

## Barcelona, Spain

### OVERVIEW

#### Introduction

Barcelona, Spain's second-largest city, is inextricably linked to the architecture of Antoni Gaudi. His most famous and unfinished masterpiece, La Sagrada Familia, is the emblem of the city. Like the basilica, Barcelona takes traditional ideas and presents them in new, even outrageous, forms. And the city's bursts of building and innovation give the impression that it's still being conceived. Both the church and the city can be tough places to get a handle on, yet their complexity is invigorating rather than forbidding.



Since it hosted the Summer Olympics in 1992, Barcelona has been on the hot list of European destinations. The staging of the Universal Forum of Cultures in 2004 also raised the city's profile. Such popularity may make it harder to land a hotel room, but it has only added to the sense that Barcelona is a place to visit as much for its energetic, cosmopolitan character as for its unusual attractions.

#### Must See or Do

**Sights**—La Sagrada Familia; La Pedrera; La Catedral (La Seu); Santa Maria del Mar.

**Museums**—Museu Picasso; Museu Nacional d'Art de Catalunya; Museu d'Historia de Catalunya; Fundacio Joan Miro.

**Memorable Meals**—Lunch at Escriba Xiringuito on the seafront; high-end Mediterranean fare at Neichel; seafood at Botafumeiro; fashionable, inventive dishes at Semproniana.

**Late Night**—Flamenco at Los Tarantos in summer; drinks and a view at Mirablau; wine at La Vinya del Senyor; dancing at Otto Zutz or Boulevard Culture Club.

**Walks**—La Rambla, the Barri Gotic and the Born; along the waterfront; Montjuic; Park Guell; Collserola woodlands.

**Especially for Kids**—Zoo de Barcelona; L'Aquarium de Barcelona; a ride on the roller coaster at Parc d'Atraccions del Tibidabo.

#### Geography

Barcelona is a large city with many districts, but the most popular attractions are found in a handful of areas that, for the most part, flow into one another. Beginning on the waterfront, Port Vell (Old Port) encompasses the harbor area and Barceloneta, a neighborhood that was once home to fishermen and has been renovated. The Vila Olimpica (Olympic Village) lies just east of Port Vell. It, too, has undergone extensive renovation in the past decade or so and is now the city's seaside recreation area.

La Rambla, Barcelona's famous boulevard and almost a district unto itself, begins at Port Vell and extends inland to Placa Catalunya. La Rambla is the heart of the central city, and it forms the boundary between El Raval, the neighborhood to the west of the boulevard, and the Barri Gotic (the Gothic Quarter), which lies to the east.

The Barri Gotic, the oldest part of Barcelona, has many bars, restaurants, museums and historic sites. Adjoining it on the east side of Via Laietana are the old quarters of Sant Pere and La Ribera, with its fine medieval mansions and trendy shopping and nightlife around the old Born market (now closed to shoppers but preserved as a historic site).

Continuing inland from the Barri Gotic, you'll enter the Eixample, an upscale shopping and residential area, crisscrossed by wide avenues, where many of the *modernisme* buildings are located. Adjoining it to the northwest is the chic villagelike district of Gracia, which has many pleasant restaurants. Beyond Gracia, the city climbs the lower slope of Mount Tibidabo.

Montjuic, a prominent castle-topped hill covered with parks, gardens and pathways west of Port Vell, is easily visible from the central city. Museums and other attractions are found on this high ground.

The renovated district of Sant Adria de Besos is more detached from the other areas and is found on the beachfront farther to the east at the end of the T5 tram line.

## History

As with many places in Europe, Barcelona's history has much to do with invasions and conquest. The Romans founded the original settlement, named Barcino, in 133 BC, and the town was later held by the Visigoths, the Moors and the Christian Carolingian Empire under Charlemagne's son, Louis the Pious. In AD 988, Barcelona won independence from the Carolingian kings and became the dominant political and military force in the region of northeastern Spain later known as Catalonia—or Catalunya, in the native Catalan tongue. (Much of the city's character stems from the fact that it identifies itself more as part of Catalonia than of Spain.)

By the late 1400s, Catalonia was politically linked with other regions of Spain, but the region continued to enjoy autonomous rights and privileges until the early 1700s. That changed after the War of Succession, when Catalonia backed the losing side led by Archduke Charles of Austria. Spain's King Philip V abolished Catalonia's government and laws and made Castilian (Spanish) the language of official business, rather than Catalan. This was but one of many conflicts between Catalonia and the central authority of Spain.

By the late 1800s, Barcelona had become one of Spain's most industrialized areas, and the factories spawned significant wealth and a dynamic middle class. Industrial profits underwrote the *modernisme* movement in architecture—Barcelona's version of art nouveau that was spearheaded by architect Antoni Gaudi. The industrial riches did not trickle down to the working class, however, and radical movements—especially anarchism—found willing converts in the city's poorer districts. A violent uprising in 1909 was a precursor to the upheaval unleashed by the Spanish Civil War in the late 1930s, when Barcelona was ruled by leftist trade unions for several years. The city remained a stronghold of the losing Republican cause until the end of the war and paid the price afterward. During the long reign of Francisco Franco (1939-75) the Catalan identity and language were viciously suppressed.

Catalonian home rule was restored after Franco's death in 1975, and the Catalan language was declared co-official with Castilian. Beginning in the late 1970s, a forward-looking urban policy was adopted in Barcelona, and the regeneration reached its peak in preparation for the 1992 Summer Olympics. Since then, its popularity as a tourist and recreation center has continued to grow.

Politically, the city and region have become increasingly detached from Madrid's centralist rule; in 2010, more than a million Catalans demonstrated in favor of independence from the rest of Spain. That same year their official abolition of bullfighting—effective from 2011—was in effect a further rejection of deep-rooted Spanish traditions.

## **Port Information**

### **Location**

Barcelona is an important stopping-off point for major cruise lines in the Mediterranean, and even the largest ocean liners can dock in its port.

The cruise ship terminal is located in Port Vell, the Old Port district at the foot of La Rambla, minutes away from the city's most important tourist attractions. The terminal, one of the largest and most modern of its kind in the Mediterranean, offers many services, including currency exchange, duty-free shops, restaurants, Internet access points, bus stops and taxi ranks.

Large ferries connect the city to the Balearic Islands and all of the major Mediterranean ports. Phone 902-222-858. <http://www.apb.es>.

### **Potpourri**

Under Franco's regime, Catalan was forbidden in all forms—printed, written or taught. Now the city offers free courses to anyone who would like to learn it. The result is that many immigrants can speak and write Catalan better than older Catalonians.

Although Antoni Gaudi created some of the most extravagant buildings ever made, he was a humble and religious man who rejected vanity in all its forms. When he was struck down by a tram in 1926, his clothes were so shabby that police assumed he was a vagrant. He died three days later in a hospital in the dilapidated Barri Xino district.

It has been estimated that to build the central spire of the Sagrada Familia, which will rise 560 ft/171 m high, the subterranean pylons would have to weigh 8,000 tons each for it to withstand an earthquake or gale-force winds of 100 mph/161 kph.

Barcelona's colorful Fiesta de Sant Medir, held in the Gracia district in early March and dating from Roman times, honors Saint Emeterio, or Sant Medir, the patron saint of broad beans. During the festivities, thousands of sweets are handed out to delighted children.

The name of Mount Tibidabo comes from the story of Christ's wanderings in the wilderness, when the Devil took him to a mountaintop and offered to give him all that he could see if Jesus would fall down and worship him. *Tibi dabo* means "I give" in Latin.

During Franco's reign, a supervisor known as "la Moral" watched over the dance floor at La Paloma concert hall and parted couples with his stick if they danced too close or tried to sneak a kiss.

The stadium on Montjuic was intended to host the People's Olympics in 1936, but Franco's coup the day before the scheduled opening kicked off the Spanish Civil War and put an end to the games. Catalans had to wait till 1992 when, in a brand-new stadium, Montjuic launched the world Olympics that made Barcelona internationally famous.

### **SEE & DO**

#### **Sightseeing**

Sooner or later, you must take a walk down La Rambla, Barcelona's famous thoroughfare, so you may as well make it sooner. It's a great introduction to the city, and it will put you in good position to see other nearby attractions.

If you head northeast from La Rambla, you'll enter the twisting, ancient streets of the Barri Gotic (Gothic Quarter). Find your way to the grandiose La Seu cathedral as you explore the district. Nearby is the Museu d'Historia de Barcelona (City History Museum). The Barri Gotic also holds several other treasures, so you may want to plan more than one day in the area. The highlights are the Museu Picasso (get there early to avoid the lines) and another magnificent Gothic church, Santa Maria del Mar. It's fun just to amble through the streets, however, especially in the evening, when you can sample many restaurants and bars in the contrasting Raval (earthy-international) and Born (avant-garde chic) districts.

You'll need at least a day to take in the famous sights from the *modernisme* movement in architecture. Before you start, stop in at the Ruta del Modernisme center at the tourist office in Placa Catalunya (and other locations), where you can get maps, a guidebook and discount vouchers to the city's 115 *modernisme* monuments. The guidebook with vouchers costs about 12 euros. Add 5 euros for additional vouchers for each accompanying adult. A route pack, which includes an additional guide to *modernisme* bars and restaurants, costs about 18 euros. For more information, visit <http://www.rutadelmodernisme.com>.

Begin at Manzana de la Discordia, on Passeig de Gracia in the Eixample district, where you can see three adjacent buildings designed by the best-known architects of the movement. Next, head a few blocks north to Antoni Gaudi's amazing building La Pedrera (or Casa Mila), which houses residential apartments, offices and an exhibition center. Plan at least two hours to see them and to walk around among the rooftop sculptures. From the roof, you'll be able to see the spires of Sagrada Familia in the distance, and that's your next stop. (You can walk there in a leisurely half-hour jaunt or catch the metro's Blue Line at the Diagonal Station near La Pedrera.) Close out the day at Gaudi's intricately surrealistic church. Be sure to go up in the spires for a vertigo-inducing look at the church and the city. A visit to Gaudi's Parc Guell, on the northern side of the city, is also recommended, though you will probably have to fit it into another day. An hour-long audio tour of Gaudi's Barcelona can be purchased from the official tourist authority website for 3 euros and downloaded to your mobile phone or MP3 player. It also contains a PDF file with more detailed information about the buildings, complete with photographs and maps. <http://bcnshop.barcelonaturisme.com>.

Montjuic, the hill rising southwest of the city center, merits a day of its own. Both the Museu Nacional d'Art de Catalunya and Fundacio Joan Miro are found on Montjuic, as are several less cultural and more hedonistic attractions, including Poble Espanyol (a theme "village" incorporating architectural styles from all over Spain and a host of shops and restaurants), the Olympic stadium and Pavello Barcelona. Just strolling around this multifaceted green area is pleasant, and it offers some splendid panoramic views of the city and the Mediterranean coastline. Figure your route ahead of time, however, as Montjuic covers a lot of territory and the attractions are widely spaced.

## Historic Sites

### Hospital de la Santa Creu i Sant Pau

Designed by Domenech i Montaner, one of the most renowned architects of the *modernisme* movement, this unusual hospital complex was built between 1902 and 1930. Located on the site of the old Santa Creu Hospital, which dates from 1401, the Hospital de Sant Pau is the largest single example of Catalan *modernista* architecture. Packed with sculptures and mosaics, it was declared a UNESCO World Heritage site in 1997. However, it still functions as a hospital, and only the courtyards and gardens are open to visitors. There are 75-minute guided tours in English daily at 10 and 11 am, noon and 1 pm. 10 euros. Sant Antoni Maria Claret 165, Eixample, Barcelona. Phone 93-317-7652 for information regarding guided tours. <http://www.santpau.cat>.

### La Pedrera

Built between 1906 and 1910, this large apartment building is one of Antoni Gaudi's masterworks. Its official name is Casa Mila, but it's better known as La Pedrera (the Quarry), a reference to its stony exterior appearance, with balconies that look like caves. Though Sagrada Familia is the Gaudi building that draws the biggest crowds, we think La Pedrera gives a better sense of the architect's astounding designs. It is also a UNESCO World Heritage site. The complex includes residential apartments, offices

and an exhibition center. Daily tours of the Espai Gaudi (loft and roof) and the Pedrera Apartment of Caixa Catalunya are available November-February 9 am-6:30 pm and March-October 9 am-8 pm (last tours of the day 30 minutes before closing). Individuals can rent audio guides, groups of 10 or more can book a guided tour in advance. 16.50 euros adults, 4 euros audio guides. Provenca 261-265, Eixample, Barcelona. Phone 902-400-973 or 93-484-5164 (for group reservations). <http://lapedrera.com>.

### **La Rambla**

This tree-dappled avenue is the heart, soul and central hub of Barcelona, not to mention a world-famous thoroughfare lined with remarkably diverse architectural styles. Although it is technically five streets (Rambla de Santa Monica, Rambla des Caputxins, Rambla de St. Josep, Rambla d'Estudis and Rambla Canaletes), the separation has not been clear for at least two centuries, and all are generally referred to as La Rambla. At least once during your visit, you should plan to stroll its full length, from Placa Catalunya to the statue of Christopher Columbus presiding over the port. Throughout the day and night it surges with people and offers a variety of amusements. Street performers line the boulevard, the most common being the human statues of one sort or another. You'll see mimes, jugglers and puppet theaters, too. There are also flower and bird vendors, and lots of outdoor cafes where you can take a seat and watch the informal parade flow past you. The end near the port has an open-air artisan market where you can find attractive gifts and souvenirs from 10:30 am till dusk on Saturday and Sunday.

### **La Sagrada Familia**

The amazing Templo Expiatorio de la Sagrada Familia, to give it its full name, has to be seen to be believed. Even then it's hard to comprehend. The foundation stone was laid in 1882, and Antoni Gaudi worked on the building for more than 40 years, leaving it unfinished when he died in 1926. It remains unfinished, though work continues amid controversy: What few plans and models Gaudi left behind were destroyed or badly damaged at the outset of the Spanish Civil War, and those directing the current work are more or less guessing at the architect's intentions. You'll have no trouble distinguishing the portions that are pure Gaudi and those that are more recent additions, based on the color and condition of the stonework. Nonetheless, it's a must-see for all visitors to Barcelona (expect big crowds). Additions include color mosaics as well as materials such as carbon fiber, which did not exist during Gaudi's lifetime but are needed today to make the structure earthquake-proof. Upon completion, the building will nearly double in height.

Start your visit in the church, then take an elevator that ascends one of the massive church spires for a great view of the city and the ongoing church construction. Also, don't miss the Gaudi House Museum located in the basement of the Passion facade. The museum focuses on Gaudi's works, especially emphasizing his work on the church. April-September daily 9 am-8 pm; October-March till 6 pm. Guided tours in English are held daily at 11 am and 1 pm; Saturday, Sunday and June-October also at noon. La Sagrada Familia admission 13 euros adults. Admission plus a guided tour or audio guide 17 euros adults. La Sagrada Familia plus Gaudi House Museum admission 14.50 euros adults. Carrer Sardenya s/n, Eixample, Barcelona. Phone 93-207-3031. <http://www.sagradafamilia.cat>.

### **Manzana de la Discordia**

The name translates to "Block of Discord," a reference to the three contrasting *modernista* buildings that stand close together along Passeig de Gracia. On the southern corner is Domenech i Montaner's ornate Casa Lleo Morera. A few doors up, at No. 41, is the intriguing geometric Casa Amatller by Puig i Cadafalch. Temporary art exhibitions are sometimes held on the ground floor by the Fundacio Amatller. Next door, at No. 43, is Antoni Gaudi's wonderful fairy-tale Casa Batllo with its carnival-mask balconies—a building that would look more at home in Disneyland than it does on a busy city street. See it at night, when it sparkles under lights. You can visit Casa Batllo using self-guided audio tours. Casa Batllo is open daily 9 am-9 pm (last entry at 8:20 pm). Admission and audio guide 20.35 euros adults. Passeig de Gracia 43 (between Consell de Cent and Arago), Eixample, Barcelona. Phone 93-216-0306. <http://www.casabatllo.es>.

### **Palau de la Musica Catalana**

Another of the *modernista* landmarks, this one was designed by Domenech i Montaner and built around the beginning of the 20th century. It's now a UNESCO World Heritage site, as well as a focal point for the city's classical music scene. Although it's impressive from the outside, try to take a tour or see a performance at the hall so you can get a look at the magnificent stained-glass ceiling and other interior design elements. Guided 50-minute tours in English are offered daily on the hour 10 am-3:30 pm (till 7 pm in August). Times are subject to change because of concerts and other events. Tour admission is 17 euros adults. Buy tickets at the box office daily 9:30 am-3:30 pm (no advance reservations). Carrer Palau de la Musica 4-6, Barri Gotic, Barcelona. Phone 902-475-485. <http://www.palaumusica.org>.

### **Pavello Barcelona**

The current Barcelona Pavilion (also known as the Mies van der Rohe Pavilion) is an exact replica of the German architect's influential work of modern architecture, originally built in 1929 for the International Exposition. (Don't confuse modern with Barcelona's *modernisme* style, which is known as art nouveau in most of the world.) The pavilion's stark, simple lines are a forerunner of many architectural designs in subsequent decades: It looks a lot like libraries and other public buildings from the 1960s. The pavilion is small, and there's not a lot to see inside except Mies van der Rohe's famous Barcelona chairs (which the caretaker won't let you sit on). Daily 10 am-8 pm. 4.75 euros adults. A 30-minute guided tour in English is offered on Saturday at 10 am. Avinguda Francesc Ferrer i Guardia 7, Montjuic, Barcelona. Phone 93-423-4016. <http://www.miesbcn.com>.

### **Santa Maria del Mar**

This soaring Catalan Gothic church sits in the heart of the medieval city's maritime district. Designed by the architect Berenguer de Montagut, this structure is considered by many to be Barcelona's most beautiful church. The foundation stone was laid to celebrate the conquest of Cerdena, which completed the Catalan domination of the region. Its relatively swift construction, between 1329 and 1384, made for an unusual unity of style. The interior, too, is uplifting in its exquisite simplicity and elegance, partly because its baroque trappings were burned during the Spanish Civil War. It also has perfect acoustics and serves as a wonderful setting for concerts and choir recitals, especially during the evenings when it's all lit up. Monday-Saturday 9 am-1:30 pm and 4:30-8:30 pm, Sunday 10 am-1:45 pm and 5-8:45 pm. Placa de Santa Maria 1, La Ribera, Barcelona. Phone 93-310-2390.

## **Museums**

### **CaixaForum**

This is a cultural center that has one of the most important contemporary art collections in Spain, containing more than 700 permanent works that represent the evolution of contemporary art. One of the most famous works is *Schmerzraum*, an installation made of sheets of lead, iron and silver, by Joseph Beuys. Many international artists such as Donald Judd, Jannis Kounellis, Bruce Naumann, Gerhard Richter and Sigmar Polke are also represented. Concerts, artistic and literary conferences, and various other activities take place regularly in the museum building, which dates from 1909 and is considered a work of art itself. A media library, bookstore and a restaurant are also available to visitors. Monday-Friday 10 am-8 pm; Saturday, Sunday and public holidays 10 am-9 pm. Free. Ave. Francesc Ferrer i Guardia 6-8 (Metro: Espanya lines 1 and 3), Montjuic, Barcelona. Phone 93-476-8600. <http://www.fundacio.lacaixa.es>.

### **Camp Nou Football Museum**

Essential for soccer fans: The museum presents the history of the FC Barcelona team (also known as Barca) with audiovisuals, glittering trophies, and an amazing assortment of boots, shirts, photos and stadium models. A visit to the museum lets you gaze upon the hugely impressive Camp Nou stadium and also visit Barca's ice-skating rink. Monday-Saturday 10 am-6:30 pm (till 8 pm April-October), Sunday and holidays 10 am-2:30 pm. 23 euros adults. Carrer d'Aristides Maillol 12, Les Corts, Barcelona. Phone 93-496-3600. <http://www.fcbarcelona.com>.

### **Fundacio Joan Miro**

One of the world's largest collections of Joan Miro's work, including paintings, graphic work, drawings, sculptures and tapestries. They're housed high above the city on Montjuic hill in a Mediterranean-style building with galleries that are bathed in natural light. Climb to the roof terrace for some great views. The Fundacio also stages temporary exhibitions, screenings, seminars and concerts in its vocation as a platform for contemporary culture. Tuesday-Saturday 10 am-7 pm (till 8 pm July-September and till 9 pm on Thursday), Sunday and holidays 10 am-2:30 pm. Main museum admission is 10 euros adults. Audio guide is 5 euros. Free guided tour of the permanent collection Thursday at 1 pm. Parc de Montjuic, Montjuic, Barcelona. Phone 93-443-9470. <http://fundaciomiro-bcn.org/?idioma=2>.

### **G Experiencia**

That's G as in Gaudi. It would be easy to dismiss this as a Gaudi theme park, but the interactive exhibits and 4-D audiovisual experience (the fourth dimension is provided by moving chairs in the screening room) are actually an informative and entertaining presentation of Gaudi's life and creative output. Daily 10 am-7 pm (till 6 pm November-March); last 4-D show 30 minutes before closing. 9 euros adults. Larrard 41 (near Park Guell), Barcelona. Phone 93-285-4440. <http://www.gaudiexperiencia.com>.

### **Museo de Cera de Barcelona**

Housed in a 19th-century neo-Renaissance building at the bottom of La Rambla, Barcelona's wax museum boasts 350 life-size figures. A blend of famous historical and fictional characters can be found in various settings designed to depict typical scenes of contemporary and historical life. Monday-Friday 10 am-1:30 pm and 4-7:30 pm, Saturday and Sunday 11 am-2 pm and 4:30-8:30 pm. Open until 10 pm during the summer. 15 euros adults, 9 euros children. Audio guide is 3.50 euros. Passatge de la Banca 7, Barcelona. Phone 93-317-2649. <http://www.museocerabcn.com>.

### **Museo Egipci de Barcelona**

This museum specializes in ancient Egyptian culture and is home to the Fundacion Clos collection, which has 700 original artifacts in its possession. The main focus is on the pharaohs and their concept of life after death. In addition, visitors can enjoy theatrical re-enactments of ancient Egyptian cultural life and various temporary exhibitions featured throughout the year. Monday-Saturday 10 am-8 pm, Sunday 10 am-2 pm. There are free guided tours in Spanish Saturday at 5 pm. 11 euros. Special prices apply to theatrical presentations. Valencia 284, Barcelona. Phone 93-488-0188. <http://www.museuegipci.com>.

### **Museo Textil de la Indumentaria**

Tracing the evolution of the textile industry, this museum contains various collections of garments, tapestries, embroideries and the apparatuses involved in the production of textiles, both from Spain and abroad. Daily except Monday 10 am-6 pm. Admission 5 euros adults. Free Sunday 3-6 pm. Avinguda Diagonal 686 (Palau Reial de Pedralbes), Barcelona. Phone 93-256-3465. <http://www.dhub-bcn.cat/en/history/museu-textil-i-d-indumentaria>.

### **Museu d'Art Contemporani de Barcelona**

Often referred to as MACBA, this museum showcases works by contemporary artists the world over, but it's the museum building that often gets attention. Designed by U.S. architect Richard Meier and opened in 1995, the dazzling white structure is the flagship of the ambitious renovation of the Raval district. Inside, the museum has lots of natural light and ramps for walking ease. Various temporary exhibits augment the main collection. Late June-late September: Monday, Wednesday and Thursday 11 am-8 pm; Friday 11 am-10 pm; Saturday 10 am-10 pm; Sunday and holidays 10 am-3 pm. Late September-late June: Monday and Wednesday-Friday 11 am-7:30 pm, Saturday 10 am-9 pm, Sunday and holidays 10 am-3 pm. Admission 8 euros adults. Free guided tours in English on Monday, Wednesday, Thursday and Saturday at 4 pm. Placa del Angels 1 (Metro: Universita), Barcelona. Phone 93-412-0810. <http://www.macba.cat>.

### **Museu de la Xocolata**

This museum presents Barcelona as you've never seen it before: made out of chocolate. The Olympic stadium, Gaudi's buildings and other Barcelona landmarks are all formed from the intoxicating sweet stuff. An initiative of the Provincial Guild of Pastry Chefs and City Hall, the museum is housed in the old Sant Agusti convent (suitably equipped with arctic-level air-conditioning to prevent Barcelona from

melting). The museum also whisks you through the history of the "bitter drink" of the Aztecs and enlightens you about chocolate as medicine, food and aphrodisiac. And, of course, there's a scrumptious cafe and shop with consumable chocolate. Monday-Saturday 10 am-7 pm, Sunday 10 am-3 pm. 4.30 euros adults. Carrer del Comerç 36, La Ribera, Barcelona. Phone 93-268-7878. <http://www.museuxocolata.cat>.

### **Museu del Modernisme Catala**

All things *modernisme*: painting, sculpture, stained glass, furniture, and other applied and decorative arts. Temporary exhibitions and lectures as well. Monday-Saturday 10 am-8 pm, Sunday and public holidays 10 am-2 pm. 10 euros adults. Balmes 48, Eixample, Barcelona. Phone 93-272-2896. <http://www.mmcat.cat>.

### **Museu d'Historia de Catalunya**

A lively, interactive overview of the history of Catalonia is housed in a restored port building. Artifacts, hands-on exhibits, audiovisuals and animated models reconstruct the social and human complexity of each period. Guidebooks in English are available. A restaurant is located on the fourth floor, and a gift and book shop are also on-site. Tuesday and Thursday-Saturday 10 am-7 pm, Wednesday 10 am-8 pm, Sunday and holidays 10 am-2:30 pm. 4 euros adults, free on the first Sunday of each month. Placa de Pau Vila 3, Port Vell, Barcelona. Phone 93-225-4700. <http://www.mhcat.net>.

### **Museu d'Historia de la Ciutat**

This institution is actually a collection of museums. The main branch incorporates the ensemble of monumental buildings on Placa del Rei. The underground levels there reveal fascinating subterranean layers of the city's ancient history, including some remains from the Roman colony Barcino. An entire ancient street and a fourth-century Christian basilica are also preserved just where they were discovered during city excavations in the 1930s. Exhibits on the upper floors chart later developments in Barcelona. The different spaces have different opening times but they are generally Tuesday-Saturday 10 am-7 pm (until 8 pm April-September), Sunday and holidays 10 am-8 pm. 7 euros adults. Placa de Pau Vila 3 (Palau de Mar), Barri Gotic, Barcelona. Phone 93-256-2100. <http://www.museuhistoria.bcn.es>.

### **Museu Europeu d'Art Modern**

The collection in this lovely restored 18th-century neoclassical palace focuses on figurative art in paintings and sculpture from the 19th century to the present day. Daily except Monday 10 am-7 pm. 7 euros adults. Barra de Ferro 5, El Born, Barcelona. Phone 93-319-5693. <http://meam.es>.

### **Museu Frederic Mares**

This museum was created around the collections donated to the city by sculptor Frederic Mares in 1946. He continued adding to the collection throughout his lifetime. In addition to an extensive Hispanic sculpture collection and many of Mares' own works, the museum also contains photographs, fans, pipes, jewelry, clocks, toys, pharmacy bottles, gargoyles, opera glasses and other ephemera that give an insight into 19th-century customs and lifestyles. Tuesday-Saturday 10 am-7 pm, Sunday 11 am-8 pm. Admission is 4.20 euros. Free on Wednesday 3-7 pm and on the first Sunday of each month. 5 Placa de Sant Iu, Barcelona. Phone 93-310-5800. <http://www.museumares.bcn.es>.

### **Museu Maritim de Barcelona**

This is one of Barcelona's most popular museums, housed in the breathtaking Drassanes (Royal Shipyards), which date from the 1200s. The permanent museum is currently closed for a massive renovation of the dockyards, but access to temporary exhibitions is still available. Daily 10 am-8 pm. General admission 2.50 euros adults. Avinguda de les Drassanes s/n, Port Vell, Barcelona. Phone 93-342-9920. <http://www.mmb.cat>.



### **Museu Picasso**

The museum's focus is on the early formative years of Pablo Picasso (1895-1904), many of which were spent in Barcelona. The collection includes drawings, representational and cubist paintings, and works from the artist's Blue and Pink Periods, housed in five adjacent medieval palaces. One of the highlights is the collection of interpretations that Picasso did of Velazquez's *Las Meninas*. Daily except Monday 10 am-8 pm. 11 euros adults, 6 euros for temporary exhibits. Free on the first Sunday of every month and every Sunday after 3 pm. Montcada 15-23, Barri Gotic, Barcelona. Phone 93-256-3000. <http://www.museupicasso.bcn.cat>.

### **Poble Espanyol**

The name translates to Spanish Village. Built for the International Exhibition of 1929, it is an open-air museum that includes replicas (often on a smaller scale) of buildings, squares and bridges found throughout the country. It was revamped for the 1992 Olympics and turned into a local nightlife hot spot with numerous bars and restaurants. It's still open in the daytime, however, and has an arts-and-crafts center with more than 40 workshops where you can view and purchase traditional goods. Numerous children's activities and concerts are also held frequently on-site. Monday 9 am-8 pm, Tuesday-Thursday and Sunday 9 am-midnight, Friday 9 am-3 pm, Saturday 9 am-4 pm. 11 euros adults, 6.25 euros children. Avinguda Marques de Comilla, Montjuic, Barcelona. <http://www.poble-espanyol.com>.

### **Neighborhoods & Districts**

#### **Barri Gotic**

The Gothic Quarter is the oldest portion of Barcelona, a warren of narrow streets on the northeast side of La Rambla. It was originally the site of the Roman settlement and the area later encompassed by the medieval walls. Now it's one of the city's most interesting districts, packed with shops, bars and restaurants, many of them occupying centuries-old buildings. Sights of note include the cathedral, a number of museums and surviving bits of Roman walls. The nerve center of the old city, Placa Sant Jaume, goes back to Roman times, when it formed the intersection of the north-south and east-west roads. It's an excellent starting point from which to explore the rest of the Gothic Quarter.

Farther to the east you'll find the La Ribera and El Born areas. Several of the handsome old mansions there now house museums, including the Museu Picasso. Nestled between Parc de la Ciutadella and Via Laietana, El Born offers an eclectic mix of designer fashion outlets and small artisan shops for you to explore during the day, and plenty of bars, restaurants, nightclubs and terraces to sample at night.

#### **Eixample**

This area of the city was first built in the mid-1800s after the medieval walls were demolished and Barcelona was allowed to expand. The Eixample (pronounced *eye-SHAAM-pla*) was laid out according to a plan drawn up by top local planner Ildefons Cerda and is made up of a uniform grid of avenues with the corners of each block "flattened" or pushed in to make a hexagon out of a square—it's easy to identify on maps. The Eixample quickly became a fashionable residential and shopping area (which it remains). It's the prime area in which to view the buildings of the *modernisme* movement. At the western edge of the Eixample is the Parc Joan Miro with the colorful totemic landmark of Miro's *Woman and Bird* rising from a small lake. It's especially pretty when lit up at night.

#### **El Raval**

On the opposite side of La Rambla from the Barri Gotic, El Raval once had a reputation as a famous red-light district (also known as the Barrio Chino, or Barri Xino), and although today street walkers still parade, there are far fewer of them than before. The area has undergone extensive revamping, making it a fascinating mixture of the old and the ultramodern. One of Gaudi's buildings, the Palau Guell, lies just a half block off La Rambla, although only part of it is open. Many fashionable bars and restaurants are also in the area, attracting a young, bohemian crowd, and its range of down-to-earth eating spots is the most ethnically varied in the whole city. The neighborhood can still be a bit dicey at times, however, so be cautious if visiting after dark.

### **Gracia**

Stroll up the Passeig de Gracia, cross the Diagonal, and you're in Gracia on the northern edge of Eixample, formerly a town in its own right before it was swallowed by Barcelona's growth. Turn into the warren of narrow streets and enjoy a more private Barcelona with an atmosphere of its own. The district is characterized by independent design, and art and cinema movements, and is home to myriad specialist shops, trendy bars and restaurants. You can find old-fashioned herbalists and junk shops as well as stylishly renovated stores, superb delicatessens and two municipal food markets. Placa del Sol and Placa Rius i Taulet are the main squares where you can enjoy a drink on a cafe terrace. The nightlife, which attracts people from all over town, centers on Carrer Verdi. The area is also famous for its spectacular street parties and celebrations in August.

### **Montjuic**

You'll need at least a full day to enjoy all that this landmark hill, the largest green area in the city, has to offer. It has a prominent castle, museums, various parks and botanical gardens, an amusement park, and the stadium and other facilities used in the 1992 Olympic Games as well as Poble Espanyol, a village that includes facsimiles of buildings from throughout Spain. Numerous ways of getting up the hill include escalators, buses, cable cars and a funicular train.

### **Port Vell**

The old port area, which surrounds the point where La Rambla meets the sea, doesn't appear old: It has been the site of renovation in recent decades. The statue of Columbus at the foot of La Rambla makes a convenient starting point for exploring this area. (Take the small elevator to the top to get your surroundings in perspective.) Nearby, in the old royal shipyard building, is the Museu Maritim de Barcelona. To the northeast is La Barceloneta, the traditional fishermen's district and home to the best seafood restaurants in town. For practical purposes, La Barceloneta can be thought of as part of Port Vell, although it's really a totally different district with a character all its own.

### **Vila Olimpica**

The area of the Olympic Village was once a wasteland of derelict factories, railroad tracks and warehouses, vestiges of its former glory days as a thriving industrial zone. Today, it's a stylish residential district. With its fountains and gardens, shopping malls and cinema complexes, it is also a popular leisure space for locals and visitors alike. It includes 2.5 mi/4 km of beach and the Port Olympic, packed with restaurants, bars and discos. On Sunday, it seems as if the whole of Barcelona is down in the Vila Olimpica area; the restaurants are crammed then, so if you can see it on another day, you'll enjoy a quieter and more relaxing visit.

### **Parks & Gardens**

#### **Parc de Cervantes**

On the edge of the city and stretching to the foothills, this luxuriant park is a favorite haunt of bikers and joggers. It has children's play areas, a pine-shaded picnic area and some vintage olive trees. The rose garden has more than 10,000 plants, which flower at different times April-November. Open daily 10 am-6 pm December-February, 10 am-7 pm March and November, 10 am-8 pm April and October, 10 am-9 pm May-September. Avinguda Diagonal 706, Barcelona.

#### **Parc de la Ciutadella**

Charmingly old-fashioned in its geometrical layout, the Parc Ciutadella is leafy and restful, yet filled with surprises such as the flamboyant waterfall and fountain (whose designer was assisted by the student Antoni Gaudi), the sculpture of the dainty *Lady With the Umbrella* by Roig i Sole, rare trees and a boating lake. Originally a citadel built in 1715 to keep Barcelona in line after the War of the Spanish Succession, this area was handed over to the city in 1869 and turned into a park. Barcelona started on its cosmopolitan journey when the park was chosen as the site for the Universal Exhibition of 1888, the gateway to which was the Arc de Triomf (Triumphal Arch). A cafe-restaurant built for the Exhibition is now the Zoology Museum. Still standing are the Hivernacle (conservatory) with a cafeteria, the shady Umbracle (tropical hothouse) and the geology museum. The southeast end of the park is taken up by the zoo. Daily 8 am-6 pm. Passeig Pujades and Passeig Picasso, Barri Gotic, Barcelona. Phone 93-413-2400.

### **Park Guell**

Gaudi's dreamland creation and now a UNESCO World Heritage site, Park Guell has been painstakingly restored and is a must-see. It was originally planned as a housing development, but only a few buildings were completed, including the gingerbread gatehouse. Some of Barcelona's most famous visual symbols are in the park: Gaudi's mosaic dragon (or lizard), the monumental plaza with its colorful serpentine bench made in *trencadis* (interwoven fragments of multicolored ceramic) and fabulous views of the city. The park stretches up the hill, with twisting paths through the woods. Daily 10 am-6 pm April-September, 10 am-8 pm October-March. Last entry 30 minutes before closing. Free admission to the park, 5 euros adults for the Gaudi House-Museum, where the architect spent the last 20 years of his life. Olot 7, Barcelona. Phone 93-219-3811. [http://www.casamuseugaudi.org/cm-eng/docs\\_instit/parkguell.php](http://www.casamuseugaudi.org/cm-eng/docs_instit/parkguell.php).

