



*Island of San Lazzaro*

## **ARTSTUR: Venice & The Islands**

**21 – 25 March 2018**

**A unique five-day tour of Venice and its islands led by Adrian Mourby, historian and author of two new literary companions, *Rooms of One's Own* (July 2017) and *Rooms with a View* (November 2017) published by Icon Press.**

### **ITINERARY**

#### **Wednesday 21 March 2018**

Guests arrive by water taxi from Marco Polo airport to be met by Adrian Mourby at Hotel Sant' Antonin. This friendly, family owned palazzo sits just two minutes away from the church where Antonio Vivaldi was baptised and four minutes from Riva degli Schiavoni with its beautiful views across the lagoon.

Lunch by Invitation on Riva degli Schiavoni follows then departure by vaporetto to the island of San Lazzaro.

At 3.25pm we will meet one of the Armenian monks who will tell us about Lord Byron's time on San Lazzaro when, among other projects, the poet worked on the first English/Armenian dictionary.

We return to Hotel Sant' Antonin and at 7pm meet for a glass of prosecco to discuss Thursday's tour followed by Dinner at Leisure.

We will offer suggestions based on local restaurants.

#### **Thursday 22 March**

We depart by vaporetto to the island of Torcello to visit one of the earliest cities in the Venetian lagoon, now a picturesque ruin. Torcello provided the background for Daphne du Maurier's short story, *Don't Look Now* and Ernest Hemingway wrote parts of his novel, *Across the River and Into The Trees* while staying at Locanda Cipriani, the island's only hotel.

Today the island's main attraction is the Cathedral of Santa Maria Assunta, founded in 639 AD, the ancient stone chair, known as Attila's Throne (named after the infamous Hun) and Ponte del Diavolo.

We then transfer to the colourful island of Burano for Lunch By Invitation. Burano is famed for its lace-making which began in the 16 C. and continues to this day. Its Church of San Martino has a leaning campanile and a beautiful painting by Tiepolo of the Crucifixion.

We return mid afternoon to our hotel and at 7pm there will be a talk from Adrian over a glass of prosecco.

Dinner will be at Leisure. At 8.30pm near the hotel there is likely to be a concert of Vivaldi's Four Seasons (tbc) at Pieta', the church where the "Red Priest" was choir master from 1703 to 1715 and from 1723 to 1740. We can assist with the purchase of tickets.

### **Friday 23 March**

We take a water taxi to the famous glass-blowing island of Murano and see a demonstration of how Venetian glass has been made by hand for centuries. Venice moved all its glass blowers on to this island in 1292 because they kept setting fire to the main city.

Today contemporary artists create beautiful modern glass objects on Murano and their shops are open to the public.



*Island of Murano at sunset*

We will also visit the Church of Santa Maria e San Donato, known for its twelfth-century Byzantine mosaic pavement that is said to house the bones of the dragon slain by Saint Donatus and the Church of San Pietro Martire with artworks by Giovanni Bellini.

Afterwards we take a vaporetto to the cemetery island of San Michele. Inaugurated for burials in 1807, during the French occupation San Michele holds the graves of the writers Ezra Pound, Joseph Brodsky and Frederick Rolfe (Baron Corvo), as well as Igor Stravinsky, Sergei Diaghilev and Luigi Nono from the world of music.

Bodies were borne to the island on special funerary gondolas. The cemetery is still in use today.

We will then walk back to the hotel through the quiet sestiere of Castello (those who want can return via vaporetto). Lunch and afternoon at Leisure.

In the evening we will take a vaporetto to Dinner by Invitation near the Accademia Bridge. After dinner we walk across the Accademia Bridge to a remarkable performance of Verdi's Rigoletto that promenades through different rooms within Palazzo Barbarigo Minotto, overlooking the Grand Canal.

## Saturday 24 March

At 10am we join Dr Rosa Maria Letts for a morning devoted to modern art. Walking over the Accademia Bridge, we will reach the Dogana, from where the lagoon divides Venice in two waterways, the Canal Grande and the Giudecca Canal.

We visit the newly reopened Punta della Dogana Exhibition Space designed by Tadao Ando for Francois Pinault as a leading showcase for Modern Art. The Guggenheim Museum will be our next stop via the seventeenth century Church of Santa Maria della Salute, described admiringly by Henry James as like "some great lady on the threshold of her salon".

We then return to Hotel Sant' Antonin for Lunch at Leisure. In the afternoon we travel by vaporetto to the Lido where Thomas Mann set *Death in Venice*, one of his most successful novellas, based on events that occurred while he was staying at Hotel des Bains. The hotel is no longer open. It closed soon after Visconti made his hugely successful film of *Death in Venice* and stands today like a memorial to a forgotten era.

From being the residence of the first Venetian doges, the Lido became in the nineteenth century the most glamorous sea bathing location in Europe. It still contains some of the most beautiful villas and hotels in Italy's Art Nouveau/Liberty style as well as the striking Santa Maria della Vittoria, a Mussolini era Tempio Votivo dedicated to the dead of World War I which we will also visit.

We return to Hotel Sant' Antonin before meeting up for a final Dinner By Invitation.

## Sunday 25 March

A restful morning before departure but the possibility exists of visiting the Scuola Dalmata dei SS. Giorgio e Trifone which is just by our hotel.

This 16 C. "school" contains a remarkable sequence of paintings by Carpaccio. Lunch by invitation. Water taxis to airport.

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**COST includes:** 4 nights B&B; 3 lunches, 2 dinners, transport throughout, entries to all sites, expert guiding, opera in palazzo.

Members **£1675**    Others: **£1895**    Single Supplement: **£100**

**not included** are flights and the option at 3.30 on Saturday 24 to go to the Opera *La Boheme* beautifully presented in La Fenice.

**Saturday 24 March 2018 at 3.30 pm | Teatro La Fenice - LA BOHEME by G. Puccini**

Orchestra e Coro del Teatro La Fenice | Conductor: **Myung-Whun Chung** | Director: Francesco Micheli  
Performers: Ivan Ayon Rivas as *Rodolfo* | Selene Zanetti as *Mimi* | Irina Dubrovskaya as *Musetta*

This option requires confirmation by 31 October when seating options will be given.

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**To book contact *Accademia Italiana / Artstur* - Tel: 07720812183**

email: [artstur@gmail.com](mailto:artstur@gmail.com) - web: [www.artstur.com](http://www.artstur.com)

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