate change as an average household's gas and electricity consumption over a whole year.

Carbon Offset Schemes

Climatecare.org and other websites use 'carbon calculators' that allow travellers to offset the greenhouse gases they are responsible for with contributions to energy-saving projects and other climate-friendly initiatives in the developing world – including projects in India, Honduras, Kazakhstan and Uganda.

Lonely Planet, together with Rough Guides and other concerned partners in the travel industry, supports the carbon offset scheme run by climatecare.org. Lonely Planet offsets all of its staff and author travel.

For more information check out our website: www.lonelyplanet.com.

gage). Check-in and departures are on the 1st floor. You'll find banks, ATMs, cafés and shops on both floors.

At Treviso's San Giuseppe airport, the arrivals hall boasts a small, thinly stocked regional tourist information booth, a lost-luggage office next to it, a bureau de change and several car-hire outlets. Next door in departures you'll find an ATM and a couple of tour and airline offices (including Ryanair). There is no *deposito bagagli* service.

There are several options for getting to Venice from Marco Polo airport, from the super-expensive water taxi to the cheap and prosaic bus.

BICYCLE

Cycling (hardly feasible anyway) is banned in Venice. On the Lido and Pellestrina it can be a pleasant option. A couple of hire places are clustered around the Lido vaporetto stop on Gran Viale Santa Maria Elisabetta (Map p116). You'll pay around €10 per day.

BOAT

Minoan Lines (www.minoan.gr) and **Anek** (www.anekeitalia.com) run regular ferries to Venice from Greece (Corfu, Igoumenitsa and Patras). **Venezia Lines** (www.venezialines.com) runs high-speed catamarans between Venice and six destinations, including pretty Pula, along the Istrian coast (once part of La Serenissima's merchant empire) in Croatia. Check also the Venezia

GETTING TO/FROM THE AIRPORTS

Boat

Alilaguna (☎ 041 523 57 75; www.alilaguna.com) fast ferries from Marco Polo airport to Venice (€12), the Lido (€12) and Murano (€6) operate approximately once an hour. The main difference between the *rosso* (red) and *blu* (blue) lines is that the *blu* stops at Fondamente Nuove (€6) and Stazione Marittima (€15), but not at Zattere or Arsenale. Travelling to the airport, you can pick up an Alilaguna ferry at several stops, including Zattere (Map pp76–7), San Marco (Map pp62–3), San Zaccaria (Map pp62–3) and Arsenale (Map pp100–1). The *arancia* (orange) line runs from the Guglie stop (Map pp92–3) via Madonna dell'Orto (Map pp92–3) and Murano to the airport. A faster direct service (the *oro*, or gold, line) from San Marco (stopping only at nearby San Zaccaria) costs €25 and runs eight times a day. Note that, coming from the airport, the *rosso* ferry runs to Murano (the Museo stop), the Lido, Arsenale, San Zaccaria, Piazza San Marco and Zattere in that order. The journey to Piazza San Marco takes one hour and 10 minutes (a few minutes longer on the *blu* line).

A **water taxi** (☎ 041 522 23 03, 041 522 12 65) is luxury. The standard official rate for the ride between Piazzetta di San Marco and Marco Polo airport is €45. To/from the Lido costs €55. Watch for night and baggage surcharges. In reality, a group of up to four people will pay around €90 for the ride to San Marco from the airport.

Bus & Train

Azienda Trasporti Veneto Orientale (ATVO; ☎ 041 38 36 72; www.atvo.it) buses run from Marco Polo airport to Piazzale Roma via Mestre's train station (€3, 20 minutes) – they're also known as Fly buses. There are around 27 to 30 departures a day. A separate service runs to/from Mestre train station (€2.50).

Azienda Consorzio Trasporti Veneziano (ACTV; ☎ 041 24 24; www.actv.it) city bus 5 runs between Marco Polo airport and Piazzale Roma (€1). It makes more stops and takes closer to 30 minutes.

Eurobus buses (run by ATVO) connect Piazzale Roma with flights at Treviso's San Giuseppe airport (one way/return €5/9, one hour five minutes). The return ticket is valid for one week. Alternatively, local Treviso bus 6 goes to the main train station in Treviso. From there you can proceed to Venice by train.

Helicopter

HeliAir Venice (☎ 041 527 47 62; www.heliairvenice.com) offers people in a hurry quick transfers to/from the Nicelli aerodrome on the Lido (where they are based), Marco Polo airport, nearby cities and the chic ski resort of Cortina d'Ampezzo (for up to six passengers around €2500, 45 minutes). It also does tours; see p255.

Taxi

Normal land taxis cost around €35 one way from Marco Polo airport to Piazzale Roma (15 to 20 minutes). From Treviso's San Giuseppe airport (€75) they can take an hour in traffic.

Terminal Passeggeri website for information on sea connections (www.vtp.it).

Gondola

A gondola ride is the quintessence of romantic Venice, but few people use them for practical transport purposes (such as getting from the train station to your hotel). And at €80 for 40 minutes (€100 from 7pm to 8am) the official price is a rather hefty return from the clouds to reality. The rates are for a maximum of six people – less romantic but more affordable. After the first 40 minutes you pay in 20-minute increments (€40, or €50 from 7pm to 8am). Several travellers have reported successfully negotiating below the official rates. Gondola rides are no doubt touristy, and

some might even agree with Oscar Wilde, who found his gondola experience akin to a promenade 'in the sewers on board a coffin'. But it is a unique experience for all that.

Gondolas are available near main canals or can be booked by phoning ☎ 041 528 50 75 or at various *stazi* (gondola stops) such as those in **Rialto** (Map pp62–3; ☎ 041 522 49 04) and at the **train station** (Map pp92–3; ☎ 041 71 85 43).

Hire

The freewheeling tripper with nerves of steel might want to rent a boat. Try **Brussa** (Map pp92–3; ☎ 041 71 57 87; www.brussaisboat.it, in Italian; Fondamenta Labia, Cannaregio 331; 🕒 7.30am–5.30pm Mon–Fri, 7.30–12.30pm Sat). You can hire a 7m boat (including

fuel) for an hour (€20) or a day (€130), or make an arrangement for a longer period. There are only four boat petrol stations around Venice. You don't need a licence, but you will be taken on a test run to see if you can manoeuvre and park. The boats carry up to six people.

Traghetto

The poor man's gondola, *traghetti*, are used to cross the Grand Canal where there is no nearby bridge. There is no limit (except common sense) on the number of passengers, who stand. The ride costs €0.60.

Traghetti are supposed to operate from about 9am to 6pm between Campo Traghetto (near Santa Maria del Giglio) and Calle de Lanza (Map pp76–7); Calle Mocenigo Casa Vecchia, further northwest, and Calle Traghetto (Map pp76–7); Campo Santa Sofia and Campo della Pescaria (Map pp92–3), near the produce market.

Several other *traghetto* routes operate from 9am to noon only. They include Stazione di Santa Lucia to Fondamenta San Simeone Piccolo (Map pp92–3); Campo San Marcuola to Salizada del Fontego dei Turchi (Map pp92–3); Fondamenta del Vin to Riva del Carbon, near the Ponte di Rialto (Map pp62–3); Campo San Samuele, north of the Ponte dell'Accademia, and Calle del Traghetto (Map pp76–7); and Calle Vallaresso to Punta della Dogana (Map pp62–3). Some may on occasion not operate at all.

Vaporetto

The most common form of transport around Venice, after your feet, are the vaporetti, the city's ferries. Actually, there are at least three kinds of ferry: the standard, ponderous vaporetto (as in line 1 down the Grand Canal), the sleeker *motoscafo*, which also runs local routes, and the *motonave* – big interisland boats that head for Torcello and other more distant destinations. Just to complicate things a little, locals tend to call any public-transport boat a *battello*.

The **ACTV** (☎ 041 24 24; www.actv.it) runs public transport in the Comune di Venezia (the municipality), covering mainland buses and all the waterborne public transport around Venice. You can pick up timetables and route maps from the ACTV tickets and information office on Piazzale Roma (Map pp84–5) and some ticket booths.

Vaporetti get crowded and visitors have a habit of gathering by exits. If you are standing near one, it is common practice on reaching a

stop to get off and let passengers behind you disembark before you get back on.

ROUTES

From Piazzale Roma, vaporetto 1 zigzags up the Grand Canal to San Marco and then on to the Lido. If you aren't in a rush, it's a great introduction to Venice. Vaporetto 17 carries vehicles from Tronchetto, near Piazzale Roma, to the Lido.

Keep in mind that routes and route numbers can change. Not all routes go both ways.

Frequency varies greatly according to line and time of day. Vaporetto 1 runs every 10 minutes through most of the day, while lines such as the 41 and 42 only run every 20 minutes. Services to Burano and Torcello are still less frequent. Night services can be as much as one hour apart. Some lines stop running by around 9pm, so check timetables.

DM (Diretto Murano) Tronchetto–Piazzale Roma–Ferrovia–Murano and back.

Line 1 Piazzale Roma–Ferrovia–Grand Canal (all stops)–Lido and back.

Line 3 Fast circular line: Tronchetto–Ferrovia–San Samuele–Accademia–San Marco–Tronchetto (summer).

Line 4 Fast circular line in reverse direction to line 3 (summer).

Line 5 San Zaccaria–Murano and back.

Line 11 Lido–Pellestrina–Chioggia and back (bus and ferries).

Line 13 Fondamente Nuove–Murano–Vignole–Sant'Erasmo–Treporti and back.

Line 17 Car ferry: Tronchetto–Lido and back (extends to Punta Sabbioni in summer).

Line 18 Murano–Vignole–Sant'Erasmo–Lido and back (summer only).

Line 20 San Zaccaria–San Servolo–San Lazzaro and back.

Line 41 Circular line: Piazzale Roma–Sacca Fisola–Giudecca–San Zaccaria–San Pietro–Fondamente Nuove–Murano–Ferrovia.

Line 42 Circular line in reverse direction to line 41.

Line 51 Circular line: Piazzale Roma–Santa Marta–Zattere–San Zaccaria–Lido–San Pietro–Fondamente Nuove–Ferrovia.

Line 52 Circular line in reverse direction to line 51.

Line 61 Limited-stops weekdays-only circular line: Piazzale Roma–Santa Marta–San Basilio–Zattere–Giardini–Sant'Elena–Lido.

Line 62 Limited-stops weekdays-only circular line, reverse direction to line 61.

Line 82 San Zaccaria–San Marco–Grand Canal (all stops)–Ferrovia–Piazzale Roma–Tronchetto–Zattere–Giudecca–San Giorgio. A Limitato San Marco or Limitato Piazzale Roma sign means it will not go beyond those stops. Sometimes it goes only as far as Rialto. Ferry crew cry this out. In summer the line extends from San Zaccaria to the Lido.

