Travel with The Met

The Pearls of the Po: From Venice to Parma Aboard La Venezia

May 9–17, 2020
Dear Members and Friends of The Metropolitan Museum of Art,

This spring, aboard the luxurious, newly renovated super ship La Venezia, join me to cruise along the legendary Po River from Venice to Parma, savoring la bella vita in northern Italy. Padua, Parma, Mantua, and Ravenna are towns that have inspired the likes of Shakespeare, yet their numerous historic treasures remain underexplored. On a rare river voyage this deep into the heart of Italy’s rustic “breadbasket,” the first of its kind in over a decade, we will enjoy full access to the region’s abundance of spectacular medieval and Renaissance art and architecture.

After a scenic tour of the lovely Venetian Lagoon, we will glide into the picturesque market town of Chioggia. In Padua, we will stop to see frescoes by Giotto and bronzes by Donatello — landmarks of European art. Next, we will call at Ferrara, the seat of the great Este court. Designed in the 16th century by Biagio Rossetti, it has earned a UNESCO designation. We will also visit its Jewish quarter, a haven for Jewish exiles throughout Europe for centuries, and its newly opened Jewish Museum. In glorious Parma, we will explore a Romanesque baptistery and cathedral, with its dome sublimely decorated by Correggio, and the Camera di San Paolo, decorated by Correggio for the remarkable abbess, Giovanna da Piacenza.

In splendid Mantua, home of the famed Gonzaga family, we will visit Palazzo Ducale, with its celebrated frescoes by Mantegna and Pisanello, and the astonishing Palazzo Te, designed by Giulio Romano. The greatest assemblage of early Christian mosaics awaits us in Ravenna, the 6th-century seat of the Byzantine governor of Italy. Upon returning to Venice, you may choose to take part in one of three behind-the-scenes tours to conclude your journey.

An optional prelude to Asolo and the Palladian Villas is also available. Extraordinary cuisine and luxurious accommodations make this trip a true delight for all the senses, and I hope to share this unique river journey with you.

Sincerely,
Keith Christiansen
John Pope-Hennessy Chairman of the Department of European Paintings
The Metropolitan Museum of Art

— Join the first cruise in a decade along this legendary waterway on the lavish, newly renovated super ship La Venezia. Visit remote, artistically rich towns that are underexplored by international visitors

— Dock overnight in the heart of stunning Venice for early, access to the city at sunrise, when the passageways are empty and serene and Venice’s sparkling piazze and palazzi are most captivating

— Revel in the artistic splendors of Parma, where dazzling frescoes from Correggio and Parmigianino grace churches, and admire stunning 5th- and 6th-century mosaics in Ravenna

— Explore the medieval and Renaissance city of Ferrara, innovatively designed as an “ideal city” by urban planner Biagio Rossetti. View medieval Estense Castle, with its storybook moat, drawbridges, and gorgeous towers

— Delight in an exclusive, after-hours visit to Venice’s iconic Saint Mark’s Basilica, an 11th-century showstopper filled with glittering gold mosaics and beautiful marble floors and statues

Traveling with You
Keith Christiansen

Keith Christiansen is the John Pope-Hennessy Chairman of the Department of European Paintings at The Metropolitan Museum of Art. He began work at The Met in 1977 and has since organized numerous exhibitions, ranging in subject from Painting in Renaissance Siena, Andrea Mantegna, and The Renaissance Portrait to Giambattista Tiepolo, El Greco, The Age of Caravaggio, Josepe de Ribera, and Poussin and Nature. He has written widely on Italian painting and is the recipient of several awards. Raised in Seattle, Washington, and Concord, California, he attended the University of California campuses at Santa Cruz and Los Angeles and received his Ph.D. from Harvard University. An engaging and highly sought-after lecturer, he previously led a Travel with The Met tour of Central Europe in 2018.

La Fenice Opera House, Venice, photo by Tracy Elaine
Photos clockwise from top right: regional map; Il Duomo, Ferrara, photo by Jasqueline Poggi; City streets of Parma, photo by Adrian Scottow; Venice, photo by Hindol Bhattacharya, Doge’s Palace, Venice, photo by Aaron Logan; Teatro Regio, Parma.
Front cover: Padua. Back cover: Mantua canals (top), Ferrara city streets (bottom).
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An optional prelude to Asolo & the Palladian Villas is offered May 7–10, 2020.

Departure
Saturday, May 9
Depart for Venice on an overnight flight.

Venice, Italy / Embark
Sunday, May 10
Arrive at Venice’s Marco Polo International Airport, where you will be transferred to the boat. Unpack, relax, and enjoy your first evening on the Venetian Lagoon. This afternoon, embark on an optional walking tour through the Cannaregio neighborhood, known for its local flavor and picturesque squares and canals. Alternatively, go out and explore the city at your leisure. Tonight, enjoy an exclusive, after-hours visit to Saint Mark’s Basilica, with its spellbinding, glittering mosaics.