### **Amusement Parks**

#### **Parc d'Atraccions del Tibidabo**

This amusement park is perched on Tibidabo, the summit of the Collserola Range, amid whose high woodlands you can enjoy a pine-scented breather from the congestion in the city below. The thrills include a roller coaster and some rides that date from 1901. The park also has a spectacular view of the city. The unique Museu d'Automates is a collection of old fairground machines. Park hours vary depending on the time of year and day of the week—consult the website to confirm hours. Entrance and unlimited rides 28.20 euros, 10 euros for children shorter than 47 in/120 cm tall. Placa Tibidabo 3-4, Barcelona. Phone 93-211-7942. <http://www.tibidabo.cat>.

### **Wineries, Breweries & Distilleries**

#### **Miguel Torres**

A 30- to 40-minute bus or car ride west of the city takes you to the wine-producing town of Vilafranca del Penedes and Torres, Catalunya's top bodega. There, for a small fee, you can learn how wine is made (and ask lots of questions); multimedia presentations are offered along with a physical tour through working vineyards. Wine tastings and a shop are also on-site. Tours available Monday-Saturday 9:15 am-4:45 pm, Sunday and holidays 9 am-12:45 pm. 6.45 euros adults. M. Torres, 6, 08720 Vilafranca del Penedes, Barcelona. Phone 93-817-7400. <http://www.torres.es>.

### **Zoos & Wildlife**

#### **L'Aquarium de Barcelona**

Take a walk through shark-infested waters while staying safe and dry. The secret is a 260-ft-/80-m-long transparent tunnel that lets you stroll through the Oceanario, the main tank that contains thousands of specimens. Outside the fishy depths, amenities for humans include an interactive area for small children, an auditorium, a cafeteria, a gift shop and a panoramic terrace. Monday-Friday 9:30 am-9 pm (till 9:30 pm June and September, till 11 pm July and August), Saturday and Sunday 9:30 am-9:30 pm. Last admission one hour before closing time. 19 euros adults, 14 euros children ages 5-10. Moll d'Espanya, Port Vell, Barcelona. Phone 93-221-7474. <http://www.aquariumbcn.com>.

#### **Zoo de Barcelona**

This pleasant zoo is located in Parc de la Ciutadella. It includes dolphin shows and farm animals. The zoo also offers shady picnic areas, pony rides and play equipment. Open daily 10 am-5:30 pm November to mid-March, till 6 pm late March-May and October, till 7 pm June-September. 19 euros adults, 9.90 euros children ages 3-12. Passeig Pujades and Passeig Picasso (in Parc de la Ciutadella), Barri Gotic, Barcelona. Phone 902-457-545. <http://www.zoobarcelona.cat>.

### **Recreation**

The most popular recreation area in Barcelona is the seafront, especially near Vila Olimpica. Walkers, joggers, bicyclists and in-line skaters all make use of the area, where they can be mobile without the worries of automobile traffic. The city's beaches are there, too, extending from Barceloneta eastward. What's more, Port Olympic at Vila Olimpica offers opportunities for sailing and other watersports.

For hiking in a real Mediterranean wood filled with wildflowers and herbs, Collserola Natural Park is only a short train journey away from the city to the mountains north and west of Barcelona. Get there by taking the Terrassa/Sabadell line of FGC train network, which departs from the Placa Catalunya. The park is a short walk from the Baixador de Vallvidrera. Phone 93-280-3552. <http://www.parccollserola.net/angles/home/home.htm>.

## Beaches

In times past, only the foolish would splash into the polluted waters near Barcelona. An efficient purification system greatly improved the quality of the waters once the city began preparing for the Olympics, and swimming there is now a positive pleasure. The coastline from Barceloneta northeast to Rio Besos was converted from industrial wasteland to seaside playground. Visitors can enjoy more than 2.5 mi/4 km of sandy shore. It's broken up into different sections with different names: Platja Sant Sebastia, Platja Barceloneta, Platja Nova Icaria, Platja Bogatell, Platja Mar Bella and Platja Nova Mar Bella.

A promenade and a number of bars and restaurants can be found along the beaches. The whole area has become popular for sunning, strolling, bicycling, in-line skating and general hanging around.

If you want to swim, be sure to check the flags on the beach, which indicate whether the surf is dangerous: A green flag indicates that it's safe to enter the water, yellow indicates that you should exercise caution while in the water and red means dangerous conditions—stay out of the water.

## Bicycling

City Hall is promoting the use of the bicycle as an alternative to the car, and the city has created numerous bicycle lanes. Where possible, these are segregated from traffic and pedestrians, though that's not always the case. Maps of the routes are available from the information offices. See the city's cycling website for maps, advice and a list of locations where you can rent bicycles both short- and long-term. <http://www.bcn.cat/bicicleta>.

The most enjoyable ride is on the seafront near Vila Olimpica, where you will be undisturbed by traffic. You will have to negotiate joggers, walkers and in-line skaters, though: This is a popular place. **Un**

### **Cotxe Menys—Bike Tours Barcelona**

The name of this ecologically conscious rental outfit means "One Car Less" in Catalan, and groups are formed daily next to the tourist office in Plaza San Jaume to pick up the bikes. No reservations are necessary for groups of fewer than 15 people. Tours last about three hours, and most of the route uses cycle lanes, parks and pedestrian zones. Daily tours at 11 am and also 4:30 pm Friday-Monday April to mid-September. 22 euros (includes bike rental, guide and drink). Bicycles can also be rented separately by the hour (5 euros), day (15 euros) or half-day (10 euros). Daily 10 am-6 pm. Call ahead if you want to rent a bike outside those hours. Esparteria 3, Barcelona. Phone 93-268-2105. <http://www.bicicletabarcelona.com>.

## Shopping

The industrious Catalans have often been dubbed a nation of shopkeepers, and Barcelona does have a staggering number of shops of every kind and in every neighborhood. Barri Gotic and El Raval, in particular, have many quirky little shops with long family traditions, struggling for survival in the face of malls and big-name merchants. A little shopping time spent around Placa Catalunya will introduce you to El Corte Ingles department store and El Triangle shopping mall.

Large or small, many of the city's merchants play to the city's love of design. In clothes, look for Catalan designers such as Antonio Miro and Adolfo Dominguez. Leather shoes, bags, wallets and belts can be particularly stunning and a good value. Some of the best choices are the Spanish brands:

Loewe, Yanko, Farrutx and Camper. Even if you never set foot in a store, you'll get to appreciate the city's sense of style by strolling past elaborate window displays.

Food and drink are also highly prized in Barcelona and make good souvenirs. Stock up on olives and cheese at La Boqueria market on La Rambla and cold-pressed virgin olive oil and Spanish wine at a large grocer such as Colmado Quilez. If you don't mind carting (or shipping) heavy parcels home, treat yourself to an earthenware cooking pot, a cast iron *plantxa* or the more portable ceramic tapas dishes.

To guide you through this cornucopia, the city has mapped out the 3-mi-/5-km-long Shopping Line (<http://www.shoppinglinebarcelona.com>), which links different shopping areas that also happen to be dotted with many of the most interesting tourist sights. The comfortable TombBus links the areas, running from Placa Catalunya to El Corte Ingles store at the top end of the Diagonal and back. The Barcelona Card transportation pass will give you a discount at a number of shops on the route: They're identified by the Shopping Line logo—four colored diamonds in a white circle within a blue circle.

**Shopping Hours:** Generally, Monday-Saturday 9 or 10 am to 1:30 or 2 pm and 4:30 or 5 pm to 7:30-9 pm (many stores are closed Saturday afternoon). Neighborhood food stores and bakeries generally open at the crack of dawn, have a long break at lunch and are open again 5-9 pm. The department stores, shopping malls and many of the larger stores on the main shopping streets stay open at lunchtime and until 10 pm. In summer, many shops close on Saturday afternoon. Sunday opening is strictly regulated: The big stores and malls are allowed to open on eight Sundays each year, including the four Sundays before Christmas. Otherwise, you'll mostly find only convenience stores and gift shops open on Sunday.

## Department Stores

### El Corte Ingles

Spain's most emblematic department store, where you can find anything and everything. The huge branch in Placa Catalunya is the most convenient for Barcelona visitors. It can get uncomfortably crowded, but tired shoppers can take a breather and enjoy the view from the rooftop cafeteria. Around the corner of Portal de l'Angel is a branch specializing in sports and leisure. Monday-Saturday 9:30 am-9:30 pm. Placa Catalunya 14, Barcelona. Phone 901-122-122. <http://www.elcorteingles.es>.

## Markets

### Els Encants Vells

A wondrous assortment of junk and jumble awaits at Barcelona's well-loved flea market. Selection and prices are best early in the morning. Monday, Wednesday, Friday and Saturday 9 am-5 pm (although the main activity occurs until 3 pm). Placa de les Glories, Barcelona. Phone 93-246-3030.

### La Boqueria

Also known as Mercat de Sant Josep, this is the oldest and most marvelous of Barcelona's 40 bustling municipal food markets. It absolutely should not be missed, and with its location just off La Rambla, it's not likely you'd accidentally pass by. Loaded with stall after stall of fresh fruit, fish, meat and vegetables, it's full of bright colors and exotic smells. Of particular interest are the egg stall, with more than 40 different types of eggs, and the stalls with chorizo and *butifarra* sausages. Seek out the Pinotxo bar for a breakfast of tasty coffee and churros. Great tapas, too, if you're there later in the day. Monday-Saturday 8:30 am-8:30 pm (Monday's not the best day to visit because a large number of stalls are closed). La Rambla 91, Raval, Barcelona. Phone 93-318-2017. <http://www.boqueria.info>.

### Mercat de Sant Antoni

If the more famous Boqueria market is too bustling for your taste, this local indoor food market would be a good alternative. Books, records and other collectibles are also sold just outside on Sunday.

Monday-Thursday 7 am-2:30 pm and 5-8:30 pm, Friday and Saturday 7 am-8:30 pm. Carrer Comte d'Urgell 1, Raval, Barcelona. Phone 93-426-3521. <http://www.mercatdesantantoni.com>.

### **Shopping Areas**

#### **Bulevard Rosa**

In this shopping area, there is a collection of shops, from jewelry to accessories, designer clothes and shoes to housewares and gifts. Many hand-crafted and original designs and a witty philosophy, which suggests looking at life through "rose-tinted spectacles." Monday-Saturday 10 am-9 pm. Paseo de Gracia 53, Barcelona. Phone 93-215-8331. <http://www.bulevardrosa.com>.

#### **El Triangle**

A smart mall in Placa Catalunya, with a combination of small shops and big-name stores such as FNAC. Monday-Saturday 10 am-10 pm. Placa Catalunya 1-4, Barcelona. Phone 93-318-0108. <http://www.eltriangle.es>.

#### **L'illa**

Housed in the unmistakable white building known as the Recumbent Skyscraper, this elegant and airy commercial center has numerous fashion shops and boutiques, a food market, an FNAC department store, lots of superb little stalls, coffee bars, eateries and a huge branch of the Caprabo supermarket. Daily 10 am-9:30 pm. Ave. Diagonal 557, Barcelona. Phone 93-444-0000. <http://www.lilla.com>.

#### **Maremagnum**

This Port Vell shopping center has been given a new lease on life with the addition of designer names such as Calvin Klein and the delectable Xocoa chocolate shop. You'll also find Mango, H&M and other popular chain stores, as well as shops catering to families, a Barca shop, and several coffee shops, tapas bars and restaurants. Open daily 10 am-10 pm; restaurants open until 1 am. Moll d'Espanya 5, Port Vell, Barcelona. Phone 93-225-8100. <http://www.maremagnum.es>.

### **Specialty Stores**

#### **Biosca i Botey**

There are a lot of lamp stores in Barcelona (part of the city's love of design), but this one's a standout. It has a stylish inventory, from the trendiest little designer lamp to the weird and wonderful, with studio lighting and an antiques departments, too. It's impossible not to be lured in by the glowing colors and shapes you'll see in the window. Monday-Saturday 10 am-2 pm and 4:30-8:30 pm. Avenida Diagonal, Eixample, Barcelona. Phone 93-238-7373. <http://www.bioscabotey.es>.

#### **Cacao Sampaka**

Purveyors of eye-catching, artisanal chocolate goodies. Monday-Saturday 9 am-9:30 pm. Consell de Cent 292, Eixample, Barcelona. Phone 93-272-0833. <http://www.cacaosampaka.com>.

#### **Caelum**

Get thee to a nunnery? Well, not quite, but everything sold there has been produced by monks and nuns in Spanish monasteries. In the cafe downstairs, you can sample such culinary delicacies as cakes, cookies, sweets, honey, marzipan, wines and spirits. Open Monday-Thursday 10:30 am-8:30 pm, Friday and Saturday 11 am-11 pm, Sunday 11:30 am-9 pm. Carrer de la Palla 8, Barri Gotic, Barcelona. Phone 93-302-6993. <http://www.caelumbarcelona.com>.

#### **Camper**

Footwear is fun at this cheerful shop, which has elevated Mallorcan peasant sandals into a fashion trend with international appeal. Flat-soled and wedge styles come with round toes, bold stripes and bright colors and designs. Other options range from sturdy leather shoes to plastic boots to funky high heels. Also at Rambla de Catalunya 122 and other locations. Monday-Saturday 10 am-10 pm. Pelai 13-37, Eixample, Barcelona. Phone 93-302-4124. For the other locations, phone 93-217-2384. <http://www.camper.com>.

### **Can Ravell**

A good spot to go foraging for local food products, like ham and other cured meats, cheeses, prepared dishes, canned goods, and the shopping list goes on. It also has a restaurant on the premises in case you can't wait to enjoy the goods. Tuesday-Saturday 10 am-9 pm, Sunday 10 am-3 pm. Arago 313, Eixample, Barcelona. Phone 93-457-5114. <http://www.ravell.com>.

### **Casa Munich**

The colorful sneakers of that old Catalan brand have become fashionable all over the world, but only in a few shops will you find the very sought-after special editions, which are presented there like icons in front of walls striped in black and white. There is a second location in L'Illa at Avenida Diagonal. Open Monday-Saturday 11 am-9 pm. Carrer Antic de Sant Joan 4, Barri Gotic, Barcelona. Phone 93-319-9608. <http://www.munichsports.com>.

### **Cereria Subira**

Specializing in candles of every imaginable color, shape and size, this old store (founded in 1857) still has its original decor and is quite a sight in itself. Monday-Friday 9:30 am-1:30 pm and 4-8 pm, Saturday 10 am-2 pm and 5-8 pm. Baixada Llibreteria 7, Barcelona. Phone 93-315-2606.

### **Colmado Quilez**

This is a wonderful grocery store that's jammed with cheeses, wine, meats and practically anything else you could want. Monday-Friday 9 am-2 pm and 4:30-8:30 pm, Saturday 9 am-2 pm. Rambla de Catalunya 63, Eixample, Barcelona. Phone 93-215-2356. <http://www.lafuente.es>.

### **Custo**

The designer T-shirts and trendy clubwear are popular with the international club set. Spanish actress Penelope Cruz reportedly adores the label. There are multiple locations throughout Barcelona, including the flagship store, but the company's empire is growing all over the world. Monday-Saturday 10 am-9 pm. Placa de les Olles 7, Barcelona. Phone 93-268-7893. <http://www.custo-barcelona.com>.

### **Foix de Sarria**

This pastry shop, one of the most select in town, has a sort of hushed, reverential, almost museumlike air. It was founded in 1886 and belonged to the family of the famous Catalan poet J.V. Foix. Located in the main square of the Sarria neighborhood (not far from Museu Monestir de Pedralbes), it is famous for its *petxines de Sarria*—shell-shaped candies made of almond and bitter chocolate. Around Easter, they have a stunning chocolate sculpture display. Daily 8 am-9 pm. Mayor de Sarria 57, Sarria, Barcelona. Phone 93-203-0473. <http://foixdesarria.com>.

### **Herboristeria del Rei**

This stately shop specializing in herbal concoctions is as much a local landmark as it is a business. Once purveyors to royal houses, it now peddles herbal remedies, essential oils, natural cosmetics and candles. Tuesday-Friday 4-8 pm, Saturday 10 am-8 pm. Vidre 1, Barri Gotic, Barcelona. Phone 93-318-0512. <http://herboristeriadelrei3.blogspot.com.es>.

### **La Manual Alpargatera**

A shoe shop specializing in the timelessly popular rope-soled espadrilles. Have a pair custom-made or choose from the shop's mind-blowing selection. Either way, be sure to see them being made by hand in the back room. The shop itself is also interesting—a haven of wrought-iron lamps and wooden beams unchanged since the 1940s. Monday-Saturday 9:30 am-1:30 pm and 4:30-8 pm. Avinyo 7, Barcelona. Phone 93-301-0172.

### **L'Arca de l'Avia**

This high-quality vintage shop is a veritable "grandmother's chest," as the name denotes. Antique textiles, particularly those that might have found their way into a bride's trousseau, such as wedding dresses, veils, linens and curtains. Centuries-old laces are also proudly displayed. Monday-Friday 10 am-2 pm and 5-8 pm, Saturday 11 am-2 pm. Banys nous 20, Barri Gotic, Barcelona. Phone 93-302-1598. <http://www.larcadelavia.com>.

### **Vila Viniteca**

Great selection of 6,000 different Catalan and Spanish wines. Wonderful *cavas*, sheries, brandies and some very rare finds. Also sells international wines. Tastings offered. Open Monday-Saturday 8:30 am-8:30 pm. Carrer Agullers 7-9, El Born, Barcelona. Phone 90-232-7777. <http://www.vilaviniteca.es>.

### **Vincon**

Barcelona's original and innovative design emporium stocks everything for the home, from elegant and practical kitchenware to fabrics to fun lamps. It's a lovely place to browse, and you can get glimpses of La Pedrera's inner courtyard from the upper floors. Monday-Saturday 10 am-9 pm. Passeig de Gracia 96, Eixample, Barcelona. Phone 93-215-6050. <http://www.vincon.com>.

## **DINING**

### **Dining Overview**

Catalan cuisine resembles that of other Mediterranean countries and makes use of nuts, garlic, olive oil, tomatoes and herbs. One of the simplest and yet most delicious dishes (the one Catalans particularly yearn for when abroad) is *pa amb tomaquet*: a large slice of fresh country bread (toasted or not) rubbed with tomato and drizzled with virgin olive oil. It may be topped with Iberian ham, cheese and anchovies or served along with meat, chicken or fish *a la brasa* (cooked over a charcoal fire).

Other local specialties include *esqueixada* (a salad of raw salt cod with onions and peppers), *espinacs a la catalana* (spinach sauteed with raisins and pine nuts) and *bacalla a la llauna* (salt cod with tomato, garlic and parsley). If you have a sweet tooth, *crema catalana* (a cinnamon- and lemon-flavored custard) is a must for dessert.

Many restaurants advertise as serving *cuina de mercat* or *cocina de mercado*, meaning they use whatever is in season at the local market: Freshness is of the essence. There are restaurants serving dishes from other regions of Spain, too. Galician cuisine, in particular, is popular and available at the superb (and pricey) Botafumeiro as well as neighborhood bars. Restaurants specializing in the cuisine of other countries are also common.

You can eat well anywhere in the city, although many of the most emblematic restaurants are clustered in the Barri Gotic and the Raval, with Barceloneta and the Olympic port being a must for seafood and the sheer pleasure of eating outdoors. Gracia, too, is full of eating places, many of them very inexpensive because they're more off-the-beaten tourist track.

Like most Europeans, the Catalans begin their day with a light breakfast that may include *bollos* (rolls), churros (fried fritters) and pastries. Lunch is served about 1:30 pm at the very earliest, with peak time being 2-4 pm. *Berenar* or *merienda* is an afternoon snack taken at around 4 or 5 pm to get you through to a late dinner, which isn't served until 9 pm or later. The best bargains are available at lunch, when most restaurants offer the *menu del dia* or set lunch. Even the most basic (for little more than 10 euros) offer a choice of starter course, main course of meat or fish and dessert, plus a drink.

Expect to pay within these general guidelines for a dinner for one, not including drinks, tax or tip: \$ = less than 20 euros; \$\$ = 21 euros-40 euros; \$\$\$ = 41 euros-70 euros; \$\$\$\$ = more than 70 euros.

### **Local & Regional**

#### **10's**

This small and casual restaurant in the Park Hotel specializes in generous portions of creative tapas. Daily except Monday for lunch and dinner. \$\$\$. Most major credit cards. Rec 79, El Born, Barcelona. Phone 93-319-2222. <http://www.parkhotelbarcelona.com>.



### **Aqua**

Refined Spanish-Mediterranean cuisine served in a great location right on the beach. Beautiful people congregate on the terrace, but you can also enjoy the view through a large windowfront from the cozy, tastefully designed interior. Daily for lunch and dinner. Reservations recommended. \$\$\$\$. Most major credit cards. Passeig Maritim de la Barceloneta 30, Barcelona. Phone 93-225-1272. <http://www.grupotragaluz.com/restaurantes/agua>.

### **Bilbao**

You couldn't find a better place to eat the authentic "Mediterranean diet." This well-loved local favorite on one of Gracia's narrowest streets serves whatever's in season, fresh and simply cooked in the traditional style: artichokes sauteed with ham, wild mushrooms with garlic and parsley, meat or fish *a la plantxa*. Homemade desserts and a good wine list. Though not inexpensive, the quality makes it an unbeatable value. The *menu del dia* is an especially good bargain. Monday-Saturday for lunch and dinner. Reservations recommended. \$\$\$\$. Perill 33, Gracia, Barcelona. Phone 93-458-9624.

### **Cafe de L'Academia**

Charming restaurant located on the Placa Sant Just, one of the most beautiful squares in Barcelona, in a Gothic building dating from the 15th century (not to mention the lovely terrace in summer). The Catalan food, using only the freshest ingredients, is excellent and surprisingly affordable: It's one of the best bets in Barcelona for lunch, which can be had for as little as 15 euros. Try the eggplant terrine with goat cheese followed by codfish au gratin. Monday-Friday for lunch and dinner. Reservations highly recommended. \$\$\$. Most major credit cards. Carrer Lledo 1, Barri Gotic, Barcelona. Phone 93-319-8253.

### **Cal Pep**

One of the best culinary shows in town. Seafood tapas and fresh seasonal fish dishes are prepared in an open kitchen in full view of diners. The cavelike interior enhances the theatrical atmosphere. Monday for dinner only, Tuesday-Friday for lunch and dinner, Saturday for lunch only. \$\$-\$\$\$\$. Most major credit cards. Carrer Placa De las Ollas 8, La Ribera, Barcelona. Phone 93-310-7961. <http://www.calpep.com>.

### **Carmelitas**

At this former convent converted into a restaurant, you'll encounter straightforward Catalan dishes highlighting seasonal and regional ingredients. Try the Catalan sausages with white beans. Daily for lunch and dinner, Saturday and Sunday for brunch. Reservations recommended for weekend brunch. \$\$\$\$. Most major credit cards. Carrer del Doctor Dou 1, Raval, Barcelona. Phone 93-412-4684. <http://www.carmelitas.biz>.

### **Casa Calvet**

Dine on excellent Mediterranean food with Asian touches, served in a former office building designed by Antoni Gaudi. Try the duck liver with oranges, and rosemary ice cream for dessert. Wonderful game dishes in the fall. Open Monday-Saturday for lunch and dinner. Reservations required. \$\$\$\$. Most major credit cards. Carrer de Casp 48, Eixample, Barcelona. Phone 93-412-4012. <http://www.casacalvet.es>.

### **Cent Focs**

This restaurant is popular with locals. Good food at very good prices. Warm atmosphere, large round tables and a traditional Catalan Mediterranean menu, which includes vegetarian and organic fare. Daily for lunch and dinner. \$-\$\$\$. Most major credit cards. Carrer de Balmes 16 (between Gran Via and Ronda Universitat), Barcelona. Phone 93-412-0095. <http://www.centfocs.com>.

### **El Gran Cafe**

One of the oldest restaurants in Barcelona. It features old-fashioned decor and traditional Catalan dishes, but also boasts a selection of more innovative dishes. With its warm, welcoming atmosphere and round tables, it's a great place for a night out with friends or family. Daily for lunch and dinner. \$\$-\$\$\$\$. Carrer d' Avinyo 9, Barcelona. Phone 93-318-7986. <http://cacheirorestaurants.com/gran-cafe>.

### **Els Quatre Gats**

Founded in 1897, The Four Cats is one of Barcelona's most famous historic restaurants. It maintains the traditional look designed by Modernist architect Puig i Cadafalch that attracted such famous personalities as Pablo Picasso and Antoni Gaudi in their day. Indeed, Picasso hung many of his earliest paintings on the restaurant's walls and designed the first menu. We recommend the 12-euro menu for lunch, which includes a choice of two courses and dessert. Despite the tourist crowd, the atmosphere is still interesting, although the food is rather average. Daily for lunch and dinner. Reservations recommended. \$\$\$\$. Most major credit cards. Montsio 3, Barri Gotic, Barcelona. Phone 93-302-4140. <http://www.4gats.com>.

### **Flash Flash Tortilleria**

Still going strong after several decades, this very 1960s-looking place specializes in tortillas (omelettes) with every conceivable filling, as well as good hamburgers and a menu with seasonal market cooking. Daily for lunch and dinner. \$\$\$. Most major credit cards. Granada del Penedes 25, Gracia, Barcelona. Phone 93-237-0990.

### **Jaume de Provenca**

Chef Jaume Bargues enjoys well-earned prestige for the wonderfully original variations on the traditional Catalan cuisine he has dreamed up. Daily except Monday for lunch and dinner. Reservations required. \$\$\$-\$\$\$\$. Most major credit cards. Provenca 88, Eixample, Barcelona. Phone 93-430-0029. <http://www.jaumeprovenza.com>.

### **La Camarga**

This restaurant features imaginative and delicious Mediterranean cooking based particularly on fresh vegetables and fish, in addition to some excellent rice dishes. Daily for lunch and dinner. Reservations recommended. \$\$\$\$. MasterCard or Visa preferred. Aribau 117, Eixample, Barcelona. Phone 93-323-6655. <http://www.laprovenza.com/eng/la-camarga/la-camarga.shtml>.

### **L'Antic Forn**

A traditional and cozy Catalan restaurant that focuses on market-fresh and seasonal ingredients and grilled meats. Set menus for lunch (11.50 euros) and dinner (19 euros). Definitely try the calcots (a type of scallion served with a sauce) when it's in season. Daily for lunch, Thursday-Saturday for dinner also. \$\$\$. Most major credit cards. Villarroel 182, Eixample, Barcelona. Phone 93-430-0826. <http://www.lanticfornvillarroel.com>.

### **Mam i Teca**

If you're looking for a light meal or just prefer to nibble the night away in a languorous setting, look no farther than this cozy tapas bar, with a handful of tables and soft jazz music. Traditional tapas are treated with loving care by the resident foodies who source top-quality Spanish ingredients such as air-cured tuna, fresh anchovies and a variety of cheeses. But the daily specials are inspired. Monday and Wednesday-Friday for lunch and dinner, Saturday for dinner only. \$\$\$. Lluna 4, El Raval, Barcelona. Phone 93-441-3335.

### **Restaurant Gaig**

Multiple generations of the Gaig family have nurtured this business for more than a century, and a distinct spirit of innovation and sound service on the part of the current husband-and-wife team keeps it going. Refined Catalan dishes are served in a sophisticated contemporary setting. Tuesday-Saturday for lunch and dinner, Monday for dinner only. \$\$\$\$. Most major credit cards. Arago 214 (at the corner of Aribau), Eixample, Barcelona. Phone 93-429-1017. <http://www.restaurantgaig.com>.

### **Rincon de Aragon**

With all the seafood places in town, you may get a craving for some good meat, and this is the place to go. Both the cooking and the decor suggest the simplicity of the mountain regions near the Aragonese town of Teruel, known throughout Spain for its delicious rustic cuisine. Simple dishes, such as the roast lamb, are cooked perfectly. Expect the best beef, pork and lamb in Barcelona. Wednesday-Sunday for lunch and dinner. Reservations recommended. \$-\$\$\$. Most major credit cards. Carme 28 (near the La Boqueria market), Raval, Barcelona. Phone 93-302-6789.

### **Semproniana**

Located in a former printing office, this restaurant affords a welcome break from style and design with its nonmatching furniture, ceramic plates and other flea-market finds. But the food is some of the most inventive and delicious you will find in the city for such reasonable prices, servings come in various sizes. Favorites include codfish moussaka, partridges with cinnamon sauce, and *civet* of hare with jam. The star of the dessert menu is the *delirium tremens*, an understandably small slice of pure chocolate bliss. Tuesday-Saturday for lunch and dinner, Sunday and Monday for lunch only. Reservations required. \$\$\$. MasterCard and Visa only. Rossello 148, Eixample, Barcelona. Phone 93-453-1820. <http://www.semproniana.net>.

### **Taktika Berri**

This is one of the best and most popular tapas bars in Barcelona, so reservations are highly recommended. Since the food is Basque, tapas there are called *pintxos* and are just delicious. Full meals are excellent, too, with an emphasis on fresh seafood. Do not expect a menu—the waiter will tell you what's available. The light, fruity Basque wines go very well with the food. Open Monday-Friday for lunch and dinner, Saturday for lunch only. Reservations recommended. \$-\$\$\$\$. Most major credit cards. Carrer de Valencia 169, Eixample, Barcelona. Phone 93-453-4759. <http://taktika-berri.vipgourmet.com>.

### **Tragaluz**

Two restaurants in one: Japanese food on the first floor and Mediterranean cuisine on the second floor, where fresh ingredients are served in endlessly imaginative combinations such as pork with figs or steamed hake with applesauce. This restaurant has won design awards as well, and is one of Barcelona's most fashionable eating places (don't miss the restrooms by Olympic-design darling Mariscal). Daily for lunch and dinner (cocktail bar open daily 6 pm-2 am). Reservations recommended. \$\$\$\$. Most major credit cards. Passaje de la Concepcio 5, Eixample, Barcelona. Phone 93-487-0196. <http://www.grupotragaluz.com/restaurantes/tragaluz>.

### **Cuisines**

#### **Mediterranean**

#### **Neichel**

Owner Jean-Louis Neichel personally ensures a high standard of Mediterranean cuisine. Two of our favorites are the roast lamb with a black-olive and anchovy crust and the Mediterranean prawn-and-lobster salad. Afterward, choose from among 30 homemade desserts. Tuesday-Saturday for lunch and dinner. Closed the entire month of August. Reservations required. \$\$\$\$. Most major credit cards. Beltran i Rozpide 1-5, Pedralbes, Barcelona. Phone 93-203-8408. <http://www.neichel.es>.

#### **Spanish**

#### **Amaya**

This big restaurant right on La Rambla serves food from the Basque region of Spain. Lots of seafood on the menu, including unusual items such as eel. Tables are set up outside April-October. It can get very crowded, especially on Sunday. Daily for lunch and dinner. Reservations recommended. \$\$\$\$. Most major credit cards. La Rambla 20, Barcelona. Phone 93-302-1037. <http://www.restauranteamaya.com>.

#### **Vegetarian**

#### **Centro Habaluc**

This very inviting space, including a wonderful terrace, specializes in creative and healthy fare with many vegetarian options. Daily for lunch and dinner. \$\$\$. Most major credit cards. Carrer Enric Granados 41, Eixample, Barcelona. Phone 93-452-2928.

#### **Illa de Gracia**

Appetizing vegetarian fare at very reasonable prices. Wine, beer, coffee and homemade cakes are available. The restaurant has an intimate atmosphere despite its Spartan decor. Tuesday-Friday for lunch, Saturday and Sunday for lunch and dinner. Reservations required. \$. Most major credit cards. Sant Domenech 19, Gracia, Barcelona. Phone 93-238-0229.

### **La Bascula**

Run as a cooperative, this cafe does not impress at first glance. However, hidden in the back is a wonderful, intimate dining area, sporting mismatched furniture and regularly filled by a young and vibrant clientele. The service is friendly, and the quality of the food is very good. Highly recommended for light lunches or afternoon teas. Wednesday-Saturday for lunch and dinner, Sunday for lunch only. Reservations not accepted. \$. No credit cards. Flassaders 30, Barri Gotic, Barcelona. Phone 93-319-9866.

### **Seafood**

#### **Botafumeiro**

A Barcelona dining institution that's synonymous with superb seafood. Very expensive, classy and worth every euro. It has a huge menu, and succulent oysters are served at the bar. The only drawback is that it's not by the sea but on the main street of Gracia. Daily for lunch and dinner. Reservations required. \$\$\$\$ . Most major credit cards. Gran de Gracia 81, Gracia, Barcelona. Phone 93-218-4230. <http://www.botafumeiro.es>.

#### **Els Pescadors**

This is one of the best places in town to eat fresh fish. The old-style tavern decor, relaxed atmosphere and high-quality wine list enhance the experience. During summer months, we recommend sitting on the terrace, an oasis of calm in the bustling city. Daily for lunch and dinner. Reservations recommended. \$\$\$-\$\$\$\$. Most major credit cards. Placa Prim 1, Poble Nou, Barcelona. Phone 93-225-2018. <http://www.elspescadors.com>.

#### **Escriba Xiringuito**

This restaurant looks right out over the beach, and staff will drag tables into the sun for you. There's lots of room inside, but the outdoor tables are what's prized: Locals mill on the seafront, aperitif in hand, while waiting for one to open up. It has delicious fish dishes. For an appetizer, don't miss the *pica-pica*, a selection of tapas including crispy fried-vegetable tidbits, sardines and croquettes. Be sure to have dessert; the place belongs to a famous family of chocolatiers who also operate an excellent pastry shop on La Rambla (if you go there, have the hot chocolate). Monday-Wednesday and Sunday for lunch only, Thursday-Saturday for lunch and dinner. Reservations recommended. \$\$\$ . Visa and MasterCard only. Ronda Litoral 42, Vila Olimpica, Barcelona. Phone 93-221-0729.

#### **Suquet de l'Almirall**

One of the most interesting seafood restaurants in town, it beautifully blends tradition and innovation. Enjoy perfectly prepared paella and a host of other rice and fish dishes, or try a selection of half portions of the chef's suggestions. The restaurant has a sunny terrace and enjoys the tangy sea air of Barceloneta. Extensive wine cellar. Tuesday-Saturday for lunch and dinner, Sunday for lunch only. Reservations recommended. \$\$\$\$. MasterCard and Visa only. Passeig Joan de Borbo 65, Port Vell, Barcelona. Phone 93-221-6233. <http://suquetdelalmirall.com>.

#### **The Mirror**

An elegantly modern restaurant (white shades, mirrors and stainless steel abound) housed in a hotel of the same name. An open kitchen allows you to see the contemporary and creative fish, seafood and rice dishes being prepared. Tuesday-Saturday for lunch and dinner, Sunday for lunch only. Reservations recommended. \$\$\$ . Most major credit cards. Corsega 225, Eixample, Barcelona. Phone 93-202-8685. <http://www.themirrorbarcelona.com>.

### **SECURITY**

#### **Etiquette**

Business travelers will find a moderately affluent city (in spite of current economic challenges), in step with the age of high technology but still maintaining many of its traditions.

**Appointments**—You may find it valuable to have a local intermediary who can assist in establishing business appointments. Schedule meetings well in advance. As a visitor, you should be punctual. Catalonians pride themselves on their efficiency and timeliness.

**Personal Introductions**—Handshakes are the typical greeting. Last names with the appropriate Spanish title are used. If your acquaintance has a professional title, you will learn it when introduced; if not, *senor* (male), *senora* (married female) and *senorita* (unmarried female) are appropriate. The title and the person's last name should be used until you are instructed otherwise. Note that it is typical for Spanish people to have two surnames, one from their father and one from their mother. The father's surname will be given first during the introduction, and that's the name that is used to address or speak of the person. Thus, Federico Garcia Lorca would be addressed as "Senor Garcia." Invest in business cards with the information printed in English on one side and Spanish on the other.

**Negotiating**—Business is typically preceded by small talk and pleasantries. Negotiations can be a more extended process than in northern European countries. Companies tend to be hierarchical, so focus on individuals of equal rank or higher. At the same time, the opinion of everyone in the company is important. You are an outsider and must ingratiate yourself. Thus, expect many questions about your business, background and family. Intuition, as much as objective fact, is important in their impression of you, so remain warm and friendly in your demeanor. Anticipate that many of the people important to a decision may not be present at any given meeting.

**Business Entertaining**—Lunch and dinner are the meals most commonly attended by business associates. Lunch is usually the more productive for deal-making, but business discussions should be saved for the very end of the meal, during coffee. Know that dinner is usually served quite late—9 or 10 pm. Spaniards often fill the gap between lunch and dinner by snacking on tapas (appetizers) at cafes and taverns.