LN (Laguna Nord) San Zaccaria (Pietà)–Lido–Litorale del Cavallino (Punta Sabbioni)–Treporti–Burano–Mazzorbo–Murano (Faro)–Fondamente Nuove and reverse.

N All-stops night circuit: Lido–Giardini–San Zaccaria–Grand Canal (all stops)–Ferrovia–Piazzale Roma–Tronchetto–Giudecca–San Giorgio–San Zaccaria (starts around 11.30pm; last service around 5am).

N A second night service (aka NMU) from Fondamente Nuove to Murano (all stops) – three or four runs from midnight.

N A nocturnal version of the Laguna Nord (LN) service (aka NLN) – a handful of services between Fondamente Nuove and Burano, Mazzorbo, Torcello and Treporti.

T Torcello–Burano (half-hourly service) and back from 7am to 8.30pm.

OTHER SERVICES

Linea Clodia Venice (Pietà) to Chioggia (same-day return €9.30); operates June to September only and runs once a day. It's basically aimed at those coming from Chioggia to spend a day in Venice.

Linea Fusina Venice (Zattere) to Fusina (one way/return €6/10, 25 minutes, up to 15 a day). There's also a direct from the same stop at Zattere to the Alberoni beaches on the Lido (one way/return €5/9, 45 minutes, up to five a day) and between Alberoni and Fusina (one way/return €5/9, 40 minutes, up to five a day). Fusina, on the mainland, has a huge car park for day-trippers, and several nearby camping grounds. For information see www.terminalfusina.it. There is also an information office at Campo di Sant'Agnesa, Dorsoduro 909c, near the boat stop.

TICKETS

Tickets can be purchased from the Hello Venezia ticket booths (www.hellovenezia.com) at most stops. Generally, they are validated when sold to you, which means they are for immediate use. If they are not validated, or if you request them not to be (so you can use them later), you are supposed to validate them in the machines located at all stops before you get on your first vaporetto. You can also buy single-trip tickets when boarding. You will probably be charged double if you have lots of luggage, but one piece of luggage is included in the ticket price. If

you are caught without a ticket you must buy one and pay a €40 fine.

The following tickets are poor value and should only be used if you rarely catch a vaporetto:

Corsa semplice (One way €6) Valid for one hour.

Line 11 (Tickets €5) Boat and bus from Lido to Chioggia; valid for 12 hours.

Line 24 (One way/return €5/10) Multiple tickets are not valid.

Paglia/Fondamente Nuove (Tickets €8.50) Allows unlimited use on LN line for 12 hours from validation.

Better value is a *biglietto a tempo*, a ticket valid on all transport (except the Alilaguna, Linea Fusina and Linea Clodia services), including buses in Mestre and on the Lido, for unlimited travel during the specified time from the first validation (*convalida*). You can get these tickets for 12/24/36/48/72 hours. They cost respectively €13/15/20/25/30. People aged 14 to 29 can get a three-day ticket for €15 on presentation of the Rolling Venice card (see p251).

WARNING

Vaporetto stops can be confusing, especially the busier ones such as Piazzale Roma, Ferrovia, San Marco and San Zaccaria. At these you will see several jetties, each catering to a line and direction. Study the signs at the various quays carefully, otherwise you may find yourself on a vaporetto with the right number but going the wrong way!

Vessels making for the Piazza San Marco area in particular can cause anguish, as most stop at one of a string of stops along Riva degli Schiavoni (Map pp62–3 and Map pp100–1). Keep an eye out for San Zaccaria. If your boat stops here, it is unlikely to make another San Marco stop before heading off elsewhere.

Water Taxi

Venetian water taxis ain't cheap, with a €8.70 flagfall, an extra €6 if you order one by telephone, €1.30 per minute thereafter and various surcharges that make a gondola ride look affordable. Up to 20 people can legally ride in a taxi, but that can be uncomfortable. There are surcharges for baggage, night trips (10pm to 7am) and for each extra passenger above the first four. Make sure the craft has the yellow strip with licence number displayed. If approached by a craft without this sign, don't take it.

WARNING

A special problem on the Isola del Tronchetto are illegal water-taxi drivers. These people approach the freshly parked tourist with stories of having the only vessel available to transfer from Tronchetto. This is rubbish, as vaporetto 82 calls here regularly. Unwitting victims are transported (often to places they did not want to go) for outrageous sums of money. Some have been whisked to Murano to look at someone's cousin's glass shop for €400!

BUS

All buses serving Venice terminate at Piazzale Roma. **Eurolines** (www.eurolines.com), in conjunction with other bus companies across Europe, is the main international carrier. Eurolines' website provides links to the sites of all the national operators. In Venice, Eurolines tickets can be bought from **Agenzia Brusutti** (Map pp84–5; ☎ 041 38 36 71; Piazzale Roma, Santa Croce 497e). Buses run several times a week from London, Paris, Barcelona and other European centres.

ACTV buses serve the area immediately surrounding Venice, including Mestre and Chioggia, while ATVO operates buses to destinations all over the eastern part of the Veneto. Tickets and information are available at the ticket office in Piazzale Roma (Map pp84–5).

Buses (including night buses) run across the bridge to Mestre and up and down the Lido. Tickets cost €1 and are valid for one hour from the time you validate them in the machine on the bus. A carnet of 10 tickets costs €9.

You can buy tickets at the main bus station in Piazzale Roma (Map pp84–5), and from many newsstands and *tabaccherie* (tobacconists). See also Tickets, [opposite](#).

CAR & MOTORCYCLE

Driving to Venice

Venice is 279km from Milan, 529km from Rome, 579km from Geneva, 1112km from Paris, 1135km from Berlin, 1515km from London and 1820km from Madrid.

The main points of entry to Italy are the Mont Blanc tunnel from France at Chamonix, which connects with the A5 for Turin and Milan; the Grand St Bernard tunnel from Switzerland, which also connects with the A5;

THE CARRYING TRADE

Getting from the vaporetto stop to your hotel can be difficult if you are heavily laden. *Portabagagli* (porters) operate from several stands around the city. At the train station and Piazzale Roma they charge €18 for one item and roughly €6 for each extra one for transport within Venice proper. Prices virtually double to transport bags to any of the islands, including Giudecca. You have to negotiate at other porter stations.

Points where porters can be found include the **train station** (☎ 041 71 52 72), **Piazzale Roma** (☎ 041 522 35 90), **Campo San Geremia** (☎ 041 71 56 94), **Piazza San Marco** (☎ 041 523 23 85) and the **Ponte dell'Accademia** (☎ 041 522 48 91).

and the Brenner Pass from Austria, which connects with the A22 to Bologna.

Once in Italy, the A4 is the quickest way to reach Venice from east or west. It connects Turin with Trieste, passing through Milan and Mestre. Take the Venezia exit and follow the signs for the city. Coming from the Brenner Pass, the A22 connects with the A4 near Verona. From the south, take the A13 from Bologna, which connects with the A4 at Padua (Padova).

Hire

Avis (Map pp84–5; ☎ 041 523 73 77) has an office in Piazzale Roma, as do **Europcar** (Map pp84–5; ☎ 041 523 86 16), **Hertz** (Map pp84–5; ☎ 041 528 40 91) and **Expressway** (Map pp84–5; ☎ 041 522 30 00). They all have reps at Marco Polo airport, too. Several companies operate in or near Mestre train station too.

Parking

Visitors to Venice who insist on driving their cars right into the city pay a hefty price, and not necessarily just in parking fees. On busy days (especially holiday weekends), day-trippers frequently find themselves stuck on the Ponte della Libertà making little forward progress and unable to go back. It is not unknown for traffic to get so jammed that the police shut the city off from the mainland. Why risk it?

Once over the Ponte della Libertà from Mestre, you can pay to tie up your metallic steed at one of the huge car parks in Piazzale Roma or on Isola del Tronchetto. Car parks in Mestre are much cheaper.

Autopark Ca' Doge (Map pp84–5; ☎ 041 520 24 89; Piazzale Roma; per hr €3, or for 10hr €10; 🕒 7am–1am)

Garage Comunale (Map pp84–5; ☎ 041 272 72 11; www.asmvenezia.it; Piazzale Roma; per day €20; 🕒 24hr)

Parking San Marco (Map pp84–5; ☎ 041 523 22 13; www.garagesanmarco.it; Piazzale Roma; per 12hr €20, per 24hr €26; 🕒 24hr) Guests of certain hotels get discounts.

Parking Sant'Andrea (Map pp84–5; ☎ 041 272 73 04; Piazzale Roma; per 2hr or part thereof €4.50; 🕒 24hr)

Parking Serenissima (Map p121; ☎ 041 93 80 21; Viale Stazione 10, Mestre; per day €6; 🕒 24hr) This is one of several car parks, some of them on the same street, in Mestre. They are all cheaper than those in Venice. Nearly all street parking is metered in Mestre.

Tronchetto (☎ 041 520 75 55; www.veniceparking.it; Isola del Tronchetto; per 24hr €20; 🕒 24hr)

ILLEGAL PARKING

If you return to your car to find that it's no longer there, call the *vigili urbani* (local police) on ☎ 041 274 70 70. They dump towed cars in one of three mainland depots. It'll cost you around €100 for the towing, €40 a day in the pound and the parking fine.

WARNING

Thieves haunt some of the car parks, particularly in Mestre. Do not leave anything of even remote value in a parked car.

MONORAIL

A monorail connecting the Tronchetto car parks, the main Stazione Marittima ferry terminal (Venezia Terminal Passeggeri) and Piazzale Roma is planned to be in operation by the end of 2008.

TAXI

Land taxis operate from a rank in Piazzale Roma (Map pp84–5). Call ☎ 041 595 20 80.

TRAIN

Train is the most convenient overland option for reaching Venice from many Italian and some European cities. In the UK, contact the **Rail Europe Travel Centre** (☎ 0870 837 1371; www.raileurope.co.uk; 178 Piccadilly, London W1V 0BA). In Italy, contact **Trenitalia** (☎ 89 20 21; www.trenitalia.it), or travel agents.

Intercity (IC) trains are fast services that operate between major cities. Eurocity (EC) trains are the international version. *Pendolino* (high-speed trains) and other top-of-the-range services, which on high-speed track can zip along at more than 300km/h, are collectively known as Eurostar Italia (ES).

Almost every train leaving from Stazione di Santa Lucia stops in Mestre (€1, 10 minutes). Get your tickets from station *tabaccherie*.

Validate your ticket in the orange machines on station platforms. Failure to do so will almost certainly result in embarrassment and a hefty on-the-spot fine when the ticket inspector comes around.

