

A VOYAGE TO VENICE IN SEARCH OF FORM AND MEANING

So we come to Venice not merely to gaze at its wonders, but to strive actively for an articulation of its contribution to our understanding of art, architecture, music, science and engineering, faith and reason. We will walk its labyrinthine streets as we venture from site to site, our observations directed by knowledgeable guides to assist us in our practice of disciplined attention. We will gather evidence, compare notes, and work both individually and collaboratively toward composing in words and images a synthesis of this extraordinarily rich experience. In this way, the trip becomes an invaluable pendant to Ashley Hall's Humanities curriculum, affording students a rare opportunity to bring to bear upon this singular setting all of the perspectives that have thus far shaped their discussions of western civilization.

We will base ourselves in Venice proper but will take two days trips into the surrounding Veneto region: one to Vicenza, the seat of Palladian architecture, and one to Padua. While in Venice the entire group will visit the following sites: San Marco and the Doge's Palace, the Accademia, the Scuola di San Rocco, and the churches Santa Maria dei Frari, San Zaccharia, and San Giovanni e Paolo. In Vicenza the focus will be on Palladian architecture, including visits to the Teatro Olimpico, la Villa Rotonda and other Ville on the Dolo River. The trip to Padua will include visits to the Arena (Scrovegni) Chapel, la Scuola del Santo, and la Palazzo della Ragione.

In addition to these group experiences, students will spend some time in smaller, faculty-led groups exploring other parts of Venice that touch upon a specific part of the Humanities curriculum. One of these smaller groups will focus on the relationship between literature and the visual arts, specifically that of literature written in response to the visual stimuli provided by Venice. The second group will be concerned with the physical composition of the city, primarily seeking to understand how the architectural form is indicative of a larger meaning. This group will also focus on Venice's historical role as the bridge between East and West and how cultural diffusion through trade with the Islamic East influenced the city.

Our hope is that through careful observation of form and its meaning, and contemplation of ideas and their physical representations, the students will be able to view firsthand the synthesis of the effects of a fluid environment on certain fixed ideals. As a result of these careful, directed observations of their environment in Italy, the students will return to Ashley Hall with a newfound perspective which they will apply to their studies here. Their courses will seem more relevant than ever, and they will find they have a new ability to see the connections between disciplines.

Draft Itinerary

FRIDAY, MARCH 26: Depart for Venice from the United States.

SATURDAY, MARCH 27: Arrive in Venice After checking in at our hotel, the group will take a walking tour of the city to acclimate to the beauty of the local environment. The group will receive an overview of the area and then a short visual introduction to some of the sights that have made Venice so popular with millions of people: the square in front of the Basilica of San Marco and the Piazzetta next to the Palazzo Ducale.

SUNDAY, MARCH 28: SAN MARCO and the DOGES' PALACE Our day will begin with a visit to the Basilica of San Marco. A conglomeration of different architectural styles and geometrical forms, the building achieves unity through diversity in what, for centuries, was its main purpose: the glorification of the Venetian State. A visit to the Doges' Palace transports you from the religious to the political sphere. The Palace is a clear illustration of the political structure of the old Venetian republic and its multitude of splendidly decorated chambers dedicated to different bureaucratic functions and governmental bodies.

MONDAY, MARCH 29: VENICE Our excursion will start on the side of Venice called Giudecca with a visit to the Accademia, a museum housing the greatest collection of Venetian paintings in the world and a veritable glorification of the city's artistic past. Across the Grand Canal from the Accademia, via the Accademia Bridge, is the Scuola of San Giorgio degli Schiavoni. Here we will find one of the greatest treasures in Venice: the beautiful cycle by Carpaccio which depicts the story of St. George and the Dragon.

TUESDAY, MARCH 30: PADUA Following the Brenta River, we will find one of the most glorious cities in the Veneto and the seat of one of Europe's oldest universities where Galileo taught. Padua offers an incredible array of architectural and artistic memories from its glorious past: from Roman structures to Renaissance buildings, from the Scrovegni Chapel, containing Giotto's magnificent fresco, to the intriguing Palazzo della Ragione.

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 31: THE VENETIAN SCUOLE Today's excursion will be dedicated to two Venetian Scuole, San Giovanni Evangelista and San Rocco. A unique product of Venetian society, the Scuole were lay confraternities provided for the local middle class a potent substitute to political activity and the possibility of playing, at the same time, an incredible role in the patronage of Venetian art.

THURSDAY, APRIL 1: VICENZA Founded in the 2nd century B.C. in northern Italy, Vicenza prospered under Venetian rule from the early 15th to the end of the 18th century. The work of Andrea Palladio (1508–80), based on a detailed study of classical Roman architecture, gives the city its unique appearance. Palladio's urban buildings, as well as his villas, scattered throughout the Veneto region, had a decisive influence on the development of architecture. We will have the opportunity to explore a great variety of works by Andrea Palladio including his Villa

Rotonda, Teatro Olimpico, and the Basilica. A drive along the famous Riviera Brenta will provide the opportunity to see the Villa Malcontenta, as well as other lesser known Palladian Villas hidden away in the Vicentine countryside.

FRIDAY, APRIL 2: VENICE Our excursion will focus upon three major churches located in different parts of the city: Santa Maria dei Frari with its incredible treasure of paintings by artists like Titian, Vivarini and Giovanni Bellini, San Giovanni e Paolo, and San Zaccharia.

SATURDAY, APRIL 3 **Depart for the United States.**

FEES

The fee for Venice and the Veneto is \$2350. This includes lunch on the day of arrival, continental breakfast and evening meal for each day of the stay and all group activity fees. It **does not include** airfare, daily lunches, health and/or travel insurance. We have a special group tour round trip airfare priced from Charleston to Venice. The Tour Reservation form must be accompanied by a **\$1,000 NON-REFUNDABLE DEPOSIT. Reservations are due by November 16, 2009. The BALANCE IS DUE on February 1, 2009.** The price is calculated on 2009 exchange rates and is subject to change based on future international land costs and the strength of the US dollar.

GATEWAY CITY TRANSPORTATION

Spoletto Study Abroad has a wonderful travel arrangement who will work with each participant to arrange travel plans with the group.