

ITALY – VENICE & THE PO VALLEY

7-day / 6-night Hotel Barge cruise & GUIDED sightseeing – includes return transfers from/to Venice



- Departs:** Venice every Sunday from 29th March to 25th October 2020 on board La Bella Vita
- Fully inclusive costs from:** \$5,720 per person twin share
- Junior Suite upgrade from:** \$1245
- Value season departures from:** 29th March to 19th April, 19th July to 23rd August and from 11th October to 25th October 2020
- High season supplement from:** \$755 per person twin share
- High season departures from:** 26th April to 12th July and from 30th August to 4th October 2020
- Single cabin supplement from:** \$2215

Venice has always struggled to cope with the large multi-story cruise ships that ply the Mediterranean ports. So it is good to have an alternative. La Bella Vita carrying a maximum of just 20 passengers is the perfect vessel for Venice, the lagoon and Po Delta.

Transformed in 2010 into a stylish hotel barge, La Bella Vita offers two upper-deck Junior Suites with opening windows and Juliet balconies and eight comfortable Staterooms, all with ensuite facilities and air conditioning. There is a spacious dining room and an intimate salon with comfortable sofas and a bar. Above is a large sun deck with comfortable sun lounges and sunshade canopy, and tables and chairs for alfresco dining or just to relax and enjoy the passing scenery.

Italy's canals and rivers are perfect for cruising with a variety of landscapes, from picturesque lagoon islands and abandoned, ancient maritime fortifications, protected marshlands, fishing villages with colourful houses, castles and grand villas. There are wild beach dunes, wetlands and forests with an abundance of birdlife. La Bella Vita cruises on the Venetian lagoon, then inland on the River Po and Canal Bianco, between Venice and the Renaissance city of Mantua (Mantova). Venice is the crowning jewel of most Italian river cruises, but Mantua, in the central northern area of the country, is a hub alive with art, culture, history and music.

Call OUTDOOR TRAVEL on 1800 331 582 for details or reservations

Our hotel barge cruises on waterways that were once ancient trade routes used by the Romans and the early Mediterranean settlers before them. So in addition to the beautiful scenery and relaxed vibe, this cruising holiday is perfect for gaining an insight to the region's many cultures, including Roman, Etruscan, Istrian, Byzantine and of course, Renaissance, with its influence on art, architecture and history over many centuries.

Delicious, regional cuisine including seafood, local culinary specialities, fine wines and attentive service complete the experience and explain the appeal of our boutique Italian river cruises. Luxuriating in a friendly and relaxing boat environment, travellers can enjoy a unique perspective on some magnificent Italian cities.



Suggested itinerary * from Venice to Mantua (Mantova): * *This is a sample itinerary and is subject to change. On alternate weeks the cruise will be in the reverse direction. Some cruises may be on the River Po, depending on the water level.*

Day 1: Arrival day

We meet in central Venice, and transfer by private chauffeured minibus to the hotel barge, for a Prosecco Welcome before an afternoon cruise along the Giudecca Canal past some of Venice's most famous monuments: the Chiesa del Santissimo Redentore a 16th Century Roman Catholic church, the Basilica di Santa Maria della Salute and the Punta della Dogana, to our mooring outside the Naval Museum. With time for a stroll to St Mark's Square and a guided tour of the Doge's Palace. A welcome dinner is served onboard.

Day 2: Venice to San Pietro in Volta

After breakfast join a guided walking tour to the Castello District, visiting the gardens of the Biennale Exhibition of Modern Arts, Palladio's Church of San Pietro in Castello and the Venetian Ships Pavilion, an annex of the Naval History Museum Venice, housing vessels of historical importance including ceremonial barges and warships. In the late afternoon cruise to Pellestrina which separates the Venetian Lagoon from the Adriatic Sea. Dinner on board.

Day 3: San Pietro in Volta to Taglio di Po with dinner hosted by the owners at 17th Century Villa Ca'Zen

We cruise after breakfast to Chioggia, here we visit the 18th Century Church of San Domenico set on its own island, to see Carpaccio's St Paul, his last recorded painting, and other works of art by Tintoretto and Bassano. Before returning to the hotel barge we take a short tour of Chioggia's pretty canals in a traditional, locally-built boat. In the afternoon we pass through a nature reserve with flamingos and the occasional heron, snipe and other wildfowl. We travel upriver to Taglio di Po for dinner hosted by the owners at the beautiful 17th Century Villa Ca'Zen, a private stately home by the river where Lord Byron courted the Countess Giuccioli and wrote some of his best poetry.