Orient Express

The **Venice Simplon Orient Express** (☎ in UK 0845 077 2222; www.orient-express.com) runs between London and Venice via Paris, Innsbruck and Verona on Thursday and Sunday (late March to November; about 30 hours). The one-way fare (most take a plane for the return trip) is UK£1430.

Venice Train Stations

Inside Venice's Stazione di Santa Lucia (Map pp92–3) there's a rail-travel **information office** (🕒 7am–9pm) opposite the APT office.

The **deposito bagagli office** (per piece first 5hr €3.80, next 7hr €0.60c, per hr thereafter €0.20; 🕒 6am–midnight) is opposite platform 14.

Mestre station (Map p121) has similar services, including rail information, a hotel-booking office and a **deposito bagagli office** (per piece first 5hr €3.80, next 7hr €0.60c, per hr thereafter €0.20; 🕒 7am–11pm).

DIRECTORY

BUSINESS HOURS

In general, shops open from 9am to 1pm and 3.30pm to 7.30pm (or 4pm to 8pm) Monday to Saturday. They may remain closed on Monday morning, or on Wednesday and/or Saturday afternoon. Some shops hoping to do a little extra tourist business open on Sunday, too.

Department stores, such as Coin, and most supermarkets open from around 9am to 7.30pm Monday to Saturday.

Banks tend to open from 8.30am to 1.30pm and 3.30pm to 4.30pm Monday to Friday, but often vary their hours a little. A few open on Saturday morning.

Bars (in the Italian sense, ie coffee-and-sandwich places) and cafés generally open from 7.30am to 8pm, although some stay open after 8pm and turn into pub-style drinking and meeting places. Pubs and bars in the nocturnal sense are mostly shut by 1am; a couple of dozen soldier on until around 2am.

For *pranzo* (lunch), restaurants usually open from around 12.30pm to 3pm, but few take orders after 2pm. Hours for *cena* (dinner) vary, but locals start sitting down to dine at around 7.30pm. You'll be hard-pressed to find a place still serving after 10.30pm and many stop by 9.30pm.

CHILDREN

Venice isn't just for art lovers and hopeless romantics. Its uniqueness makes it fascinating for children, too. Make it an adventure and they'll soon start wondering as much as you just what lies around the corner.

Kids will enjoy a trip down the Grand Canal. If you prefer not to take a gondola ride, at least treat them to a short hop across the canal on a *traghetto* (commuter gondola). They are bound to appreciate an excursion to the islands, particularly to see the glass-making demonstrations on Murano (p112). Older kids might enjoy watching the big ships pass along the Canale della Giudecca, so take them to Gelateria Nico (see p172) on the Fondamenta Zattere for a relaxing waterside gelato.

Children of all ages will get a kick out of watching the Mori strike the hour at the Torre dell'Orologio (p71) on Piazza San Marco.

Understandably, most of the museums and galleries will leave the little ones cold, but some may work. Kids with a nautical interest should be drawn by the boats and model ships at the Museo Storico Navale (p106). The sculpture garden at the Peggy Guggenheim Collection (p79) may prove an educational distraction while you indulge your modern-art needs.

Climbing towers is usually a winner. Try the Campanile di San Marco (p66) or the bell towers of the Chiesa San Giorgio Maggiore (p111) and Torcello's Cattedrale di Santa Maria Assunta (p114).

Parco Savorgnan (part of Palazzo Savorgnan, Map pp92–3) and the Giardini Pubblici (p106) have playgrounds.

In summer, a jaunt to the beach – the Lido di Venezia (p116), Sottomarina (Chioggia, p120) or Lido di Jesolo – should win points. If you are using your own transport, remember to leave early to beat the horrible traffic jams. And forget it at weekends (except on the Lido di Venezia) – whether you drive or catch buses, you'll be stuck on the roads for an eternity.

Discounts are usually available for children under 12 years on public transport, and at museums, galleries and other sights.

Some handy books are *Viva Venice*, by Paola Scibilia and Paolo Zoffoli, and *Venice for Kids*, by Elisabetta Pasqualin. These books are richly illustrated and bursting with games, legends, anecdotes and suggestions on what to do. For general advice check out Lonely Planet's *Travel with Children*, by Cath Lanigan.

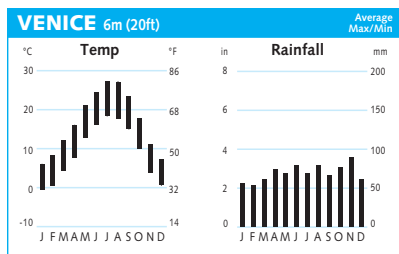
Baby-sitting

Some of the major hotels, especially those on the Lido di Venezia, offer a baby-sitting service.

CLIMATE

Midsummer (July and August) is the worst time of year to be in Venice – average daytime temperatures hover around 27°C but can go higher. Humidity is high, the canals can get a little on the nose and prevailing southern winds (the *sirocco*) are hot.

In spring the weather is often crisp and clear and the temperatures pleasant. That said,



a lot of rain falls in May and into June. In July and August the humidity can bring cracking storms in the evening.

The first half of winter sees heavy rainfall, with flooding most likely in November and December. On bad days, the city and lagoon are enveloped in mist (which some find enchanting).

December and January are the coldest months, with average temperatures hovering between 0°C and 7°C, and often clear skies. Because of the city's position on the lagoon, snow is a (beautiful) rarity.

COURSES

The **Istituto Italiano di Cultura** (IIC; Italian Cultural Institute), a government-sponsored organisation that promotes Italian culture and language, is a good place to research courses in Italy. The institute has branches all over the world, including Australia (Sydney and Melbourne), Canada (Montreal, Vancouver and Toronto), the UK (London and Edinburgh) and the USA (Los Angeles, New York, San Francisco, Chicago and Washington). The Italian foreign ministry website, www.esteri.it, has a full list; click on Ministry, then on Diplomatic Representations and Cultural Institutes.

There are surprisingly few language schools in Venice. The following are some suggestions for Italian-language and other courses in Venice:

Bottega del Tintoretto (Map pp92–3; ☎ 041 72 20 81; www.tintorettovenezia.it, in Italian; Fondamenta dei Mori, Cannaregio 3399a) This former stomping ground of Tintoretto has recovered its use as a hive of artistic activity, as Roberto Mazzetto now runs an old-time print workshop there. Roberto is one of the last to keep traditional printing methods alive. To supplement the activity, he and his cohorts run a series of courses ranging from bookbinding to design. Some courses run over a year, with lessons of two to four hours a week (€85 to €120 a month). Also of interest are the summer intensive five-day courses (€360).

Ca' Macana (Map pp76–7; ☎ 041 277 61 42; www.camacanacourses.com; Calle delle Botteghe, Dorsoduro 3172) This mask and costume shop (see p159) runs a pair of short courses (2½ hours each) in mask-making and, more interestingly, mask decorating. Prices vary according to the number of people in the course but hover around €40 per person.

Fondazione Giorgio Cini (Map p109; ☎ 041 528 99 00; www.cini.it; Isola di San Giorgio Maggiore) Organises seminars and specialist courses on subjects relating to the city and its culture, in particular music, art and restoration.

Istituto Europeo di Design (☎ 041 277 11 64; www.iied.it; Isola La Certosa) Offers masters courses in everything from yacht design to film-making.

Istituto Venezia (Map pp76–7; ☎ 041 522 43 31; www.istitutovenetia.com; Campo Santa Margherita, Dorsoduro 3116a) Offers language and one- and two-week courses on subjects as widely divergent as cooking, wine and Burano lace. Four weeks (80 hours) of intensive language classes cost €640.

RiViviNatura (Map pp62–3; ☎ 041 296 07 26; www.rivivinatura.it; Calle Vitturi, San Marco 2923; €50 per person) This association offers daily Venetian cooking classes for a maximum of six people. You learn the secrets in the preparation of local dishes in a private attic apartment, and then sample the results.

Venice International University (Map p116; ☎ 041 271 95 11; www.univiu.org; Isola di San Servolo) Proposes a vast range of undergraduate courses, aimed mostly at foreign students, with components ranging from Italian language and Venetian churches through to bioethics!

CUSTOMS REGULATIONS

Duty-free sales within the EU no longer exist (but goods are sold free of value-added tax, VAT, in European airports). Visitors coming into Italy from non-EU countries can import, duty free: 1L of spirits (or 2L wine), 50g perfume, 250mL eau de toilette, 200 cigarettes and other goods up to a total of €175; anything over this limit must be declared on arrival and the appropriate duty paid. On leaving the EU, non-EU citizens can reclaim any VAT on expensive purchases.

DISCOUNT CARDS

An International Student Identity Card (ISIC; www.isic.org) can get you discounted admission prices at some sights and help with cheap flights out of Italy. Similar cards are available to teachers (ITIC) and nonstudents aged under 26 (IYTC). The cards also carry a travel-insurance component. They are issued

by student unions, hostelling organisations and some youth travel agencies.

In Venice the ISIC benefits are limited. A handful of bars, restaurants and shops give discounts, along with a couple of cinemas and some accommodations options. As for sights, the card will only come in handy at the Scuola Grande di San Rocco.

Rolling Venice

If you are aged between 14 and 29, pick up the Rolling VENICEcard (€4), which offers significant discounts on food, accommodation, entertainment, public transport, museums and galleries. You can get the card at tourist offices, Azienda Consorzio Trasporti Veneziano (ACTV) public-transport ticket points and HelloVenezia information and ticket stands (see p196). The Rolling Venice map lists all the hotels, restaurants, shops, museums, cinemas and theatres where the card entitles you to reductions.

Venice Card

A much-touted, all-inclusive transport and sights card, **VENICEcard** (☎ 041 24 24; www.venicecard.it) can save some hassle and a little money, depending on how much use you make of it.

The Blue card gives you unlimited use of ferries and buses throughout the Venice municipality for one, three or seven days. It also gives you free access to the public toilets (otherwise €1) scattered around town. Discounts are offered on exhibitions and a series of bars, restaurants, shops and car parks. Senior cardholders also get free entry to the Casinò di Venezia.

The Orange version throws in the Musei Civici (City Museums) and (if you take the three or seven-day version) the churches covered in the Chorus scheme for free (see p61), as well as a couple of other sights.

The Junior Blue card (for those aged under 30) costs €15/30.50/49 for one/three/seven days, while the senior version costs €17/34/52. The Junior Orange card costs €22/46/69 and the senior version €29/55/78. The passes are marginally cheaper if purchased online.

ELECTRICITY

The electric current in Venice is 220V, 50Hz, and plugs have two round pins, as in the rest of continental Europe. Several countries outside Europe (such as the USA and Canada) use 110V, 60Hz, which means that some appliances

from those countries may perform poorly. It is always safest to use a transformer.