**Body Language**—Conversations take place at close quarters, and polite conversational touching may be practiced.

**Gift Giving**—In business contexts, gifts are typically given at the conclusion of successful negotiations. Gifts should be opened and appreciated immediately. Appropriate personal gifts when visiting a home include flowers or chocolate, but avoid chrysanthemums, dahlias or 13 of anything.

**Conversation**—If you don't speak Spanish or Catalan, try to learn at least a few phrases well. In Barcelona, Catalan is spoken on an equal footing with Spanish, and the locals are generally impressed when foreigners take the time to learn the language. Spanish culture is always a good topic, as is Spanish literature, if you are knowledgeable. Sports and travel are good topics.

Be aware that, in many regards, Spain is still a country of regions: Many people will identify more strongly with their local area than with the country as a whole. Catalonians consider themselves members of an autonomous nation, even though many people in the rest of Spain oppose this view—tread lightly with the topic.

### **Personal Safety**

In general, Barcelona is a reasonably safe city to walk around in, even late at night. The biggest danger is petty crime—pickpocketing, bag snatching and assorted scams. Thieves tend to ply their trade in the busy tourist spots such as La Rambla, the Barri Gotic, El Raval, down by the port, on the metro and on the buses.

A few precautions will help keep you out of trouble: Don't carry money, credit cards or documents in back pockets, breast pockets or backpacks. Leave valuables in a safe-deposit box at your hotel. Wear purses, bags and cameras slung around your neck or across your chest and keep them close to your body in crowds. Don't set them down at your feet or in adjacent seats in outdoor cafes or on trains and buses—keep your hand on them. Never leave any item of value unattended or inside a parked car.

In an emergency, dial 112.

For more information, contact your country's travel-advisory agency.

## **Health**

Barcelona's tap water is safe to drink; however, many people prefer bottled water, which is easily available and inexpensive. Sanitation levels are high, but it's wise to exercise caution with tapas (bar snacks) that look old and tired. It's also sensible to avoid mayonnaise when the weather's hot.

Spanish law prohibits smoking in all enclosed (and some open) public areas. With its regulations coming into line with most of the rest of Europe, smoking is banned totally in cafes and restaurants, and only allowed in certain specified areas of hotels. Smoking outdoors is banned in children's play areas, around schools and near hospitals.

Most doctors have some knowledge of English, and many speak it reasonably well. Hotels will likely arrange to find an English-speaking doctor for you. In an emergency, your best bet is to go to the emergency department of any of the big public hospitals, all of which are open 24 hours a day.

Two hospitals in or near the city center are Centre Perecamps, Drassanes 13-15, Raval (phone 93-441-0600), and Hospital Clinic i Provincial, Villarroel 170, Eixample. Phone 93-227-5400.

If you need a prescription filled on short notice, be aware that every neighborhood has at least one pharmacy open 24 hours a day. Their addresses will be posted in the windows of other pharmacies and will be published in the newspaper under *Farmacias de Guardia*.

For an ambulance, dial 061.

For more information, contact your country's health-advisory agency.

## **Dos & Don'ts**

Do be careful where you light up. Spain's antismoking law took effect in 2011. The law bans smoking in enclosed public spaces, which include bars, restaurants, hotel lobbies, casinos, clubs, office buildings, open-decked tourist buses and airports. There is also a ban on smoking in outdoor spaces around schools, hospitals and children's playgrounds.

Do keep your eyes open for pickpockets. The areas around La Rambla and La Sagrada Familia are particularly dicey. In addition to light-fingered pickpockets, there are also a number of tricks thieves use to distract and defraud you. If you are wearing a fanny pack, someone may approach you with a magazine or clipboard and practically press it into your chest, talking excitedly all the time. This is just a cover for them entering your pack and removing your valuables. Leave your valuables in the hotel safe and take only as much cash as you'll need.

Don't confuse Catalan with Spanish or refer to Catalan as a dialect. They are distinct languages representing different cultures.

Do dress modestly in the city. Spain is a conservative country, so skimpy tops and too-brief clothing are inappropriate for visits to churches. Catalonians normally dress well and stylishly, so save the shorts for the countryside or the beach. In any case, shorts in the city will mark you as a tourist and as a more likely target for thieves.

Don't litter. You may see some people throwing trash in the street, but most people are tidy and have great respect for public areas.

## **FACTS**

### **Geostats**

**Passport/Visa Requirements:** Passports are needed by citizens of Australia, the U.S. and Canada. A tourist visa is not required for a visit of three months or less. Proof of onward passage and sufficient funds are needed by all. Reconfirm travel document requirements with your carrier before departure.

**Population:** 5,569,950.

**Languages:** Catalan, Spanish.

**Predominant Religions:** Christian (Roman Catholic).

**Time Zone:** 1 hour ahead of Greenwich Mean Time (+1 GMT). Daylight Saving Time is observed from the end of March to the end of October.

**Voltage Requirements:** 220 volts. 50 Hz.

**Telephone Codes:** 34, country code; 93, city code;

### **Money**

#### **Currency Exchange**

The euro is the local currency. Although foreign currency exchange fees will apply, the best and most convenient way to obtain euros is by withdrawing them from an ATM. There are ATMs in all neighborhoods of the city. La Caixa ATMs, in particular (those with the bright blue star logo), are very common and found in municipal markets and shopping malls. Most ATMs have instructions in English. Outside of normal banking hours, you gain access to ATMs by inserting your credit or cash card into a slot in the door. You can lock the door from inside.

Most banks will change traveler's checks (preferring denomination in euros), but the commissions vary. Exchanging money is more streamlined at the big banks in the city center than at small local branches. Private exchange bureaus are located in the city center and along La Rambla, and most stay open until midnight or later. Although private bureaus generally don't charge commissions, they invariably give poor rates of exchange, and it's best to avoid them if you can.

### **Taxes**

The value-added tax in Spain is called by its abbreviation IVA (pronounced *ee-bah*). The basic rate is a whopping 21%. There is a reduced rate of 10% which applies to such things as passenger transport, hotels and restaurants. The lowest rate of 4% applies to such items as basic food and drink (not purchased at a restaurant) and pharmaceuticals.

Visitors to Spain not residing in the European Union are eligible for a reimbursement of the tax that they pay on some merchandise. The procedure can be a bit complicated, but it's basically as follows:

The tax refund is valid only for purchases of 90.15 euros (taxes included) or higher. Look for stores displaying a "tax-free" sticker and request an invoice and an IVA refund form detailing the value, tax rate and nature of the purchase. When departing Spain, you will need to have the completed form stamped by customs—do this before you check your luggage, because they may need to see the purchased items. This is important even if you will be returning home from another EU country. If you are departing the EU from another member country, final processing of your refund claim will be handled by that country's customs. You can mail in the stamped form up to three months from the date of purchase and wait to receive your refund in the form of a check in euros, or you can get an immediate cash refund (minus a service charge) at the Tax-Free Shopping refund window, which is usually located in the departure area of airports.

### **Tipping**

Tipping in Spain is not based on a set formula. A service charge is generally already included in restaurant bills, so waitstaff do not expect tips of 15% or 20%. Nevertheless, they will be delighted if you leave something as a way of saying you were pleased with the service. The norm would be to leave small change or round up the bill. The same goes for taxi drivers.

### **Weather**

There is really no best time to visit Barcelona, nor a worst. Thanks to its location on the Mediterranean, it enjoys a mild, pleasant climate year-round. December-February is the chilliest period, although the sun shines most of the time. Even in winter, locals sunbathe on the beaches (in "suntraps" by the seawall) and eat and drink on terraces. The hardier ones even occasionally take a dip; you may not want to follow their example, however, as the water is surprisingly cold.

In January, the average temperature rarely falls below 50 F/10 C and is often considerably higher. Really cold spells are typically few and far between, although recent years have seen an increasing number of cold spells and even some snow.

Summers aren't necessarily hot—the average high in July and August is 78 F/25 C—but the high humidity can make them somewhat uncomfortable. School vacation runs late June to mid-September, and those who are able to do so spend the entire summer away from the city. Most shops and businesses take their annual vacations in August, leaving the city relatively empty.

Rain is infrequent, but can be heavy when it occurs. It's most common in November, March and April.

### **What to Wear**

It won't take you long to learn that Barcelona is a style-conscious city, so it's a good idea to have some options other than jeans and T-shirts. For the heat of summer, take along the coolest clothes possible. Fashionable trousers and sleeveless tops are fine, but bathing gear is strictly for the beach. Sunscreen and a hat will be useful accessories.

In autumn and spring, it can be chilly in the morning and evening, so take along a jacket and sweater. The winter tends to be relatively mild, but it is wise to take along hats, gloves, scarves and so forth, and to be prepared for very cold spells, which can appear without much warning.

Business visitors should stick to plain, conservative business suits with ties for the men and the equivalent for women: dark colors in winter, lighter in summer. Above all, pack comfortable walking shoes.



## **Communication Telephone**

Public pay phones accept coins, phone cards issued by Telefonica (Spanish Telecom) and credit cards. The phones have clear instructions in English. You can also find pay phones in many bars and cafes, although they tend to cost more. You can buy Telefonica phone cards at post offices, tobacco shops (*estancos*) and newsstands. International calls are cheapest at phone centers, called *locutorios*, which offer discounted international connections. You will find several in the old town, especially in El Raval. You make your call in a private booth and pay in cash when you are through.

Most regular Spanish phone numbers contain nine digits: The area code (93 for Barcelona and Catalonia) must be dialed for all calls, even if you are calling from within the same city or region. For international calls, first dial 00, then the country code, then the area code and number.

For directory assistance, dial 118. Call 1005 for an international operator to assist with calls to Canada or the U.S.; dial 1008 for assistance with calls to Europe.

Spanish cell-phone numbers begin with 6, toll-free lines with 900 and special-rate services with 902. For directory assistance within Spain, dial 1003. For international directory assistance, dial 025.

## **Internet Access**

Internet cafes are less common in Barcelona than they used to be because such portable accessories as smart phones are now so omnipresent. But small establishments with varying prices and connection speeds can still be found in various parts of the city, some with rates as low as one or two euros per hour.

Wi-Fi is available in the city and is offered by various hotels. There are also numerous cafes and bars that offer free Wi-Fi. The Eixample area has the highest number of such cafes, though they are also found in the city center and university areas. All of them advertise with large signs, frequently in English, for free Wi-Fi, or, less commonly, for Wi-Fi gratis.

Barcelona WiFi is a free Internet service provided by the city council and has a fairly comprehensive network of access points. <http://www.bcn.cat/barcelonawifi>. **Bornet Internet Cafe**

An intimate spot tucked away in a tiny lane near the Picasso Museum where you can sip delicious coffee in a cozy ambience as you work. Monday-Friday 9 am-11 pm, Saturday and Sunday noon-11 pm. Carrer Barra del Ferro 3, El Born, Barcelona. Phone 93-268-1507. <http://bornet.wordpress.com>.

## **Transportation**

The best way to get around in Barcelona is on foot (a centrally located hotel will put you within walking distance of many of the best attractions) and by public transport, especially the efficient subway system, the metro. There are a number of multiride tickets and travel passes available for use on the six metro lines, the city railway network and a huge fleet of buses.

The city's old tram network has also been resurrected, renovated and streamlined; modern, speedy, and almost-noiseless trams now coast up and down Avenida Diagonal and northeast along the coast to the former industrial suburb of Sant Adria de Besos on a regular basis. Another alternative for getting around the city center are the ecological taxis that resemble a cross between rickshaws and bicycles, though they're not the best choice if you happen to be in a hurry or want to go farther afield.

The hugely popular Bus Turistic is a great way to visit the main sights of Barcelona. For general information on all city transportation services, visit [http://www.tmb.cat/en\\_US/home.jsp](http://www.tmb.cat/en_US/home.jsp).

## Connecting Transportation

### *Best way:*

If you are headed for the city center, the Aerobus is inexpensive (5.90 euros one way; 10.20 euros round-trip) and almost as fast as a taxi (about 30 minutes, depending on traffic). It can also accommodate all the luggage you have on the plane. You can purchase tickets from automatic machines with a credit card, or from the staff at bus stops by card or cash. However, you can only use cash to buy a ticket from the driver. It stops at Placa Espanya, Comte Urgell/Gran Via and Placa Universitat and ends at Placa Catalunya, at the top of La Rambla. There is a bus stop outside each terminal, with buses leaving every 10 minutes 6 am-1 am. Phone 902-100-104. <http://www.aerobusbcn.com>.

### *Other options:*

Taxis are probably the most expensive option, but they will take you right to your destination. Be prepared to wait in line for a few minutes at the rank outside your terminal. Taxis are metered. For general information on using taxis and a list of current fares, see <http://www.taxibarcelona.cat/tabid/2099/Default.aspx>.

The Renfe train is the least expensive way into town. At the airport, it operates from both terminals. Just follow the signs. Train service between Barcelona and the airport is via line C2 Norte (Macanet-Sant Celoni-Airport). Phone 902-240-202. <http://www.renfe.com>.

Plans are also under way for line 9 of the metro to have a stop at the airport terminals. When fully completed in 2014, it will be one of the longest metro lines in Europe.

Major rental car agencies have branches at the airport, and terminal T1 has parking for more than 11,000 cars.

## **Bus**

Barcelona is served by a large number of bus companies that operate regular lines to other cities and towns in Spain and to the rest of Europe. Most long-distance buses, both national and international, arrive and depart from one of two stations. Estacio d'Autobusos is at Barcelona-Nord, Ali Bei 80 (next to Arc de Triomf metro station). Estacio d'Autobusos Barcelona-Sants is next to Barcelona-Sants railway and metro station. Some buses to and from other towns in Catalonia stop elsewhere in the city.

## **Car**

The minimum driving age in Spain is 18, although most car rental companies will not rent to anyone younger than 21. Because it has a good public-transportation system, and because its automobile congestion is legendary, the first rule about driving in Barcelona is to avoid it if at all possible. If you can't avoid it, carefully study a good map well in advance of your arrival and plan the route to your destination within the city.

Driving is on the right side of the road, although Barcelona has a rather extensive and complex grid of one-way streets. Use a detailed city map to locate a parking garage (indicated with a P) near your destination—though these are often expensive (20 euros or more per day). It's always difficult—if not impossible—to find a space on the street.

Remove all valuables from the car, no matter where you have it parked. Don't be tempted to park in a loading zone or other restricted area, as cars will be towed and the cost is very expensive.

## Public Transportation

Transports Metropolitans de Barcelona (TMB) runs both the bus and subway systems, and there are also FGC trains that operate in the greater Barcelona area. There is an integrated fare system, which allows you to use one travel card on several modes of transport, including the metro; urban, metropolitan and interurban buses; the tram system; FGC trains; and Rodalies de Catalunya trains. This system allows you to use four different types of transport and make up to three changes within the zones for which your travel card is valid. There are six travel zones. The various options are detailed on the TMB website. <http://www.tmb.cat/en/bitllets-i-tarifas>.

It will almost certainly be worth your while to buy a Barcelona Card. It covers travel on the metro, TMB buses and FGC trains. In addition, it grants you discounts at museums, shops, restaurants and on special buses such as the TombBus, Aerobus and Barcelona Bus Turistic. Cards are good from one to five days and are on sale at the tourist information offices at Placa Catalunya, Placa Sant Jaume, Sants railway station, Cortes Ingles stores, at other tourist attractions or online. [http://www.barcelona.com/barcelona\\_city\\_tours/standard\\_bus\\_tours/barcelona\\_card](http://www.barcelona.com/barcelona_city_tours/standard_bus_tours/barcelona_card).

Free maps of the public transportation system are available at the customer service centers at several locations, including the Sants train station and metro stations at Universitat, Diagonal and Sagrada Familia. <http://www.tmb.cat>. **FGC Trains**

This railway network is run by the Catalan government and offers service in the city and to the surrounding region. You can take FGC trains from Placa Catalunya to the uptown residential district of Sarria and to the foot of Mount Tibidabo. Stations are marked by bright blue signs with FGC in white letters. Automated ticket machines have instructions in (slightly weird) English. Phone 93-205-1515. <http://www.fgc.es>.

## Ship

Barcelona is one of the Mediterranean's leading cruise ports and has several passenger terminals. The terminals are extremely close to the city center in the old port, watched over by the promontory of Montjuic.

## Taxi

Taxis are plentiful and can usually be hailed on the street fairly quickly. A bright green light on the top and a sign in the windshield saying *Llibre/Lliure* (Free) indicate that the taxi is available. There are taxi ranks at metro, bus and train stations, in main squares and many other locations as well. You can also call for a pickup, but most companies will start the meter at the time they receive the call, not from the time you get in the cab.

Special services, including seven-seat vehicles and English-speaking drivers, can be hired from some of the telephone-taxi firms. The cabs are metered, and the official rates and supplements are shown in English on a sticker inside the rear window. A supplement is charged for each item of baggage handled by the driver.

Try to be sure you have small bills: Drivers are not required to carry large amounts of change, and very few accept credit cards. When giving the driver your destination, you'll have better luck stating the nearest intersection rather than the street number.

## Train

Barcelona has two principal stations for long-distance trains. Barcelona-Sants on Placa Paisos Catalans is the busier of the two. It handles many of the trains bound for other destinations in Spain as well as some international routes. Estacio de Franca at Avinguda Marques d'Argentera 6 handles many of the international trains to and from France.

RENFE, the Spanish national railway, operates most long-haul trains in Spain, whether bound for Spanish cities or international destinations. Its well-designed Web site provides schedules and fares in English. Phone 90-224-0202. <http://www.renfe.es/ingles>.

FGC, the Catalan railway organization, operates trains throughout the region as well as local city lines. Two commuter lines run to nearby towns and villages, one from Placa Catalunya and one from Placa Espanya. <http://www.fgc.es>.

## Nice, France

### OVERVIEW

#### Introduction

Graced with an average of 2,640 hours of sunshine per year, Nice, France, proudly wears the colors of Chagall and Matisse: Its Mediterranean bay is azure blue, its tiled roofs are red, its houses ochre and yellow, and its gardens emerald green. All those colors also show up at the wonderful flower market on Cours Saleya and on the tiny bikini bottoms worn on the pebbly but oh-so-fashionable beaches.

Greeks and Romans, Savoyard kings and wealthy visitors have shaped the destiny of Nice, and still this is the only town on the Cote d'Azur that doesn't seem to depend on its 4 million tourists per year. The dynamic capital of the *departement* of Alpes-Maritimes may be the most-visited French city after Paris, but it is still a very local affair.



If you avoid the summer months in Nice, you can still enjoy the local cuisine to its fullest and soak up the Mediterranean light that Picasso so loved. And the stunning highlights of the French Riviera are just a few minutes' drive away.

#### Must See or Do

**Sights**—Hotel Negresco; Chapelle de la Misericorde et de la Confrerie des Penitents Noirs; Cathedrale Orthodoxe Russe St. Nicolas; Eglise du Gesu.

**Museums**—Musee d'Art Moderne et d'Art Contemporain; Musee Matisse; Musee National Message Biblique Marc Chagall; Musee des Arts Asiatiques.

**Memorable Meals**—L'Univers de Christian Plumail; La Merenda; Chez Pipo; La Zucca Magica.

**Late Night**—Les Trois Diables; High Club and Studio 47; La Bodeguita del Havana.

**Walks**—Cours Saleya; Promenade des Anglais; Parc Floral Phoenix; Port Lympia.

**Especially for Kids**—An afternoon at one of the beaches; ice skating in the Palais des Sports Jean Bouin; the playground in the Parc du Chateau.

#### Geography

Nice enjoys a privileged position between a gently curving bay of the Mediterranean Sea and the mountains of the Ligurian Alps, which shelter it from cold northern winds. Palms, eucalyptus and citrus trees give Nice a subtropical appearance. In the hinterland, the Arriere Pays, you'll find olive groves,

pine woods, wild flowers and perched villages, which offer fabulous vistas along with cooling summer breezes.

The major areas of tourist interest are the Old Town (Vieux Nice), the New Town to the west with the Promenade des Anglais and the major boulevards, the leafy district of Cimiez with its first-class museums to the north, and the port to the east of the Old Town.

## History

At the site known as Terra Amata at the foot of Mont Boron, remnants of a prehistoric human camp some 400,000 years old have been unearthed. Around 1000 BC, the Ligurians built their *oppida* at the mouth of the Paillon river and on the hill overlooking the valley.

Classical civilization goes back to the fourth century BC, when Phocaean Greeks from Marseille sailed into the harbor and founded a commercial colony near the seaside *oppidum* around a hill they called Nikaia (today Colline du Chateau).

In 100 BC, the Romans, called in to help against Ligurian pirates, chose to stay on and built a city on a third hill that they called Cemenelum (today's Cimiez). By the third century, Cemenelum had 20,000 inhabitants, who enjoyed such luxuries as Roman baths and an amphitheater.

In the early Middle Ages, Nice was invaded and destroyed by Saracens and Barbarians, but in the 14th century the city rose again. In 1382, Jeanne, Queen of Sicily and Countess of Provence, was smothered to death on the order of her cousin Charles of Durazzo, Prince of Naples. He and another cousin, Louis of Anjou, tried to rule Nice, but the city preferred to side with the Counts of Savoy and spend the prosperous Renaissance and Baroque times Italian-style.

With Louis XIV, the French made a comeback by blowing up the city's fortifications, but apart from a brief period of control by Revolutionary forces between 1792 and 1814, Nice belonged to Savoy until 1860, when the King of Sardinia ceded the city of Nice and Savoy to Napoleon III in the (secret) Treaty of Turin. The treaty was later ratified in a rigged plebiscite.

By 1755 the first wealthy British travelers seeking winter warmth had set up shop in Nice and on the Riviera. In 1830 they financed the building of the seafront esplanade along the Baie des Anges, known to this day as the Promenade des Anglais. Soon it was lined by elegant hotels, and Nice became the favorite meeting place for European glitterati in winter. In the 1890s, Queen Victoria sealed Nice's fate by making the suburb of Cimiez her winter residence.

Famous writers, film stars, composers and painters such as Picasso and Matisse flocked to Nice, followed by an armada of tourists. Longtime mayors Jean Medecin and his notorious son Jacques Medecin elevated corruption to an art form. Since then, things have calmed down a bit, although the current flamboyant mayor, Christian Estrosi, a former motorbike champion, shows a tendency to revive some of the Medecin traditions.

## Port Information Location

The Port de Nice is located on the Quai du Commerce, close to the French Riviera Chamber of Commerce (phone 04-9200-4214; <http://www.riviera-ports.com>). The Port of Villefranche Darse is located east of Nice, on Villefranche-sur-Mer's main quay (phone 04-9301-7805; <http://www.riviera-ports.com>). Both Nice and Villefranche's terminals are largely commercial and, apart from a Chamber of Commerce office in both, offer little for the tourist. However, each is situated in its respective town's oldest neighborhood, and numerous bars, cafes, restaurants and shops abound within walking distance. Boat trips to Monaco, St. Tropez and the Ile Ste. Marguerite are on offer from both ports. A

free shuttle bus connects Port Lympia with the larger commercial port of Villefranche, which serves the car ferries to Corsica and Sardinia as well as the Mediterranean cruise ships.

The cruise ship pier in the nearby principality of Monaco (Nouvelle Digue de Monaco) is located at the Port of Monaco (Hercules Port), just east of the Palais Princier (the home of Monaco's ruler, Prince Albert), and just below the ritzy center of Monte Carlo. The 1,155-ft/352-m dock can accommodate several ships in port, but occasionally tenders are still needed because of the vast number of superyachts in the harbor during high season. Phone 377-9777-3000. <http://www.ports-monaco.com/lang-en/le-port-hercule.html>.

Surprisingly, given the principality's reputation as a playground for the rich, there is little at the pier itself in the way of amenities. Most visitors simply follow the seawall adjacent to the yacht harbor to get to Monte Carlo (the distance being roughly 1 mi/1.6 km from the ship) or take an elevator and stairs (about 1,483 ft/452 m immediately to Old Town (Monaco-Ville)).

### **Potpourri**

Italy's national hero, Giuseppe Garibaldi, was born in Nice on 4 July 1807.

Masterpieces of world literature were written in Nice, including *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* by German philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche and *Three Sisters* by Russian playwright Anton Chekhov.

In front of the Hotel Negresco, the famous dancer Isadora Duncan was accidentally strangled to death in 1927 when the large, red silk scarf draped around her neck became entangled around one of the open-spoked wheels and rear axle of her Bugatti.

Catherine Segurane is Nice's "Jeanne d'Arc." When joint French and Turkish armies besieged the town in 1543, Catherine supposedly inspired the defenders with a "patriotic" gesture by showing the enemy her bare bottom.

Nice has two classes of summer tourists: the *juilletistes*, who flock to the beaches in July (mainly foreigners), and the *aoutiens*, who replace them in August (mainly French).

### **SEE & DO Sightseeing**

By international standards, Nice is a rather small city, but it offers a surprisingly diverse number of attractions for the visitor. Its museums are world-class affairs: You can admire Roman antiquities, masterpieces of Asian art, paintings by Matisse, Chagall and Picasso, and the best contemporary art on the Riviera.

The revamped Old Town with its old churches and houses of Genoese times remind visitors of Nice's long Italian heritage. Countless charming bars and cafes invite *flâneurs* (strollers) within their doors.

Enjoy the stately belle époque and art-deco mansions in the suburb of Cimiez, where queens and tsarinas once spent balmy winters; walk or skate the fabulous Promenade des Anglais; watch millionaires sailing their yachts in and out of Port Lympia; enjoy a lazy beach afternoon at classy Beau Rivage Plage; get pampered in one of the luxury spas; and enjoy a performance of *Tosca* in the beautiful Opera House before you dance the night away in one of the many bars.

And if money is burning a hole into your pocket, there are two casinos right on the sea promenade.

## Casinos

Partly in an effort to keep tourists' money in France and not in nearby Monaco's casinos, France allows gambling at age 18 and recently passed legislation permitting online and remote gambling, as well. Although many visitors still head to Monaco's famed Monte Carlo Casino complex, Nice also boasts two famous ones of its own. **Casino du Palais de la Mediterranee**

The beautiful art-deco facade is all that's left from the original casino palace opened in 1929 by U.S. millionaire Frank Gould. The rest was demolished in 1989. In December 2003, the reconstructed palace finally reopened as a hotel, but the casino didn't follow until 2008. There are tables for French and English roulette, stud poker, blackjack, Texas hold 'em poker and North American baccarat, plus 220 slot machines. Gaming tables open daily 8 pm-3 am (till 4 am Friday and Saturday). 13 Promenade des Anglais, Nice. Phone 04-9214-6800. <http://www.casinomediterranee.com>.

### Casino Ruhl

The Ruhl is one of the world's most famous casino palaces. It saw its first inauguration in 1913 but was closed and razed in 1969 when its founder, Henry Ruhl from London, suffered bankruptcy. On 11 December 1974, the Ruhl reopened under the roof of the luxury hotel Meridien, and it now belongs to the Lucien Barriere Group. Visitors can choose among 18 gaming tables: two for French roulette (minimum 5 euros), four for English roulette (minimum 5 euros), four for blackjack (minimum 10 euros), two for stud poker and six for Texas hold 'em poker. The decor is elegant, so dress up. There are also more than 300 slot machines on two levels of the building (0.01 euros-10 euros). You can eat and drink in the modern L'American Cafe and in the plush La Dolce Vita Restaurant. Gaming tables Monday-Thursday 8 pm-4 am, Friday and Saturday 5 pm-5 am, Sunday 5 pm-4 am; slot machines Sunday-Thursday 10 am-4 am, Friday and Saturday 10 am-5 am. The poker rooms are open daily from 5 pm. 1 Promenade des Anglais, Nice. Phone 04-9703-1222. <http://www.lucienbarriere.com/fr/Casino/Nice/accueil.html>.

## Historic Sites

### Cathedrale de Ste. Reparate

This impressive building replaced the original hilltop cathedral and dominates Nice's prettiest square. Its elegant, balanced front was modeled in the second half of the 17th century by Jean-Andre Guiberto on the early Baroque church Santa Susanna in Rome. The church was inaugurated in 1699, but its bell tower was added in the 18th century.

The cathedral glorifies the city's patron saint, Ste. Reparate, a teenage girl martyred in Caesarea (Palestine) in AD 250. After unsuccessfully trying to burn her (it started raining) and filling her mouth with molten peat (she still refused to die), they decapitated the stubborn girl. According to legend, her uncorrupted body reached the shores of Nice in a flower-filled boat towed ashore by angels.

The church shows the traditional basilica cruciform design of St. Peter in Rome and is topped with a shiny, polychrome-tiled dome. The exuberant bright blue and white interior is a riot of ornate plasterwork and frescoes, with marble columns and balustrades, a gilded high altar, glitzy side chapels maintained by affluent families and local corporations, and three magnificent organs. Open daily 9 am-noon and 2-6 pm. Free. 3 Place Rossetti, Vieux Nice, Nice. Phone 04-9392-0135. <http://cathedrale-nice.com>.

### Cathedrale Orthodoxe Russe St. Nicolas

The cathedral's five brilliant-green onion domes crowned by golden crosses represent Christ and the four Evangelists, the gilded cupola of the bell tower the Virgin Mary. St. Nicolas was modeled on the church of Jaroslav near Moscow. The central cupola reaches a height of 170 ft/52 m. St. Nicolas is one of the largest Orthodox churches outside of Russia and also one of the most striking, its Russian features showing sublime Mediterranean colors.

It was built on the site of a luxurious villa owned by the Romanov family, in which the sick tsarevich and heir to the Russian throne Nicholas Alexandrovich, or Nixa as he was known in his family, died from meningitis at the age of 21 in 1865. Tsarina Maria Feodorovna, his fiancée (who later married Tsar Alexander III), spared no expense when she donated this church to the affluent, aristocratic

Russian community of Nice. The ocher-colored bricks were brought in from Bavaria, the pink granite from Italy, the blue majolica tiling from Florence and the white stone from La Turbie. The splendid interior has a beautiful iconostasis embellished with gilded frescoes and intricate carvings.

The church was inaugurated in 1912 and is well-used by the current Russian community in Nice, which has about 9,000 members. A dress code is strictly enforced. No shorts, short skirts or sleeveless shirts are allowed, so cover up. Also check out the Byzantine chapel built nearby in the park shortly after Nicholas' death. He is buried there. Don't be concerned by the black-suited men of the Russian Secret Service guarding the entrance; the Russian government is currently fighting a legal battle over the ownership of the church. Open daily May-October 9 am-noon and 2:30-6 pm, November-April 9:30 am-noon and 2:30-5:30 pm. 3 euros. Avenue Nicolas II, Cimiez, Nice. Phone 04-9396-8802. <http://acor-nice.com>.

### **Chapelle de la Misericorde et de la Confrerie des Penitents Noirs**

This masterpiece of the French-Mediterranean Rococo built in 1736 using the plans of Bernardo Vittone from Piedmont is unfortunately closed most of the time. The chapel of the aristocratic Penitents Noirs brotherhood, founded in the 14th century, whose mission was to assure the dead a dignified burial, has an elegant elliptical layout, beautiful trompe l'oeil frescoes and soaring blue-and-gold columns. Don't miss the early Renaissance *Polyptique de la Misericorde* (1430) by Jean Miralhet and a painting with the same subject attributed to Louis Brea, the major local painter, probably finished in 1515. On this painting you can see possibly the oldest existing representation of the city of Nice. Both are on display in the sacristy. Open only for Mass on Sunday 10:30 am and for visits on Tuesday 2:30-5:30 pm. Free. Cours Saleya, Vieux Nice, Nice. Phone 04-9392-9710.

### **Chapelle Ste. Rita**

St. Rita of Cascia lived in the 14th century, was plagued with a violent, abusive husband and children who would not listen to her, and she suffered from a permanent and smelly wound on her forehead caused by a thorn from a figure of the crucifixion of Jesus Christ. No wonder she was soon revered as the saint of lost and impossible causes, sickness, wounds, marital problems, abuse and other calamities. "Her" church (officially devoted to Saint Jacques, or Saint Giaume, as the locals call him) is right on the spot in front of the city's noisy fish market, where all those problems are discussed loudly and in detail. Whenever things get too hard and hopeless for the downtrodden to bear, a new candle is lit at Rita's altar inside the gilded small Baroque church. Open daily 7:30 am-noon and 2:30-6:30 pm. Free. 1 Rue de la Poissonnerie, Vieux Nice, Nice. Phone 04-9362-1362. <http://www.sainte-rita.net>.

### **Eglise du Gesu**

Officially called St. Jacques Le Majeur, this tiny church built by the Jesuits between 1612 and 1642 is known to everyone as the Church of Jesus, and it was indeed inspired by the famous Il Gesu in Rome. The facade was revamped in 1825, but its interior is a showcase of Baroque architecture, with all the ideological and theatrical principles of the masters of the Counter Reformation worked out in ornate stucco, fake marble and celestial frescoes. Wherever you look, you will catch angels in flight. Open Tuesday and Thursday 2:30-5 pm. Free. Place du Gesu, Vieux Nice, Nice. Phone 04-9200-4190.

### **Eglise et Monastere de Cimiez**

This Franciscan monastery (still used by members of the order), built on the Cimiez hill on the site of an earlier Benedictine monastery, dates from the 17th century, but the rather unremarkable church was heavily restored in the 19th century in a neo-Gothic style. Its saving graces are three beautiful altarpieces by Louis Brea, including a very early and beautiful *Pieta* from 1475 on a golden background and *Crucifixion* with a detailed landscape background, which Louis painted much later (1512). For the third painting, *Deposition From the Cross*, brother Antoine is believed to have assisted.

The cloisters have interesting esoteric murals from the 17th century, which may have alchemical meanings. The adjoining Musee Franciscain tells the story of the Franciscan order in Nice between the 13th and 18th centuries with frescoes, sculptures and documents. The history of Brother Marc is of particular interest to visitors from the U.S., as he was one of the first Europeans to explore New Mexico and Arizona.



The museum also has a reconstructed, very Spartan-looking monk's cell. It's safe to assume that the friars preferred to spend their time in the gardens of the monastery, which have shaded cypress walkways, orange and lemon trees, old pergolas and thousands of roses (go in May when they are in full bloom), and a fabulous view of Nice, the Baie des Anges and the valley of the Paillon. This is where recently married couples have their picture taken. In the cemetery next door, you can visit the graves of the painters Henri Matisse and Raoul Dufy. Open daily April and May 8 am-7 pm, June-August 8 am-8 pm, September and October 8 am-6 pm, November-March 8 am-5:30 pm. Church open daily 9 am-noon and 3-6 pm. Museum open Monday-Saturday 10 am-noon and 3-6 pm (till 5:30 pm in winter). Free. Place du Monastere, Cimiez, Nice. Phone 04-9381-0004. [http://www.frenchriviera-tourism.com/culture/religious-heritage-06\\_105.html](http://www.frenchriviera-tourism.com/culture/religious-heritage-06_105.html).

### **Hotel Negresco**

The famous Negresco hotel with its extravagant cupola was the idea of Henry Negresco, a former Romanian waiter who had made a fortune as the director of the municipal casino of Nice. He won the financial support of a French industrial magnate to build the most luxurious hotel on the coast. Soon after the hotel's splendid inauguration in 1913, attended by seven ruling European royals, World War I broke out, and the Negresco was turned into a hospital for wounded soldiers. Henry went bankrupt.

In 1957, the local Augier family restored the Negresco to its former glory. For a few euros, you can sample the atmosphere by ordering a drink at Le Relais, a bar that has seen such illustrious guests as Ernest Hemingway, Marlene Dietrich, Coco Chanel and Salvador Dali. The Negresco has two fine restaurants: Chantecler, decked out in Regency style, and the much more affordable Brasserie La Rotonde. 37 Promenade des Anglais, Centre-Ville, Nice. Phone 04-9316-6400. <http://www.hotel-negresco-nice.com>.

### **Palais Lascaris**

This grand Genoese-style baroque villa with wrought-iron and marble balconies was built by the Lascaris-Ventimiglia family in the early 17th century and restored as a national monument in the 1940s. On the ground floor is a reconstructed 1738 apothecary's shop with some of its original Delftware fittings. A broad baroque staircase lined with classical statues leads up to a series of rooms decorated with trompe l'oeil frescoes, Flemish tapestries and ornate woodwork. On the third floor you can see a collection of antique musical instruments, including a 1578 Italian precursor of the pianoforte. Check out the schedule for the baroque concerts held there occasionally in summer. Open daily except Tuesday 10 am-6 pm. Free. 15 Rue Droite, Vieux Nice, Nice. Phone 04-9362-7240. <http://www.palais-lascaris-nice.org>.