Venice / Chioggia
Monday, May 11
Take a scenic cruise through the historic Venetian Lagoon to the picturesque fishing village of Chioggia, then choose among three options today. You may enjoy a gentle bike ride along the waterways and through the town of Chioggia. Or you may choose to travel to Padua for a guided stroll through the Old Town, including visits to the Scrovegni Chapel, famous for its rich and elaborate frescoes by Giotto, and the Basilica of St. Anthony, with its bronzes by Donatello. Finally, your third option is a guided visit of Villa Valmarana, one of the grand villas along the bucolic Brenta Canal, opened exclusively for us. Enjoy a festive captain’s welcome reception and dinner this evening.

Ferrara
Tuesday, May 12
Disembark this morning for an excursion to Ferrara, once a center for the arts ruled by the Este family. Meticulously designed by urban planner Biagio Rossetti, Ferrara was the first fully executed concept of an ideal city during the Renaissance. Explore its pioneering layout during guided walks around the city. Walk the cobbled streets of the UNESCO-designated city center, full of grand palaces including the Palazzo dei Diamanti, whose façade is studded with marble blocks carved to resemble diamonds. Stroll through the ancient Jewish quarter, whose community has lived here continuously since the Middle Ages, and visit the newly opened Jewish Museum. Admire the 12th-century cathedral, which combines Romanesque and Gothic styles in its three-tiered pink and white marble façade. Return to the ship in the late afternoon.

Parma
Wednesday, May 13
Today journey to Parma, which has existed since Roman times and is famous for producing two of Italy’s most iconic foods: Parmigiano-Reggiano cheese and prosciutto. Take a tour exploring the town’s rich culinary traditions, sampling the local specialties along the way. Alternatively, marvel at the architectural highlights of the historic city of Parma: from the Romanesque cathedral whose cupola by Correggio is a masterpiece of perspective to the octagonal Baptistery, considered one of the finest medieval buildings in Italy. Explore the 13th-century San Giovanni Pharmacy, filled with apothecary jars on ancient wooden shelves. Take a behind-the-scenes tour of the famous Teatro Regio, one of the country’s most renowned opera houses, linked with great composers like Verdi and Rossini (pending final confirmation). Stroll through vibrant Piazza Garibaldi, and step inside the Basilica di Santa Maria della Steccata to marvel at the work of Parmigianino. At the National Gallery of Parma, admire works by Parmigianino, Correggio, and Tintoretto.

Mantua
Thursday, May 14
Step off the ship today to discover Mantua, called La Bella Addormentata, or “Sleeping Beauty.” We will visit the stunning Palazzo Ducale, created by the powerful Gonzaga family, the largest residence in Italy after the Vatican. With more than 500 rooms, a basilica, courtyards, and gardens, the palace contains precious tapestries based on cartoons by Raphael, spellbinding frescoes by Andrea Mantegna, and extraordinary murals by Pisanello. A short distance away, explore Giulio Romano’s awe-inspiring creation Palazzo Te, a fine example of mannerism in architecture. Inside, admire the painted Hall of the Horses and the Chamber of the Giants.

Ravenna
Friday, May 15
Get an in-depth look at the UNESCO-listed Byzantine and early Christian mosaics in Ravenna, the capital of Western Roman Empire from 402 to 476 A.D. Visit Sant’Apollinare in Classe, with its glorious 6th-century apse covered in brilliant mosaics. Then see the mausoleum of Galla Placidia and Theodoric the Great’s churches—San Vitale and Sant’Apollinare Nuovo—with their extraordinary mosaics. This evening, we will dine al fresco as La Venezia sails from the Venetian Lagoon along the shores dotted with picturesque fishing villages.

Venice
Saturday, May 16
Docked in Venice, choose among several options to savor this beautiful city: take a tour led by an art historian of the Accademia, Venice’s grand museum housing masterworks by Tiepolo, Veronese, and Bellini; explore Venice’s famous opera house, La Fenice, on a behind-the-scenes tour; or take a guided tour of the Peggy Guggenheim Museum to view its fascinating modern art collection. Return for lunch on board and enjoy an afternoon at leisure. This evening, attend the captain’s farewell reception and dinner.

Venice / Return
Sunday, May 17
Disembark in Venice this morning and transfer to the airport for flights home.

This itinerary is subject to change at the discretion of The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Arrangements Abroad, and the Master of La Venezia, depending on water levels and other factors. For complete details, please carefully read the terms and conditions at www.arrangementsabroad.com/terms.
The 130-passenger La Venezia, undergoing a total interior renovation that will be completed in March 2020, is filled with light and color. The redesign of the super ship will be inspired by Venetian culture, and La Venezia will feature six elegantly appointed suites; three dining venues, including an Italian kitchen on the upper deck; spa; library; lounge and bar. Relax in riverview staterooms and suites with marble bathrooms and handcrafted Savoir® of England beds. Experience a meticulous standard of hospitality including 24-hour room service, and concierge services with butler service in all suites. Savor gourmet dining with unlimited wine and alcoholic beverages; personal items and expenses; optional trip insurance; optional Asolo and the Palladian Villas prelude; any other items not specifically mentioned as included.

La Venezia

Optional Prelude

☐ Please send me/us more information on the optional prelude to Asolo and the Palladian Villas

Form of Payment

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Travel with The Metropolitan Museum of Art

Traveling solo?
Select cabins available with NO single supplement!

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