Day 4: Taglio di Po to Zelo

This morning we join the Bianco canal and cruise to Adria, an ancient Etruscan town where we visit the Archaeological Museum. After lunch on board, we drive to the Bagnoli Estate to tour the Renaissance gardens and wine cellars of the 17th Century Villa Widmann Borletti to enjoy a private tasting of their renowned estate-grown vintages. This winery has been supplying Venetian society for centuries. Afterwards, we re-join La Bella Vita moored at Zelo. Dinner on board.

Day 5: Zelo to Governolo

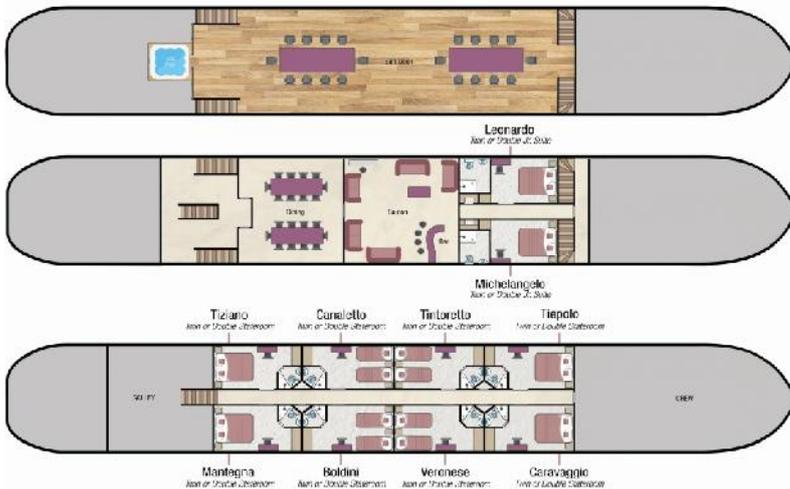
Morning excursion with a guided tour of the Renaissance city of Ferrara, including the Schifanoia Palace, renowned for its fabulous 15th Century frescoes. We also admire the exterior of the Estense Castle and its moat and visit the cathedral with its façade of sculpted images, described as an illustrated Bible. Return to the hotel barge moored in Trevenzuolo for an afternoon canal cruise past villages and farmsteads to Governolo. Dinner is served with wine and cheeses on board.

Day 6: Governolo to Mantua

Today reach our final destination Mantua, Mantua displays extraordinary neo-classical and baroque architecture, portrayed in the 14th Century Palazzo Ducale di Mantova (Ducal Palace) housing some 15 gardens and courtyards, a museum, basilica and theatre. The intricate frescoes, Gallery of Mirrors and exquisite Rivers Room and 12,000 paintings and sculptures all create a Grand Finale to our Italian Renaissance adventure. Captain's Farewell Dinner on board.

Day 7: Departure day

After breakfast, we transfer by private chauffeured minibus to Venice for your onward travel connections.



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Cuisine aboard the barge is traditional Italian fare – Here are some suggested meals in a typical cruise week:

Regional Specialities: *Fegato alla Veneziana, Baccala Mantecato, La Polenta, Sarde in Saor, Risotto al Prezzemolo, Lagoon Seafood.*

Selection of wines: *Chianti Classico Castello d'Albola, Malvasia Passito Valtidone, Rose Blanc Brut Sanfeletto, Pinot Grigio St. Michael – Eppan, Rosso di Montepulciano Sabazio, Vino Nobile di Montepulciano Sabazio, Prosecco Millesimato Valdobbiadene Sanfeletto, Rose Millesimato Brut Riserva Bortolomiol.*

Cheese Board: *Mozzarella di Bufala, Pecorino, Provalone, Grana Padano, Lombardy Quartirollo Bagos.*

Other hotel barge cruises available from **Outdoor Travel** – with weekly departures – are in **Ireland** on the River Shannon, Windsor on the **River Thames** near London, **Burgundy**, the **Loire Valley**, the **Bordeaux** region, **Provence** or on the **Canal du Midi** in the south of France and Scotland on the **Caledonian Canal**.

Contact Outdoor Travel for more itinerary details and reservations

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