## **Museums**

### **Musee d'Archeologie et Site Archeologique de Cimiez**

The well-kept Museum of Archaeology, adjacent to the Matisse Museum, is accessible through the excavations of Cemenelum, which include well-preserved remnants of Roman baths dating from the second and third centuries, and the vestiges of a 400-seat amphitheater (Arenes) that is now used as a venue for the Nice Jazz Festival. The museum charts the history of civilization in Nice and the Alpes-Maritimes region (of which Nice was the Roman capital) from 1100 BC to the Middle Ages. You can see a stunning array of vases, glass, coins, tools, statues, jewels and models of what Cimiez looked like 2,000 years ago. An underground section shows funeral steles and sarcophagi. A small shop sells reproductions of some of the exhibits. Open daily except Tuesday 10 am-6 pm. Guided tours on Thursday at 3:30 pm. Admission 3.80 euros. Guided tours 5 euros. 160 Ave. des Arenes-de-Cimiez, Cimiez, Nice. Phone 04-9381-5957. <http://www.musee-archeologie-nice.org>.

### **Musee d'Art Moderne et d'Art Contemporain**

The sprawling gray-and-white marble-coated Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art—four concrete towers linked by humpbacked glass walkways offering pretty views of the city—was inaugurated in 1990. The MAMAC's permanent collection on the second and third floors presents the related schools of French new realism and American pop art, with a particular focus on the artists of the Second School of Nice (Arman, Cesar, Klein and Sosno). The permanent collection has works by Christo, Niki de St. Phalle, Andy Warhol, Roy Lichtenstein, Robert Rauschenberg, Richard Serra, Franck Stella, Tinguely, and other influential figures of the 1960s and '70s. There is a constantly changing program

of temporary exhibitions on the first floor. Open daily except Monday 10 am-6 pm. Guided tours on Wednesday at 3 pm. Free. Guided tours 5 euros. Place Yves Klein, Centre-Ville, Nice. Phone 04-9713-4201. <http://www.mamac-nice.org>.

### **Musee de Paleontologie Humaine de Terra Amata**

The museum was named after the earliest inhabited site to be excavated in Nice—a 400,000-year-old camp of elephant-hunting *Homo erectus*, which predated *Homo sapiens* by more than 350,000 years—and is devoted to the 7-million-year history of humans, specifically the last 900 millennia. Open daily except Monday 10 am-6 pm. Free. 25 Blvd. Carnot, Nice. Phone 04-9355-5993. <http://www.musee-terra-amata.org>.

### **Musee des Arts Asiatiques**

This beautiful minimalist white-marble building was designed by Japanese architect Kenzo Tange in 1998 to represent "a swan that floats on the water of a peaceful lake." The central building, inspired by the structure of the Tibetan mandala, is based on geometrical forms of the square and circle, symbolizing the earth and the sky, reflected in a shallow artificial pool in Parc Phoenix. Four cubes spread out over the lake contain the permanent collection.

The minimalist approach is maintained in the presentation, which only shows a handful of carefully selected artifacts per room: Chinese jade and bronze, Japanese lacquer and ceramics, Cambodian sculpture and Indian textiles. Then the visitor follows an elliptical glass staircase up to the rotunda, the spiritual sphere of Buddhism. The equally beautiful Japanese pavilion stages authentic tea ceremonies on specific days posted on the museum's Web site. You can also learn the arts of origami, ikebana or calligraphy there. The museum includes a multimedia center for further study of Asiatic culture. Open daily except Tuesday May to mid-October 10 am-6 pm, mid-October to April 10 am-5 pm. Free. 405 Promenade des Anglais, Nice. Phone 04-9229-3700.

### **Musee des Beaux-Arts**

Built in 1878, the beautiful former private villa of Ukrainian princess Elisabeth Kotchoubey was converted into a museum in 1925 and now houses a fine collection of paintings from 17th-century Italian works to 19th- and 20th-century romantics and impressionists, including Degas, Boudin, Dufy and Sisley, as well as sculptures by Rodin and others. It is particularly strong in pieces by Nice's native masters: Louis Brea, Carle Van Loo and Jules Cheret. In August 2007, some of the museum's best pieces—two Breughels, a Monet and a Sisley—disappeared in a dramatic broad-daylight robbery straight out of a Tarantino movie. They were recovered a year later in Marseilles. (It's interesting that two of the stolen paintings, Monet's *Cliffs Near Dieppe* and Sisley's *The Lane of Poplars at Moret*, had been stolen before, so be sure to have a close look at them in case the three-strikes rule applies.) The beautiful gardens are worth a visit as well. Open daily except Monday 10 am-6 pm. Guided tours (in French) Wednesday and Thursday at 3 pm. Museum entrance is free; guided tours are 5 euros. 33 Ave. des Baumettes, Cimiez, Nice. Phone 04-9215-2828. <http://www.musee-beaux-arts-nice.org>.

### **Musee International d'Art Naif Anatole Jakovsky**

This strawberry-pink villa in western Nice was built by the founder of the Monte-Carlo casino and redesigned in 1922 by Francois Coty, the perfume magnate, as his summer residence. Do visit the wonderful park filled with rare, fragrant flowers. Since 1982, the villa has housed one of the world's most important collections of naive art, bequeathed to the city by art critics Anatole and Renee Jakovsky. The museum, an offshoot of the Paris Pompidou Centre, presents around 600 paintings, drawings, engravings and sculptures of native art from the 18th century to the present day, including works by Henri Rousseau, Bauchant, Lefranc, Rimbert, Seraphine, Vivin and the American painter Gertrude O'Brady, who created a stylized portrait of Jakovsky. Haitian and Brazilian artists (Iracema, Isabel De Jesus, Luis Figueiredo, Miranda and Prefete Duffaut) are particularly well-represented, as are painters from Croatia, including Ivan and Josip Ceneralic, Lackovic, Kovacic and Mraz. Open daily except Tuesday 10 am-6 pm. Guided tours (in French) Wednesday at 3:30 pm (must be booked in advance). Museum entrance is free; guided tour is 5 euros. Chateau Ste. Helene, Avenue de Fabron, Cimiez, Nice. Phone 04-9371-7833. <http://www.nice.fr/Culture/Musees-et-expositions/Musee-d-Art-Naif>.

### **Musee Massena**

Designed in the style of Italian villas, this beautiful building right on the Promenade des Anglais was built 1898-1901. Since 1921, it has served as a museum presenting the history of Nice in chronological order, including the daily life of the Nicois and Carnival. Open daily except Tuesday 10 am-6 pm. Free. 65 Rue de France and 35 Promenade des Anglais, Nice. Phone 04-9391-1910. <http://www.musee-massena-nice.org>.

### **Musee Matisse**

This late 17th-century intimate Genoese villa is located in the leafy quarter of Cimiez, just a short walk away from the monumental Hotel Regina. (Matisse lived and worked in two converted apartments after World War II and died there in 1954.)

Matisse's huge stylistic range included primitive art, impressionism, sculpture and abstraction. Although his most famous works were snapped up early by collectors and museums all over the world, this museum, established in 1963 with the original collection donated by the artist to the city of Nice, shows an impressive amount of the artist's paintings, drawings and engravings, sculptures and illustrated books (including Joyce's *Ulysses* and Baudelaire's *Fleurs du Mal*), documenting the artist's stylistic evolution. Matisse's last work, the giant paper cutout *Flowers and Fruit* (1952-53), dominates the light-filled atrium.

Don't miss the sultry *Odalisque With a Red Box* (1926) and the most famous painting of the collection, *Still Life With Pomegranates* (1947). Other beautiful works include the blue gouache paper cutouts *Blue Nude* and *Woman With Amphora*. Open daily except Tuesday 10 am-6 pm. Free. Guided tours Wednesday at 3 pm. 5 euros. 164 Ave. des Arenes-de-Cimiez, Cimiez, Nice. Phone 04-9381-0808. <http://www.musee-matisse-nice.org>.

### **Musee National Message Biblique Marc Chagall**

This low geometrical building, constructed of pale stone from La Turbie and set among a garden of olive and cypress trees, was designed by Andre Hermant, a follower of Le Corbusier. Its highlight is a complete set (17 large canvasses) of vivid and colorful biblical paintings created by Marc Chagall between 1954 and 1967.

Chagall's otherworldly interpretations of *The Creation of Man* and *The Garden of Eden* are particularly fascinating. In an adjacent, octagonal gallery, the stunningly glowing red series of the *Song of Songs* dedicated to Chagall's wife, Vava, captivates the mind.

The museum also shows an impressive collection of sculptures, stained-glass windows, tapestries, preparatory sketches, gouaches, engravings and lithographs. Also note the exterior mosaic of the prophet Elijah soaring across the sky in his chariot of fire among signs of the zodiac. Open daily except Tuesday May-October 10 am-6 pm, November-April 10 am-5 pm. 7.50 euros (may be increased to 8.50 or 9.50 euros during temporary exhibitions). Free for anyone younger than 26 and for everyone on the first Sunday of the month. Avenue Docteur-Menard, Cimiez (corner of Boulevard de Cimiez), Nice. Phone 04-9353-8720. <http://www.musee-chagall.fr>.

### **Theatre de la Photographie et de l'Image**

This gallery, located in the former Theatre de l'Artistique, presents the art of photography in all its forms, from journalism to fashion, art and experimental photography. Excellent temporary exhibitions featuring new talents. The best exhibition is the annual *Septembre de la Photo*. Open daily except Monday 10 am-6 pm. Free. 27 Blvd. Dubouchage, Centre-Ville, Nice. Phone 04-9713-4220. <http://www.tpi-nice.org>.

### **Neighborhoods & Districts**

#### **Le Port**

Also called Port Lympia, the 17th-century port of Nice is on the east side of Vieux Nice. It is a handsome rectangle of old and new buildings with warm, russet-colored facades around a harbor teeming with large and small craft, including local ferries.

### **Vieux Nice**

Once a dangerous slum, this is now the trendiest part of Nice: a maze of narrow streets east of Place Massena with baroque churches, pastel-colored Genoese buildings, cafes, bistros, nightclubs, designer boutiques and galleries. Don't miss a stroll on beautiful Cours Saleya with its colorful flower and food markets. Vieux Nice, Nice.

### **Parks & Gardens**

#### **Jardin Albert 1er**

Nice's oldest public garden provides a welcome shady oasis between the old and new towns. Open daily 24 hours. Avenue de Verdun (at Avenue des Phocéens), Nice.

#### **Parc du Chateau**

The park of Castle Hill at the eastern end of Vieux Nice is the site of the ancient acropolis of Nikaia. Walk up the steps to the chateau or take the free Ascenseur du Chateau (chateau lift) from the seafront and enjoy the sweeping views from the breezy belvedere across the Baie des Anges and the rooftops of Nice. In the 19th-century Tour Bellanda, Hector Berlioz composed his *King Lear Overture*. The park has an 18th-century artificial waterfall and a playground for children. Open daily April, May and September 8 am-7 pm; June-August 8 am-8 pm; October-March 8 am-6 pm. Free. Montee du Chateau at Montee Montfort, Vieux Nice, Nice. Phone 04-9385-6233.

#### **Parc Floral Phoenix**

This beautiful park with 20 separate gardens close to the airport and next door to the Musee des Arts Asiatiques presents the habitat of the Mediterranean flora. The giant greenhouse with its diamond dome is one of the largest in Europe. It has 2,500 different plants, including a terrific selection of delicate orchids, thriving in seven tropical climates. Rare species of ducks, black swans and pelicans live on the shores of the park's lake. Interesting temporary themes and exhibitions. Open daily April-September 9:30 am-7:30 pm, October-March 9:30 am-6 pm. Last entry one hour before closing. 2 euros adults, free for children younger than 12. 405 Promenade des Anglais, Nice. Phone 04-9229-7700. <http://www.nice.fr/Environnement/Parc-Phoenix>.

### **Recreation**

Nice and its hinterland, the Pays Nicois, offer a great selection of activities. The beaches are just a few feet/meters away from the famous Promenade des Anglais, which is occupied by strollers, joggers and skaters.

Sailing, kayaking, diving, parasailing and beach volleyball are only some of the watersports the French Riviera offers.

The hinterland is great territory for hikers, and when you return to the city you can relax in one of several luxurious spas.

### **Beaches**

Nice has 5 mi/8 km of beaches, all of them pebbly, so walking barefoot on the seashore has become an art form only mastered to perfection by locals. Tourists are advised to put on plastic shoes. You also need to watch your belongings, as thieves operate on public beaches.

If you are ready to pay for the privilege (13 euros-18 euros per day), you can avoid most of the hassles by choosing one of the 15 private beaches. Most are open between Easter and October. They offer lockers, hot showers, thick carpets that lead right down to the water, and—if they belong to a hotel—chilled cocktails and smooth service.

Running east to west from the foot of the Colline du Chateau, our favorite private beaches are sheltered Castel Plage (opposite Hotel La Perouse, with a smart restaurant and comfortable loungers), Opera Plage and the classy Plage Beau Rivage. Blue Beach (opposite Hotel West End) is open year-round and offers parasailing, and Neptune Plage (opposite Hotel Negresco) is another good choice.

## Shopping

Nice has its fair share of high-end boutiques and luxury stores on and around New Town's Rue Paradis, but Cannes and Monte Carlo probably have more to offer for glam shoppers.

With its warren of streets, Vieux Nice is the most attractive place to shop. There you can browse for art, crafts, clothes and fabulous specialty foods (fruit confits, handmade pasta) at the markets and local shops. The flower and fruit markets on Cours Saleya are great to watch.

The pedestrian zone around Place Massena has scores of designer clothes shops and cheap boutiques, while on Avenue Jean Medecin you'll find Nice's biggest department store, Galeries Lafayette, as well as the local mall Nice Etoile.

**Shopping Hours:** Generally, shops are open Monday-Saturday 10 am-6:30 pm. Food stores may open earlier. Most stores close on Sunday, and some on Monday. Many smaller shops stay open until 7 or 8 pm. Butcher shops, fish markets, and fruit and vegetable stands often close 1-4 pm and then reopen until 7 or 8 pm. Small grocery shops stay open to 11 pm.

## Department Stores

### Galeries Lafayette

A branch of the famous upscale Parisian department store in the heart of Nice right on Place Massena. On its six levels you will find anything you can possibly want, including fashion and a well-stocked food hall. On the top floor a restaurant and a cafe await weary shopaholics. Open Monday-Saturday 9 am-8 pm. 6 Ave. Jean Medecin, Nice. Phone 04-9217-3636. <http://www.galerieslafayette.com/magasin-nice>.

## Galleries

### Atelier Galerie Sylvie T

This gallery across from the Palais Lascaris sells beautiful paintings with local themes that make for great souvenirs. Open Tuesday-Saturday 10:30 am-6 pm. 14 Rue Droite, Vieux Nice, Nice. Phone 04-9362-5915. <http://www.sylvie-t.com>.

### Galerie d'Art Moderne et Contemporain Sandrine Mons

Sandrine Mons specializes in modern and contemporary art. There you can find the works of established French and international artists, but also of young talents. Open Tuesday-Saturday 2:30-7 pm. 25 Rue de la Buffa, Nice. Phone 04-9382-0409. <http://www.galeriemons.fr>.

### Galerie du Chateau

Ambitious platform for young local artists, famous for its provocative exhibitions. Open Tuesday-Saturday 10 am-noon and 2-6 pm. 14 Rue Droite, Vieux Nice, Nice. Phone 04-9713-3217.

### Galerie Ferrero

Dazzling art gallery founded in 1972 and now managed by Guillaume Aral. It carries a great selection of all modern, local art styles—Arman, Ben, Klein, Sosno, Venet, Cesar, Christo, Mas, Moya and other artists of the Nice school and the Nice new realists, plus young promising upstarts. This is like visiting a small MAMAC—without the entrance fee. Open Tuesday-Saturday 10 am-12:30 pm and 2:30-7 pm. 2 Rue du Congres, Nice. Phone 04-9388-3444. <http://www.galerieferrero.com>.

### **Galerie Jean Renoir**

Excellent little municipal gallery that specializes in young, talented local artists. Temporary exhibitions feature installations, paintings and sculptures. Open Tuesday-Saturday 10 am-noon and 2-6 pm. 8 Rue de la Loge, Vieux Nice, Nice. Phone 04-9313-4046.

### **Markets**

#### **Cours Saleya**

Cours Saleya is famous for its colorful flower market, which takes place at its western half, while the eastern end is reserved for a great food market where you can buy exotic spices, delicious fruits and vegetables, candied fruits and much more. On Monday, Cours Saleya also hosts an antiques market. In the summer months check out the lively art market (June-September). Flower market Tuesday-Saturday 6 am-5:30 pm, Sunday till 1:30 pm; food market daily except Monday 6 am-1:30 pm; antiques market Monday 6 am-6 pm. Cours Saleya, Nice.

#### **Marche aux Poissons**

This busy fish market takes place around the square's central fountain in the Old Town. Go early to sample the atmosphere. A few hours later, the fresh catch will be snapped up. Open daily except Monday 6 am-1 pm. Place St. Francois, Nice.

#### **Marche aux Puces**

Nice's flea market is always worth a visit. It's best to go in the morning. Open Tuesday-Saturday 10 am-6 pm. Place Robilante, Nice.

### **Shopping Areas**

#### **Centre Commercial Nice TNL**

This mall right in the center of Nice, just a short walk from the Acropolis conference center, has more than 60 shops and restaurants under one roof. Open Monday-Saturday 9 am-8:30 pm. 15 Blvd. du General Louis Delfino, Nice. Phone 04-9356-8240. <http://www.nicetnl.com>.

#### **Nice Etoile**

Largest shopping mall in Nice, with lots of fashion and luxury stores on four floors. Open Monday-Saturday 10 am-7:30 pm; also open Sunday 11 am-7 pm from mid-May to mid-October. 30 Ave. Jean Medecin, Nice. Phone 04-9217-3817. <http://www.nicetoile.com>.

### **Specialty Stores**

#### **Alziari**

Owned by the Alziari family since 1936 and located only a few steps away from the Opera, this shop is a shrine to the olive. You can buy green fragrant olive oil in attractively shaped bottles (a liter of finest extra virgin costs around 10 euros), tubs of fresh olives and many products made of olive oil, such as soaps and tapenade. You can also learn more about the versatile olive on a free guided tour of their olive mill at 318 Blvd. de la Madeleine. Open Tuesday-Saturday 8:30 am-12:30 pm and 2:15-7 pm. 14 Rue St. Francois de Paule, Vieux Nice, Nice. Phone 04-9362-9403 or 04-9385-7692. <http://www.alziari.com.fr>.

#### **Aux Parfums de Grasse**

Precious fragrances created by Molinard, Galimard and Fragonard in nearby Grasse. The selection is simply stunning. Open daily 9 am-7 pm. 2 Rue du Pont Vieux, Nice. Phone 04-9313-4831.

#### **Caves Caprioglio**

This excellent address for wine lovers in Old Nice has been around for a century, and not much seems to have changed. Racks filled with wine bottles adorn the walls. Great selection of French wines, including many affordable local Crus such as the Bellet. Very friendly and knowledgeable service. Open Tuesday-Saturday 8 am-1 pm and 3-7:30 pm, Sunday 8 am-1 pm. 16 Rue de la Prefecture, Vieux Nice, Nice. Phone 04-9385-6657.

### **Confiserie Florian**

Florian is famous for its pralines, sweets, candied fruits, jellies and jams. Open daily 9 am-noon and 2-6:30 pm. 14 Quai Papacino, Vieux Nice, Nice. Phone 04-9355-4350. <http://www.confiserieflorian.com>.

### **Custo Barcelona**

Extravagant Mediterranean fashion great for your summer holidays on the Riviera. There's a second store in the Galeries Lafayette. Open Monday-Saturday 11 am-7 pm. 23 Rue de la Prefecture, Vieux Nice, Nice. Phone 04-9313-9147. <http://www.custo-barcelona.com>.

### **Espace Harroch**

One of the best fashion boutiques in Nice with a fabulous selection of designer labels. Also beautiful home decor. Open daily 10 am-7:30 pm. 7 Rue Paradis, Nice. Phone 04-9382-5023. <http://www.espace-harroch.com>.

### **Inspirations**

Great selection of contemporary home decor with beautiful lamps, candles and ceramics. Open Monday 2:30-7 pm, Tuesday-Saturday 10 am-12:30 pm and 2:30-7 pm. 27 Rue de l'Hotel des Postes, Nice. Phone 04-9387-1992.

### **Joue Club**

The best and biggest toy shop in Nice—a paradise for children. Open Monday-Saturday 10 am-7 pm. 16 Ave. Notre Dame, Nice. Phone 04-9385-4310. <http://www.joueclub.com>.

### **La Chapellerie**

Beautiful hats for ladies and gentlemen, from colorful caps to traditional sun hats and elegant Panamas or Borsalinos. There's a second location at 56 Rue Gioffredo. Open daily 9:30 am-1 pm and 2-6:30 pm. 36 Cours Saleya, Nice. Phone 04-9362-5254. <http://www.chapellerie.com>.

### **L'Air de Rien**

Great gift shop that stocks all sorts of shiny, funny and colorful things you never thought you'd need but now can't live without. Open Monday-Saturday 1-7 pm in winter, 2 pm-midnight in summer. 22 Rue Benoit Bunico, Vieux Nice, Nice. Phone 04-9392-7332. <http://www.lairderien06.com>.

### **L'Epicurien**

A treasure trove of fine wines and champagnes for all budgets and fancy French foods such as chocolate, mustard, olive oil, vinegar, foie gras, honey, confits and terrines. Free samples of all products are offered on Thursday from 5 pm. Open Monday 3-8 pm, Tuesday-Saturday 10 am-12:30 pm and 3-8 pm (Thursday until 10 pm). 55-R Gioffredo, Nice. Phone 04-9336-1537. <http://www.l-epicurien.fr>.

### **Maison Auer**

Since 1820 this beautiful shop across from the Opera has been famous for its sweets—candied fruits, chocolates, *calissons*, cakes, syrups and jams. Do try the pralines. A tea salon is next door. Open Tuesday-Saturday 9 am-1:30 pm and 2:30-6 pm. 7 Rue St. Francois de Paule, Vieux Nice, Nice. Phone 04-9385-7798. <http://www.maison-auer.com>.

### **Maison Barale**

This delicatessen store specializes in the home-style pasta Nice is famous for—ravioli, tagliatelle and gnocchi. Open Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday-Sunday 7:30 am-1 pm; Saturday 3:30-7 pm also. 7 Rue Ste. Reparate, Nice. Phone 04-9385-6308. <http://www.barale-raviolis.com>.

### **Natura Design**

This small store is only a few steps away from the sea promenade. It sells tasteful modern accessories and home decor, made from natural materials such as wood, stone and bamboo. Open Monday 2:30-7 pm, Tuesday-Saturday 10 am-12:30 pm and 2-7 pm. 4 Rue du Congres, Nice. Phone 04-9376-1332. <http://www.naturadesign.fr>.

### **Papeterie Rontani**

Family-owned for 150 years, and it shows; entering this shop is a step back in time. You'll find a great selection of locally produced guidebooks, reference books on Nice and the Riviera, maps and guides, beautiful stationery and the traditional local crib figures called *santons de Provence*. Open Tuesday-Friday 8:30 am-7 pm, Saturday 8:30 am-6 pm. 5 Rue Alexandre Mari, Vieux Nice, Nice. Phone 04-9362-3243.

### **Patisserie Lac**

Pascal Lac is considered one of the best chocolatiers in France. His creations are veritable works of art. Ask for *les paves massena*. There is a second location at 18 Rue Barla (phone 04-9355-3774). Open Monday-Saturday 9:45 am-7:15 pm. 48 Rue Gioffredo, Nice. Phone 04-9382-5778. <http://www.patisseries-lac.com>.

### **Verre Tigre**

This boutique has a huge selection of arts and crafts, especially glassware, crystal, ceramics, china and jewelry. Open Tuesday-Saturday 9 am-7 pm. 1 Rue Alexandre Mari, Vieux Nice, Nice. Phone 04-9380-0315. <http://www.verretige.fr>.

## **DINING**

### **Dining Overview**

Nice's cuisine still shows its Ligurian influences, with its love for seafood, olive oil and tiny black olives, chickpeas, fresh basil and pine nuts.

For starters, the Nicois eat pasta (for example, ravioli filled with seafood, artichoke hearts or walnut sauce), gnocchi or, in the winter, *soupe au pistou*. This hearty soup is made with *courgettes* (zucchini), tomatoes, beans, potatoes, onions and vermicelli, and served with *pistou*, a sauce based on basil, pine nuts and garlic. Another Nicois favorite is *bourride*, a fish soup served with aioli.

Rightfully popular is the *salade nicoise*, usually made with quartered tomatoes, capers, black olives, spring onions, anchovies or tuna, green beans, and with or without hard-boiled eggs and potatoes.

Grilled fish and *estocafinado* (a stew of salt cod, garlic and tomato stockfish) appear on most menus, as do ratatouille or *tourte aux blettes* (a pie filled with boiled Swiss chard, pine nuts and raisins in vinaigrette). The Nicois also love *socca* (a sort of chickpea flour pancake), *pan bagnat* (a sandwich filled with tuna, onions, tomato, egg and olive oil), *pissaladiere* (onion tart), *petits farcis* (stuffed vegetables with meat or herb and mushroom fillings) and courgette flowers.

Nice has its very own local wine, the high-quality Bellet, from one of the smallest vineyards in France.

Expect to pay within these general guidelines, based on the cost of a dinner for one, including tax and service charge but not including drinks: \$ = less than 20 euros; \$\$ = 20 euros-35 euros; \$\$\$ = 36 euros-50 euros; and \$\$\$\$ = more than 50 euros.

### **Local & Regional**

#### **Aphrodite**

In a formal contemporary setting, David Faure's innovative cuisine hovers between traditional and artistic *terroir* dishes and molecular experiments. Sample dishes such as roasted lobster tail with thyme, mussels in *pistou* soup, or saddle of rabbit stuffed with basil and confit shallots. There's a wholly vegetarian menu, too, and the wine list is impressive. Excellent desserts, friendly service. You can also eat on a pretty terrace shaded by magnolia trees. Very affordable set menu for lunch. Open Tuesday-Saturday for lunch and dinner. Closed first three weeks in January and for about two weeks (variable) in August. Reservations recommended. \$\$\$\$. Most major credit cards. 10 Blvd. Dubouchage, Nice. Phone 04-9385-6353. <http://www.restaurant-aphrodite.com>.



### Chantecler

One of the grandest and best places to eat in Nice, this opulent, Michelin-starred restaurant is in the Hotel Negresco, a luxurious historic landmark on the Promenade des Anglais. The azure Mediterranean can be seen from the window. Service is highly professional but friendly. The food is classic, refined haute cuisine at top prices, although the set Sunday lunch is a surprising bargain. Open Sunday for lunch and dinner, Wednesday-Saturday for dinner only. Reservations required. \$\$\$\$\$. Most major credit cards. 37 Promenade des Anglais, Nice. Phone 04-9316-6400. <http://www.hotel-negresco-nice.com/les-restaurants/le-chantecler>.

### Chez Pipo

This small restaurant is where the locals gather to eat the "sacred Nicois trilogy" of *socca* (the best in town), *pissaladiere* and *tourte aux blettes* at unbeatable prices. Wash it down with a glass or two of local rose. Expect the place to be fuller than full at all times, and be prepared to wait in line outside until you can snatch a seat at one of the long tables with wooden benches. Open Tuesday-Saturday for lunch and dinner, Sunday for dinner only. Closed in November. Reservations not accepted. \$. No credit cards. 13 Rue Bavastro, Vieux Nice (at the port), Nice. Phone 04-9355-8882. <http://www.chezpipo.fr>.

### Don Camillo Creations

Behind the low-key facade of a house on a residential street, a short walk from Cours Saleya, the award-winning young chef Marc Laville and his team serve creative and refined local Mediterranean and Italian fare with ingredients fresh from the local markets. Try grilled langoustine with orange chutney, lobster stew with artichokes, truffle risotto, Corsican sausage with onion rings, or pan-fried foie gras served with a mille-feuille of *pissaladiere* and *socca*. The wine list has matching local Bellet wines. Affordable set menu for lunch, a rarity for a restaurant of this class in this city. Leave room for the delicious desserts. Elegant contemporary interior. Open Tuesday-Saturday for lunch and dinner. Reservations recommended. \$\$\$\$. Most major credit cards. 5 Rue des Ponchettes, Nice. Phone 04-9385-6795. <http://www.doncamillo-creations.fr>.

### Flaveur

Tables are close together in this small and intimate restaurant with contemporary decor. Wooden cutouts of fish decorate the walls. Portions are on the small side, and service can be slow and disorganized, but this is one place where Michelin-starred dining need not cost the earth, with a set three-course menu of just 35 euros, or six courses for 70 euros. The set lunch is an especially good value, with three courses and a glass of wine for 32 euros. 25 Rue Gubernatis, Nice. Phone 04-9362-5395. <http://www.flaveur.net>.

### Keisuke Matsushima

The *equipe* of the celebrated Keisuke Matsushima, alias Kei, serves Michelin-starred local and Mediterranean cuisine with a strong Italian accent. The only Asian touches you might find are a sprinkle of wasabi or a hint of Szechuan pepper. You will dine in a minimalist modern Zen setting. The menu excels in seafood. Signature dishes are fried red mullet with artichokes, pan-seared Breton crayfish and sauteed calamari, but also a heavenly mille-feuille of Simmental beef or braised pork with honey. The desserts are to die for, and the cellar has a very interesting, but mostly pricey selection of exclusively French wines. Open Tuesday-Friday for lunch and dinner, Saturday and Monday for lunch only. Reservations recommended. \$\$\$\$\$. Most major credit cards. 22 Rue de France, Nice. Phone 04-9382-2606. <http://www.keisukematsushima.com>.

### La Cantine de Lulu

Lucien Brych, or Lulu as the locals affectionately call him, serves up wonderfully simple local dishes and French classics in his illustrious bistro with only a few tables. Try the *daube Provencale* (beef stew) and handmade *merda de can* (delicious green gnocchi), or sample the classics of Nicois cuisine by ordering the *farandole gourmande* (seven or eight starters). For dessert the Promenade des Anglais, a mellow chocolate cake with orange confit and vanilla sauce, is highly recommended. The first Friday of the month is reserved for the grand aioli, and the last Friday of the month is stockfish and bouillabaisse day. Open Monday-Friday for lunch and dinner. Closed in August. Reservations recommended. \$\$\$. Most major credit cards. 26 Rue Alberti, Nice. Phone 04-9362-1533.

### **La Merenda**

This restaurant, run by eccentric chef Dominique Le Stanc, has no phone and is closed on weekends. He left his Michelin-starred restaurant Le Chantecler at the Negresco hotel to open a simple shoebox-sized and invariably packed bistro in Old Nice in the vicinity of the opera. You can make a reservation, if you pass by earlier in person, but most people just queue up outside until a few of only 24 seats become available—two rows of tables and tiny stools, and be prepared to share a table. The fare prepared in the tiny open kitchen at the back of the room—Provençal cuisine prepared with local ingredients fresh from the market—is chalked up on a blackboard. Try *pistou* soup, ratatouille, tripes à la Nicoise with panisse (potato-sized chunks of fried chickpeas), oxtail, slowly stewed *daube de boeuf*, stockfish (dried-cod stew with aniseed, simmered with onions, tomatoes, garlic, olives, peppers and potatoes), polenta with gorgonzola, *petits farcis* (stuffed vegetables) or andouillettes (mini sausages made from pork tripe). Service is swift, but prices are on the rise. Open Monday-Friday for lunch and dinner. Closed three weeks in August. Reservations are recommended but only available if you inquire in person. \$\$\$-\$\$\$\$. No credit cards. 4 Rue Raoul Bosio, Nice.

### **L'Aromate**

Young chef Mickael Gracieux, winner of a Michelin star just two years after starting his first restaurant, has learned his trade working for some of the best chefs in France, and it shows. In the evening, he serves modern French cuisine including a fabulous crab in ginger jelly, truffled scallops, roast lamb shoulder with carrot mousse, or potato tarte with onions, smoked bacon and parsley. At lunchtime he serves risottos and simpler fare. Prices are rather high, but the small selection of regional wines is still quite affordable. Open Tuesday-Saturday for lunch and dinner. Reservations recommended. \$\$\$-\$\$\$\$. Most major credit cards. 20-22 Ave. du Marechal Foch, Nice. Phone 04-9362-9824. <http://www.laromate.fr>.

### **L'Escalinada**

This rustic, unpretentious place, opened in 1952, serves authentic traditional Nicois dishes. Many locals eat there and swear that Brigitte Autier's *merda de can* (gnocchi prepared in the local way) tastes better than anywhere else on the Cote. Also try the tripes, stockfish, red mullet, stuffed vine leaves, Provençal beef stew, Marsala veal stew and *porchetta* (suckling pig). The brave can order *testicules de mouton panes* (sheep's testicles in batter). For dessert try the sweet *mangold* cakes or (in summer) the lemon tarts. Great list of regional wines such as the Clos St. Vincent or the Clos St. Joseph. Also sample the local digestif called *farigoulette*, a thyme liqueur. Friendly atmosphere, impeccable service. You can also eat on the candle-lit streetside terrace. Open daily for lunch and dinner. Closed mid-November to mid-December. Reservations recommended. \$\$\$. Most major credit cards. 22 Rue Pairoliere, Vieux Nice, Nice. Phone 04-9362-1171. <http://www.escalinada.fr>.

### **Luc Salsedo**

Luc Salsedo has worked with Alain Ducasse in Monaco and in such hotel palaces as the Eden Roc, but he puts a lot more effort in his Provençal cuisine than in the decoration of his restaurant. The menu changes every 10 days and features seasonal Mediterranean classics prepared with the freshest ingredients, as well as many choices for vegetarians. Excellent desserts. Lunch menu at moderate prices. The selection of wines is very good, but unfortunately a bit expensive. Open daily except Wednesday for dinner in season, Sunday-Tuesday and Friday for lunch. Also closed three weeks in January. Reservations recommended. \$\$\$\$. Most major credit cards. 14 Rue Maccarani, Nice. Phone 04-9382-2412. <http://www.restaurant-salsedo.com>.

### **L'Univers de Christian Plumail**

Christian Plumail is an institution in Nice, with a rightfully deserved Michelin star. Sample excellent cuisine *du terroir* such as red mullet soup, sea bream, *loup de mer* in coconut sauce, suckling lamb from the Pyrenees, sweetbread with morels and a great selection of regional starters that you can order as a full set menu. Excellent lunch menu at a moderate price, and fine wines served by the glass, too. Open Tuesday-Friday for lunch and dinner, Saturday and Monday for dinner only. Reservations recommended. \$\$\$\$. Most major credit cards. 54 Blvd. Jean Jaures, Nice. Phone 04-9362-3222. <http://www.christian-plumail.com>.

## Cuisines

### Vegetarian

#### La Zucca Magica

Excellent and friendly portside vegetarian restaurant with an eccentric Halloween decor (*zucca* means "pumpkin" in Italian). There's no menu—you just sit down and eat. Piedmontese chef Marco Folicardi, who looks a bit like Luciano Pavarotti, serves up a no-choice, five-course menu of imaginative seasonal dishes using a mix of Italian- and French-influenced recipes. The food is so good that nonvegetarians fill up the place as well. Children age 12 and younger eat for free. Go hungry. Open Tuesday-Saturday for lunch and dinner. Reservations recommended. \$\$-\$\$\$\$. Most major credit cards. 4 Bis Quai Papacino, Vieux Nice (at the port), Nice. Phone 04-9356-2527. <http://www.lazuccamagica.com>.

### Cafes & Tearooms

#### Fenocchio

Fenocchio is arguably the best ice-cream parlor in town, with a fascinating choice of flavors ranging from orange flower to lavender to black olive. There's another location at 6 Rue de la Poissonnerie. Open daily 9 am-midnight. Closed November-January. \$. No credit cards. 2 Place Rossetti, Nice. Phone 04-9380-7252. <http://www.fenocchio.fr>.

#### Serain Cappa

One of the best chocolatiers, patisseries and tearooms in Nice, with fabulous homemade cakes and pralines. Try Opera (chocolate, biscuit and almond cake), Guanaja (dark chocolate and milk mousse) or Le Marquis de Nice (caramelized profiterole with kirsch). Teas come in many wonderful fragrances. Open Tuesday-Saturday 8 am-7:30 pm, Sunday 7:30 am-6 pm. Reservations recommended. \$. No credit cards. 7 Place Garibaldi, Vieux Nice, Nice. Phone 04-9362-3083.