EMBASSIES & CONSULATES

Most countries have an embassy in Rome. Look them up under *Ambasciate* in that city's *Pagine Gialle* (Yellow Pages). A limited number of countries maintain consulates in Venice, including:

Austria (Map pp84–5; ☎ 041 524 05 56; Fondamenta Condulmer, Santa Croce 251)

France (Map pp100–1; ☎ 041 522 43 19; Ramo del Pestrin, Castello 6140)

Germany (Map pp62–3; ☎ 041 523 76 75; Campo Sant'Anzolo, San Marco 3816)

Netherlands (Map pp62–3; ☎ 041 528 34 16; Ramo Giustinian, San Marco 2888)

Switzerland (Map pp76–7; ☎ 041 522 59 96; Campo di Sant'Agnes, Dorsoduro 810)

UK (Map p121; ☎ 041 505 59 90; Piazzale Donatori di Sangue 2, Mestre)

The nearest **Australian consulate** (☎ 02 7770 4217; Via Borgogna 2) and **US consulate** (☎ 02 29 03 51; Via Principe Amedeo 2/10) are in Milan. The **Canadian consulate** (Map p224; ☎ 049 876 48 33; Riviera Ruzzante 25) is in Padua.

EMERGENCIES

There is a **police station** (Map pp100–1; ☎ 041 270 55 11; Fondamenta di San Lorenzo, Castello 5053) a bit of a walk from the centre, and a handy branch at Piazza San Marco 67 (Map pp62–3). The city's **questura** (head police station; Map pp84–5; Santa Croce 500) is off the beaten track in one of the few rather unpleasant parts of town in the ex-convent of Santa Chiara, just beyond Piazzale Roma. Useful numbers:

Ambulance (*ambulanza*) ☎ 118

Fire Brigade (*vigili del fuoco*) ☎ 115

Military Police (*carabinieri*) ☎ 112

Police (*polizia*) ☎ 113

GAY & LESBIAN TRAVELLERS

Homosexuality is legal in Italy and well tolerated in Venice and the north.

ArdiGay (www.ardigay.it), the national gay organisation, has information on the gay and lesbian scene in Italy. The useful website www.gay.com (in Italian) lists gay bars and hotels across

the country. The pickings in Venice are slim (see the boxed text on p195 for some ideas). The nearest gay organisation is **ArciGay Tralaltro** (Map p224; ☎ 049 876 24 58; www.tralaltro.it, in Italian; Corso Garibaldi 41) in Padua, a town that offers considerably more nightlife options for gays.

HOLIDAYS

For Venetians as for most Italians, the main holiday periods remain summer (July and especially August), the Christmas–New Year period and Easter. August is a peculiar time as all Italy grinds to a halt, especially around Ferragosto (Feast of the Assumption; 15 August). Travelling to and around Venice in this high holiday period is far from ideal. For information on the city's many festivals and other events, see p16. The following is a list of national public holidays:

Capodanno/Anno Nuovo (New Year's Day) 1 January

Epifania/Befana (Epiphany) 6 January

Pasquetta/Lunedì dell'Angelo (Easter Monday) March/April

Giorno della Liberazione (Liberation Day) April 25; this marks the Allied Victory in Italy, and the end of the German presence and Mussolini, in 1945.

Festa del Lavoro (Labour Day) 1 May

Festa della Repubblica (Republic Day) 2 June

Ferragosto (Feast of the Assumption) 15 August

Ognissanti (All Saints' Day) 1 November

Immacolata Concezione (Feast of the Immaculate Conception) 8 December

Natale (Christmas Day) 25 December

Festa di Santo Stefano (Boxing Day) 26 December

INTERNET ACCESS

If you plan to carry your notebook or palm-top computer with you, carry a universal AC adaptor for your appliance (most are sold with these). Do not rely on finding wi-fi, as hot spots remain few and far between and often require payment. Another option is to buy a PCMCIA card pack with one of the Italian mobile phone operators, which gives wireless access through the mobile telephone network. These are usually prepaid services that you can top up as you go.

Internet Cafés

Some of the following places offer student rates and also have deals on cards for several

hours' use at reduced rates. Some offer cut-price international calls. Bring photo ID, as under Italian antiterrorism laws you cannot use these centres otherwise.

Grace (Map p109; ☎ 041 522 36 93; Fondamenta Sant'Eufemia, Giudecca 517; per hr €5; ☎ 9.30am–1pm & 3.30–7.30pm Mon–Fri)

Internet Corner (Map pp100–1; ☎ 041 277 05 15; Calle del Cafetier, Castello 6661a; per hr €7; ☎ 10am–10pm Mon–Sat, 1–9pm Sun)

Internet Point (Map pp62–3; Campo Santo Stefano, San Marco 2958; per 20 mins €3; 11.5am–7pm)

Planet Internet (Map pp92–3; ☎ 041 524 41 88; Rio Terà San Leonardo, Cannaregio 1519; per hr €8; ☎ 9am–11pm)

Venice Internet Point (Map pp92–3; ☎ 041 275 82 17; Rio Terà Lista di Spagna, Cannaregio 149; per hr €8; ☎ 9am–11pm)

World House (Map pp100–1; ☎ 041 528 48 71; www.world-house.org; Calle della Chiesa, Castello 4502; per hr €8; ☎ 10am–11pm)

LAUNDRY

Self-service laundries are finally beginning to appear in Venice.

Erre Effe Laundry (Map pp100–1; Ruga Giuffa, Castello 4826; 8kg wash €5, dry €3; ☎ 8.30am–8pm)

Laundry (Map pp84–5; www.laundry.it; Calle Chioverette, Santa Croce 665/b; 8kg wash €4, 12kg dry €4; ☎ 7.30am–10.30pm) This place has an ironing service next door.

Laundry (Map p109; www.laundry.it; Fondamenta delle Zitelle 65, Giudecca; 8kg wash €4, 12kg dry €4; ☎ 7.30am–10.30pm)

Laundry (Map p121; www.laundry.it; Via Piave 41, Mestre; 8kg wash €4, 16kg dry €4; ☎ 7.30am–11.30pm)

Speedy Wash (Map pp92–3; Rio Terà San Leonardo, Cannaregio 1520; 8kg wash €5, 15 min dry €3; ☎ 8am–10pm)

LOST PROPERTY

If you lose your stuff in Venice it may well be gone forever, but check with the *vigili urbani* (Map pp84–5; ☎ 041 522 45 76; Piazzale Roma). Otherwise, the following numbers might be useful:

ACTV (☎ 041 272 21 79) Public transport (vaporetti).

Marco Polo airport (☎ 041 260 92 22)

Municipio (☎ 041 274 82 25) Town hall.

Santa Lucia train station (☎ 041 78 55 31)

MAPS

You should be able to get by with the maps in this book, but some of those on sale are also good. The free one handed out by the tourist office is next to useless.

Whichever map of the city you buy, you will find inconsistencies. The *Venezianizzazione* (Venetianisation) of street names has created more problems than it could ever have solved. Most maps take a haphazard approach to using Italian, Venetian or mongrel versions. Which is no surprise, because some of the city's *nizioletti* (street signs) are equally haphazard, frequently mixing Venetian and Italian with gay abandon. Usually it's no great hassle to work out – but occasionally you need to use a little lateral thinking. We have adopted a mix of standard Italian and Venetian, a compromise between what you'll see on the ground and on business cards, websites and so on. There will be discrepancies (and, as purists of the Venetian tongue will note, grammatical and orthographic inconsistencies), but they are usually minor and easy to work out.

Try Lonely Planet's *Venice* map. If you can't find it, another good one is the wine red-covered *Venezia* produced by the Touring Club Italiano (1:5000).

If you plan to stay for the long haul, *Calli, Campielli e Canali* (Edizioni Helvetica) is for you. This is the definitive street guide and will usually allow you to locate to within 100m any Venetian address you need – saves a lot of shoe leather. Posties must do a course in it before being sent out to deliver the mail.

Online, try the maps on **Venice Explorer** (www.veniceexplorer.net).

Street Numbering

Venice has its own style of street numbering, which was introduced by the Austrians in the 19th century. Instead of a system based on individual streets, each *sestiere* (or municipal division) has a long series of numbers. Thus a hotel might give its address simply as San Marco 4687. Because the *sestieri* are fairly small, wandering around and searching out the number is theoretically feasible but often extraordinarily frustrating. Most streets in Venice are named, so where possible we have provided street names as well as the *sestiere* number. Even where this is not the case, using the maps in this book in conjunction with the *sestiere* numbers should clear up any mysteries.

MEDICAL SERVICES

Medical Cover

All foreigners have the same right as Italians to free emergency medical treatment in a public hospital. EU citizens (and those of Switzerland, Norway and Iceland) are entitled to the full range of health-care services in public hospitals free of charge, but you will need to present your European Health Insurance Card (EHIC). Australia has a reciprocal arrangement with Italy that entitles Australian citizens to free public health care – carry your Medicare card.

Citizens of New Zealand, the USA, Canada and other countries have to pay for anything other than emergency treatment. Most travel-insurance policies include medical cover.

The Italian public health system is administered by local centres generally known as Azienda Sanitaria Locale (ASL), Unità Sanitaria Locale (USL) or Unità Socio Sanitaria Locale (USSL). Just for fun, the Venetian version is ULSS. Under these headings you'll find long lists of offices – look for Poliambulatorio (poly-clinic) and the telephone number for *accettazione sanitaria* (medical appointments). Call this number to make an appointment – there's no point in just rolling up (you'll likely need to speak some Italian, but you never know your luck). Opening hours vary, with the minimum generally being about 8am to 12.30pm Monday to Friday. Some open for a couple of hours in the afternoon and on Saturday morning. In an emergency, head for the *pronto soccorso* (casualty section) of any hospital.

If your country has a consulate in Venice, staff there should be able to refer you to doctors who speak your language. If you have a specific health complaint, obtain the necessary information and referrals for treatment before leaving home.

The following medical services may be of use to travellers:

Guardia Medica (Venice ☎ 041 529 40 60, Mestre 041 95 13 32, Lido 041 526 77 43) This service of night-time callout doctors (locums) operates from 8pm to 8am on weekdays and from 10am the day before a holiday (including Sunday) until 8am the day after.

Spedale Civile (Map pp100–1; ☎ 041 529 41 11; Campo SS Giovanni e Paolo, Castello 6777) This is the main hospital. For emergency treatment, go straight to the *pronto soccorso* (casualty) section, where you can also get emergency dental treatment.

Spedale Umberto I (Map p121; ☎ 041 260 71 11; Viale Circonvallazione 50, Mestre) A modern mainland hospital.

Pharmacies

Most pharmacies in Venice are open from 9am to 12.30pm and 3.30pm to 7.30pm, and are closed on Saturday afternoon and Sunday. When closed, pharmacies are required to display a list of other pharmacies in the area that are open (on rotation) for extended hours.