### Seafood

#### L'Ane Rouge

The Red Donkey is a popular restaurant by the harbor with excellent seafood. In a refined setting, chef Michel Devillers serves up a mean bouillabaisse (order in advance), or try the cod in coconut sauce, sauteed sea bream with onion chutney and artichokes, *loup de mer* or red mullet. In autumn, regional game dishes appear on the menu. Delicious desserts, fine selection of matching wines, beautiful terrace. Open Friday-Tuesday for lunch and dinner, Thursday for dinner only. Reservations recommended. \$\$-\$\$\$\$. Most major credit cards. 7 Quai des Deux Emmanuel, Nice. Phone 04-9389-4963. <http://www.anerougenice.com>.

#### Le Cafe de Turin

This old cafe is a real institution in Nice, opened 200 years ago on a corner of then Place Victor (now Place Garibaldi) and Boulevard Jean Jaures. A hundred years ago it was more like a cabaret, but today it specializes in seafood, which may well be the best served in Nice. Enjoy the authentic decor inside or sit outside under the colonnades of Place Garibaldi and sample fresh oysters, plates of mussels, langoustine, crab and sea urchins (the latter September-April only). Prices are a bit steep, and service can be rough, though nobody seems to care. If it's full, the annex Le Petit Turin serves the same delicacies. Open daily for lunch and dinner. Closed part of July. \$\$-\$\$\$\$. Most major credit cards. 5 Place Garibaldi, Vieux Nice, Nice. Phone 04-9362-2952. <http://www.cafedeturin.fr>.

### Steak Houses

#### Steak House

Meat lovers gather at this cocktail bar and brasserie-restaurant located in the charming Hotel de la Petite Sirene. It serves up big, sizzling steaks at moderate prices and also offers excellent burgers and salads. Open daily except Monday for lunch and dinner. Reservations recommended. \$\$\$. Most major credit cards. 8 Rue Macarani, Nice. Phone 04-9703-0340. <http://www.sirene-fr.com>.

## SECURITY

### Etiquette

It is sometimes said that the predominant religion in France is French. The country is rightfully proud of its culture, and visitors who exhibit an understanding of the country's lifestyle and customs will be given more consideration than those who don't.

At the same time, the people of Provence and the Cote d'Azur are also proud of the many cultural and historical differences between "the South" and "the North." It is polite and sensible to share in their opinion.

**Appointments**—Schedule meetings well in advance. Punctuality is expected. It is not necessary to have your business cards translated into French, but it does make a great impression with the French and shows consideration on your part.

**Personal Introductions**—Handshakes are the common form of greeting and are somewhat less firm than is common in some other countries. Eye contact should be direct. On meeting, always use professional titles or standard French titles (*monsieur, madame, mademoiselle*) along with the person's last name. Don't use a person's first name until instructed to do so, and if speaking French remember to always use the formal *vous* even when on friendly terms (adults, especially middle-aged and older, usually use *tu* only when there is genuine personal friendship). *Les bises*, or light kisses to the cheeks as a greeting, occur only among close acquaintances. As a visitor, participate only if your host initiates the action. Do not expect your smile to be reciprocated. The French do not smile just to be smiling.

**Negotiating**—The French are formal in their business dealings, but the conversation may take a winding path and at times may dwell on minutiae. Do not let this confuse or frustrate you. Decisions are typically made very formally and deliberately and after respectful consultation with superiors. Junior executives typically do not have a great deal of authority. The French tend to avoid the subject of money in meetings, although it is by no means taboo. It shouldn't, however, be the first item on the agenda.

**Business Entertaining**—Business lunches are common and often extended in duration—three hours is not uncommon. Maintain good table manners at all times, hold knives and forks correctly, and keep your hands visible while dining.

**Body Language**—The French converse at a somewhat closer distance than is common in some other countries. It is not unusual for polite conversational touching to occur. "Thumbs up" means "OK"—and it can also mean "one." Good posture is important, as is stylish, good-quality clothing. Chewing gum in public is considered ill-mannered, as is eating while walking on the street.

**Gift Giving**—Though the practice is not typical, tasteful gifts are appreciated. They are usually only given after a relationship is somewhat established.

**Conversation**—If you speak French, do so. If you do not, learn a few polite phrases—and learn them well. But do not be offended if your French pronunciation is corrected. Good topics are food, wine, art and French soccer or rugby. Be careful not to inadvertently demean any aspect of French culture. The French are a private people. Personal questions are considered poor form. Privacy extends to the audible level of conversation. The French tend to speak more quietly than people from the U.S. or even other European countries.

**Other Information**—Office doors are typically kept closed; knock before entering. The French pride themselves on their leisurely lifestyle. It is not unusual to have six weeks of vacation per year.

## **Personal Safety**

Nice is generally a safe city. However, you should take all normal precautions, because thefts (particularly pickpocketing and purse snatching) do occur. Be particularly vigilant against car break-ins; any bag, case or other object left in view is temptation to a thief. Always take your belongings with you. It is best to leave rental cars in a garage. Also, keep the car locked when driving to avoid purse- or luggage-snatching by thieves on motor scooters. Watch your belongings on public beaches at all times. The best way to avoid trouble with panhandlers or beggars is with a firm but polite refusal—ignoring them is usually not effective.

If you are the victim of a crime, the police station at 1 Ave. Marechal Foch (phone 04-9217-2222) is open around the clock, and you will usually find an English-speaking officer. Expect a fair share of French bureaucracy nonetheless.

For the latest information, contact your country's travel-advisory agency.

## **Health**

No unusual health risks exist, with one exception: France has one of the highest rates of HIV/AIDS in Europe, so unprotected sex is a high-risk activity. Condoms (*preservatifs*) are available at pharmacies and at dispensers near them.

Although tap water is safe to drink throughout the country, many French people choose to drink bottled water. Food sold by street vendors is generally safe to eat.

Nice has excellent medical and dental facilities. The pharmacies are first-rate, and many sell herbal and alternative-medicine treatments as well as standard medications. Many medications from your own country may not be available, however, so take along your own supply. All pharmacies are designated by a green neon cross, and most are open Monday-Saturday 8:30 am-8 pm. They all post on their doors a list of pharmacies that are open Sunday or after hours.

SOS Mediciens provides on-call doctors for nonurgent medical care 24 hours a day. The dentists at SOS Dentistes are available around the clock on weekends and on weekdays during school vacations. Most of these health-care professionals have at least a basic understanding of English.

For the latest information, contact your country's health-advisory agency.

In emergencies, go to the city-center Hopital St-Roch, 5 Rue Pierre Devoluy. It is part of Le Centre Hospitalier Universitaire de Nice. Phone 04-9203-3333 or 04-9203-3322. <http://www.chu-nice.fr>.

## **Disabled Advisory**

Nice is not always the easiest city for travelers with disabilities to maneuver, but the government is trying to make the city more accessible. Most monuments, museums and attractions are suited for wheelchairs.

An organization called Tourisme et Handicaps (<http://www.tourisme-handicaps.org>) assesses business premises for suitability for disabled people and is introducing a sticker, "Destination Pour Tous," that approved premises may display.

The Nice Tourist Office Web site has a page on Accessible Nice. <http://en.nicetourisme.com/accessible-nice>.

## **Dos & Don'ts**

Do say *bonjour* (good morning) when meeting people. This courtesy extends to absolutely everyone, even if you are only buying a metro ticket or a morning paper.

Don't forget to address people by their full title when speaking to strangers: *monsieur* for men, *madame* for married women and *mademoiselle* for unmarried women. You will have to decide whether a woman is a *mademoiselle* or a *madame*.

Do say *pardon* if you bump into someone, even lightly, though they may say it to you first, even if it is your fault.

Don't fill wine glasses too full when pouring for other people. Many French wine drinkers like to swirl their wine around in the glass in order to release the full bouquet.

Don't be afraid to try out new food on French menus—it's probably delicious. Try asking for the chef's special du jour.

Do avoid breakfasts at cheaper hotels; they are usually overpriced and of poor quality. Instead of often stale bread in the breakfast room, opt for a fluffy fresh croissant and a cafe au lait in a cafe next door.

Don't smoke in bars, restaurants and discos; it is illegal to do so. You may be fined up to 75 euros.

Do watch out for dog excrement on the sidewalks in Nice, a nuisance even worse than in Paris.

## **FACTS**

### **Geostats**

**Passport/Visa Requirements:** Citizens of the U.S. and Canada need only passports to visit Nice. Reconfirm travel document requirements with your carrier before departure.

**Population:** 370,000.

**Languages:** French. You may also hear a local city dialect called Nissart. In addition, most tourism professionals know a good level of English and Italian.

**Predominant Religions:** Christian (Roman Catholic). There are also Protestant, Jewish and Muslim places of worship.

**Time Zone:** 1 hour ahead of Greenwich Mean Time (+1 GMT). Daylight Saving Time is observed from the last Sunday in March to the last Sunday in October.

**Voltage Requirements:** 220 volts. two round-pin plugs.

**Telephone Codes:** 33, country code; 04, area code;

### **Money**

#### **Currency Exchange**

France uses the euro as currency. Bank notes are available in denominations of 500 euros, 200 euros, 100 euros, 50 euros, 20 euros, 10 euros and 5 euros (many shops will not accept 200-euro and 500-euro notes). There are coins for 2 euros, 1 euro, 50 cents, 20 cents, 10 cents, 5 cents, 2 cents and 1 cent.

ATMs are the easiest and usually the cheapest way of obtaining cash in euros, drawn on either your debit or credit card. ATMs are located throughout the city center and at banks. Most accept major credit cards and are connected to at least one international banking network (for bank cards). Each machine clearly displays symbols to let you know which cards will work. You can also change money at banks and currency-exchange offices (*bureaux de change*). Not all banks have exchange facilities, so look for those with a change sign.

Big hotels will usually change currency, but the rate is often not favorable. Traveler's checks in U.S. dollars should be exchanged at banks or exchange offices, as very few businesses will accept them.

Major credit cards are readily accepted, although a minimum purchase (often 15 euros) might be required.

When paying for goods or services by credit card, you generally won't be able to use a card that still has only a magnetic strip on the back instead of a chip (*puce*) on the front. Using a magnetic strip, customers use their signature to make purchases, whereas the "chip & PIN" methods require a PIN only.

Most banks are open Monday-Friday 9 am-noon and 2-4 pm. Banks are closed on weekends and national holidays.

## **Taxes**

Goods and services in France are subject to a value-added tax, called TVA (*taxe sur la valeur ajoutée*). The price displayed almost always includes tax—the letters TTC (*tous taxes compris*) next to a price mean it's included. The current TVA is 19.6% on most goods, except for food, medicine and books, in which case it is 5.5%. Be aware that it can be as high as 33% on items such as watches, cameras and DVDs.

To benefit from a TVA refund, the unitary purchase price inclusive of tax from any single store must be at least 175 euros. Look for shops with a Tax Free Shopping logo in their windows. You need to be a nonresident of the EU. When you make your purchase, request a global refund check or an export sales invoice (*bordereau de vente*).

When you get to the airport, present the form at the claims counter at customs for an immediate refund, or ask the customs officials to stamp your form and then send it to Global Refund, which will refund you through your credit card. Some stores manage their own TVA refunds and have specific forms and procedures, so always check with customer service.

The details of who may claim TVA refunds are online at <http://www.douane.gouv.fr/data/file/1268.pdf>.

There is also a VAT of 5.5% for all hotels, but this is automatically included in the bill.

## **Tipping**

By law, all restaurants in France include tax and service within their prices (generally 10%-15% of the bill). There is no expectation of any further tip. Nevertheless, at bars and cafes, it's a nice gesture to leave some small change as a tip. This same practice can also be applied to taxi drivers, although no tip is required.

Hotel porters expect 1 euro per bag, and housekeepers may be tipped 2 euros-4 euros per day, although there is no expectation of any tip at all. Lavatory attendants usually levy a small charge of about 0.50 euros.

### **Weather**

The best time to visit Nice is April-October. Winters are generally moderate, but it's really too cold for swimming or lying on the beach.

There's a world of difference between visiting Nice during high season (late spring, summer, early fall) and low. If you're interested in the sights or spas—as opposed to lying on the beach—go during low season. There are no crowds, hotel rates drop, and it's easy to get reservations in good restaurants. The only downside is that a few of the attractions may have shorter hours.

### **What to Wear**

You really can't dress up too much in Nice, but you will find that locals as well as daytrippers and tourists usually wear casual attire. Only the poshest restaurants, nightclubs and casinos require men to wear a jacket and tie (*tenue correcte*). Elsewhere it is typical to opt for smart casual attire.

Do not wear shorts for dining out, and walking around the streets in swimwear is considered indecent, with the exception of the waterfront—bikini tops on the Promenade des Anglais are a common sight. If you visit religious buildings, dress modestly.

Even in summer, evenings can be cool, so pack a sweater or light jacket. In winter (October-April) you will need a warmer jacket. Days may be quite balmy, but it can be rainy with a chilly wind, too.

### **Communication**

#### **Telephone**

Public phones typically only accept *telecartes* (phone cards), which you can buy at post offices and tobacconists or newsagents. Specify if you want a *carte a puce* (works only in phone boxes) or a *carte a code* (works from any phone). The latter usually have better international rates. A surcharge usually will be added for calls made from your hotel room. Some phone booths also accept credit cards.

The advent of cellular phones means there are fewer public phone booths available. However, there are often pay phones in post offices, and you can often find a pay-phone booth in bars and cafes.

France uses a 10-digit phone-number system. Numbers on the French Riviera begin with 04; French mobile phone numbers start with 06. Special-rate numbers start with 08, varying from free-phone 0800 to premium rate 0892. If you are calling any number in France—local or not—always dial all 10 digits: area code, city code (including the zero) and the local number.

Cell phone coverage in Nice is at 100%. You can use any GSM 900/1800 phone or 3G phone. International roaming with French mobile phone providers is available, but expensive. It's better to buy a prepaid SIM card from Bouygues Telecommunication (<http://www.bouyguestelecom.fr>), Orange France (<http://www.orange.fr>) or SFR (<http://www.sfr.fr>).

#### **Internet Access**

Wi-Fi is readily available in most hotels, restaurants and bars, often for free. Internet cafes, often referred to as cybercafes, come and go. There are usually a few in Vieux Nice, costing on average 0.50 euros-0.75 euros per hour.



## **Transportation**

Getting to and from Nice is not difficult. The city is well-served by national and international air, train and bus connections.

Getting around in Nice is easy. Vieux Nice is best explored on foot. The New City with the Promenade des Anglais is also easy to walk. For longer distances (such as the museums in Cimiez), take a local bus.

Driving offers the greatest flexibility, but the city's streets are very busy, especially during Monday-Friday rush hours, and parking is a problem. To explore the hinterland (especially the three Corniches), you'll definitely need a car.

## **Public Transportation**

Public transport in Nice is provided by city buses and trams.

The extensive bus and tram network, including four Noctambus night buses, is run by Ligne d'Azur (phone 08-1006-1006). Tickets cost 1 euro and can be bought onboard. Bus-hop passes (4 euros daily, 15 euros weekly) are available from Ligne d'Azur, tabacs and newsagents. <http://www.lignesdazur.com>.

Tickets for the tram cost 1 euro and can be bought from machines at each stop (not on the tram itself). Ligne 1 traces a 5.4-mi/8.7-km U-shape through the city, from Comte de Falicon to the Pont Michel.

## **Taxi**

Nice's taxis are notoriously expensive. A trip to Cannes or Monaco costs about 70 euros-75 euros each way.

There are several taxi companies, including Central Taxi Riviera (phone 04-9313-7878) and Taxis Nicois Independants (phone 04-9388-2582). Your hotel can assist in reserving a taxi ahead of time.

## **Train**

The main SNCF railway station, at 3 Ave. Thiers, is served by frequent trains from Paris and Marseille or Ventimiglia, Italy. Local services to Menton also stop at Gare Riquier, near the port and in the Old Town. The Gare St. Augustin is near the airport. Phone 08-9235-2535. <http://www.sncf.com>.

The private Gare de Provence, located at 4 bis Rue Alfred Binet just north of the main station, is the departure point for the narrow-gauge Train des Pignes, which heads on a picturesque route into the Alps. Phone 04-9703-8080. <http://www.trainprovence.com>.

**Livorno, Italy**

**OVERVIEW**

**Introduction**

Situated on the Tyrrhenian Coast, Livorno, Italy, is Tuscany's second largest city, next to Florence.

In addition to offering some of the best seafood in the region, the city's pebbly beaches stretch south from the town's seafront, and there is a compact historic quarter. The old Porto Mediceo part of town was laid out in the 1500s by Florentine architect Bernardo Buonattenti for the Medicis. The five-sided Fosso Real canal is the highlight and is bridged in the east by the Piazza della Repubblica. Take a boat trip along the *fossi* (canals) for an interesting perspective of the city.



The tourist office is just off the Via Grande, in a building that separates the Piazza Grande from the Piazza del Municipio. There, you can book day trips, or the canal boat tour in Livorno. It also sells tickets for the one-hour hop-on, hop-off bus tour of Livorno that starts from the Piazza Grande.

**Port Information**

**Location**

The port is a major cruise stop for the Western Mediterranean and serves as a jumping-off point for day trips to Pisa (15 minutes away by train), the walled city of Lucca (35 minutes away), Florence (an hour and a half away by train or car), and the hill town of San Gimignano (also an hour and a half away by car). Taxis line up outside the ships, and the train station is 15 minutes away.

The cruise terminal at the Calata Punto Franco is 0.3 mi/0.5 km away from the city center, and shuttles or taxis can drop you off at the Piazza Grande. Take Bus 1 "Stazione" to the train station, a five-minute ride. From there, trains run regularly to Pisa, Lucca and Florence.

**Florence, Italy**

**OVERVIEW**

**Introduction**

Florence, Italy, is one of the most beautiful cities in the world—and for many visitors, it is the most splendid. While travel to the city usually centers on its attractions, including museums, palaces and churches that overflow with masterful paintings and sculpture, it is not limited to those destinations.

Visitors encounter the spirits of da Vinci, Dante, Boccaccio, Michelangelo and the Medicis, and the days of the Renaissance seem close at hand.

As the birthplace of the Renaissance, Florence combines unequalled beauty with centuries of history in a heady mix. Visitors' first glimpse of the Duomo is likely to take their breath away.



Florence is essentially a proud, provincial city, with a conservative mentality yet very liberal politics. Visitors can sense that its citizens pay a price for living in what has become, essentially, an open-air museum. Florentines—especially those who deal with masses of tourists daily—can be haughty and standoffish toward visitors. But there are many who will offer visitors a warm smile and a helpful gesture.

The vitality of this small city, the robustness of its cuisine, the enduring beauty of its architecture and the richness of its treasures cannot fail to educate, exhilarate and dazzle those who visit Florence.

### **Must See or Do**

**Sights**—The Duomo (The Cathedral of Santa Maria del Fiore) and its dome; Battistero di San Giovanni (the Baptistery) and its intricate doors; Palazzo Pitti; Ponte Vecchio; Basilica di San Miniato al Monte with the splendid view from the Piazzale Michelangelo; the tomb sculptures by Michelangelo at the Cappelle Medicee; the view of downtown from the rooftop of The Continentale hotel.

**Museums**—*David* and Michelangelo's other sculptures at the Galleria dell'Accademia; the Museo dell'Opera del Duomo (with the original door panels of the Baptistery); the Museo Nazionale del Bargello (with works by Cellini, Donatello and Michelangelo); the Uffizi Gallery; the Galleria Palatina and Royal Apartments in the Pitti Palace.

**Memorable Meals**—A massive, rare *bistecca alla fiorentina* at Il Latini; *fritto del convento* (Florentine chicken and vegetables lightly fried) at the superb Il Francescano in the shadow of Santa Croce's convent; any of the restaurants on Piazza Santo Spirito.

**Late Night**—A stroll around Ponte Vecchio, with the lights reflected in the Arno; jazz at the Jazz Club; hot beats and top DJs at YAB.

**Walks**—A leisurely stroll along the terraced paths of Boboli Gardens; walking through Cascine Park and its enormous Tuesday market; a sunset stroll from Piazzale Michelangelo to Ponte Vecchio; exploring the Piazza Duomo pedestrian-only zone.

**Especially for Kids**—The Museo Stibbert and its park; the Gozzoli fresco in the Cappella dei Magi in Palazzo Medici-Riccardi; the Duomo's bell tower and dome; Galileo's telescope in the Museo Galileo.

### **Geography**

The historic city center of Florence, the Centro Storico, is where you'll find most of the city's monuments and attractions. The area was once encircled by medieval city walls. In the 1860s, when Florence was briefly capital of the newly formed Kingdom of Italy, the walls were replaced by large boulevards that today form a ring road (*viali di circoscrizione*) around the old city. The city falls naturally into two sections: the Duomo side of the Arno River, called *di qua d'Arno*, and—across the river—the Oltrarno side. (Oltrarno means "beyond the Arno.")

On the Duomo side, where visitors usually spend most of their time, Piazza della Signoria and the Duomo itself are grand, historic centers of religious and political power. The Oltrarno has its share of monuments such as the Palazzo Pitti and the churches of Santo Spirito and Santa Maria del Carmine, but it is less imposing and can feel more accessible. The last bastion of old Florentine popular culture is in the Oltrarno: The San Frediano neighborhood is still known for its artisans who handcraft shoes, restore furniture and practice goldsmithing, although their workshops are slowly disappearing.

A note about Florentine addresses: A street number such as 36/R means "36 red." All storefront commercial properties are marked with red street numbers (the coloring is usually worn off, making them simply stone-colored); residences have black numbers (sometimes they may look blue). Don't

be surprised if the sequence of numbers is not continuous between the two colors: You may have 5/R followed immediately by 27/B. If there's no letter designation, the address is probably in the black sequence.

## History

Julius Caesar established Florentia, the "flourishing one," in 59 BC as a military post along the banks of the Arno River, and Roman walls embraced what is now the city center. The city did not truly come into its own until the 12th and 13th centuries, becoming an independent republic in 1198. In this period, a few merchant and banking families began to distinguish themselves in the world market, establishing guilds and bringing international commerce to the city. The florin, named after the city, became a standard unit of currency in Europe.

During the 13th and 14th centuries, the Guelphs (supporters of the pope) and the Ghibellines (upholders of the Holy Roman Emperor) battled each other. After these factions faded into history, the Medici family of bankers ruled the city. Their courts employed artists, designers, architects, artisans, musicians and poets, fostering an explosion of artistic production that has shaped the city to this day. Their dynasty lasted, on and off, until 1737, when Florence came under the rule of Maria Theresa of Austria.

At this time, a pact was drawn up in Vienna to guarantee the longevity and integrity of the Florentine artistic patrimony. The masterpieces of the Austrian crown and the private collections of the Medici family were handed over to the Tuscan government. The agreement stipulated that no work of art could be taken from the enormous collection. It also emphasized that the priceless works would be showcased to attract visitors to the region.

Italy itself was unified in 1860, and Florence became the capital of the Kingdom of Italy from 1865 to 1870. (Rome later became capital of the Republic of Italy.) The city had several setbacks in the 20th century: During World War II, all the bridges were blown up except the Ponte Vecchio, and many buildings along the river were destroyed. In 1966, a particularly devastating flood swept through the city, causing an incredible amount of damage to buildings and artworks. (You can still find markers throughout the city that indicate the water level that day.) More works were lost or seriously damaged in 1993 when a car bomb exploded in front of the Uffizi Gallery. After all three events, Florentines quickly rallied to restore the city and preserve its vital Renaissance legacy.

## Potpourri

Although there is no shortage of torture museums in Tuscany, Florentines were the first people in the world to outlaw the death penalty through the reforms of Grand Duke Pietro Leopoldo in 1786.

The great medieval poet Dante Alighieri, author of the *Divine Comedy*, bitterly complained about the "shameless" Florentine women who freely showed their bare breasts in public. Rest assured, they don't do that anymore.

The "Stendhal Syndrome" (fainting from an overdose of art exposure) was first described by the French author Stendhal who experienced dizziness after visiting the church of Santa Croce.

Florence is extremely popular with language students because Florentines are said to speak the purest Italian.

The Uffizi is the busiest museum in Italy, with more than 1.5 million visitors per year. If you don't have a reservation, expect to wait many hours before you can enter.

After Oscar Wilde was arrested and tried in the U.K., in 1895, many affluent gay and lesbian British intellectuals flocked to Florence to enjoy the tolerant lifestyle there.

It is only mildly surprising that Florence was the birthplace of *Pinocchio* creator Carlo Lorenzini, also known as Carlo Collodi (but not in the Tuscan village from which he took his name). Another Florentine native was Realist painter John Singer Sargent, born to American parents in Florence in 1856.

Florence's leather and its beef steak, the famous *bistecca alla fiorentina*, come from the Chianina cow, a huge, pure white animal with large, expressive brown eyes.

## **SECURITY**

### **Etiquette**

Contrary to the relaxed image many have of Italy, the Italian business world emphasizes formality and procedure. Get assistance from a local contact, go through proper channels, and always present yourself and your firm as well-polished and accomplished.

**Appointments**—Having an intermediary is essential. Without someone to make the appropriate contacts, you'll find it hard to get much accomplished. Your go-between can help schedule meetings, which should be set up well in advance. It is very difficult—nearly impossible, in fact—to call on a businessperson unannounced. Confirm your meetings a day or two before they're set to take place, but expect last-minute changes, and if you're meeting outside of an office, don't expect punctuality.

**Personal Introductions**—Greet others with a handshake and a slight nod. Titles are important: Use any professional titles that are supplied on introduction or, better yet, ask for a list of the participants and their official titles in advance of the meeting. Continue to use the title and last name unless you are instructed otherwise.

**Negotiating**—The pace of negotiations is slow, and final decisions are not made by lower-level functionaries. The chain of command in Italian business is both vertical and horizontal, and decision-making can take a long time. Last-minute demands can be made by a person who enters the negotiations late in the game. In fact, this is sometimes used as a negotiating tool. Remain patient and calm at all times.

**Business Entertaining**—Business dinners are common but will typically involve only a few key players. If you are hosting the dinner, ask your Italian contact whom to invite. If you want to pay, tip the waiter ahead of time and ask that the bill be quietly given to you. If you do not make such arrangements in advance, you will have to ask for the check; it will not be brought to you automatically.

**Body Language**—Italians typically converse while standing close to one another. They tend to gesture when talking, and handshakes can extend longer than in other cultures. There is an entire system of hand signs that they use all the time, though none are likely to be made inadvertently by a foreigner. More often, visitors to Italy will start to imitate the gestures used by the locals without understanding the precise meanings of the movements—a practice we'd caution against.

**Gift Giving**—Small but high-quality gifts are appropriate in some situations: Ask your intermediary for advice. If you are invited to a home, take flowers or chocolates. Exercise caution in giving wine: Many Italians are experts; if you're not, you may want to select a different gift.

**Conversation**—Very little is off-limits in Italian conversation, but avoid being critical of Italian society and culture, even if your host is. Soccer is a passion and an easy topic, as are art, travel and Italian culture. The less positive sides of Italy, including Mussolini, World War II and the Mafia, are probably better avoided.

### **Personal Safety**

In Florence, as elsewhere, the best safety guideline is to use common sense. Florence is a lively place, and even on weekday evenings—especially during high season—the streets are relatively full until about midnight (much later on weekends).

Although there's no reason to avoid going out at night in the center of town, women traveling alone should take extra precautions. Avoid the Santa Maria Novella train station and the surrounding area at night: Transients congregate there. Do not cross any parks or large grassy squares, such as the Fortezza del Basso, in the dark.

Pickpocketing, unfortunately, is quite common. Pickpockets and purse snatchers often target tourists in crowded places, such as public buses, the train station or even churches. The Cascine street market is notorious. Italians often carry day packs backwards, with the pack in front of them where they can keep an eye on it. This way it is unlikely that a backpack can be slashed with a knife and the contents removed without the holder even being aware of the action behind them, a rather common way to separate tourists from their cameras or other valuables.

Watch out for packs of "gypsy" children who tend to come out of nowhere to create a small scene. While some distract you by harassing you or asking for money, another one of them—or a parent—may be making off with your wallet or purse. Keep a good lookout for people—even children—carrying a wrapped newspaper, a piece of cardboard or a raincoat on their forearm: That's a typical method of concealing the action. And keep your purse or bag tightly closed with single-minded determination.

Men should put wallets in either an inside zippered pocket or a front trouser pocket. (Gripping a wallet tells thieves where the wallet is located and makes things easy for them.)

Another thing to watch out for is purse snatchers on motorbikes: They may grab your purse as they ride by (more common on relatively isolated residential streets). A purse strap slung diagonally across your body, with the purse away from the road, will help you avoid being a target.

When stopping at traffic lights, watch for children cleaning your windshield. They are sometimes used to distract you while others clear the backseat and trunk of your car within seconds.

For the latest information, contact your country's travel-advisory agency.

### **Health**

Hygienic standards are generally similar to those in other industrialized nations. The water is safe to drink, although most Italians prefer the bottled variety. The water at public fountains on public squares is safe—and a boon in hot weather. Food sold on the streets is usually fine, but trust your instincts. Only buy gelato advertised as made in-house from shops with a high turnover so you are sure that the stock each day is fresh.

Medical facilities are generally very good in Florence. The Tourist Medical Service offers English-speaking doctors in two locations. The clinic at Via Porta Rossa 1 is open 1-3 pm; the clinic at Via Lorenzo il Magnifico 15 is open 10 am-noon and 5-6 pm. A visit costs a minimum of 50 euros. Phone 055-212-222 .

Pharmacies (*farmacias*) are located throughout Florence and are indicated with a red or green neon cross that is lit when the store is open at night. (The door will sometimes be closed; ring the buzzer for service.) Regular hours are Monday-Saturday 9 am-1 pm and 3-7:30 pm, with a few minor variations. Pharmacies open 24 hours are listed on the city-run Web site [http://www.en.comune.fi.it/quick\\_links/pharmacies.htm](http://www.en.comune.fi.it/quick_links/pharmacies.htm).

Pharmacists in Italy can be of more help for minor ailments than pharmacists in the U.S. For major concerns, call the toll-free medical emergency number: 118.

Visitors to Italy are advised to write down the scientific or generic name of prescription medicines and keep them in a safe place during travel. If medicines are lost or a prescription runs out, making a trip to the pharmacy might be all you need to do to fill it.

During off hours and on Sunday and holidays, at least one pharmacy is open in every neighborhood. These are called *farmacia di turno* and are listed in the newspapers *La Nazione* and *La Repubblica* (in the Florence section). A window outside each pharmacy lists the closest *farmacia di turno*.

For the latest information, contact your country's health-advisory agency.

### **Disabled Advisory**

In general, Florence—and the rest of Italy—is not an easy place for the disabled because not all structures are equipped with ramps. Sensitivity to this issue is growing, however, and a few of the most important museums (Uffizi, Accademia, Bargello) are accessible, although the historic center is otherwise not easily navigated. The Santa Maria Novella train station is also fully accessible. All tourist offices offer up-to-date listings.

Some public restrooms are wheelchair accessible, especially in the larger establishments. There's extensive information about the accessibility of public buildings at [http://en.comune.fi.it/health\\_safety/accessibility.html](http://en.comune.fi.it/health_safety/accessibility.html).

### **Dos & Don'ts**

Do wear comfortable shoes, as the pavements in Florence are a nightmare for high heels.

Don't ignore Florence's traffic rules—authorities have made sure that tourists won't escape the hefty fines.

Do visit the *aperitivi* bars of Florence in the early evening. They are the places to be seen at these hours, and most serve free nibbles of food with your drink, which is welcome when you're not used to Italy's later dining hours.

Don't—never, in fact—buy brand-name articles from street vendors, as they are bound to be fake. You may even face hefty fines when caught at the border or an Italian airport with a fake Rolex watch or Gucci bag.

Do enjoy the great view of Florence from the neighboring town of Fiesole.

Don't order a cappuccino after a meal, as you will get a blank stare from the waiter. Italians only drink cappuccinos in the morning; after meals, they drink espresso.

Do visit the historic center at 5 am to enjoy an hour of almost tourist-free Florence.

## **FACTS**

### **Geostats**

**Passport/Visa Requirements:** Citizens of Canada and the U.S. need only a passport for stays of less than three months. Check travel document requirements with your carrier before departing.

**Population:** 372,218.

**Languages:** Italian, but English is usually spoken in places most frequented by tourists.

**Predominant Religions:** Christian (Roman Catholic).

**Time Zone:** 1 hour ahead of Greenwich Mean Time (+1 GMT). Daylight Saving Time is observed from the last Sunday in March to the last Sunday in October.

**Voltage Requirements:** 220 volts. Two- and three-prong round plugs are used.

**Telephone Codes:** 39, country code; 055, city code;

### **Money**

#### **Currency Exchange**

Italy uses the euro as its currency. ATMs accept a range of foreign bank and credit cards for dispensing currency and are the most convenient way to get money. They usually give better rates than money-changing stands. Cash and traveler's checks may be exchanged at banks, commercial exchange offices and post offices, but be prepared for an ordeal—this is no longer a common way to get cash.

A detailed list of banks and commercial exchange services is available at the tourist information office at Via Cavour 1/R. It also has an updated list of post offices where you can exchange money.

The post office charges a fairly low commission (about 0.50 euros for cash and 1 euro for checks) if you're exchanging a relatively small amount of money. Banks often pay a higher exchange rate than the post office, but they may also charge a higher commission. Because this commission is a flat charge, it may be worthwhile to exchange relatively large sums at a bank.

Banks are open Monday-Friday 8:30 am-1:30 pm; most reopen for an hour in the afternoon, from about 2:30.

#### **Taxes**

Italy imposes a value-added tax, known as IVA, on the price of most items, ranging from 4% for essential items (such as food) to 20% for nonessentials (such as leather goods). If you make a large purchase (more than about 155 euros) in a store and plan to take the items out of Italy, it may be possible to receive a refund of the IVA. Participation in this program is left up to the individual stores, so you may have to look around. Stores participating in the program usually have a special sticker or sign in the window, but it's still a good idea to verify participation before making your purchase. The refund can be claimed when you leave the last European Union country through which you are traveling.



## Tipping

Tipping is not obligatory. All restaurants include a cover charge per person (*pane e coperto*) that ranges from about 1 euro to about 3 euros. They sometimes add a 10%-12% service charge (*servizio*) as well. However, if you wish to reward especially good service, you might leave an extra 5%-10%.

In hotels, you might consider leaving the housekeepers 3 euros per day, per person, at the end of your stay. Porters and room-service personnel can be given 5 euros-10 euros. For taxi drivers, it's usually appropriate to tip about 1 euro unless it's an especially large fare.

## Weather

Summers are hot, with July being the hottest month. Temperatures can easily surpass 100 F/38 C, but 89-93 F/32-34 C is more the norm. Spring and fall tend to be mild, but don't be surprised to see the odd 80 F/27 C day even in April. A good time to visit is in late September or October—the sky is clear, the vineyards are in harvest, and the long, hot, muggy summer is over. Rain tends to be infrequent but heavy; it is most common in February and March and in the fall.

Although winter temperatures are not very low, dampness makes the cold penetrating. Winter temperatures can drop to just below freezing at night and warm up to 46-50 F/8-10 C during the day. Snow is rare.

## What to Wear

Italians dress very well and are extremely fashion-conscious. For visitors who want to be taken seriously, neat, casual attire is appropriate for everyday situations.

Italians tend to find tourists who sightsee in beach or sports attire rather amusing. You'll feel more comfortable (and get more attention) shopping in expensive clothing stores or patronizing more refined restaurants if you're dressed well, but if you do any walking in Florence, opt for comfortable shoes.

Show respect for religious places by dressing appropriately. If you're wearing short skirts, sleeveless tops or shorts, you will not be allowed to enter. Business meetings require a suit and tie for men and equivalent apparel for women.

## Communication

### Telephone

There are few public phones left in Florence. Those that remain require a card issued by the phone company, Telecom. The cards (*carta telefonica*) are sold in various amounts. Before they can be used, the perforated corner must be torn off. A telephone card may be purchased at *tabacchi* (tobacco shops) and newspaper stands. A wide range of international phone cards now offer fixed rates, regardless of the time of day you call.

Remember that all Florence numbers begin with the prefix 055. Of course, to make an outside call from hotels, you may have to start with an additional 0 or 9, which should be included in the calling instructions.

Almost every Italian uses cell phones, called *telefonino*. GSM 900/1800 phones are used in Italy, and coverage is almost 100% in Florence. Roaming is very expensive, so it is best to sign up for a prepaid plan in Italy. If you have an unlocked GSM 900/1800 phone, you can purchase Italian SIM cards at a phone store or at many newsstands. Once you put in an Italian SIM card, you can buy minutes (*ricarica*) and only pay 0.20 euros for calls within Italy. Major providers are TIM (<http://www.tim.it>), Wind (<http://www.wind.it>) and H3G (<http://www.tre.it>).

The 3 or Tre store is also the best place to find inexpensive SIM cards for your 3G-enabled tablet or other mobile devices, and is very helpful in the installation and activation of the SIM. The SIM is only available for use after midnight of the day it is purchased. It costs about 5 euros per month for 3 GB of data usage.

## **Taxi**

Taxis operate 24 hours a day and are metered. There are surcharges at night, on Sunday and holidays, for trips originating at the airport, for baggage, and when you order a cab by phone. Fares are outrageous: Even a rather short ride will rarely cost less than 10 euros, thanks to a high minimum fare. However, because the number of public buses is greatly reduced after 9 pm, taxis are indispensable for going long distances late at night.

You can get a taxi either by going to a taxi stand or by phoning; you won't have much luck hailing one on the street. Taxi stands are located in the following city-center piazzas: San Marco, Repubblica, San Giovanni, Santa Maria Novella and Santa Croce. There are also stands in front of the Hotel Baglioni and at the corner of Via Oriuolo and the Duomo. Stands are marked with blue-and-white signs.

When you telephone for a cab, the switchboard operator will tell you the number of the cab that is coming to pick you up. Don't get in unless the number corresponds—wait for your proper taxi to arrive. Phone 055-4242, 055-4390 or 055-4499.

## **Train**

Train service in Italy is run by the state-owned Ferrovie dello Stato. There are two main stations in Florence: Santa Maria Novella and Campo di Marte. The central station is Santa Maria Novella (abbreviated SMN on most signs), and Campo di Marte lies to the east of the Viali and predominantly serves trains that are merely passing through the city without stopping. Always check which station your train stops at—a surprising number of night trains, for example, stop only at Campo di Marte.

The information desk at Santa Maria Novella, located in front of tracks 10 and 11, has English-speaking personnel. All train times can be found online at <http://www.trenitalia.com>.

Before you hop on your train, make sure you validate the train ticket in the yellow stamping machines located at the end of almost every track. Fines for not doing so are hefty, and you'll be required to pay on the spot.

## **Civitavecchia, Italy**

### **OVERVIEW**

#### **Introduction**

Located 43 mi/69 km west of Rome, Civitavecchia, Italy, is one of the most popular destinations for ferry travelers in the Mediterranean.

All major cruise lines begin and end voyages there or stop for shore excursions to see Rome and the Vatican.

#### **Port Information**

##### **Location**

The enormous port in Civitavecchia is not very attractive. From the ferries to the port entrance is 0.5 mi/0.8 km; shuttles are available.

The train station is another 10-minute walk. Trains leave for Rome's Termini Station every 20 minutes and take about one hour and 15 minutes. Buses also go to Rome. Trains do not run direct to Fiumicino Airport; travelers must go first to Rome, and transfer trains. Total travel time is at least two hours.

Taxis are not always available.

Private shuttle companies take travelers from Civitavecchia to Rome or the Fiumicino Airport.

## Rome, Italy

### OVERVIEW

#### Introduction

Rome, Italy, seems to have its own gravitational pull, attracting not only millions of tourists each year, but also the most creative artists and thinkers of every era. All that surrounds a visitor in Rome—the stunning art and architecture, the terrible traffic, the grandeur of scale and the lively (almost hyperanimated) citizens—guarantees an unforgettable trip.



Known as "The Eternal City," Rome is a supreme palimpsest. The ruins of pagan temples have become the foundations of Christian churches, ancient theaters have been made into medieval family fortresses, and Corinthian columns support new walls. The ages are layered, one atop the other, but the flow of Roman life is ever forward, with a respect for its glorious past.

Rome wasn't built in a day, so don't expect to see it in one. The historic center alone could absorb a week: the Michelangelo-designed Campidoglio, the Pantheon, the Palatine Hill and the Roman Forum, as well as the nearby Colosseum and Baths of Caracalla. The basilicas take a little longer because they are spread throughout the city.

If it's Rome's views you're after, climb up into the dome of St. Peter's or admire the panorama from the top of the Spanish Steps (better yet, from the Pincio Gardens above it) at sunset. Or survey the Forum at night from the Capitoline. Bustling, beautiful Rome, sprawling among its seven hills, is fascinating for both its ancient and its modern wonders.

Of course, not everyone immediately loves Rome: Some dislike the city's untidiness and seeming disorganization. But give *la citta eterna* a chance to charm, or else risk missing something magnificent.

#### Must See or Do

**Sights**—The ancient Forums, Palatine Hill, Foro di Traiano, Piazza del Campidoglio and Colosseo (the Colosseum); Basilica di San Pietro; the fountains of Piazza Navona; the Spanish Steps; The Pantheon; Trevi Fountain; Circo Massimo; the catacombs and monuments along the ancient Appian Way; Piazza del Popolo and the Pincio Gardens above it; Castel Sant'Angelo.

**Museums**—The Musei Vaticani and the Sistine Chapel; sculptures, frescoes and the Tabularium of the Musei Capitolini; phenomenal art at the Museo e Galleria Borghese; the privately owned Galleria Doria Pamphili; the unique paintings in Palazzo Barberini; the modern works at the Galleria Nazionale d'Arte Moderna e Contemporanea; the Etruscan treasures at the Museo Nazionale Etrusco di Villa Giulia; history's layers at the Museo Nazionale Romano—Crypta Balbi.

**Memorable Meals**—Linguine with lobster sauce followed by baked turbot at Ristorante da Vincenzo; Mediterranean sushi at F.I.S.H.; fried fillet of codfish with zucchini flowers and artichokes *guida* at Piperno; sliced, aged beef with fresh basil and Parmesan cheese at Da Tullio; brusque service and celebrities in the Spartan Pizzeria Panattoni "Ai Marmi"; nouvelle cuisine at L'Antico Arco, atop the Gianicolo Hill; wandering the ancient streets with slices from any *pizzeria al taglio* (takeaway); a picnic from the gourmet deli Volpetti.

**Late Night**—Fine jazz at Alexanderplatz; kitsch at Jonathan's Angels; a quiet drink at the swanky Caffè della Pace; dancing at Zoobar or other Testaccio hot spots; late-night vistas from atop the Gianicolo Hill, at the electric Piazza Navona or while walking from Piazza Venezia to the Colosseum.

**Walks**—A leisurely walk from the top of the Spanish Steps to the Pincio Gardens at dusk; a daytime walk through the outdoor market at Campo dei Fiori; an excursion from the Trevi Fountain to the Pantheon before or after dinner; a nighttime trek to view the Colosseum and the ruins of the Forums beautifully illuminated; a midnight adventure through the medieval streets of Trastevere; a stroll in the picturesque open spaces of Villa Borghese and Villa Pamphili.

**Especially for Kids**—A visit to the Museo della Civiltà Romana; the Bioparco zoo in Villa Borghese and its Children's Farm; the Explora—Il Museo dei Bambini di Roma children's museum; go-karts on the Pincio; climbing the dome of Basilica di San Pietro; sticking your hand in La Bocca della Verità (the Mouth of Truth) at Chiesa di Santa Maria in Cosmedin; searching for animals and other hidden pictures on fountains and monuments; indulging in gelato and pizza.

## Geography

For urban planners and traffic managers, Rome is a headache. Streets originally designed for horses now have to accommodate SUVs. Fortunately, visitors need only focus on navigating the city, not solving its traffic problems.

The city's historic center is the Centro Storico—it's on the left bank (east side) of the Tiber River (called the Tevere in Italian), and home to the original seven hills. The ancient political, spiritual and commercial heart of this area is the Campidoglio (Capitoline Hill) and the adjacent Foro Romano (Roman Forum). Nearby are the most important monuments of ancient Rome, including Trajan's Markets, the Imperial Forum, the Colosseum and the Arches of Constantine, Septimus Severus and Titus. To the south are Palatine Hill, Circus Maximus and, a bit farther, the Baths of Caracalla, the Appian Way and the Christian catacombs.

The city's main piazzas are also helpful for orientation. Piazza Venezia and the adjoining Piazza Campidoglio are just northwest of the Roman Forum, and Piazza Navona is still farther northwest. Piazza del Popolo is on the western edge of Villa Borghese, a large park northeast of the Centro Storico. Piazza di Spagna and the Spanish Steps are just south of Piazza del Popolo. Connecting Via del Popolo and Piazza Venezia is Via del Corso, the city's main street.

On the right (west) bank of the Tiber, west of the Centro Storico, is Vatican City. To the south of the Vatican are Villa Doria Pamphili and Gianicolo (Janiculum Hill). The medieval neighborhood of Trastevere (literally, "across the Tiber") is between the Gianicolo and the river, nestled in the westward bend of the river across from Isola Tiberina, an island in the Tiber. On the east side of Tiberina is the old Jewish ghetto, which contains one of the largest synagogues in Europe, along with some of the best restaurants serving traditional Roman fare.

## History

Rome is nicknamed The Eternal City not merely for surviving almost 3,000 years, but also for retaining political, religious and artistic significance throughout that time. Legend has it that Rome was founded by Romulus in 753 BC, but archaeologists have found evidence of a much earlier Etruscan settlement. Fact and myth are difficult to untangle, but it's clear that Rome was already the major

power in Latium by the time of the Republic's foundation in 509 BC. By the first century AD, Rome was dominating the Mediterranean through military conquest, cunning diplomacy and innovative political organization.

During the period of the late Republic, Julius Caesar and other generals extended the boundaries and glory of Rome, while simultaneously destroying its principles of government. The Roman Empire followed, remaining a heavyweight power for hundreds of years. Initially, literature flourished, with great emerging writers such as Cicero, Virgil, Catullus and Ovid. As the arts bloomed, however, the political structure crumbled. Squabbles and coups—as well as increased debauchery—eventually led to the Empire's division and fall.

In the first century AD, the apostles Peter and Paul arrived in Rome to proselytize, but they were martyred, along with hundreds of other Christians. Persecutions continued, on and off, until the Emperor Constantine legalized the faith in 312. The first Christian emperor also gave the Catholic Church temporal powers, beginning the papal state, which continued until the end of the 19th century (with occasional periods of foreign occupation). Papal coffers funded the projects of Michelangelo, Raphael and Bernini, the University of Rome and much of the city's infrastructure—as well as the infamous inquisitions, beginning in the 12th century.

Benito Mussolini descended on Rome in 1922 and formed the world's first fascist government. When World War II broke out, the nation allied itself with Nazi Germany, but the Partigiani (Resistance) soon convinced most Italians to support the Allies. Rome's open-city status spared it from the destruction of bombing but did little to stop the massacres and pillaging by the Germans.

American troops liberated Rome on 4 June 1944, yet the city and country were destitute. The 1950s economic boom revived both, triggering the *dolce vita*, era of glamour. The capital steadily grew in cultural and political power. The city had a makeover for the Vatican's 2000 jubilee and now has a revitalized urban plan, improved infrastructure and massive restoration projects under way. Rome continues to bloom with art, architecture, culture, tourism and fine living.

## Potpourri

The Kingdom of Italy was proclaimed on 17 March 1861, but it was not finally unified until 1870.

The calendar we use today is more than 2,000 years old and was started by Julius Caesar. The month of July is, in fact, named after the emperor himself.

Italy celebrates 1 May as a national holiday, akin to the U.S. Labor Day; during this time, Rome hosts numerous music concerts, and international celebrities congregate in the city.

The games held to mark the inauguration of the Colosseum lasted for 100 days and nights, during which more than 5,000 animals were killed.

The historical center of Rome was frequently flooded by the Tiber River until retaining walls were built in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Since then, the river has flooded the city only once, in 1937.

Italian children do not receive gifts only from Santa Claus. Until the last decade or so, Italian children primarily received presents from the Befana witch on the eve of 6 January, which is Epiphany or Twelfth Night. The tradition traces from pre-Christian times. Befana leaves a lump of coal (mostly candy shaped as coal), since no children are thought to have been good all year.

Romans have traditionally used "talking statues" to voice their opposition to corruption and abuses by tacking notes onto statues on busy streets. Although the practice has been largely abandoned, four important talking statues remain: The *Pasquino* (Piazza Pasquino), *Marforio* (Capitoline Museums), *Babuino* (Via Babuino) and *Il Facchino* (Via Lata).

Romans are among the most superstitious Italians. When Romans see a nun, they immediately touch iron to ward off bad luck; bird excrement on the shoe and hearing a cat sneeze are considered signs of good luck. In a restaurant, pouring from a bottle with your hand on the bottom, or failing to look your companion in the eye while clinking glasses together for a toast are both said to bring bad luck.

## SECURITY

### Etiquette

Contrary to the relaxed image many have of Italy, the Italian business world emphasizes formality and procedure. Get assistance from a local contact, go through proper channels, and always present yourself and your firm as polished and accomplished.

**Appointments**—Having an intermediary is essential. Without someone to make the appropriate contacts, you'll find it hard to get much done. A go-between can help schedule meetings, which should be set up well in advance. It is very difficult—nearly impossible, in fact—to call on a businessperson unannounced. Confirm your meetings a day or two before they're set to take place. Punctuality is expected throughout the country. Your Italian counterparts may or may not be as prompt: Those in the northern part of the country generally are; those in the south are less so.

**Personal Introductions**—Greet others with a handshake and a slight nod. Titles are important: Use any professional titles supplied on introduction or, better yet, ask for a list of the participants and their official titles in advance. Use the title and last name—plus the formal third-person address if you speak any Italian—until instructed otherwise. On a social level, Romans often bestow two cheek kisses to friends of friends. Be alert and follow cues.

**Negotiating**—The pace of negotiations is slow, and final decisions are not made by lower-level functionaries. The chain of command in Italian business is both vertical and horizontal, so decision-making can take a long time. Last-minute demands can be made by a person who enters the negotiations late in the game. In fact, this is sometimes used as a negotiating tool. Remain patient and calm at all times.

**Business Entertaining**—Business dinners are common, but will typically involve only a few key players. If you are hosting the dinner, ask your Italian contact whom to invite. Tip the waiter ahead of time and ask that the bill be quietly given to you, should you wish to pay. Otherwise, you will have to request the check; it will not be brought to you automatically.

**Body Language**—Italians typically converse while standing close together. Handshakes can extend longer than in other cultures, and locals tend to gesture when talking. The hand signs are continuous and nuanced, though none are likely to be made by a foreigner inadvertently. More often, visitors start to imitate the gestures without understanding the precise meanings—a practice we'd caution against.

**Gift Giving**—Small but high-quality gifts are appropriate in some situations: Ask your intermediary for advice. Take flowers, chocolates or lavishly wrapped pastries to someone's home. Exercise caution in giving wine: Many Italians are experts; if you're not, select a different gift.

**Conversation**—Very little is off-limits in Italian conversation, but avoid being critical of Italian society and culture, even if your host is. Soccer is a passion and an easy topic (though discussing individual players rather than teams may be safer), as are art, travel and Italian culture. The less-positive side of Italy, including racism charges, Mussolini, World War II, the role of the Church in Italian affairs and the Mafia, is probably better avoided unless you know the other parties well.

### Personal Safety

Rome, like any big city, has its fair share of crime. Fortunately, few incidents involve gangs or violence. Great progress has been made by Rome's mayor, Gianni Alemanno, to diminish petty crime,

but it has made those vagrants still out there more aggressive than usual. There are many more police officers patrolling tourist areas than in previous years, but one should still be cautious. The buses that connect to St. Peter's, the Colosseum, the Catacombs and Termini Station are crawling with pickpockets, as are the subway trains.

Don't tempt thieves with flashy, expensive jewelry, dangling or open purses, easily accessible wallets or unlocked cars. Don't leave handbags or backpacks open, and make sure your most valuable possessions are close to your body or back in the hotel safe. Hold on tightly to purses and briefcases, and avoid the side of the sidewalk nearest traffic (purse snatchers sometimes operate from the backs of motorbikes). Avoid fanny packs. They are the mark of a tourist and attract thieves. One favorite trick is for someone to approach with a clipboard or magazine and thrust it in your face. While you are trying to get them to move away an accomplice can open your pack, remove the contents and zip it up again, and you'll be none the wiser until later on. Keep physical contact with your belongings, even when seated at a cafe table or outdoor restaurant (for example, handbags should loop over an ankle or knee, rather than a chair back).

Be alert. Make eye contact with potential pickpockets. Should an incident begin, shout and point while gripping your belongings. Don't be afraid of causing a scene: Locals and transit workers will quickly come to your defense.

*Note:* Street musicians—many of them classically trained Romanians or self-taught Roma—are largely innocent of such scams. Many support large families. Locals consider it *bella figura* (good style) to donate spare change to talented buskers and sincerely needy beggars.

Be wary of fast-talking "guides" or "hotel representatives" in the train station or at tourist sites. They are either swindlers or serving as a diversion as another crook strips you of your possessions. You can appeal to the police if there is a dispute over the price for any type of service. Changes to the taxi charter have put caps on prices, so be sure you check the printed price list or ask for an estimated price before entering the cab.

A small percentage of Roman soccer fans are apt to become violent, but there is increasing violence by fans of visiting teams, especially England. Be attentive to which team the people around you support. Serious incidents are extremely rare, but it's better to stay on the safe side. Sporting the wrong jersey, or even wearing the wrong colors, can sometimes lead to problems. As a rule, it's advisable to leave the stadium early.

Women may endure more attention than at home. Flattering comments such as "*bellissima*" (most beautiful) are culturally acceptable—touching is not. Scream and slap; most Romans will leap to your aid.

In Rome, there are four different law-enforcement organizations: the city police, *polizia municipale* (in blue and white); the state police, *polizia di stato* (also in blue and white); the paramilitary police, *carabinieri* (in designer black and red); and the finance police, *guardia di finanza* (in brown and green). Although each has a specialization, they all cover the same jurisdiction. Appeal to any of them, regardless of the problem. All four types tend to speak at least basic English and are eager to ensure that tourists are not cheated (after all, tourism is Rome's biggest business). Finally, do not be alarmed by machine guns at the airport or in the hands of traffic cops: The heavy weaponry is routine.

In an emergency, phone 113 for the police, 115 for fire and 118 for medical assistance. For the latest information on travel safety, contact your country's travel-advisory agency.

## Health

Medical facilities are generally very good, and the water, although heavily chlorinated, is safe to drink. Locals stick to bottled water, but it's a matter of preference—the tap water is fine. Rome can get particularly hot in summer—carrying a bottle of water can help prevent dehydration. Refills from the

street nozzles are perfectly safe, but keep out of the fountains. Also, as everywhere, take your most comfortable pair of walking shoes, as Rome is a city best seen on foot.

Most pharmacies are open Monday-Friday 8:30 am-1 pm and 3:30-7 pm. They rotate night duty (7 pm-8:30 am), publishing the schedule daily in newspapers, such as *Il Messaggero* or *Il Tempo*.

Pharmacists can sometimes aid travelers with basic prescriptions such as birth-control refills or medicine for conjunctivitis (pink eye); for a minor ailment, ask first before tracking down an English-language doctor. All medicine is given over the counter, so it helps to know the Italian name for your malady.

The two main hospitals in the city center are Policlinico Umberto I, located on Viale del Policlinico close to the Policlinico metro stop on the B line (phone 06-49971; <http://www.policlinicoumberto1.it>), and Ospedale San Giovanni-Addolorata, located on Via dell'Amba Aradam 9 (phone 06-77051; <http://www.hsangiiovanni.roma.it>).

For more information, contact your country's health-advisory agency.

### **Disabled Advisory**

As an ancient city with limited vehicle access, Rome can be difficult for disabled travelers to navigate.

The public-transit system and the train system both have special services for the disabled, but trams are the only sure bet. Otherwise, transportation must be reserved at least 24 hours in advance (a week ahead is best). There is an office at Termini Station, open daily 7 am-9 pm, that offers information on services for the disabled and helps to make special arrangements if contacted in advance. Phone 06-488-1726.

For up-to-date information on accessibility for trams, buses and subways, call ATAC Monday-Saturday 8 am-8 pm. Toll-free 800-154-451. <http://www.trenitalia.it> or <http://www.atac.roma.it>.

Clubs and restaurants are also becoming more aware of access issues. Listings for them in the local *Roma C'e* now include wheelchair accessibility.

### **Dos & Don'ts**

Do feel free to drink the water from the many street nozzles. It's the same water drunk by astronauts in space and what is sold as bottled water throughout the world. Avoid only if the words *non potabile* (not drinkable) appear.

Do pack a good insect repellent. Large tiger mosquitoes from Asia do not carry diseases, but they do plague the city in the summer months.

Don't bathe in the city's fountains. They are considered monuments, and you will risk being arrested or fined.

Don't snack close to monuments or historical sites in the city center. You could be fined if caught.

Do order a pizza with ham and figs or potatoes and rosemary—popular, traditional Roman snacks.

Don't expect to eat dinner in a local restaurant before 7:30 or 8 pm, and lunch is rarely served before 12:30 or 1 pm.



Do take time to admire the cobbled streets in the city center. Many of the city center's main traffic streets have already been paved with asphalt, but there is little chance they will disappear entirely.

Don't forget to look up when walking down Rome's quaint streets. Many old buildings have remnants of frescoes and original statues on the facades. And you might see wonderful Roman faces people-watching from the windows.

Do spend some time walking along the Via Appia, The Appian Way. There is a section, a short bus journey away from the city center, that has been restored and is virtually a pedestrian zone. This was one of the first of the Roman roads.

## **FACTS**

### **Geostats**

**Passport/Visa Requirements:** Citizens of Canada and the U.S. need only a passport. Check travel document requirements with your carrier before departing.

**Population:** 3,357,000.

**Languages:** Italian. English is widely spoken—if not perfectly, at least enough to communicate basic information.

**Predominant Religions:** Christian (Roman Catholic).

**Time Zone:** 1 hour ahead of Greenwich Mean Time (+1 GMT). Daylight Saving Time is observed from the last Sunday in March to the last Sunday in October.

**Voltage Requirements:** 220 volts.

**Telephone Codes:** 39, country code; 06,city code;

### **Money**

#### **Currency Exchange**

Banks, though ubiquitous, are concentrated on main drags such as the Via Veneto, Piazza San Silvestro and Via del Corso. ATMs, called *bancomats*, are available 24 hours a day outside almost all banks and at many other locations. They are the preferred way of getting cash, because they do not usually add the 2.5%-4% fees that credit cards charge for advances.

Cards with the Cirrus symbol are accepted almost anywhere. To change cash and traveler's checks, banks charge a commission of about 3 euros. Post offices charge a fee of 3.13 euros. Exchange rates are generally better at downtown banks and exchanges (*ufficio di cambio*) than at the airports or hotels. *Cambio* hours are generally 8:30 am-7:30 pm. At the airport, try to avoid changing more money than you may need to get into town. You'll also find 24-hour automated exchange machines dotting the city for extra convenience. One way of avoiding most charges is to get a Visa or MasterCard preloaded with euros. It also minimizes the chance of loss through robbery.

Bank hours are generally Monday-Friday 8:30 am-1:30 pm and 2:30-4 pm (with some variation), but some of the larger banks are open throughout the day. In winter, banks often have reduced hours.

### **Taxes**

Hotels in Rome now charge an occupancy tax of 1 euro-3 euros per night, depending on the level of accommodation.

A value-added tax (VAT, or IVA in Italy), anywhere from 4%-23%, can be refunded to non-European Union visitors. The amount added varies from country to country within the EU, and not all stores participate. Check first or look for the sign in the store window. In addition, only luxury goods—such as clothing and wine—are eligible. Refunds usually amount to about 13%-16% of the purchase price.

Present three things to the refund officer at the airport before departure: your purchase, the receipt and the customs division's stamped refund form (which must be picked up at the place of purchase). Without these, your refund will be denied. Note that only unused articles are eligible for a refund: If the article looks used, you won't get your money back. If everything is in order, the IVA refund officer will give you a final form to be mailed. (Ideally, jump through all these hoops before checking your bags, and have your purchases in an easy-to-reach place.)

Some larger stores have a streamlined process: They handle most of the paperwork and then mail the refund to you, usually minus a fee. Private IVA refund services, located at the airport, also pay immediately minus a fee, usually a percentage of the refund. This is also possible at refund centers in the shopping district of Rome's Centro Storico and other large Italian cities. The two largest such services are Global Refund and Cashback; you'll see their signs in store windows. For more information, check Global Refund's Web site, <http://www.globalrefund.com>. It provides information, a tax calculator and a location map, showing its refund offices in 34 countries and all major exit points in Italy (airports, harbors and roads).

### **Tipping**

The culture of tipping in Europe is considerably different from that in North America. For the most part, Italians do not tip, as waiters and housekeeping staff are paid a fair wage. At times a service charge (*servizio*) is tacked onto restaurant bills. Don't confuse this with the cover (*coperta*), which is a charge for bread and table settings. If the service charge is included, a tip is not necessary. If service has been excellent, a tip of 1 euro per person is greatly appreciated.

Tipping in taxis is not obligatory, but most people round up to the next euro.

### **Weather**

May and June are the best times to visit, as far as the weather goes. Spring weather can be quite changeable, especially in March and April, with sunny skies in the morning and storms in the afternoon. May and June can be very pleasant, but temperatures often climb above 85 F/30 C in July and August. High humidity (around 85%) causes most locals to flee the city toward the end of summer. Fall remains sunny, with October and November quite mild but sometimes rainy. September-November is a nice time to visit—the weather's good for touring around, and you'll miss the early-summer crowds. Winters are generally mild, with January lows around 40 F/5 C. Rome receives snow about once every five years, and when it does, public transport tends to stop, and getting around the city can be difficult.

### **What to Wear**

As a rule, Italians are very conscious about clothes and fabric, and they have a highly developed sense of style. Casual dress is fine for most occasions, but a suit and tie are recommended for business meetings. Jackets for men and smart attire for women are wise for dining out. The only locals in shorts and T-shirts are construction workers or people playing soccer in the park; women rarely wear shorts. Bare feet are taboo except at the seaside or swimming pools.

When visiting the Vatican or any major cathedral, men should wear long pants and women should wear skirts or long pants. Sleeveless shirts and shorts are not permitted in churches or the Vatican, including the Vatican museums. Use a large scarf to cover exposed shoulders if no other covering is available.

## Transportation

### Ship

Cruise ships dock at the port of Civitavecchia, a port city approximately 65 mi/105 km north of Rome. This rapidly growing port is one of the most popular destinations for ferry travelers in the Mediterranean. Popular destinations from the port include Sardinia, Palermo, Genoa and Barcelona.

The port itself is not very attractive. It is enormous; from the ferries to the port entrance is half a mile/kilometer, and shuttles are available. The train station is another 10-minute walk. Trains leave for Rome's Termini Station every 20 minutes and take about one hour and 15 minutes. Buses that leave from the train station also go to Rome. Trains do not run direct to Fiumicino Airport; travelers must go first to Rome, and transfer trains. Total travel time is at least two hours. Taxis are not always available. Private shuttle companies take travelers from Civitavecchia to Rome or the Fiumicino Airport. Popular companies include Rome Airport Transfers and Airport Connection Service.

Cruise ships also dock at Naples, about two hours south of Rome. This grand, sprawling port also welcomes ferries (*traghetti*) and hydrofoils (*aliscafi*). Routes web the Tyrrhenian Sea, linking Naples to Sicily, Sardinia, Capri, Ischia, Procida, the Pontine and Aeolian Islands, as well as international destinations such as Tunisia, Croatia and Greece. Naples and Rome are very well-connected by bus, train and even plane, but the train is best and takes less than two hours.

### Taxi

Official taxis are white, carry a Commune di Roma plaque (inside the rear door on the left side), have meters and operate 24 hours. Cabdrivers are not accustomed to being hailed and may not stop. Instead, go to a taxi stand (marked with green signs) or book one by phone: 06-0609 (centralized service), 06-3570, 06-4157 or 06-4994.

Different fares are charged for travel outside and inside the GRA, a ring road around the city, inside and outside the ZTL (a limited traffic area in the center of the city) and for different times of day. Fares vary depending on traffic; fares start at 2.80 euros, but are 2.50 euros higher after 10 pm and on Sunday, and 3 euros higher when the cab leaves from Termini. For taxis booked by phone, the rate is charged from the time the car is dispatched. Sometimes you'll be charged for luggage. Most taxi drivers don't speak English, so it's a good idea to have the destination address written down.

### Train

#### Ferrovie dello Stato

The Italian national rail service is fairly cheap and reliable. Rome's primary stations are Termini (the main hub, connected to both metro lines), Trastevere (on the rail line between Termini and the airport) and Ostiense (in southern Rome on Metro Line B, with connections to Ostia and Naples). Termini has easy-to-use interactive kiosks where the traveler can choose a destination and print a ticket (reserve a seat on the faster, more expensive services, such as Eurostar).

Termini is the source of all schedule and train information as well, however frustrating and inefficient employees can be. Take with you plenty of patience and time. Be sure to validate your ticket using the yellow machines on the platform before boarding a train. Phone 892-021. You can also plan your trip and book tickets online. <http://www.trenitalia.it>.

## Naples, Italy

### OVERVIEW

#### Introduction

There are as many stories about Naples, Italy, as there are sides to the city, but there's one thing almost everyone can agree on: You either love it or hate it.

Unlike other Italian cities, Naples does not offer calm cobblestoned streets or a leisurely *passaggiata*. Its streets are painted with graffiti, and to the untrained eye, there is very little leisure to be had.

Although Naples appears dirty and chaotic, luxury is prevalent in some areas. Scratch the surface and you will find spas, designer shopping and fine-dining restaurants with some of the best views in the world. Each Neapolitan neighborhood has its own character.



Naples is located in the beautiful Campania region, and many visitors use the city as a base to explore the surrounding areas, particularly Mount Vesuvius, the amazingly preserved cities of Pompeii and Herculaneum, the Amalfi Coast and the island of Capri.

Within Naples itself, historic sights are so numerous that you can't help but come across them. The National Archaeological Museum is one of the best in the world, and the Museo di Capodimonte houses a collection of art that includes the Farnese Collection and rivals the Uffizi in Florence. Strolling along the Gulf of Naples with Mount Vesuvius in the background, you can quickly forget the chaos of the Centro Storico.

Then, of course, there's the food. Naples has some of the best cuisine in all of Italy. From espresso and biscotti to dishes of pasta overflowing with fresh seafood, Naples does it like no other city. True Neapolitan pizza cannot be found anywhere else, and even the street food is worth sampling, especially when served piping hot from storefronts.

The stress of Naples can be overwhelming, and the city is not for everyone. But if you can pick up the pace, it's possible that you might just fall in step.

#### Must See or Do

**Sights**—Castel dell'Ovo; Napoli Sotterranea (Naples Underground); Pompeii; Herculaneum.

**Museums**—Museo Archeologico Nazionale di Napoli; Museo del Capodimonte; MADRE.

**Memorable Meals**—Pizza with double mozzarella at Antica Pizzeria "Da Michele" Dal 1870; elegant Neapolitan cuisine at Palazzo Petrucci, a refurbished palace; a splurge with incredible water views at George's Restaurant; the seafood risotto and a carafe of house white wine on the waterfront at Ristorante La Bersagliera.

**Late Night**—Live jazz and a whiskey at Bourbon Street; a glass of good Campanian wine at Enoteca Belledonne; a nonstop night of food, cocktails, live music and dancing at the elite La Garconne.

**Walks**—Through Naples's authentic Centro Storico neighborhood, along either Via Tribunali or Via Benedetto Croce; the seaside promenade; along Via Chiaia, an avenue of shopping delight, to Piazza dei Martiri, surrounded by the best names in fashion.

**Especially for Kids**—Museo Ferroviario Nazionale; Naples Aquarium; running around the Castel dell'Ovo while catching great views of Mount Vesuvius and the Bay of Naples; Liberty City Fun amusement park.

## Geography

Naples wraps along the coast of the Bay of Naples. The central train station is on the eastern edge of the city, and the hilly Posillipo neighborhood constitutes the western side. The Vomero neighborhood is located on the hills that compose the northern portion of the city.

The city's center is large and contains numerous alleyways, nooks and crannies. The most important neighborhoods are the Centro Storico, Chiaia and San Ferdinando. Via Toledo runs north to south and divides the city in two with Centro Storico to the east and Chiaia and San Ferdinando to the west.

The Centro Storico and San Ferdinando neighborhoods are where most historical monuments and museums are found, including Castel Nuovo and Castel dell'Ovo, Piazza Plebiscito, the Duomo, Sotterranea (Naples Underground) and the National Archaeological Museum. The Centro Storico is the best place to find true Neapolitan pizza, although its tiny streets and hectic traffic can make it stressful to walk in. Alternatively, Chiaia is more modern and relaxed, featuring Villa Comunale and Naples' best waterfront area, which is full of fine-dining restaurants.

From the central train station, a 30-minute walk through the Centro Storico gets you to Via Toledo; from there, it takes another 20 minutes to walk to the heart of the Chiaia neighborhood, which is accessed by taking Via Chiaia. For this reason, using Naples' public transportation is paramount when crossing the city.

## History

The Greeks founded Naples in the sixth century BC. The settlement was located in what is today the Centro Storico neighborhood, and it was named Neapolis, which literally means "new city." The Romans claimed Neapolis in 326 BC and ruled until AD 800, when Naples became an independent city. This independence lasted until AD 1100, when the city was briefly controlled by the Lombards before falling under Norman rule.

The Normans began to make Naples a world-renowned cultural center. Holy Roman Emperor Frederick II built the first state-run university in Europe, the University of Naples, in 1224. Subsequently, the Angevin dynasty built Sant'Elmo and Castel Nuovo. Artists of all kinds came to Naples during the 13th and 14th centuries, creating an influx of Spanish Gothic and Renaissance-inspired works. Byzantine-influenced art also entered the region when fugitives from Constantinople came to the city. These three styles are still present in the city's architecture. Because the city drew musicians, poets, philosophers, writers and scientists, such people as Handel and Goethe held it in high esteem.

The Golden Period came when the Spanish Bourbons took control in 1734. They named Naples the capital of their southern kingdom, which included southern Italy and Sicily. Charles of Bourbon, better known as King Charles III of Spain, became "king of the two Sicilies." He was king of Naples from 1734 to 1759, during which he accomplished an extraordinary number of artistic feats. He united the Farnese Collection, financed the unearthing of Pompeii and Herculaneum as well as the retrieval of their impressive artworks, and built Capodimonte palace, Regina di Caserta palace and Teatro San Carlo.

Also, for the first time, Naples developed its own unique school of painting, exemplified by Ferdinando Galiani, Pietro Giannone and Giambattista Vico. Charles of Bourbon left Naples in 1759, when he became king of Spain, passing down the throne of Naples to his son, Ferdinand I.

In the late 18th century, Naples's political allegiance switched from Spain to Britain, just in time to unite against Napoleon. The Bourbons were forced to flee in 1798. They returned a few years later,

after signing an agreement with Napoleon, and promptly broke the agreement by ruthlessly executing everyone sympathetic to the French. These atrocities and others are attributed to the royal leaders King Ferdinand I (son of Charles of Bourbon) and Queen Maria Carolina, who is known to have greatly influenced her husband. (Perhaps some of their cruelties toward the French can be explained by the death of her sister, Marie Antoinette.)

Public opinion eventually turned against the iron-fisted Bourbons, making the city sympathetic to Giuseppe Garibaldi, who united Italy in 1860. This marked the beginning of the downfall of Naples. The Piedmont region confiscated the city's massive gold reserves, and heavy taxes were leveled by the north. This downfall was further facilitated by a cholera outbreak in 1884 and the severe destruction of World War II.

However, things have begun to look up for Naples. The city's museums and tourist sites have been revitalized. Former mayor Antonio Bassolino spent more than 30 million euros on the tourist industry and fixing inner-city traffic congestion. He also has been blamed for the famous garbage strikes of the 1990s and 2000s, for which the Camorra (the local organized crime ring) shared the blame. The strikes have since stopped. This is attributed to the 2008 election, when the People of Freedom party (PDL), headed by Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi, won the majority of the seats in Campania. Berlusconi was pushed out of office in 2011, in part because of his inability to find a lasting solution to the city's garbage problems, which continue amid allegations of blackmail and extortion.