METRIC SYSTEM

Italy uses the metric system. Like other continental Europeans, the Italians indicate decimals with commas and thousands with points. For a conversion chart, see the inside front cover of this book.

MONEY

As in 12 other EU nations (Austria, Belgium, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Portugal, Slovenia and Spain), the euro is the currency in Italy.

Euro notes come in denominations of €500, €200, €100, €50, €20, €10 and €5, in different colours and sizes. Euro coins are in denominations of €2, €1, 50c, 20c, 10c, 5c, 2c and 1c.

Each participating state decorates the reverse side of the coins with its own designs, but all euro coins can be used anywhere that accepts euros.

Changing Money

You can exchange money in banks, at post offices or in bureaux de change. See the Quick Reference (inside front cover) for exchange rates at the time of going to press. The post office and banks are reliable, but always ask about commissions. You'll find most of the main banks in the area around the Ponte di Rialto and San Marco.

Keep a sharp eye on commissions at bureaux de change, which sometimes exceed 10% on traveller's cheques. A handy bank with ATM for both the train and bus stations is the **Monte dei Paschi** (Map pp84–5; Fondamenta San Simeone Piccolo).

American Express (Amex; Map pp62–3; ☎ 041 520 08 44; Salizada San Moisè, San Marco 1471; 🕒 9am–5.30pm Mon–Fri, 9am–12.30pm Sat) Has an ATM for Amex cards.

Travelex (Map pp62–3; ☎ 041 528 73 58; Piazza San Marco, San Marco 142; 🕒 9am–6pm Mon–Sat, 9.30am–5pm Sun) There is another branch at Riva del Ferro, San Marco 5126.

Credit/Debit Cards

Major cards such as Visa, MasterCard, Maestro and Cirrus are accepted throughout Italy. They can be used in many hotels, restaurants and shops. Cards can also be used in ATMs displaying the appropriate sign if you have a PIN. If you have no PIN, some (but by no means all) banks will allow you to obtain cash advances over the counter (a lengthy process). MasterCard and Visa are among the most widely recognised for such transactions. Check charges with your bank. Most banks now build in a fee of around 2.75% into every foreign transaction. In addition, ATM withdrawals attract a fee, usually around 1.5%.

If your card is lost, stolen or swallowed by an ATM, you can call toll free to have an immediate stop put on its use.

Amex (☎ 800 914912)

MasterCard (☎ 800 870866)

Diners Club (☎ 800 864064)

Visa (☎ 800 819014)

Travellers Cheques

Travellers cheques have been largely outmoded by plastic. Various readers have reported having trouble changing travellers cheques in Italy and it seems most banks apply hefty commissions, even on cheques denominated in euros.

Visa, Travelex and Amex are the most widely accepted brands. Get your cheques in fairly large denominations to save on per-cheque charges. For more information, call ☎ 041 241 38 17 from 10am to noon, Monday to Friday.

It's vital to keep your initial receipt, along with a record of your cheque numbers and the ones you have used, separate from the cheques. Take along your passport as identification when you cash travellers cheques.

For lost or stolen cheques, call:

Amex (☎ 800 914912)

MasterCard (☎ 800 870866)

Travelex (☎ 800 872050)

Visa (☎ 800 874155)

NEWSPAPERS & MAGAZINES

A wide selection of national daily newspapers from around Europe (including the UK) is available at newsstands all over central Venice and at strategic locations like the train

and bus stations. The *International Herald Tribune*, *Time*, the *Economist*, *Der Spiegel* and a host of other international magazines are also available.

There is no 'national' paper as such but rather several important dailies published in major cities. These include Milan's *Corriere della Sera* (with a good Venice insert), Turin's right-leaning *La Stampa* and Rome's centre-left *La Repubblica*. This trio forms what could be considered the nucleus of a national press, publishing local editions up and down the country.

Two papers dominate the local scene. *Il Gazzettino*, in business since 1887, brings out separate editions in each province across the Triveneto area (the Veneto, Friuli Venezia Giulia and Trentino). If you're in Venice and want decent national and foreign news but with solid local content, this is probably the paper you want. Competition comes from two tabloids, *La Nuova Venezia* and *Il Venezia*.

VeNews, a monthly magazine, has info on the latest events, cinema, music and the like, along with a hodgepodge of articles, some in English.

ORGANISED TOURS

You can join free tours for a biblical explanation of the mosaics in the Basilica di San Marco. They take place in Italian at 11am Monday to Saturday. Tours in English are at 11am on Monday, Thursday and Friday, and in French at the same time on Thursday. This timetable is subject to change. For more information, call ☎ 041 241 38 17 from 10am to noon, Monday to Friday.

Consult *Un Ospite di Venezia*, available from tourist offices, for details of other tours of Venetian churches and sights. The Azienda di Promozione Turistica (APT) has an updated list of authorised guides, who will take you on a walking tour of the city. Many museums, such as the Palazzo Ducale, can organise guided tours at a price. A couple of museums, including the Museo Archeologico and the Libreria Nazionale Marciana, offer free tours. Travel agencies and hotel-reception staff can also put you on to a range of city tours.

The Azienda di Promozione Turistica (APT) tourist offices (see p259) offer a series of guided tours, from a two-hour walk around San Marco (€30 per person) to an evening serenaded gondola jaunt (€38 per person).

Allegra in Venice (☎ 041 528 77 78; www.allegroinvenice.com) Offers a 7.30am tour (for crowdless sightseeing),

a Running Venice tour (for jogging and sightseeing at once), or another tour chasing ghosts and legends. Their Easy Access Venice service is aimed at helping people with disabilities enjoy the city. The ghosts and legends tours are based on tales vividly recounted by Alberto Toso Fei in *Venetian Legends and Ghost Stories*; check out www.venetianlegends.it (in Italian).

Associazione Sant'Apollonia (☎ 041 270 24 64) Guided visits of several churches off the beaten tourist track, including the Cattedrale di Santa Maria Assunta in Torcello, Chiesa di San Pantalon, Chiesa dei Carmini and the Chiesa di San Salvador.

Città d'Acqua (☎ 041 93 68 33; www.veniceitineraries.com, in Italian; Centro Internazionale Città d'Acqua, Officina Viaggi, Via Col Moschin 14, Mestre; per person with minimum 40-person group €75, with minimum 10-person group €95; 🕒 variable) Runs Maree Veneziane (Venetian Tides) tours exploring various parts of the lagoon, including the Arsenal, Malamocco, Le Vignole and Giudecca. Call for details.

Eolo (☎ 049 807 80 32; www.cruisingvenice.com; Via Mantegna 11, Brugine) Takes you on board the like-named 1946 *bragazzo*, a typical, two-masted, heavy-hulled lagoon sailing vessel, for three-day trips (€2000 per person; six to 10 people). Other trip options include an on-board cooking tour. You sleep in selected villas or *palazzi* in Venice or around the lagoon, spend the day tootling about the lagoon, and eat a delicious seafood lunch on board each day.

HeliAir Venice (☎ 041 527 47 62; www.heliairvenice.com, in Italian) Offers quick helicopter tours over the city (around 10 minutes, €99 per person), the lagoon (around 15 minutes, €169 per person) and a more wide-ranging tour over the region (about 25 minutes, €249 per person). Hovering about the city and its lagoon, you begin to wish you were a bird. Below, the city looks like a detailed model of itself, while the lagoon and other islands together take on the rich colours of an oil painting. It's brief but beautiful. You take off from the nicely restored 1930s Nicelli aerodrome (which was then Venice's only airport) at the north end of the Lido (take the San Nicolò bus from the vaporetto stop).

RiViviNatura (Map pp62–3; ☎ 041 296 07 26; www.rivivinatura.it, in Italian; Calle dei Vitturi, San Marco 2923) Organises offbeat day tours around the lagoon. There are various options and, depending on the kind of boats used (from large traditional *bragozzi* under sail to a vaporetto), these trips can cost up to €54 per person (extra for lunch). They also organise bird-watching trips and excursions of up to three days around the mainland.

Venice Escapes (www.venicescapes.org) Offers six curious tours of Venice, with themes ranging from Crimes of State to the Age of Decadence. Tours cost US\$150 to US\$250 for two people depending on the tour (each extra adult is another US\$50). Book on the website.

Venice Events (☎ 041 523 99 79; www.veniceevents.com; Frezzaria, San Marco 1827; adult/under 5yr/6-15yr/ student & senior €22/free/11/16; ☎ 11.15am Mon-Fri, 2pm Sat-Sun mid-Mar–mid-Nov) Runs various tours, including a Venice Past & Present tour from Piazza San Marco to the Arsenal.

Walks Inside Venice (☎ 041 524 17 06; www.walksin sidevenice.com) Run by three women who will organise anything from tours themed on art to specific city districts. A typical three-hour tour costs €225 for a small private group.

POST

Poste Italiane (☎ 803160; www.poste.it), Italy's postal service, is slow but has improved over the past few years.

Francobolli (stamps) are available from post offices and authorised tobacconists (look for the official *tabacchi* sign: a big 'T', often white on black).

The **main post office** (Map pp62–3; Salizada del Fontego dei Tedeschi; ☎ 8.30am–6.30pm Mon–Sat) is near the Ponte di Rialto. *Francobolli* are available at windows in the central courtyard. There is something special about doing your post in this former trading house. Stand by the well in the middle and imagine the bustle as German traders and brokers shuffled their goods around on the ground floor or struck deals in their quarters on the upper levels back in the Republic's trading heyday.

Postal Rates

The cost of sending a letter by *via aerea* (air-mail) depends on its weight, size and where it is being sent. Most people use the so-called *posta prioritaria* (priority post; though it's really the standard service expected anywhere in Europe!). Letters up to 20g cost €0.65 within Europe, €0.85 to Africa, Asia, North and South America and €1 to Australia and New Zealand. Letters weighing 21g to 50g cost €1.45 within Europe, €1.50 to Africa, Asia and the Americas, and €1.80 to Australia and New Zealand.

Officially, letters sent *posta prioritaria* within Italy should arrive the following working day, those posted to destinations in Europe and the Mediterranean basin within three days, and those to the rest of the world in four to eight days.

Pacchetti (parcels) can be sent from any post office. You can purchase posting boxes or padded envelopes from most post offices. Parcels usually take longer to be delivered than letters; a different set of postal rates applies.

Receiving Mail

Poste restante is known as *fermo posta* in Italy. Letters marked in this way will be held at the Fermo Posta counter in the main post office in the relevant town. At the main post office in Venice, you can pick up your letters at window 16 – take your passport along as ID. Poste restante mail should be addressed as follows:

John SMITH
Fermo Posta
Posta Centrale
30100 Venice
Italy

RADIO

The state-owned RAI-1, RAI-2 and RAI-3 (www.rai.it) broadcast all over the country and abroad. They offer a combination of classical and light music with news broadcasts and discussion programmes.

There are various local stations, two based in Venice proper. Most are not very inspiring, but **Radio Venezia** (www.radiovenezia.it) has news and a reasonable music selection. **Radio Vanessa** (www.radiovanessa.it, in Italian) presents anything from operettas through '60s hits to Italian pop. If your Italian is good and you like a little right-on, left-wing, antiestablishment news and views, try Mestre-based **Radio Base** (www.radiobase.net, in Italian), part of the national Radio Popolare network.

You can pick up the BBC World Service on short wave at 6.195MHz, 7320MHz, 9.410MHz, 12.095MHz and 15.485MHz depending on where you are and the time of day. Voice of America can be found on short wave at 1593MHz, 9685MHz, 11,835MHz, 15,255MHz and 17,555MHz.

SMOKING

Since early 2005 smoking in all closed public spaces (from bars to elevators, offices to trains) has been banned.

TAXES

VAT of around 20%, known as Imposta di Valore Aggiunto (IVA), is slapped onto just about everything in Italy. If you are a non-EU resident and spend more than €155 on a purchase, you can claim a refund when you leave. The refund only applies to purchases from affiliated retail outlets that display a 'tax free for tourists' (or similar) sign. You have

to complete a form at the point of sale, then have it stamped by Italian customs as you leave. At major airports you can then request an immediate cash refund; otherwise it will be refunded to your credit card. For information, pick up a pamphlet on the scheme from participating stores.

TELEPHONE

Most of the orange Telecom payphones only accept *carte/schede telefoniche* (phonecards).

There is a bank of telephones near the main post office on Calle Galeazza (Map pp62–3). Unstaffed Telecom offices can be found on the corner of Corte dei Pali and Strada Nova in Cannaregio (Map pp92–3); Calle San Luca, San Marco 4585 (Map pp62–3); and at Santa Lucia train station (Map pp92–3).

You can buy phonecards (€2.50 or €5) at post offices, tobacconists and newsstands, and from vending machines in Telecom offices. Snap off the perforated corner before using it. Phonecards have an expiry date, usually it is 31 December or 30 June depending on when you purchase the card.

Calling Venice from Abroad

Dial the international access code (00 in most countries), followed by the code for Italy (39) and the full number, including the leading 0. For example, to call the number ☎ 041 528 77 77 in Venice you need to dial the international access code followed by ☎ 39 041 528 77 77.

Costs

A *comunicazione urbana* (local call) from a public phone costs €0.10 every minute and 10 seconds. For a *comunicazione interurbana* (long-distance call within Italy) you pay €0.10 when the call is answered and then €0.10 every 57 seconds.

A three-minute call from a payphone to most European countries and North America will cost about €1.95. Australasia would cost €2.80. Calling from a private phone is cheaper.

Domestic Calls

Area codes are an integral part of Italian telephone numbers. The codes all begin with 0 and consist of up to four digits. You must dial this whole number, even if calling from next door. Thus, any number you call in the Venice area will begin with 041.

Mobile phone numbers begin with a three-digit prefix such as 330, 335, 347 or 368. Free-phone or toll-free numbers are known as *numeri verdi* (green numbers) and start with 800. National rate (the call rate that applies across the country) numbers start with 848, 899, 166 or 199. Some six-digit national-rate numbers are also in use (such as those for rail and postal information).

In order to make national directory inquiries, call ☎ 12.

Fax

You can send faxes from post offices and some tobacconists, copy centres and stationers. Faxes can also be sent from some Telecom public phones. Expect to pay around €1.50 a page for faxes sent within Italy, and more abroad.

International Calls

Direct international calls can easily be made from public telephones by using a phonecard. Dial 00 to get out of Italy, then the relevant country and city codes, followed by the telephone number.

For international directory inquiries, call ☎ 4176. To make a reverse-charge (collect) international call from a public telephone, dial ☎ 170. It is easier and often cheaper to use your country's Country Direct service. You dial the number and request a reverse-charge call through the operator in your country. Get hold of the access numbers before you leave your home country.

International Phonecards & Call Centres

Several private companies distribute international phonecards offering cheaper rates on long-distance calls. Some are better than others, but few are available in Venice. Keep an eye out at newsstands, tobacconists and the like.

Planet Internet (Map pp92–3; ☎ 041 524 41 88; Rio Terà San Leonardo, Cannaregio 1519; per hr €8; ☎ 9am–11pm) offers cheap-rate international calls.

Mobile Phones

You can buy SIM cards in Italy for your own national mobile phone (provided you have a GSM, dual- or tri-band cellular phone), as well as prepaid call time. This only works if your

phone hasn't been code blocked, which is often the case, so find out before leaving home. You won't want to consider a full contract unless you plan to live in Italy for a good while. You need your passport to open any kind of mobile-phone account, prepaid or otherwise.

Of the four main mobile phone companies, TIM (Telecom Italia Mobile) and Vodafone have the densest networks of outlets across the country. You can get prepaid SIM cards for as little as €10.

US mobile phones generally work on a frequency of 1900MHz, so for use in Italy your US handset will have to be tri-band.

TELEVISION

The three state-run stations, RAI-1, RAI-2 and RAI-3 (www.rai.it), are run by Radio e Televisione Italiana. Historically, each has been in the hands of one of the main political groupings in the country and the appointment of station directors and senior staff is politicised.

Of the three, RAI-3 tends to have some of the more interesting programmes. Generally, however, these stations and the private Canale 5, Italia 1, Rete 4 and La 7 tend to serve up a diet of indifferent news, tacky variety hours (with lots of near-naked tits and bums, appalling crooning and vaudeville humour) and game shows. Talk shows, some interesting but many nauseating, also abound.

Regional channels include Telenuovo, Italia 7, Antenna 3, TeleNordEst and Televenezia. Quality is mainly indifferent but all carry more news and cultural items on Venice and the Veneto than the main stations.

TIME

Italy (and hence Venice) is one hour ahead of GMT/UTC during winter and two hours ahead during the daylight-saving period from the last Sunday in March to the last Sunday in October. Most other Western European countries are on the same time as Italy year-round, the major exceptions being the UK, Ireland and Portugal, which are one hour behind.

TIPPING

You are not expected to tip on top of restaurant service charges, but it is common to leave a small amount, say €1 per person. If there is no service charge, you might con-

sider leaving a 10% tip, but this is by no means obligatory. In bars, Italians often leave any small change as a tip, often only €0.05c or €0.10. Tipping taxi drivers is not common practice, but you should tip the porter at higher-class hotels.

TOILETS

Stopping at a bar or café for a quick coffee and then a trip to the toilet is the common solution to those sudden urges at awkward times. Make sure the bar actually has a toilet before committing yourself! Public toilets (€1) are scattered about Venice – look for the 'WC Toilette' signs. They are generally open from 7am to 7pm.

TOURIST INFORMATION

Tourist Helpline & Complaints

Take complaints to the tourist offices or the **Sportello di Conciliazione Turistica** (Map pp100–1; ☎ 041 529 87 10; complaint.apr@turismovenetia.it; Fondamenta di San Lorenzo, Castello 5050; ☎ 8.30am–1.30pm Mon–Fri). Note that they don't promise much more than to listen sympathetically.

Tourist Offices Abroad

Information on Venice is available from the following branches of the Ente Nazionale Italiano per il Turismo (ENIT; Italian State Tourism Board).

Australia (☎ 02-9262 1666; italia@italiantourism.com.au; Level 4, 46 Market St, Sydney, NSW 2000)

Austria (☎ 01-505 16 39; delegation.wien@enit.at; Kaerntnerring 4, Vienna, A-1010)

Canada (☎ 416-925 4882; www.italiantourism.com; Suite 907, South Tower, 175 Bloor St East, Toronto, M4W 3R8)

France (☎ 01 42 66 03 96; www.enit-france.com in French; 23 rue de la Paix, Paris, 75002)

Germany Berlin (☎ 030-247 8398; www.enit.de in German; Kontorhaus Mitte, Friedrichstrasse 187, 10117); Frankfurt (☎ 069-259126; Kaiserstrasse 65, 60329); Munich (☎ 089-531317; Lenbachplatz 2, 80333)

Japan (☎ 03-3478 2051; www.enit.jp; 2-7-14 Minami-aoyama, Minato-ku, Tokyo, 107-0062)

The Netherlands (☎ 020-616 82 46; enitams@wirehub.nl; Stadhouderskade 2, Amsterdam, 1054 ES)

Switzerland (☎ 043 466 40 40; info@enit.ch; Uraniasstrasse 32, Zurich, 8001)

UK (☎ 020-7408 1254; italy@italiantouristboard.co.uk; 1 Princes St, London, W1B 2AY)

USA Chicago (☎ 312-644 0996; www.italiantourism.com; 500 North Michigan Ave, Suite 2240, IL 60611); Los Angeles (☎ 310-820 1898; 12400 Wilshire Blvd, Suite 550, CA 90025); New York (☎ 212-245 4822; 630 Fifth Ave, Suite 1565, NY 10111)

Tourist Offices in Venice

Azienda di Promozione Turistica (APT; information line ☎ 041 52987 11; www.turismovenetia.it) offices have information on the town and the province. Staff will assist with information on hotels, transport and things to see and do in the city.

APT office Chioggia (☎ 041 40 10 68; www.chioggia.tourism.it; Lungomare Adriatico 101, Sottomarina, Chioggia; ☎ 8.30am–6.30pm, reduced hr winter); Lido di Venezia (Map p116; Gran Viale Santa Maria Elisabetta 6a; ☎ 9am–12.30pm & 3.30–6pm Jun–Sep); Marco Polo airport (Arrivals hall; ☎ 9.30am–7.30pm); Piazzale Roma (Map pp84–5; Piazzale Roma, Santa Croce; ☎ 9.30am–1pm & 1–4.30pm Nov–Mar, 9.30am–6.30pm Apr–Oct); Piazza San Marco (Map pp62–3; Piazza San Marco, San Marco 71f; ☎ 9am–3.30pm); Stazione di Santa Lucia (Map pp92–3; Stazione di Santa Lucia, Cannaregio; ☎ 8am–6.30pm, to 8pm in summer)

Infopoint (Map pp62–3; Venice Pavilion, San Marco; ☎ 10am–6pm) Next to Giardini ex Reali, a quick walk from Piazza San Marco.

Terminal Fusina Venice Office (Map pp76–7; Campo di Sant'Agnes, Dorsoduro 909; ☎ 9am–1pm) For those arriving in town from Fusina on the mainland, this office has limited city info, public-transport tickets and a couple of internet terminals.