## **Port Information**

### **Location**

Ferries and superfast hydrofoils serve Naples from various departure points, the most popular of which are Molo Beverello and Mergellina.

Molo Beverello is the main ferry terminal in Naples, and ferries run to the Amalfi Coast, Capri, Ponza, Ischia, Sardinia and Sicily. Catch a bus to the Molo Beverello marina from the central train station and get off at the Piazza Municipio stop, or take a tram, car or taxi. A taxi is sure to give you an exciting ride, as Naples is notorious for its traffic. Major ferry companies running out of Naples are MedMar Group and Tirrenia.

Ferries from the Mergellina terminal run to the Aeolian Islands, Palermo and Cagliari. Mergellina is reachable by car, bus, train, tram and taxi.

### **Potpourri**

The Margherita pizza is named for Queen Margherita, the wife of King Umberto I. In the late 1800s, Raffaele Esposito, the owner of Pizzeria di Pietro e Basta Così (now Antica Pizzeria Brandi), made a pizza for the queen, on request. He prepared three pizzas; she preferred the pizza with mozzarella and basil, which reminded her of the Italian flag. (He left off the traditional garlic, thinking it unsuitable for the queen's refined palate.)

In 1818, Naples launched the first steamboat ever to grace the Mediterranean Sea.

Naples was originally founded by Greek settlers from the city of Partenope, which was located on the isle of Megaride where Castel dell'Ovo sits today. Legend says that Partenope was named after a mermaid who was one of the sirens in Homer's *Odyssey*. Early settlers said they found her corpse on the isle of Megaride; she had committed suicide after failing to entrap Ulysses with her intoxicating songs.

An episode of *The Sopranos* was filmed inside Sybil's Cave, which is located in the city of Cuma in Campi Flegrei. Sybil was an oracle that the Greeks believed lived inside the cave. She was granted

immortality by the gods, but she forgot to ask for eternal youth; legend has it that she was hideous to behold.

In Naples, the nativity scene is more important than the Christmas tree, which was only introduced in the 1950s. Elaborate displays feature not only Mary, the baby Jesus and the three wise men, but also ordinary Neapolitans.

When a law was passed in Naples requiring all passengers in a car to wear their seatbelts, a wildly popular fashion took hold in the city: shirts with seatbelts stenciled across the front.

In December 2008, the women of Naples protested the use of fireworks, which maims hundreds of men each year, by refusing to have sex with any man who used them.

## **SEE & DO**

### **Sightseeing**

Naples has an astonishing number of museums and churches. If you have only a day or two, make sure to visit both Pompeii and the National Archaeological Museum. The oldest of its kind in Europe, this museum houses the most impressive artifacts from Pompeii and Herculaneum, greatly complementing a visit to the ancient cities. Visit Pompeii first for a complete appreciation of the museum.

Naples is famous for its Farnese art collection, begun by Pope Paul III and inherited first by Elisabeth Farnese, then by her son Charles of Bourbon. When Charles of Bourbon inherited it, the collection was scattered across Rome, Pisa and Naples; he brought it to Naples. The bulk of its works, numbering more than 200 and including works by Botticelli and Raphael, is divided between the Capodimonte Museum and the National Archaeological Museum. The Palazzo Reale (Royal Palace), located in the sweeping Piazza del Plebiscito, contains the National Library and many important works of art.

Contemporary Naples is built upon Greek and Roman foundations, which have been unearthed over the years. Archaeological remains are visible in both the Duomo and the church of San Lorenzo Maggiore, and a tour of underground Naples gives insight into the city's long and eventful history. Most of Naples' churches appear unremarkable from the outside; however, they are rich in art and history on the inside. Make sure to pop in one or two when passing.

With so many options, a traveler with a tight schedule can easily become overwhelmed. To make planning easier, purchase a Campania Artec card, which groups sites into 11 cultural itineraries and offers considerable discounts. Different versions of the Campania Artec card specialize in specific sites and attractions.

The most comprehensive Campania Artec card is the three-day "Tutta la Regione" (Entire Region) card. It costs 27 euros and includes free access to two sites and 50% off all subsequent sites. The seven-day version of the card is a bargain at 30 euros, with free access to the first five sites and 50% off all subsequent sites. Both cards also take care of corresponding public transportation for three days. The rechargeable card is activated upon entry to the first site or first use of public transportation. It can be purchased online, through the call center, at all participating museums and archaeological sites and at the information booth in the central train station (open Monday-Friday 9 am-6 pm, Saturday 9 am-2 pm). Phone 800-600-601; from cell phones and abroad, call 06-399-676-50. <http://www.campaniartecard.it>.

Pierreci books visits to museums and landmarks in the city. Whether you book by phone or over the Internet, get a confirmation number for your reservation and take it with you. You will be charged a booking fee (1.50 euros), but it's worth it for the convenience. Monday-Friday 9 am-5 pm, Saturday 9 am-1:30 pm and 2-6 pm. Phone 06-390-8071. <http://www.pierreci.it>.

## Historic Sites

### Castel dell'Ovo

Inseparable from mythology, this castle is thought to rest on the original location of the Greek city Partenope. It gets its name ("castle of the egg") from the poet Virgil, who was thought to have magical powers during the medieval era. He allegedly placed an egg beneath the castle, and if the egg ever breaks, it will spell the doom of Naples. Constructed by Frederick II on the island of Megaride, which is connected with the Santa Lucia neighborhood by a short bridge primarily for pedestrians, the castle ramparts afford views of Naples and Mount Vesuvius. The heart of the castle is inaccessible, however. Upon entering, follow the signs to the elevators, which will take you to the top of the castle. Monday-Saturday 8 am-7:30 pm (October-April until 6:30 pm), Sunday 8:30 am-2 pm. Free entrance to the castle. Fees vary for special exhibitions. Borgo Marinari, Naples. Phone 081-795-6180. <http://www.comune.napoli.it/flex/cm/pages/ServeBLOB.php/L/EN/IDPagina/1433>.

### Castel Nuovo

Built in 1279, this castle is strikingly ornate. Indeed, it's difficult to imagine a more picturesque castle. A giant white-marble arch over the entrance is an example of Renaissance sculpture and was built in the 15th century by King Alfonso V of Aragon, in honor of his military victories. Inside are the Palatine Chapel, the Baron's Hall, the Museo Civico (which contains local art from the 15th-19th centuries), the Armory and the remains of a villa, visible beneath glass flooring. It was in the Baron's Hall that Ferrante I massacred a host of his barons. Supposedly, he poured boiling oil from the ceiling during a dinner party. This castle, more than any other in Naples, retains its ancient architecture. Monday-Saturday 9 am-7 pm (ticket office closes at 6 pm). 5 euros. Maschio Angioino, Piazza Municipio, Naples. Phone 081-795-5877. <http://www.comune.napoli.it/flex/cm/pages/ServeBLOB.php/L/EN/IDPagina/1372>.

### Castel Sant'Elmo

The castle towers above Naples, visible from points throughout the city. Located beside the Certosa e Museo di San Martino, it is the work of 16th-century architect Luigi Scriva. The walls are shaped into a six-point star; some were actually carved directly into the rocky hilltop. The views, however, are the primary reason for visiting. The city thoughtfully installed a series of escalators and elevators from Piazza Vanvitelli along the steep hill leading to the castle. Daily except Tuesday 8:30 am-7:30 pm (ticket office closes at 6:30 pm). 5 euros adults, 2.50 euros ages 18-25, free for seniors older than 65 and children younger than 18. Via Tito Angelini 20, Naples. Phone 081-229-4401 or 848-800-288. <http://www.polomusealenapoli.beniculturali.it>.

### Napoli Sotterranea (Naples Underground)

A 90-minute tour takes you on a don't-believe-it-until-you-see-it system of underground tunnels that runs beneath Naples. Learn about the city's ancient underground aqueducts, which actually run all the way to Rome. Highlights include a candlelit tour through very tight passageways (those with claustrophobia be warned), underground ponds, contemporary art exhibits and remnants from when the tunnels were used for protection during World War II. Wear a long-sleeved shirt. English-language tours daily every two hours 10 am-6 pm. There is also a 9 pm tour on Tuesday; reservations must be made in advance. 9.30 euros adults, 6 euros children younger than 10. Piazza San Gaetano 68, Naples. Phone 081-296-944. <http://www.napolisotterranea.org>.

### Palazzo Reale

Aside from the statues of Naples' monarchs glaring down from their alcoves, the exterior of the Royal Palace doesn't hold a candle to its interior. With more than 30 rooms on the first floor alone, the interior displays the best in 17th- and 18th-century architecture. The Royal Living Quarters form the core of the palace and contain their original furniture and decorations. A mammoth marble staircase transports visitors to the mid-18th century. During this time period, architect Ferdinando Fuga turned an old ballroom into the rococo-style Small Court Theatre. Later, Carolina Bonaparte added the palace's neoclassical ornamentation. The National Library is also located there; it contains more than 1.5 million volumes, including the legendary papyrus of Herculaneum. The palace caught fire in 1837 and was subsequently renovated. Its impressive collection of paintings makes it a must-see for classical-art lovers. Daily except Wednesday 9 am-7 pm. 4 euros admission; 4 euros for audio guide. Piazza del Plebiscito 1, Naples. Phone 848-800-288. <http://www.palazzorealenapoli.it>.



### **Palazzo Zevallos**

Originally designed by Cosimo Fanzago, this 17th-century palazzo has undergone a much-needed renovation. Its unique Neapolitan baroque design alone is worth a visit. Besides architectural charm, the palazzo houses a small art gallery displaying an exquisite collection: Caravaggio's final work, *The Martyrdom of St. Ursula*, is found there, as well as works by Van Wittel and Pitloo. Tuesday-Friday 10 am-6 pm, Saturday 10 am-8 pm, Sunday 10 am-6 pm. 4 euros. Via Toledo 185, Naples. Toll-free 800-454-229. <http://www.palazzozevallos.com>.

### **Museums**

#### **Museo Archeologico Nazionale di Napoli**

Built in 1734 by Charles of Bourbon, this is the oldest archaeological museum in Europe. The first floor is dedicated to the immensely important Farnese Collection, which was accumulated by Charles of Bourbon. Many of the collection's sculptures are there, including those found in the Roman Baths of Caracalla. On the second floor, room after room displays the most impressive murals and sculptures recovered from Pompeii and Herculaneum. A prior visit to Pompeii greatly enhances the power of this museum. Give yourself at least three hours. Audio guides contribute little to the experience, mainly reiterating what is written on the plaques. Daily except Tuesday 9 am-7:30 pm (ticket office closes one hour before). 6 euros, additional 3.50 euros for special exhibitions, audio guide 4 euros. Piazza Museo 19, Naples. Phone 081-442-2149. <http://cir.campania.beniculturali.it/museoarcheologico nazionale>.

#### **Museo d'Arte Contemporanea Donna Regina (MADRE)**

Located inside Palazzo Donnaregina, this is the most important contemporary-art museum in Naples. Three floors wrap around a quiet courtyard. The first floor features "site-specific" exhibits, created in Naples by world-renowned artists. The second floor has the historical collection, and the third floor features temporary exhibits. The museum's evolving collection is surprising in its versatility, making it worth a hunt for your favorite artists. Special exhibits change regularly. Monday and Wednesday-Saturday 10:30 am-7:30 pm, Sunday 10:30 am-11 pm. 7 euros (free entry on Monday); audio guide 4.50 euros. Via Settembrini 79, Naples. Phone 081-1931-3016. <http://www.museomadre.it>.

#### **Museo del Capodimonte**

Designed and built by Charles of Bourbon specifically to house the Farnese Collection, the museum features the collection's best paintings. Many rooms retain their original decor; to visit is to see both an art museum and a palace. The paintings that compose the collection are located on the first floor—more than 200 pieces created by masters such as Botticelli, Raphael, El Greco, Brueghel and Titian. Original sketches of Michelangelo's *Pauline Chapel* in the Vatican are also found there.

On the second floor, the museum's 13th- to 19th-century gallery includes works by Caravaggio, Ribera and Solimena. The third floor includes contemporary art, notably the colorful *Vesuvius* by Andy Warhol. Allow at least three hours for the museum; it is surrounded by staggering views and the luscious Parco di Capodimonte. Daily except Wednesday 8:30 am-7:30 pm. Ticket office closes one hour before. 9 euros adults, 8 euros after 2 pm (slight fee for exhibitions); audio guide 5 euros. Via Miano 2 (take bus C67 or 178, which stops in front of the National Archaeology Museum; get off at the Porto Grande stop), Naples. Phone 081-749-9111 or 848-800-288. <http://museodicapodimonte.campaniabenculturali.it>.

#### **Museo del Novecento**

The museum located inside Castel Sant'Elmo offers contemporary works of art connected with social movements. It begins with works from Italy's futurism movement in the 1910s and ends with the poetic-visual experimentations of the 1980s. Its long, winding hallways truly make it feel like an exploration. Daily except Tuesday 9 am-7:30 pm (last entry 6 pm). 5 euros. Via Tito Angelini, Naples. Phone 848-800-288. [http://www.polomusealenapoli.beniculturali.it/museo\\_se/se\\_collez.html](http://www.polomusealenapoli.beniculturali.it/museo_se/se_collez.html).

#### **Museo del Tesoro di San Gennaro**

The entrance to the Chapel of the Treasure of San Gennaro, in which this museum is housed, is located to the right of the duomo. San Gennaro's skull and clotted blood can be found inside. The Saint's blood allegedly runs two times a year during the Miracle of the Liquefaction of San Gennaro's

Blood: the first Sunday of May and 19 September. The celebration is more than 600 years old. San Gennaro's treasure includes jewels, religious objects and old documents; the museum houses the most famous paintings and valuable statues, many of which are made of silver and gold. Daily except Tuesday 9 am-6 pm. 10 euros adults, 8 euros children. Via Duomo 149, Naples. Phone 081-294-980. <http://www.museosangennaro.com>.

### **Museo Ferroviario Nazionale**

The National Train Museum, located on the waterfront, is a great place to take kids. In 1839, unification of Italy began with the first train line, from Naples to Portici. Trains were produced and serviced in a factory in the Pietrarsa area of Naples, now home to the museum. Tour the factory and view trains from various points in Italy's history. Monday-Friday 8:30 am-1:30 pm, Saturday and Sunday by appointment (for groups of less than 30 people). 5 euros; free for children younger than 6. Traversa Pietrarsa, Naples. Phone 081-472-003. <http://www.fsitaliane.it/cms/v/index.jsp?vgnextoid=082568ae9d50a110VgnVCM10000080a3e90aRCRD>.

## **Neighborhoods & Districts**

### **Centro Storico**

This neighborhood retains the classic Neapolitan image more than any other. It is where you'll find most historical sites and churches. Two parallel streets, Via dei Tribunali and Via San Biagio dei Librai, compose the heart of the neighborhood, where the city's best pizzerias and bars are located. Though streets are narrow (some might consider them alleyways), this doesn't stop locals from whizzing by on mopeds at breakneck speeds. Bordered by Via Foria to the north, Piazza Garibaldi to the east, Corso Umberto to the south and Via Toledo to the west, the neighborhood makes up the eastern section of Naples. It gets seedier the closer you get to the train station. Even though some of the best restaurants in Naples can be found there, including the world-famous Pizzeria Da Michele, don't stay around after midnight.

### **Chiaia**

Chiaia is where you'll find the high-end retailers such as Armani, Prada and Gucci, as well as antiques stores and art galleries. It also offers the prettiest waterfront area in Naples. On a nice day, walk along the promenade or find a bench in Villa Comunale; farther east, look out over the Bay of Naples from Castel dell'Ovo. Shopping is located just behind Villa Comunale, around Piazza dei Martiri and along Via Belledonne. It is a good place for nightlife, wine bars, nightclubs and live music.

### **Posillipo**

This western neighborhood includes the coastal hillside of Naples, offering some the best views of the coast and Mount Vesuvius, especially from Parco Virgiliano. Unless you are staying nearby, it's best to access the area by taxi or public transportation (metro line 2 or bus 140). Restaurants in the area specialize in views of the coast as much as in Italian cuisine. The steep roads make foot travel grueling. The ferry terminal Mergellina is located at the base of the hill and takes travelers to nearby Capri, Ischia and Procida.

### **San Ferdinando**

Bordered by the Centro Storico to the east and the Bay of Naples to the south, this neighborhood is home to bargain shopping and the best-known government buildings and castles. Piazza Municipio and Piazza Plebiscito are found there. Within the northwest portion of the neighborhood is the Spanish Quarter. To access this lively, market-filled area, take any one of the streets that go west off Via Toledo. Plenty of good, inexpensive restaurants are tucked away there. The neighborhood was originally created to house Spanish troops during the 16th century and features a chessboard layout.

### **Vomero**

This neighborhood, with its square city blocks and popular retail stores, is located on one of the western hills overlooking Naples. It is easily accessible by the Funicular. Loads of shopping can be found around Piazza Vanvitelli. Also in the neighborhood are Castel Sant'Elmo and the park Villa Floridiana.

## **Parks & Gardens**

### **Orto Botanico**

Naples' botanical gardens were established in 1807 by Giuseppe Bonaparte, king of Naples and older brother of Napoleon. Originally, their purpose was to study plants of agricultural, economic and medicinal value. Now they are home to an astounding variety of plants: around 25,000 (10,000 species) spread across nearly 30 acres/12 hectares. The desert garden displays an impressive collection of succulents; the beach garden exhibits species that grow along the coasts of Italy. Open Monday-Friday 9 am-2 pm. Also open Sunday in May and the first Sunday in June 8:30 am-1:30 pm, but call first. Entrance to the gardens is free but requires a reservation (same-day reservations are accepted). Via Foria 223, Naples. Phone 081-253-3937. <http://www.ortobotanico.unina.it>.

### **Parco di Capodimonte**

The most stately of Naples' parks, it houses the Museo Nazionale di Capodimonte and boasts beautiful views of the city. Rolling lawns and more than 400 species of plants make it an idyllic escape from the bustle of the city. Couples picnic and children play soccer on the grass facing the museum. The vast park also contains the hunting lodge of Vittorio Emanuele II, the Chapel of San Gennaro, a working porcelain factory built by Charles of Bourbon in the 18th century and a pheasant breeding ground. Open daily 9 am till one hour before sunset. Via Miano 1 (take bus C63 to the Porto Grande stop), Naples. <http://www.boscodicapodimonte.it>.

### **Parco Virgiliano e Posillipo**

No better views can be found of Naples than those from this spectacular park, located a 20-minute bus ride from the city center. The ride is rocky, but you'll forget all your troubles once you've entered the park, which is popular with joggers. Find a bench and take in the breathtaking views of Vesuvius, the Phlegrean Fields and the Gulf of Naples. Indeed, the views inspired a generation of painters in the 1800s; the School of Posillipo was founded by Anton Sminck Pitloo and included his student Giacinto Gigante.

Take bus 140 toward Capo Posillipo to the end. Turn back, walk up the road 200 ft/62 m, and take the first road on the right. Follow the road uphill until you've reached the gates to the park. Don't let the name fool you: This is not the site of Virgil's tomb. That park, much smaller (and more difficult to find), is called La Tomba di Virgilio e Leopardi. Open daily 8 am till one hour before sunset. No phone. Via Tito Lucrezio Caro, Naples. [http://www.incampania.com/turismo.cfm?Menu\\_ID=175&Sub\\_ID=178&Info\\_ID=4041](http://www.incampania.com/turismo.cfm?Menu_ID=175&Sub_ID=178&Info_ID=4041).

### **Villa Comunale**

Running along the waterfront from Piazza Vittoria to Piazza della Repubblica, the park dates back to 1778, when Ferdinando IV of Bourbon decided he wanted a garden for the royal family. It was originally called the Royal Gardens; eventually, it became open to the general public. Today, it is ideal for people-watching or a leisurely stroll. It is popular among joggers because of its long, narrow shape. It houses the Anton Dohrn Aquarium, and there is a small playground, making it an excellent place for children. Those looking for green space will not find it there; it has surprisingly few trees and very little grass. Open daily except Tuesday 8:30 am till one hour before sunset. No phone. Via Riviera di Chiaia 200, Naples.

### **Villa Floridiana**

This large park in the Vomero neighborhood contains manicured paths and lush green lawns. It houses the Duca di Martina Ceramics Museum, in a building once given to the Duchess of Florida by her husband, Ferdinand of Bourbon. Open daily 8:30 am till one hour before sunset. The museum is open daily except Tuesday 8:30 am-2 pm. Free. Via Cimarosa 77, Naples. Phone 081-578-8418.

## **Religious Sites**

### **Cappella Sansevero**

This baroque chapel features the stunning Cristo Velato, a sculpture of a veiled Christ on his deathbed created by Sammartino, as well as other highly impressive and valuable sculptures. Originally built in 1590, the chapel was renovated by the famous alchemist Raimondo de Sangro in 1742. The

Catacombs of San Severo, only open during one week in May, are located beneath the chapel. Monday and Wednesday-Saturday 10 am-6 pm (doors close 20 minutes before); Sunday 10 am-1:10 pm. 7 euros (5 euros with Artocard). Via Francesco De Sanctis 19 (on an alley off Vico San Domenico), Naples. Phone 081-551-8470. <http://www.museosansevero.it>.

### **Catacombs of San Gaudioso**

This tomb features *seditoi*, seats where the dead were placed to "dry" to preserve the bodies before they were laid to rest. The Santa Maria della Sanita Church, in which these catacombs are located, features twin ornamental staircases as part of its impressive decor. Daily 10 am-1 pm (guided tours every hour). 8 euros adults, 5 euros seniors older than 65 and children ages 6-18, free for the disabled and children younger than 6. Price includes entrance to Catacombs of San Gennaro; keep tickets for discounted entry to Museo Diocesano. Piazza della Sanita 14, Naples. Phone 081-744-3714. <http://www.catacombedinapoli.it>.

### **Catacombs of San Gennaro**

In these catacombs that date from the second century, paleo-Christian paintings adorn the walls of the tombs. Madre del Buon Consiglio church, in which the tombs are housed, is a miniature version of St. Peter's Basilica in Rome and features views of Naples, spread out below. Monday-Saturday 10 am-5 pm, Sunday 10 am-1 pm (guided tours every hour). 8 euros adults, 5 euros seniors older than 65 and children ages 6-18, free for the disabled and children younger than 6. Price includes entrance to Catacombs of San Gaudioso; keep tickets for discounted entry to Museo Diocesano. Via Tondo di Capodimonte, 13 (take bus C63 and exit at the Capodimonte stop), Naples. Phone 081-744-3714. <http://www.catacombedinapoli.it>.

### **Certosa e Museo di San Martino**

Located on a hill high above Naples, the church and museum offer views challenged only by those from Parco di Capodimonte. Built for Robert of Anjou, also called Robert the Wise, in the 14th century, the church's architecture has evolved from its original design by famed architect Tino di Camaino to its present state, the work of 15th- and 16th-century architects Dosio and Fanzago. It touts elaborate marble paneling, sculptures, frescoes and paintings, including Luca Giordano's *The Triumph of Judith*.

The National Museum of San Martino is located inside the complex, featuring world-famous paintings and sculptures as well as uniquely Neapolitan artifacts. A collection of cribs and wooden figurines from the 14th-18th centuries is particularly interesting. To see Naples as its politicians once did, visit the Prior's Apartment, which provides panoramic views. Daily except Wednesday 8:30 am-7:30 pm (ticket office closes one hour before). 6 euros (may vary with special exhibitions). Largo San Martino 5, Naples. Phone 081-229-4502. <http://www.polomusealenapoli.beniculturali.it>.

### **Chiesa del Gesu Nuovo**

Its strikingly austere facade makes this church of one the most noticeable in Naples. Formerly Sanseverino Palace, the church is composed of ashlars (large black stones) in a style that introduced baroque architecture to the city. It's worth taking a look inside; the church is elegant and stunningly expansive. Daily 7 am-12:30 pm and 4-7:30 pm. Free. Piazza del Gesu 2, Naples. Phone 081-557-8111. <http://www.gesunuovo.it>.

### **Chiesa di San Domenico Maggiore**

This grand church was the original location of the University of Naples, the oldest state university in the world. Frescoes by Cavallini and 45 sepulchers of members of the Aragonese family, including King Alfonso V, make it worth popping in. The Treasures Hall features clothing and valuable religious possessions of the Aragonese family. Church open daily 9:30 am-noon and 4:30-7 pm. Treasure Hall open daily except Monday 9:30-noon; also open Friday and Saturday 4:30-7 pm. 3 euros adults for Treasure Hall, free for the church. Piazza San Domenico Maggiore, Naples. Phone 081-459-298.

### **Complesso San Lorenzo Maggiore (Basilica di San Lorenzo Maggiore alla Pietrasanta)**

When Charles I of Anjou decided to build the Castel Nuovo, he unfortunately chose to build it on top of the church of the Franciscan order. Basilica di San Lorenzo Maggiore, part of this complex, is their compensation. To give an idea of how important the church is, it was built on top of what was then the city hall of Naples. The church includes sculptures, 14th-century frescoes and paintings by prominent

Neapolitan artists. Its original Gothic interior, which dates from the 12th century, has been maintained, and the wooden doors date from the 14th century. Catherine of Austria's sepulcher is located near the front, featuring two statues by Tino da Camaino that symbolize Hope and Charity, and the eye-catching majolica cloister is beautifully tiled. One room features an archaeological area with the remains of a fourth-century market and Greek agora, or public meeting place. To see more of what lies beneath Naples, take an underground tour in the Sotterranea; it begins to the left of this complex. Monday-Saturday 9:30 am-5:30 pm, Sunday 9:30 am-1:30 pm. 9 euros (includes guided tour). Via Tribunali 316 (Piazza San Gaetano), Naples. Phone 081-454-948. <http://www.sanlorenzomaggiorenapoli.it>.

### **Duomo**

Sandwiched between buildings, the Duomo is far less impressive than those found in other Italian cities—from the outside, that is. Because it was destroyed and rebuilt multiple times, the inside reveals a mixture of architectural styles. The naves are decorated with mosaics, paintings and statues, and several contain sepulchers. On the left side is the Chapel of San Gennaro, which, besides ancient mosaics, offers glimpses of the archaeological remains of the Greek and Roman foundations upon which the church rests. Walk to the front of the church and look for stairs descending beneath the altar to the crypt of San Gennaro. The saint's remains and famous clotted blood, which allegedly liquefies twice a year, can be viewed in the nearby Museo del Tesoro di San Gennaro, located outside and to the left of the duomo. Duomo open daily 8:30 am-1:30 pm and 4:30-8 pm. Free. Via Duomo, Naples. Phone 081-449-097.

### **Quadreria dei Girolamini**

Comprising six rooms in the Girolamini Church complex (across from the duomo), the cloister contains works of art from the 15th-17th centuries, with a focus on works from the naturalist movement during the Renaissance. The church itself displays precious pieces, among them a sculpture by Bernini (located in the transept). Daily 10 am-1 pm; other times by appointment only. 7 euros. Via Duomo 142, Naples. Phone 081-294-444. <http://quadreriagirolamini.campaniabeniculturali.it>.

### **Santa Maria Donna Regina**

Comprising two churches, Santa Maria Donna Regina old and new, the complex also houses the Museo Diocesano, where religious themes and stories come to life in the form of truly Neapolitan paintings, sculptures and frescoes. Inside the old Donna Regina, you will find Mary of Hungary's sepulcher, featuring the queen being held up by the four virtues. Inside the new Donna Regina, discover six chapels rich with marble decorations. Monday and Wednesday-Saturday 9:30 am-4:30 pm, Sunday 9:30 am-2 pm. 6 euros. Largo Donnaregina, Naples. Phone 081-557-1365. <http://www.museodiocesanonapoli.com>.

1.50 euros adults, 1 euro children ages 5-12. Via Caracciolo 1 (in Villa Comunale), Naples. Phone 081-583-3263.

### **Recreation**

Naples is famous for its healing thermal springs (generated by volcanic activity), and you will find an abundance of health clubs and rejuvenating day spas.

Hiking is available at Vesuvius National Park, and traversing Parco Virgiliano e Posillipo amounts to a moderate hike. Joggers have plenty of options: In the morning or late evening, Via Partenope and Via Caracciolo offer fairly level terrain with glorious views of the waterfront. Joggers also frequent Parco Virgiliano. Bicycling in the city, however, is out of the question.

Naples is stingy with its public swimming pools and tennis courts; they are generally for members of a *circolo*, or club. There is a golf course in Castel Volturno, outside the city.

Some 90% of Naples' Darsena Actin Marina, in front of Castel dell'Ovo (near Molo Beverello), is made up of sailing charter companies. They offer daily and weekly boat rentals; it is best to visit the marina and negotiate a price in person. Same-day rentals are often available.

## **Beaches**

The Bay of Naples offers more in the way of views than sunbathing, but for those looking to spend a day at the beach, there are a couple of options. Clamber with locals along the rocks in front of Villa Comunale, on Via Caracciolo. Posillipo's beaches are popular in summer, especially the area beneath Palazzo Donn'Anna.

Take the metro to the Mergellina stop or bus 140 to Capoposillipo, then bus C23 down to Marechiaro, a fishing village with a picturesque public beach. If you'd prefer to walk, it takes about 30 minutes to get from Capoposillipo to the beach.

## **Shopping**

Top fashions and their knock-off equivalents duke it out in Naples (make sure your Armani isn't an Armano), making it both a fun and an elegant place to shop. Much of Via Toledo is closed to traffic; the street offers a plethora of shopping options, from clothing to jewelry to specialty items. The Chiaia area is Naples' high-fashion neighborhood; Piazza dei Martiri, Via Calabritto and Via Filangieri are home to numerous designer shops, including Prada, Cartier, Gucci, Armani, Hermes and Bulgari.

Via Alessandro Scarlatti in Vomero is ideal for a late-afternoon stroll, stopping into midrange shops along the way. Galleria Umberto I contains clothing stores and cafes. After closing, children take over the galleria, playing soccer late into the night.

The Chiaia area brims with antiques shops; they line Via Carlo Poerio and Via Santa Maria di Costantinopoli, and venturing onto a small side street is likely to turn up a hidden gem. For novelty items and a real taste of Naples, walk along Via dei Tribunali in the Centro Storico: Although many of the shops offer kitschy souvenirs, some are filled to the brim with artisan creations and whimsical antiques.

Naples is known for its street markets, offering deals that seem too good to be true—and half the time, they are. Electronics and DVDs should be avoided; it's not unheard of to buy a camera, open the box and find a piece of pavement. With this in mind, shopping can be a true pleasure, as long as you don't expect an 8-euro Gucci bag to be the real thing.

**Shopping Hours:** Most shops are open 9 am-1:30 pm and 4-7:30 or 8 pm. Generally, shops close on Sunday and are only open in the afternoon on Monday.

## **Department Stores**

### **Coin**

With locations throughout Italy, the large department store sells inexpensive yet stylish clothing and products for the home. Monday-Friday 10 am-8 pm, Saturday and Sunday 10 am-8:30 pm. Via A. Scarlatti 86-100, Naples. Phone 081-578-0111. <http://www.coin.it>.

## **Factory Outlets**

### **La Reggia Designer Outlet**

Less than 19 mi/30 km from Naples, near Caserta, this outlet offers sizable discounts on designers such as Guess, Valentino and Calvin Klein. Daily 10 am-10 pm. Strada Provinciale 336, Ex Sannitica, Marcianise. Phone 0823-510-244. <http://www.mcarthurglen.it/marcianise>.

## Galleries

Naples has a number of art galleries; pick up a copy of *artshow.it*, which lists galleries in Naples and their currently featured artists.

### **Alfonso Artiaco**

This gallery features various artists in clean, white spaces. Open Monday-Saturday 10 am-1:30 pm and 4-8 pm. Closed Saturday June-September. Palazzo Principe Raimondo de Sangro, Piazzetta Nilo 7, Naples. Phone 081-497-6072. <http://www.alfonsoartiaco.com>.

## Markets

For information on markets, Napoli Unplugged is a good resource. <http://www.napoliunplugged.com>.

### **Mercatino Antignano**

One of the most popular and important markets, it offers food, clothing and miscellaneous items. You never know what you'll find, but there's a good chance that it will be a bargain. Monday-Saturday 8 am-2 pm. Piazza Antignano, Naples.

### **Mercatino di Posillipo**

This trendy market in the beautiful Posillipo neighborhood offers both deals and views. Tables covered with inexpensive clothing, accessories and miscellaneous items for the home offer plenty of opportunities for the savvy (and patient) shopper to find a bargain. Parking is available. Afterward, stroll through nearby Parco Virgiliano. Thursday 8 am-1 pm. Closed in August. Viale Virgilio, Naples.

### **Mercato dei Fiori (Flower Market)**

Every morning, Piazza Municipio is in full bloom. Stalls selling flowers and plants are set up among grand city buildings, with views of Castel Nuovo and the waterfront. Daily, early in the morning. Piazza Municipio, Naples.

### **Piazza Garibaldi**

Until recently, the streets near Piazza Garibaldi were jam-packed with this popular market. A parking lot has since taken over; however, many merchants still set up shop between Corso Umberto I and Via Pasquale Stanislao Mancini, particularly along Via Santa Candida. Find clothing and knock-off designer bags and shoes at a great bargain. Hagging is expected. Carefully examine all products before purchasing. Beware of pickpockets. All day, every day (busiest in the morning). Piazza Garibaldi, Naples.

### **Porta Nolana Fish Market**

This quintessentially Neapolitan market near the train station features a striking display of live fish and shellfish, as well as olives, cheeses, vegetables and local staples. Take in the scene or make purchases from the freshly caught selection. It is very busy so go early for the best choices. Monday-Saturday 7 am-1:30 pm. Porta Nolana, Naples.

### **Villa Comunale Antiques Market**

More than 100 dealers set up stalls in Villa Comunale for this bimonthly antiques market. Spend a weekend morning browsing books, silver and furniture; you may find a treasure for several euros—or, if you are serious about antiques, you could easily spend a small fortune. Held two weekends each month except August. See the website for dates. Piazza Sannazaro 57 (Villa Comunale), Naples. <http://www.napoliunplugged.com>.

## Shopping Areas

### **Galleria Umberto I**

Built in 1887, this exquisite galleria boasts a mosaic floor and a beautiful dome. It houses a number of cafes, shops and ATMs, although it is more of a gathering place than a mall. Shop hours vary. Via Toledo 213/214.

## Specialty Stores

### Brinkmann

This long-standing shop on Piazza Municipio sells and repairs fine watches and jewelry. Although the founder was not Italian, he became such a fixture of Naples that he was declared a "real Neapolitan." Monday-Friday 9:30 am-1:30 pm and 4-7:30 pm, Saturday 9:30 am-2 pm. Piazza Municipio 21, Naples. Phone 081-552-0555. <http://www.brinkmann-napoli.com>.

### Bruno Acampora Profumi

The founder of this perfume store has been photographed by Andy Warhol; his collections are innovative and evocative, inspired by the world's most exotic locales. Monday-Saturday 10 am-2 pm and 4-8 pm. Via Gaetano Filangeri 72, Naples. Phone 081-401-701. <http://www.brunoacampora.com>.

### Casuccio & Scalera

Leather shoes, bags and belts vie for space on the shelves. There are also locations on Via Chiaia and Via Scarlatti. Daily 10 am-8 pm. Via Toledo 101, Naples. Phone 081-552-3462.

### Cigar House by Sarnacchiaro Smoke

From the outside, it looks like your typical *tabacchi*, but its selection is much more extensive. It sells Italian cigarettes, cigars, pipes and smoking accessories. Monday-Saturday 8 am-1 pm and 4:30-8 pm. Via Bernini 6, Naples. Phone 081-578-6679.

### Cristallerie di Toledo

Open since 1954, the store sells unique gift items and whimsical glassware. Although many of the items may be hard to pack in a suitcase, it's worth a browse. Monday 4-8 pm, Tuesday-Friday 9:30 am-1:30 pm and 4-8 pm, Saturday 4:30-8 pm. Via Toledo 62, Naples. Phone 081-552-1947. <http://www.cristallerieditoledo.it>.

### Eddy Monetti

Founded in 1887, the small shop sells classic men's and women's clothing that never goes out of style: button-down shirts, blouses, sweaters and scarves. Shirts can be made to measure. Monday-Wednesday 10 am-1:30 pm and 4:30-8 pm, Thursday-Saturday 10 am-8 pm. Via Dei Mille 45, Naples. Phone 081-407-064. <http://www.eddymonetti.it>.