The useful monthly booklet *Un Ospite di Venezia* (A Guest in Venice), published by a group of Venetian hoteliers, is distributed in many hotels. In tourist offices, ask for *La Rivista di Venezia*, a bi-monthly free magazine with articles in Italian and English and a handy listings insert, *Shows & Events*. Another useful listings freebie you may encounter in bars is *VDV* (*Venezia da Vivere*), in Italian and English.

TRAVEL AGENTS

Venice is not awash with good-value travel agents, but you could try the following:

CTS (Map pp76–7; ☎ 041 520 56 60; www.cts.it, in Italian; Calle Foscarei, Dorsoduro 3252) The main Italian student and youth travel organisation.

CTS (Map p121; ☎ 041 96 11 25; Via Ca' Savorgnan 8, Mestre)

Gran Canal Viaggi (Map pp62–3; ☎ 041 271 21 11; Calle del Lovo, San Marco 4759/4760)

TRAVELLERS WITH DISABILITIES

People with disabilities have not been completely left out of what is, after all, a fairly unfriendly environment for those with mobility problems.

A map available from APT offices has city areas shaded in yellow to indicate that they can be negotiated without running into one of Venice's many bridges. Some bridges are equipped with *servoscale* (lifts), which are marked on the maps. You can (in theory) get hold of a key to operate these lifts from tourist offices. APT offices also distribute a series of smaller route maps entitled *Accessible Venice* with sights descriptions and notes on accessibility.

A **disabled assistance office** (☎ 7am–9pm) is located in front of platform 4 at Stazione di Santa Lucia.

Vaporetto lines 1 and 82, and the bigger lagoon ferries, have access for wheelchairs. Passengers in wheelchairs travel for free.

Five bus lines are adapted for wheelchair users: line 2 (Piazzale Roma to Mestre train station), line 4 (Piazzale Roma to Corso del Popolo in Mestre), line 5 (Piazzale Roma to Marco Polo airport), line 6 (Tronchetto and Piazzale Roma to the mainland) and line 15 (a mainland service running between Marco Polo airport and Mestre).

The Venice town hall is also developing a project for the sight-impaired, including tactile maps of the city that can be downloaded using special processes. Information (in Italian only) is available at www2.comune.venezia.it/letturagevolata/.

Organisations

Accessible Italy (☎ 378 94 11 11; www.accessibleitaly.com) A San Marino-based company that specialises in holiday services for the disabled, ranging from tours to the hiring of adapted transport. They can even arrange romantic Italian weddings. This is the best first port of call.

Holiday Care (☎ 0845 124 9971; www.holidaycare.org.uk; 7th fl, Sunley House, 4 Bedford Park, Croydon, Surrey CR0 2AP, UK) Information on hotels with disabled access, where to hire equipment and tour operators dealing with the disabled.

Informahandicap (Map pp62–3; ☎ 041 274 81 44; www.comune.venezia.it/informahandicap, in Italian; Ca' Farsetti, San Marco 4136) The website has details on hotels that can accommodate guests with disabilities, getting around the city and other information.

Informahandicap (Map p121; ☎ 041 274 61 44; Piazzale Candiani 5, Mestre)

Italia Per Tutti (www.italiapertutti.it) The website has a region-by-region search engine with lists of hotels, restaurants and more with disabled access and other information.

VISAS

Italy is among the 16 countries that have signed the Schengen Convention, an agreement whereby 14 EU member countries (excluding the UK, Ireland and 11 of the 12 new members that have entered the union since 2004) plus Iceland and Norway agreed to abolish checks at common borders. Legal residents of one Schengen country do not require a visa for another. Citizens of the remaining EU countries and Switzerland are also exempt. Nationals of some other countries, including Australia, Brazil, Canada, Israel, Japan, New Zealand and the USA, do not require visas for tourist visits of up to 90 days.

All non-EU nationals entering Italy for any reason other than tourism (such as study or work) should contact an Italian consulate, as they may need a visa. They should also insist on having their passport stamped on entry as, without a stamp, they could encounter problems when trying to obtain a *permesso di soggiorno* (residence permit).

If you are a citizen of a country not mentioned here, check with an Italian consulate whether you need a visa. The standard tourist visa issued by Italian consulates is the Schengen visa, valid for up to 90 days. A Schengen visa issued by one Schengen country is generally valid for travel in all other Schengen countries. These visas are not renewable inside Italy. For more information on this and a list of countries whose citizens require a visa, check the website of the [Italian foreign ministry](#) (www.esteri.it) or [www.eurovisa.info/SchengenCountries.htm](#).

Permits

EU citizens do not need permits to live, work or start a business in Italy. They are, however, advised to register with a *questura* if they take up residence. While you're at it, you'll need a *codice fiscale* (tax-file number) if you wish

to be paid for most work in Italy. Study and work visas (required by all non-EU citizens) must be applied for in your country of residence. On arrival, non-EU citizens coming to study or work may also need a *permesso di soggiorno* (residence permit) and or *permesso di lavoro* (work permit). Go to the **police station** (Map pp100–1; ☎ 041 271 55 11; Fondamenta di San Lorenzo, Castello 5053) to obtain precise information.

WOMEN TRAVELLERS

Of the main destinations in Italy, Venice has to be the safest for women. The kind of bravado that has more southerly Italians strutting about in an effort to gain the attention of foreign women seems largely absent here. There are a couple of exceptions. The more popular Lido beaches have a bit of a reputation – local chaps of all ages try it on with local and foreign women. A social club known as the Battitori (Beaters) di San Marco 'works' Piazza San Marco. Following are a couple of organisations worth noting if you are spending any length of time in the city and have problems.

Centro Anti-Violenza (off Map p121; ☎ 041 269 06 11; Villa Franchin, Viale G Garibaldi 155a, Mestre) A women's centre offering legal advice, counselling and support to women who have been attacked, regardless of nationality. The service is free and open 9am to 8pm Monday to Friday. Take bus 2 from Piazzale Roma.

Centro Donna (off Map p121; ☎ 041 269 06 30; www.comune.venezia.it/c-donna, in Italian; Villa Franchin, Viale G Garibaldi 155/a, Mestre) Located in the same building as Centro Anti-Violenza, this centre has a library and cultural events aimed at women, whether Italian or foreign.

WORK

It is illegal for non-EU citizens to work in Italy without a *permesso di lavoro* (work permit), but obtaining one through your Italian consulate is a pain. Immigration laws require non-EU foreign workers to be 'legalised' through their employers. This applies even to cleaners and baby-sitters. The employers then pay pension and health-insurance contributions.

Doing Business in Venice

People wishing to make the first moves towards expanding their business into Italy should contact their country's trade department. The commercial department of the Italian embassy in your home country should also have information – at least on red tape.

In Italy, the trade office of your embassy can provide tips and contacts.

Information on trade fairs in Venice can be found at [www.veneziafiere.it](#) (in Italian). For organising business conventions in Venice, getting temporary accommodation for clients, secretarial services and so on, contact the following:

ENDAR (Map pp100–1; ☎ 041 523 84 40; www.endar.it; Castello 4966)

Venezia Congressi (Map pp100–1; ☎ 041 522 84 00; www.veneziacongressi.com; San Marco 4606)

Employment Options

Work options in Venice are limited. Au pair work, organised before you come to Italy, is one possibility. A useful guide is *The Au Pair and Nanny's Guide to Working Abroad*, by Susan Griffith and Sharon Legg.

Art students and graduates might consider doing a stint for the Peggy Guggenheim Collection. The gallery takes on foreign students to staff the museum, the cloakroom and so on for periods of up to three months. This is most easily pursued through your art school.

The easiest source of employment for foreigners is teaching English (or another foreign language), but even with full qualifications a non-EU citizen will find it difficult to secure a permanent position and there aren't many schools in Venice.

University students or recent graduates might be able to set up an internship with companies in Venice. The [Association of International Students for Economics and Commerce](#) (www.aiesec.org), with branches throughout the world, helps member students find internships in related fields.

LANGUAGE

It's true – anyone can speak another language. Don't worry if you haven't studied languages before or that you studied a language at school for years and can't remember any of it. It doesn't even matter if you failed English grammar. After all, that's never affected your ability to speak English! And this is the key to picking up a language in another country. You just need to start speaking.



Learn a few key phrases before you go. Write them on pieces of paper and stick them on the fridge, by the bed or even on the computer – anywhere that you'll see them often.

You'll find that Italians really appreciate travellers trying their language, no matter how muddled you may think you sound. So don't just stand there, say something! If you want to learn more Italian than we've included here, pick up a copy of Lonely Planet's comprehensive but user-friendly *Italian Phrasebook* or *Fast Talk Italian*.

Lingo in Venice

Italian in Venice comes with its own unique flavour. Standard Italian, with its roots in the Tuscan dialect of Dante, is spoken by pretty much everyone but often with a strong local lilt.

Influenced by Venessian (one of several dialects making up what linguists refer to as Venet, the language of the Veneto region), Venetians clip and chop consonants to some extent. *Ciao bello!* (hi handsome!) becomes *ciao beo!* in the local tongue. Many locals stick grimly to their dialect, although others tend to mix Venessian with Italian – giving Italian speakers from other parts of the country the impression at times that they understand everything, only to be confounded halfway through a sentence.

Documents from the time of the Republic (predating unification) show a disconcerting mix of Italian and Venessian. Only with the process of standardisation and universal schooling that occurred though the course of the 20th century have dialects – or mixes of dialect and Standard Italian – been clearly relegated to a secondary place in Venice – as elsewhere in Italy.

SOCIAL

Meeting People

Hello.
Buongiorno.
Goodbye.
Arrivederci.

Please.
Per favore.
Thank you (very much).
(Mille) Grazie.
Yes/No.
Sì/No.
Do you speak English?
Parla inglese?
Do you understand (me)?
(Mi) capisce?
Yes, I understand.
Sì, capisco.
No, I don't understand.
No, non capisco.

Could you please ...?
Potrebbe ...?
repeat that **ripeterlo**
speak more **parlare più lentamente**
slowly
write it down **scriverlo**

Going Out

What's on ...?
Che c'è in programma ...?
locally **in zona**
this weekend **questo fine settimana**
today **oggi**
tonight **stasera**

Where are the ...?
Dove sono ...?
clubs **dei clubs**
gay venues **dei locali gay**
places to eat **posti dove mangiare**
pubs **dei pub**

Is there a local entertainment guide?
C'è una guida agli spettacoli in questa città?

PRACTICAL

Question Words

Who? **Chi?**
What? **Che?**
When? **Quando?**
Where? **Dove?**
How? **Come?**

Numbers & Amounts

1 **uno**
2 **due**
3 **tre**
4 **quattro**
5 **cinque**
6 **sei**
7 **sette**
8 **otto**
9 **nove**
10 **dieci**
11 **undici**
12 **dodici**
13 **treddici**
14 **quattordici**
15 **quindici**
16 **sedici**
17 **diciassette**
18 **diciotto**
19 **diciannove**
20 **venti**
21 **ventuno**
22 **ventidue**
30 **trenta**
40 **quaranta**
50 **cinquanta**
60 **sessanta**
70 **settanta**
80 **ottanta**
90 **novanta**
100 **cento**
1000 **mille**
2000 **duemila**

Days

Monday **lunedì**
Tuesday **martedì**
Wednesday **mercoledì**
Thursday **giovedì**
Friday **venerdì**
Saturday **sabato**
Sunday **domenica**

Banking

I'd like to ...
Vorrei ...
cash a cheque **riscuotere un assegno**
change money **cambiare denaro**
change some **cambiare degli assegni**
travellers cheques **di viaggio**

Where's the nearest ...?
Dov'è il ... più vicino?
automatic teller **bancomat**
machine
foreign exchange **cambio**
office

Post

Where is the post office?
Dov'è la posta?
I want to send a ...
Voglio spedire ...
parcel **un pacchetto**
postcard **una cartolina**

I want to buy ...
Voglio comprare ...
an aerogram **un aerogramma**
an envelope **una busta**
a stamp **un francobollo**

Phone & Mobile Phones

I want to buy a phone card.
Voglio comprare una scheda telefonica.
I want to make ...
Voglio fare ...
a call (to ...) **una chiamata (a ...)**
reverse-charge/
collect call **una chiamata a carico del destinatario**

Where can I find a/an ...?
Dove si trova ...
I'd like a/an ...
Vorrei ...
adaptor plug **un adattatore**
charger for my **un caricabatterie**
phone
mobile/cell **un cellulare da**
phone for hire **noleggiare**
prepaid mobile/
cell phone **un cellulare prepagato**
SIM card for **una carta SIM per**
your network **vostra rete telefonica**

Internet

Where's a local internet café?
Dove si trova un punto internet?

I'd like to ...
Vorrei ...
 check my email **controllare le mie email**
 get online **collegarmi a internet**

Transport

What time does the ... leave?

A che ora parte ...?

bus **l'autobus**
 ferry (large) **la motonave**
 ferry (speedboat) **il motoscafo**
 plane **l'aereo**
 train **il treno**
 vaporetto **il batello/vaporetto**

What time's the ... bus/vaporetto?

A che ora passa ... autobus/batello?

first **il primo**
 last **l'ultimo**
 next **il prossimo**

Are you free? (taxi)

È libero questo taxi?

Please put the meter on.

Usa il tassametro, per favore.

How much is it to ...?

Quant'è per ...?

Please take me to (this address).

Mi porti a (questo indirizzo), per favore.

FOOD

Can you recommend a ...

Potrebbe consigliare un ...?

bar/pub **bar/pub**
 café **bar**
 restaurant **ristorante**

breakfast **prima colazione**

lunch **pranzo**

dinner **cena**
 snack **spuntino/merenda**
 eat **mangiare**
 drink **bere**

Is service/cover charge included in the bill?

Il servizio/coperto è compreso nel conto?

For more detailed information on food and dining out, see the Eating chapter (p168).

EMERGENCIES

It's an emergency!

È un'emergenza!

Could you please help me/us?

Mi/Ci può aiutare, per favore?

Call the police/a doctor/an ambulance!

Chiami la polizia/un medico/un'ambulanza!

Where's the police station?

Dov'è la questura?

HEALTH

Where's the nearest ...?

Dov'è ...più vicino?

chemist (night) **la farmacia (di turno)**
 dentist **il dentista**
 doctor **il medico**
 hospital **l'ospedale**

I need a doctor (who speaks English).

Ho bisogno di un medico (che parla inglese).

Symptoms

I have (a) ...

Ho ...

diarrhoea **la diarrea**
 fever **la febbre**
 headache **mal di testa**
 pain **un dolore**

GLOSSARY

Listed below are useful Italian terms. Some of these have particular local meanings in Venice (and sometimes elsewhere in the Veneto), and are marked (Vz). Other local terms in Venetian dialect are also included and these are marked (V).

abbonamento – transport pass valid for one month
acqua alta (s), **acque alte** (pl) – high water (flooding that occurs in Venice, especially during winter, when the sea level rises)

ACTV – Azienda Consorzio Trasporti Veneziano; Venice public transport (bus and vaporetto) company
affittacamere – rooms for rent (sometimes cheaper than a pensione and not part of the classification system)
AIG – Associazione Italiana Alberghi per la Gioventù; Italian Youth Hostel Association
alimentari – grocery shop
alloggio – general term for lodging of any kind; not part of the classification system
altana – traditional Venetian roof terrace
altor maggiore – high altar

andata e ritorno – return trip
aperitivo – apéritif, early-evening drink
APT – Azienda di Promozione Turistica (local tourist office)
arco – arch
autonoleggio – car hire
autostazione – bus station/terminal
bacaro – (V) traditional Venetian bar or eatery
bagagli smarriti – lost luggage
batello – generic term for all types of Venetian ferry
battistero – baptistry
biglietteria – ticket office
biglietto (s), **biglietti** (pl) – ticket
binario – platform
bucintoro – doge's ceremonial barge
calle (s), **calli** (pl) – (Vz) street
campanile – bell tower
campo – (Vz) square, piazza
cappella – chapel
carabinieri – police with military and civil duties
carnet – book of tickets
Carnevale – carnival period between Epiphany and Lent
carta marmorizzata – marbled paper
cartapesta – papier-mâché, used to make Carnevale masks
casa – house
centro storico – (literally 'historical centre') old town
chiaroscuro – (literally 'light-dark') the use of strong light and dark contrasts in painting to put the main figures into stronger relief
chiesa – church
chiostro – cloister
cicheti – (V) traditional bar snacks
consolato – consulate
contorno – side order
convalida – validation (of train ticket, for example)
coperto – cover charge (in restaurant)
corte – (Vz) blind alley
CTS – Centro Turistico Studentesco e Giovanile (student/youth travel agency)
cupola – dome
deposito bagagli – left luggage
digestivo – after-dinner liqueur
doge (s), **dogi** (pl) – leader, duke
ENIT – Ente Nazionale Italiano per il Turismo (Italian State Tourist Office)
enoteca (s), **enoteche** (pl) – wine bar
ES – Eurostar Italia; very fast train
espresso – express mail; short black coffee
fermo posta – poste restante
ferrovia – railway
fiume – river
fondamenta – (Vz) street beside a canal
forcola – (V) wooden support for gondolier's oar
foresto – (V) stranger, foreigner (non-Venetian)
fornaio – bakery

gabinetto – toilet, WC
gelateria (s), **gelaterie** (pl) – ice-cream shop
intarsia – inlaid wood, marble or metal
isola – island
IVA – Imposta di Valore Aggiunto (value-added tax)
lago – lake
largo – (small) square; boulevard
lido – beach
locanda – inn, small hotel
lungomare – seafront road or promenade
malvasia – tavern (named after the wine imported from Greek islands once controlled by Venice)
marzaria – (V) shop-lined street in heart of Venice
merceria – haberdashery shop, see also **marzaria**
motonave – big, interisland ferry on Venetian lagoon
motorino – moped
motoscafo (s), **motoscafi** (pl) – motorboat; in Venice also a faster, fully enclosed ferry and water taxi
nave (s), **navi** (pl) – ship
oggetti smarriti – lost property
ombra – (Vz) small glass of wine
orario – timetable
ostello (per la gioventù) – (youth) hostel
osteria (s), **osterie** (pl) – traditional bar/restaurant
pala d'altare – altarpiece; refers to a painting (often on wood) usually used as an ornament before the altar
palazzo (s), **palazzi** (pl) – palace, mansion; large building of any type, including an apartment block
panetteria – bakery
panini – sandwiches
passaggiata – traditional evening or Sunday stroll
passerella (s), **passerelle** (pl) – raised walkway
pasticcERIA – cake/pasty shop
pendolini – high-speed trains
pensione – guesthouse, small hotel
pescaria – (V) fish market
piano nobile – main floor
piazzetta – small piazza
pietà – (literally 'pity' or 'compassion') sculpture, drawing or painting of the dead Christ supported by the Madonna
pinacoteca – art gallery
poltrona – airline-type chair on a ferry
ponte – bridge
portabagagli – porter
portico – covered walkway, usually attached to the outside of buildings
porto – port
posta aerea – airmail
primo piatto – first course
pronto soccorso – first aid, casualty ward
prosecco – sparkling white wine from the Veneto region
punto informativo – information booth
questura – police station

ramo – (Vz) tiny side lane
rio (s), **rii** (pl) – (Vz) the name for most canals in Venice
rio terà – (V) street following the course of a filled-in canal
ruga – (V) small street flanked by houses and shops
sala – room, hall
salizada – (V) street, the first type in Venice to be paved
salumeria – delicatessen
scala mobile – escalator, moving staircase
scalinata – staircase
scuola (s), **scuole** (pl) – literally, school; religious confraternity
secondo piatto – second or main course
servizio – service charge (in restaurant)
sestiere (s), **sestieri** (pl) – (Vz) term for the six 12th-century municipal divisions of Venice
sirocco – hot south wind
spiaggia – beach
spiaggia libera – public beach
spritz – classic Venetian apéritif consisting of one part sparkling white wine, one part soda water and one part bitters
squero (s), **squeri** (pl) – gondola-building and repair workshop

stazio (s), **stazi** (pl) – gondola jetty
stazione – station
stazione marittima – ferry terminal
strada – street, road
tabaccheria, tabaccaio – tobacconist's shop, tobacconist
terrazzo alla Veneziana – Venetian flooring
tesoro – treasury
traghetto – ferry; commuter gondola that crisscrosses the Grand Canal
trattoria (s), **trattorie** (pl) – cheap restaurant
Trenitalia – Italian State Railways, also known as Ferrovie dello Stato (FS)
ufficio postale – post office
ufficio stranieri – foreigners' bureau (in police station)
vaporetto (s) **vaporetti** (pl) – Venetian passenger ferry
vetrai – glass-makers
via – street, road
vigili del fuoco – fire brigade
vigili urbani – local police
voga alla veneta – Venetian form of rowing that involves standing up

© Lonely Planet Publications. To make it easier for you to use, access to this chapter is not digitally restricted. In return, we think it's fair to ask you to use it for personal, non-commercial purposes only. In other words, please don't upload this chapter to a peer-to-peer site, mass email it to everyone you know, or resell it. See the terms and conditions on our site for a longer way of saying the above - 'Do the right thing with our content.'