### Enoteca Dante

This is one of the most centrally located wine stores, with an excellent selection of wines from Campania and throughout Italy. It also offers several types of *vino sfuso*, local wine from the tap. Monday-Saturday 9 am-8:30 pm. Piazza Dante 18/19, Naples. Phone 081-549-9689. <http://www.enotecadante.it>.

### Enoteca Vinorum Historia

This small shop on bustling Via Tribunali sells unique wines from Campania. It also offers a large selection of *vino sfuso*, wine from the tap. Try the Falanghina, a light white D.O.C. There are wine tastings Friday and Saturday 9 pm-midnight. Open Monday-Wednesday 9:30 am-8:30 pm, Thursday-Saturday 9:30 am-12:30 am, Sunday 10 am-2 pm. Via Tribunali 33, Naples. Phone 081-211-0079.

### Gay Odin

This shop is famous for its specialty chocolates. There are nine stores throughout the city, some of which also sell gelato. Daily 9:30 am-8 pm (often later on weekends), Sunday noon-8 pm. Via Benedetto Croce 61, Naples. Phone 081-551-0794.

### Leonetti Giocattoli

This toy store is much larger than it looks from the outside. Two floors are filled with toys, both classic and cutting-edge, including an enormous selection of board games, stuffed animals, brand names and specialty items. Monday-Saturday 10 am-2 pm and 3:30-8 pm. Via Toledo 350, Naples. Phone 081-412-765. <http://www.leonettigiocattoli.com>.



### **Louis Vuitton**

This shop sells shoes, handbags, sunglasses and other accessories bearing the mark of the famous brand. Monday-Saturday 10 am-8 pm. Via Calabritto 2, Naples. Phone 081-764-6606. <http://www.louisvuitton.com>.

### **Mario Valentino**

Playful women's footwear in bright colors will make you want to kick up your (high) heels. Open Monday-Saturday 9:30 am-1:30 pm and 4-8 pm. Via Calabritto 10, Naples. Phone 081-764-4262. <http://www.mariovalentino.it>.

### **Matermatuta**

In a tiny shop set back from the street, artisan Renato Maresca sells his funky rings, bracelets and earrings. Monday-Saturday 10:30 am-1:30 pm and 4:30-7:30 pm. Via Benedetto Croce 38, Naples. Phone 081-542-4315.

### **Salvatore Ferragamo Men and Salvatore Ferragamo Women**

Shop for clothing and accessories by the famous designer. Daily 10 am-2 pm and 3-8 pm. Closed the last Sunday of each month. Piazza dei Martiri 56 (women) and 60 (men), Naples. Phone 081-412-123 (shop for men); 081-415-454 (shop for women). <http://www.ferragamo.com>.

### **Tod's**

This small branch sells luxury leather shoes and accessories by the famous designer. Open Monday-Saturday 10 am-1:30 pm and 4-8 pm. Via Calabritto 3, Naples. Phone 081-764-3694. <http://tods.com>.

### **Touring Club Italiano**

This store provides driving maps and guides. Stop in before an automotive excursion. Monday-Friday 9:30 am-1 pm and 3-7 pm, Saturday 9:30 am-1 pm. Via Cesare Battisti 11/13, Naples. Phone 081-420-3485. <http://www.touringclub.it>.

### **Voyage Pittoresque**

This store offers old maps and paintings depicting Naples as it was hundreds of years ago, as well as a high-quality jumble of books, prints and stationery. Monday-Saturday 9:30 am-1 pm and 4:30-8 pm. Via V. Colonna 15, Naples. Phone 081-407-309. <http://www.voyagepittoresque.it>.

## **DINING**

### **Dining Overview**

Naples is known as the home of the true pizza (*pizza vera napoletana*), and a trip to the city can easily be eaten away at its many pizzerias. *Pizzaioli* (pizza makers) do not toss the dough in the air; they work it with their hands into a very thin crust, then top it with sauce or tomatoes and mozzarella. The Italian government classifies pizzas in a similar way to wine: Pizzas can be D.O.C. (*denominazione d'origine controllata*). To qualify, the pizza must be made according to precise standards, including the thinness of the crust and the weight.

Try the *pizza fritta* (fried pizza), which resembles a calzone and is filled with tomatoes and mozzarella or ricotta and pancetta. When you arrive at a busy pizzeria, push through the crowd to get your name on the list; there's no such thing as a line in Naples. Locals eat their pizza *al fazzoletto* (folded and eaten with the hands).

Buffalo mozzarella is one of Campania's most delectable specialties, made with milk from buffaloes that graze in the nearby countryside. Order it on pizza (most pizzerias will make any of their pizzas with *mozzarella di bufala*, for a slight surcharge), but it is also delicious on a sandwich or on its own. Look for D.O.P. (*denominazione d'origine protetta*). *Fior di latte* is another local cheese, similar to *mozzarella di bufala* but made with cow's milk.

Breakfast, as in the rest of Italy, consists of coffee and a pastry, generally eaten while standing at the bar (*al banco*). Food and drinks *al tavolo* (at the table) often cost twice the price, so if you're not staying long, do as the locals do and stand. *Espresso napoletano* is arguably the best espresso in Italy, richer and creamier than most. Just order *un espresso* or *un caffè*; the *napoletano* part is understood.

Pastries in Naples are also some of the best, especially the *sfogliatella* (a flaky pastry, shaped like a seashell, filled with ricotta and a touch of lemon) and the *biscotti all'amarena*. *Baba*, a rum-soaked, spongy pastry, is very popular among Neapolitans, although it may be an acquired taste. Around Easter and Christmas, pastry shop windows feature glorious and strange concoctions, such as the *casatiello* (bread with hard-boiled eggs, salami and cheese).

For lunch on the go or a midday snack, the street food in Naples is unbeatable—and cheap. Stop at a street vendor for *arancini* (breaded, deep-fried balls of risotto stuffed with mozzarella). They generally cost 1 euro-2 euros. Any deli or supermarket will make you an inexpensive sandwich (2 euros-3 euros) with cheese and meat (try *salame di napoli*, the traditional salami of Naples) or vegetables; just ask for *un panino* and choose your fillings.

Most Neapolitans eat dinner after 9 pm. The seafood in Naples is outstanding; try the *risotto alla pescatora* (seafood risotto) or *frittura* (fried seafood) at one of the restaurants on Borgo Marinari, near Castel dell'Ovo—they look touristy, but they serve delicious seafood, and their prices are surprisingly reasonable.

Pair your meal with one of Campania's excellent white wines—in fact, it is hard to find a bad one. Falanghina, Fiano di Avellino D.O.C.G. and Greco di Tufo D.O.C.G. are especially notable. The reds are also delicious, especially Lacryma Christi ("tears of Christ") and Taurasi D.O.C.G.

Keep in mind that credit cards aren't used as commonly in Italy as elsewhere, but most major restaurants accept them readily. If you are having a sandwich and a glass of water in a bar, you will generally be expected to pay in cash.

Expect to pay within these general guidelines, based on the cost of a dinner for one, excluding drinks, tax and tip: \$ = less than 20 euros; \$\$ = 20 euros-35 euros; \$\$\$ = 36 euros-65 euros; \$\$\$\$ = more than 65 euros.

## Local & Regional

### Antica Osteria Pisano

In a small piazza not far from Piazza San Domenico Maggiore, locals flock for traditional Neapolitan cuisine. The menu changes regularly. Dishes may include fresh pasta with clams, roasted *baccala* (salt cod) and fried Parmesan and artichokes. On warm nights, tables overflow onto the *piazzetta*. Monday-Saturday for lunch and dinner. \$. No credit cards. Piazzetta Crocelle ai Mannesi 1, Naples. Phone 081-554-8325.

### Antica Pizzeria Brandi

The pizzeria that invented the Margherita pizza in 1889 is touristy and overpriced, but its pizzas are still good. The menu extends to pastas and other dishes, but there's no need to bother with anything other than the pizza. Daily for lunch and dinner. \$\$\$. Most major credit cards. Salita Santa Anna di Palazzo 1/2 (corner of Via Chiaia), Naples. Phone 081-416-928.

### Antica Pizzeria "Da Michele" Dal 1870

The most famous pizzeria in Naples, and arguably the best, it only offers two styles of pizza: marinara (without cheese) and Margherita (try the *doppia mozzarella*, or "double mozzarella," for the ultimate pizza experience). There is usually a wait, but don't let this deter you; the fact that locals opt to wait for a table is a sign of how good (and inexpensive) the food is. Monday-Saturday for lunch and dinner. Also open Sunday in December and May. \$. No credit cards. Via Cesare Sersale 1/3, Naples. Phone 081-553-9204. <http://www.damichele.net>.

### **Antica Pizzeria Port'Alba**

You might mistake this for a street food vendor, thanks to the counter filled with *pizze fritte* (fried pizzas) and other snacks. Located beneath Port'Alba, the oldest pizzeria in Naples (and, some say, in the world) started out as a snack cart. It now has indoor and outdoor seating, but it retains a casual, amiable atmosphere. In its own words, it is "open always." The menu includes a variety of fresh seafood, but the real lure is the pizza. Daily until midnight. \$. Most major credit cards. Via Port'Alba 18, Naples. Phone 081-459-713. <http://www.anticapizzeriaristoranteportalba.com>.

### **Coco Loco**

There are plenty of tables, but you'll want to have a reservation at this popular restaurant near Piazza dei Martiri. Whimsical yet stylish decor complements creative Neapolitan cuisine. Try the sea bass, prawn and eggplant flan or *insalata di aragosta e gamberi alla catalana* (lobster and prawn salad). Outdoor seating is available in nice weather. Open Monday-Saturday for lunch and dinner, Sunday for lunch only. Reservations recommended. \$\$\$\$ . Most major credit cards. Piazza Giulio Rodino 31, Naples. Phone 081-415-482.

### **Di Matteo**

A favorite among locals, this pizzeria is no-nonsense and authentic. A counter in front sells fried pizza and other snacks; you may not think the restaurant itself is open, but it is. Get your name on the list. All that's left is to order one of the fried snacks to tide yourself over and join the waiting locals. Try the *pizza fritte* (deep-fried pizza filled with ricotta and prosciutto). Monday-Saturday for breakfast, lunch and dinner. \$. Most major credit cards. Via dei Tribunali 94, Naples. Phone 081-455-262.

### **Hosteria Toledo**

A few steps from Via Toledo, traditional Neapolitan food is served in a cozy family restaurant, founded in 1951. Try the *cozze al gratte* (mussels au gratin), *sfizietto Toledo* (mixed fried Naples specialties) or the *risotto alla pescatore* (seafood risotto). There is a good selection of meat dishes and wines. Open daily for lunch and dinner, Tuesday for lunch only. \$\$ . Most major credit cards. Vico Giardinetto 78a, Naples. Phone 081-421-257.

### **Palazzo Petrucci**

Housed in a 15th-century palace that once belonged to Antonello Petrucci, secretary to King Ferdinand of Aragon, this is one of Naples' premier restaurants. The entrance is tucked in a corner of picturesque Piazza San Domenico Maggiore. Visually stunning, delicious dishes are created using ingredients from Campania; they include the divine *lasagnetta di mozzarella di bufala*, a tower of creamy buffalo mozzarella and delicate shrimp on a sauce of zucchini flowers, and *timpano di paccheri*, baked pasta filled with ricotta, served with slow-cooked meat ragu. Open Tuesday-Saturday for lunch and dinner, Sunday for lunch only, Monday for dinner only. Reservations required. \$\$\$\$ . Most major credit cards. Piazza San Domenico Maggiore 4, Naples. Phone 081-552-4068. <http://www.palazzopetrucci.it>.

### **Pizzeria Lombardi Dal 1892**

Very near the Archaeological Museum, this pizzeria has a variety of specialty pizzas. The Gigi and Nando pizzas feature buffalo mozzarella, the Nando adding a bonus of ricotta made with buffalo milk. Generous portions; unlike other Naples pizzerias, two people can comfortably split a single pizza. Daily except Monday for lunch and dinner (until 1 am). \$. Most major credit cards. Via Foria 12, Naples. Phone 081-456-220.

### **Sorbillo**

You'll know you've arrived when you see the crowd outside. The pizza is authentic and cheap (a Margherita costs 3.50 euros). Choose from the multitude of options. If your hotel is in the Centro Storico, the restaurant will deliver; place the order through the website. If you go, allow plenty of time to wait for a table. Open Monday-Saturday for lunch and dinner. \$. Most major credit cards. Via Tribunali 32, Naples. Phone 081-446-643. <http://www.accademiadellapizza.it>.

### **Tranon da Ciro Dal 1923**

It makes a D.O.C. pizza that substitutes high-quality tomatoes for sauce. A good place to go if you can't stand the wait at Da Michele. Daily for lunch and dinner. \$. Most major credit cards. Via Pietro Colletta (across the street from Antica Pizzeria "Da Michele"), Naples. Phone 081-553-9426.

### **Umberto Ristorante**

This family restaurant's menu is traditional Neapolitan with a contemporary twist. Dine on *tubettoni d' 'o treddeta* (with clams, black olives, capers and tomatoes *con polpetti*). Neapolitan meatloaf with potatoes and rosemary is a specialty. The menu changes according to season, and tasting menus are based around holidays and local festivals. If you're in the mood for something simple, dine in the pizzeria portion of the restaurant. The colorful decor is complemented by contemporary art, which changes throughout the month. A gluten-free menu is available. Monday for dinner only, Tuesday-Sunday for lunch and dinner. Only open for dinner during August. Reservations recommended. \$\$-\$\$\$ . Most major credit cards. Via Alabardieri 30/31, Naples. Phone 081-418-555. <http://www.umberto.it>.

### **Cuisines Italian**

#### **La Stanza del Gusto**

Its name means *tasting room*, and it offers a variety of tasting menus at different price levels. You might find a vegetarian menu for around 35 euros, a menu with buffalo fillet for 45 euros and a surprise menu for 65 euros. The plates are small and the wine list extensive. There is also a more casual cheese bar, with wines by the glass and a blackboard listing the day's selections. The decor is playful, perfectly complementing the spirit of innovation and experimentation. Tuesday-Saturday for lunch and dinner, Sunday for lunch only. Reservations required. \$\$\$ . Most major credit cards. Via Costantinopoli 100, Naples. Phone 081-401-578. <http://www.lastanzadelgusto.com>.

#### **Ristorante Ciro**

Sharing space with Castel dell'Ovo on the isle of Megaride, the restaurant offers traditional Italian and a wood-burning pizza oven; the seafood is excellent. Although the atmosphere inside is a bit bland, it offers a charming view of the water, especially when lit up at night. Open since 1936. Daily except Wednesday for lunch and dinner. \$\$\$ . Most major credit cards. Borgo Marinari 29/30, Naples. Phone 081-764-6006. <http://www.ristoranteciro.it>.

### **Mediterranean**

#### **George's Restaurant**

At this luxurious restaurant, Naples-born chef Vincenzo Bacioc creates Mediterranean-inspired dishes. Enjoy exquisite flavor combinations such as local fish with truffles, zucchini flowers stuffed with buffalo-milk ricotta and served with a bitter chocolate sauce, or *sfogliatella* (pastry) "puffs" with curly endive served over beans with a spicy sauce. The extensive wine list focuses on Italian wines. Breakfast is a buffet of fruit, croissants and coffee. If the weather permits, request a table on the terrace for unparalleled views of the Bay of Naples and Vesuvius. Daily for breakfast, lunch and dinner. Reservations required. Evening attire. \$\$\$\$ . Most major credit cards. Corso Vittorio Emanuele 135 (inside Grand Hotel Parker's), Naples. Phone 081-761-2474. <http://www.grandhotelparkers.it>.

### **Vegetarian Un Sorriso Integrale**

This restaurant in the vicinity of Piazza Bellini offers vegetarian food with a Mediterranean slant. For 20 years it has focused on serving food in harmony with nature. The menu changes daily. Dine on tofu, *seitan* (a wheat and gluten meat substitute), black-eyed peas with greens or artichoke risotto amid local art, fliers for Buddhist events and pamphlets for yoga classes. A section of the cafe functions as an organic food store. Gluten-free food is available. Open daily for lunch and dinner. The store is open 10:30 am-midnight. \$. Most major credit cards. Vico San Pietro a Majella 6, Naples. Phone 081-455-026. <http://www.sorrisointegrale.com>.

### **Seafood Ciro a Mergellina**

This restaurant by the water, near Mergellina station, is a staple of the Naples dining scene. The pizza is excellent, but local seafood is the star; opt for pasta with lobster or *Polipetti in umido*. Daily except Monday for lunch and dinner. \$\$\$ . Most major credit cards. Via Mergellina 21, Naples. Phone 081-681-780.

### **Da Dora**

Located a block from the water, the restaurant is famous for its seafood. Specialties include a *fritto misto antipasto*, featuring fresh fried seafood, and *linguine alla Dora*, a variety of shellfish over pasta. It is famed for its traveling guitarist and its outgoing owner Tony, who knows all the U.S. state capitals. Tuesday-Saturday for lunch and dinner, Sunday lunch only, Monday dinner only. Reservations required. \$\$\$\$ . Most major credit cards. Via F. Palasciano 29/30, Naples. Phone 081-680-519.

### **La Cantinella**

This lively restaurant near the waterfront is a favorite of Italian VIPs, from Pavarotti to Antonioni. Neapolitan seafood (try the *frittura*, an assortment of fried seafood) and an extensive wine list are served along with views of Vesuvius and Sorrento. Monday-Saturday for lunch and dinner. Reservations required. \$\$\$\$ . Most major credit cards. Via Cuma 32, Naples. Phone 081-764-8684.

### **Ristorante La Bersagliera**

Located on the pier in front of Castel dell'Ovo, La Bersagliera has served delectable Neapolitan seafood to the world's stars, from Elizabeth Taylor to Italian actor Toto. Those were better days, but it still retains its charm. Famous for cooking with humility, the chefs prepare complex, well-seasoned dishes made with simple ingredients. Specialties include octopus salad, spaghetti with clams and a melt-in-your-mouth seafood risotto. The house wine is excellent. Daily except Tuesday for lunch and dinner. Reservations recommended. \$\$ . Most major credit cards. Borgo Marinari 10/11, Naples. Phone 081-764-6016. <http://www.labersagliera.it>.

### **Terrazza Calabritto**

Sleek and stylish and situated on the waterfront, the restaurant offers breezy views and light, refined cuisine, with a focus on seafood. The wine list contains nearly 300 labels, from Campania and beyond; the sommelier is happy to help you weed through and choose the perfect pairing for your meal. The adjacent lounge is ideal for an aperitif or a post-beach drink. Open Tuesday-Saturday for lunch and dinner, Sunday for lunch only. Reservations recommended. \$\$\$ . Most major credit cards. Piazza Vittoria 1, Naples. Phone 081-240-5188. <http://terrazzascalabritto.it>.

## **SECURITY**

### **Etiquette**

Contrary to the relaxed image many have of Italy, the Italian business world emphasizes formality and procedure. Get assistance from a local contact, go through proper channels, and always present yourself and your firm as polished and accomplished.

**Appointments**—Having an intermediary is essential. Without someone to make the appropriate contacts, you'll find it hard to get much done. A go-between can help schedule meetings, which should be set up well in advance. It is very difficult—nearly impossible, in fact—to call on a businessperson unannounced. Confirm your meetings a day or two before they're set to take place. Punctuality is expected throughout the country. Your Italian counterparts may or may not be as prompt: Those in the northern part of the country generally are; those in the south are less so.

**Personal Introductions**—Greet others with a handshake and a slight nod. Titles are important: Use any professional titles supplied on introduction or, better yet, ask for a list of the participants and their official titles in advance. Use the title and last name—plus the formal third-person address if you speak any Italian—until instructed otherwise. On a social level, Italians often bestow two cheek kisses to friends of friends. Be alert and follow cues.

**Negotiating**—The pace of negotiations is slow, and final decisions are not made by lower-level functionaries. The chain of command in Italian business is both vertical and horizontal, so decision-making can take a long time. Last-minute demands can be made by a person who enters the negotiations late in the game. In fact, this is sometimes used as a negotiating tool. Remain patient and calm at all times.

**Business Entertaining**—Business dinners are common but will typically involve only a few key players. If you are hosting the dinner, ask your Italian contact whom to invite. Tip the waiter ahead of time and ask that the bill be quietly given to you, should you wish to pay. Otherwise, you will have to request the check; it will not be brought to you automatically.

**Body Language**—Italians typically converse while standing close together. Handshakes can extend longer than in other cultures, and locals tend to gesture when talking. The hand signs are continuous and nuanced, though none are likely to be made by a foreigner inadvertently. More often, visitors start to imitate the gestures without understanding the precise meanings—a practice we'd caution against.

**Gift Giving**—Small but high-quality gifts are appropriate in some situations: Ask your intermediary for advice. Take flowers, chocolates or lavishly wrapped pastries to someone's home. Exercise caution in giving wine: Many Italians are experts; if you're not, select a different gift.

**Conversation**—Very little is off-limits in Italian conversation, but avoid being critical of Italian society and culture, even if your host is. Soccer is a passion and an easy topic (though discussing individual players rather than teams may be safer), as are art, travel and Italian culture. The less-positive side of Italy, including racism charges, Mussolini, World War II and the Mafia, is probably better avoided.

### **Personal Safety**

Naples is notorious for pickpockets, and petty crime is definitely prevalent. Spread money around on your person and do not flash big bills when paying. Do not take your passport outside of the hotel. We recommend taking only a backpack and keeping it slung over both shoulders. Do not leave your jacket hanging or slung over the bench next to you.

Avoid fanny-packs. They are the mark of a tourist and attract thieves. One favorite trick is for someone to approach with a clipboard or magazine and thrust it in your face. While you are trying to get them to move away, an accomplice can open your pack, remove the contents and zip it up again and you'll be none the wiser until later on.

Thieves operate from mopeds, so whenever possible walk on the inside of the sidewalk, away from traffic. When sitting in parks or in outdoor cafes, loop purses about chair legs or other safe places. If you carry a purse or camera, keep it looped on your shoulder and not in your hand. Walking alone, especially at night, is not advised.

There are several types of scams used in Naples. One of the most common is for a person to pretend to have been knocked over and to blame you as responsible. Naples police do not fall for this tactic and neither should you. Ignore such behavior and move on. At night, it is common for thieves to offer to show you a great club or bar around the corner. Do not fall for this: The only thing around the corner is a mugging. Finally, it is common to see families with young children begging. Do not let the children approach you; they are trained pickpockets. In the worst situations, mothers beat a child until receiving money. Obviously this type of behavior should not be encouraged.

Be alert. Make eye contact with potential pickpockets. Should an incident begin, shout and point while gripping your belongings. Don't be afraid of causing a scene: Locals and transit workers will quickly come to your defense.

*Note:* Street musicians—many of them classically trained Romanians or self-taught Roma—are largely innocent of such scams. Many support large families. Locals consider it *bella figura* (good style) to donate spare change to talented buskers and sincerely needy beggars.

After midnight, avoid the part of the Centro Storico nearest to the train station and the area around the station itself. Use caution there during the day.

Be wary of fast-talking "guides" or "hotel representatives" in the train station or at tourist sites. They are either swindlers or serving as a diversion, as another crook strips you of your possessions. You can appeal to the police if there is a dispute over the price for any type of service. Changes to the taxi charter have put caps on prices, so be sure you check the printed price list or ask for an estimated price before entering the cab.

In Naples, there are four different law-enforcement organizations: the city police, *polizia municipale* (in blue and white); the state police, *polizia di stato* (also in blue and white); the paramilitary police, *carabinieri* (in designer black and red); and the finance police, *guardia di finanza* (in brown and green). Although each has a specialization, they all cover the same jurisdiction. Appeal to any of them, regardless of the problem. All four types tend to speak at least basic English and are eager to ensure that tourists are not cheated. Finally, do not be alarmed by machine guns at the airport or in the hands of traffic cops: The heavy weaponry is routine.

In an emergency, phone 113 for the police, 115 for fire and 118 for medical assistance. For the latest information on travel safety, contact your country's travel-advisory agency.

## Health

No vaccinations are required to enter Italy, but general sanitation is subpar in Naples. Likely the water is safe to drink inside your accommodations, but it's best to ask the front desk. Likewise, bars often provide water when you order an espresso, and this is safe to drink. However, tap water outside reputable establishments is questionable, as are the fountains on the street. Naples is hot in the summer, so make sure to drink enough water to avoid sunstroke.

Most pharmacies are open Monday-Friday 8:30 am-1 pm and 3:30-7 pm. They stay open late and on a rotating basis on Saturday and Sunday. Pharmacists can sometimes aid travelers with basic prescriptions such as birth control refills or medicine for conjunctivitis (pink eye); for a minor ailment, ask first before tracking down an English-language doctor. All medicine is given over the counter, so it helps to know the Italian name for your malady.

For medical emergencies, call 118. Don't assume that an English-speaking operator will be working. Cardarelli Hospital has high-quality facilities, and many doctors speak English. In case of emergency, go to the hospital and follow signs to the *pronto soccorso* (emergency room). The hospital is located just outside of Naples and is reachable by public transportation. Via A. Cardarelli, 9. Toll-free 800-019-774. <http://www.ospedalecardarelli.it>.

There is also a U.S. Naval Hospital, which focuses on providing care to members of the military. Reach the hospital by taking highway A1 South. Take exit Villa Literno, then exit Gricignano d'Aversa. Via Contrada Boscariello and Via Contrada Boscariello. For emergencies, phone 081-811-6000. <http://www.med.navy.mil/sites/napoli/Pages/default.aspx>.

## Disabled Advisory

As an ancient city with limited auto access, Naples can be exceptionally difficult for disabled travelers to navigate. Particularly in the historic center, the narrow, cobbled streets are particularly difficult to navigate for wheelchair users. Where pavement ramps exist, it's common to find that they are blocked by parked cars. Public transportation tries to offer disability services, but the services are sadly nonfunctioning. Naples Centrale Station does not have operational lifts to the metro, but it is in the process of installing them. Bus-stop signs show the handicapped sign, but you shouldn't trust them. Many buses simply have spaces for wheelchairs without safety straps or lifts onto the bus. Although the law requires all restaurants to have disabled access and restrooms, many have yet to comply.

Most sights are accessible, however. Ask at the tourist office or pick up a copy of *Qui Napoli* or the Campania Artec card brochure for sight-by-sight information. Call museums and sights in advance to reserve particular services and to ensure that existing services are currently functional.

Trenitalia Disability Office is located inside Naples Central Station. It provides information on access within the station and on regional trains, but it does not have information on inner-city transportation. The friendly staff members speak English. Open daily 7 am-9 pm. Phone 199-30-3060.

For up-to-date information on accessibility for trams, buses and the metro, visit <http://www.trenitalia.it> or [http://www.turismoaccessibile.it/trasporti\\_en.htm](http://www.turismoaccessibile.it/trasporti_en.htm).

### **Dos & Don'ts**

Don't be surprised if you're hugged by the stranger standing next to you when The Blues soccer team scores a goal.

Don't expect traffic to stop when you cross the street. Locals appear fearless: Follow them across the street.

Do try the street food, particularly *arancini* (deep-fried risotto balls).

Do order a glass of Campania's white wine, which is some of the best in Italy, particularly the Fiano di Avellino D.O.C.G.

Don't be surprised if a moped brushes you while walking in the Centro Storico.

Do order an entire pizza per person: They are thinner and more delicious than you might think.

### **FACTS**

#### **Geostats**

**Passport/Visa Requirements:** Citizens of Canada and the U.S. need only a passport. Check travel-document requirements with your carrier before departing.

**Population:** 959,574.

**Languages:** Italian. English is spoken in tourist offices, luxury hotels and many smaller hotels.

**Predominant Religions:** Christian (Roman Catholic).

**Time Zone:** 1 hour ahead of Greenwich Mean Time (+1 GMT). Daylight Saving Time is observed from the last Sunday in March to the last Sunday in October.

**Voltage Requirements:** 110 volts.

**Telephone Codes:** 39, country code; 081, city code;

#### **Money**

##### **Currency Exchange**

Italy's currency is the euro, and credit cards with the Cirrus symbol are accepted almost anywhere.

To change cash and traveler's checks, banks charge a commission of about 3 euros. Post offices charge a fee of 3.13 euros. Exchange rates are generally better at downtown banks and exchanges



(*ufficio di cambio*) than at the airports or hotels. *Cambio* hours are generally 8:30 am-7:30 pm. At the airport, try to avoid changing more money than you may need to get into town. You'll also find 24-hour automated exchange machines dotting the city for extra convenience.

ATMs, called *bancomats*, are available 24 hours a day outside almost all banks and at many other locations, especially in Chiaia, San Ferdinando and Via Toledo, as well as near the train station. They are the preferred way of getting cash, because they do not usually add the 2.5%-4% fees that credit cards charge for advances. Although ATMs accept foreign debit cards, be aware that many banks charge a fee for foreign withdrawals. Preloaded cards in euros are a good idea, because this avoids many of the charges and varying exchange rates.

Use caution when withdrawing cash near the train station. Better still, avoid the area and use an ATM elsewhere. Try to use ATMs located inside banks; many require you to swipe your debit card and let only one person in at a time, for safety purposes.

Bank hours are generally Monday-Friday 8:30 am-1:30 pm and 2:30-4 pm (with some variation), but some of the larger banks are open throughout the day. In winter, banks often have reduced hours.

### **Taxes**

A value-added-tax (IVA in Italy) ranges 3%-22% and can be refunded to non-European Union visitors. The amount added varies from country to country within the EU, and not all stores participate. Check first or look for the sign in the store window. In addition, only luxury goods—such as clothing and wine—are eligible. Refunds usually amount to about 13%-16% of the purchase price.

Present three things to the refund officer at the airport before departure: your purchase, the receipt and the customs division's stamped refund form (which must be picked up at the place of purchase). Without these, your refund will be denied. Note that only unused articles are eligible for a refund: If the article looks used, you won't get your money back. If everything is in order, the IVA refund officer will give you a final form to be mailed. (Ideally, jump through all these hoops before checking your bags, and have your purchases in an easy-to-reach place.)

Some larger stores have a streamlined process: They handle most of the paperwork and then mail the refund to you, usually minus a fee. Private IVA-refund services, located at the airport, also pay immediately minus a fee, usually a percentage of the refund. The two largest such services are Global Refund and Cashback; you'll see their signs in store windows. For more information, check Global Refund's Web site. It provides information, a tax calculator and a location map, showing its refund offices in 34 countries and all major exit points in Italy (airports, harbors and roads). <http://www.globalrefund.com>.

### **Tipping**

The culture of tipping in Europe is considerably different from that in the U.S. Italians usually do not tip, as waiters, housekeeping staff and so forth are paid a wage. At times, a service charge (*servizio*) is tacked onto restaurant bills. Don't confuse this with the cover (*coperta*), which is a charge for bread and table settings. If the service charge is included, do not tip. If it is not included and you have had very good service, leave a tip of about 1 euro per person.

Tipping in taxis is not obligatory, either, but most people round up to the next euro.

### **Weather**

May and June are the best times to visit, as far as the weather goes. Spring weather can be quite changeable, especially in March and April, with sunny skies in the morning and storms in the afternoon. April is a good month to beat the crowds and gamble on good weather.

Temperatures often climb above 85 F/30 C in July and August. High humidity (around 85%) causes most locals to flee the city toward the end of summer. Fall remains sunny, with October and November quite mild but sometimes rainy.

September-November is also a nice time to visit—the weather is good for touring, and you'll miss the early-summer crowds. Winters are generally mild, with January lows around 40 F/5 C, but the wind off of the Mediterranean can be chilling, and rain is prevalent.

### **What to Wear**

The streets of Naples may be rough-and-tumble, but that doesn't mean elegant dress is not an art form. As a rule, Italians are very conscious about clothes, and they have a highly developed sense of style. Casual dress is fine for most occasions, but a suit and tie are recommended for business meetings. Jackets for men and smart attire for women are wise for dining out.

Wrinkled shirts will be noticed. Shorts are uncommon except in July and August, and bare feet are taboo except at the seaside or swimming pools. Women should be aware that shorts, skirts and tank tops attract stares.

When visiting major cathedrals, men should wear long pants and women should wear long skirts or long pants. Sleeveless shirts are not permitted in churches, and shorts are frowned upon. Use a scarf to cover exposed shoulders if no other covering is available.

### **Transportation**

Naples' transportation is hectic but efficient once you get the hang of it. Trains and trams come in all shapes and sizes, and it's important to distinguish the intercity trams from the intracity. Intracity trains include the Metronapoli and the Funicular. Intercity trains include the Metro Campania (the Metronapoli becomes the Metro Campania outside the city limits), the Circumvesuviana and the Italian national rail service (Trenitalia).

Naples' main train station, located in Piazza Garibaldi, is divided into upper and lower levels: Napoli FS, or Napoli Centrale (Naples Central Station), is the upper level. The Piazza Garibaldi station is the lower level, served by local and regional trains, including the Metronapoli, the Metro Campania and the Circumvesuviana. Pay careful attention to which station your train leaves from. We highly recommend giving yourself plenty of time before your scheduled departure. It is also a good idea when arriving in Naples to immediately go to the lower level of the station and continue a few stops closer to the city center to avoid the seedy area and streets that surround the main station.

You cannot buy tickets for all trains at the main ticket booths or automated ticket machines in Naples Central Station. Metronapoli, Funicular, Metro Campania and Circumvesuviana tickets are sold elsewhere. Buy Metronapoli, Funicular and Metro Campania tickets at tobacconists in the train station or throughout the city. Unfortunately, these stores' clerks rarely have helpful information on travel times or departure locations, so it is helpful to get information online or from a concierge.

Circumvesuviana tickets must be purchased at the Circumvesuviana ticket booths, located on the lower level of the train station. The employees are knowledgeable and usually speak English.

### **Public Transportation**

Intercity public transportation includes buses, the metro and the Funicular, and one ticket gets you access to all of them. Sold at tobacconists, tickets cost 1.20 euros and are valid for 90 minutes. Validate tickets in the validation machines on the buses or by slipping them through the turnstiles at the stations.

If you plan on using public transportation regularly, buy several tickets in advance to save time later: Many tobacconists close in the afternoon and on Sunday.

It's important to note that when the metro travels longer distances, you need to purchase more-expensive tickets. Simply tell the tobacconist your destination, and they'll give you the correct ticket. The most common transportation area, which includes all of the urban and suburban area of Naples, is known as Unico Napoli. Day-long tickets for this area, which are valid until midnight on the day of validation, cost 3.60 euros Monday-Friday and 3.00 euros Saturday and Sunday. Make sure to specify which ticket you want when purchasing. There are no weekly passes; monthlong passes cost 40 euros.

Popular destinations outside of Unico Napoli are Sorrento, Salerno, Pozzuoli and the Phlegraean Fields. These destinations require different tickets. Tickets are often checked by ticketing agents, so make sure to purchase the right one. All intercity transportation is run by Unico Campania. Phone 081-551-3109. <http://www.unicocampania.it>.

### **Buses**

Buses run everywhere in Naples and are usually dependable. Get a route map from the tourist office in the Central Station. The main bus station is located in Piazza Garibaldi, in front of the Central Station. Buses from there go all over the city, as well as to the airport. Buy tickets from the tobacconists inside the station. Buses R2 and 201 take visitors to many major sights and destinations. Beware of pickpockets. We do not recommend taking night buses after 1 am. Daily 24 hours; night buses midnight-6:30 am, running once per hour. Phone 081-551-3109. <http://www.unicocampania.it>.

### **Funicular**

These trams take visitors up the steep hillsides in Naples. All trams lead to different parts of the Vomero neighborhood. Strangely isolated, the three Funicular trams are more like elevators than trains, merely running up and down on one track. All stations are easy to locate and save you a lot of huffing and puffing up steep roads and stairs. Daily 6:30 am-midnight. Phone 081-551-3109. <http://www.unicocampania.it>.

### **Metronapoli**

The metro is the easiest, fastest way to get from one side of the city to the other. There are three lines, Line 1, Line 2 and Line 6. Line 2 originates at the Naples Central Station. Its most popular stops are Cavour, where the National Archaeology Museum is located; Amedeo, in the swank Chiaia neighborhood; and Campi Flegrei (the Phlegraean Fields). The popular stops on Line 1 are Piazza Dante, in the Centro Storico; Vanvitelli, in the Vomero neighborhood; and Cavour. The Cavour stop, which often features modern art, is the only place where Line 1 and Line 2 cross. Daily 6 am-11 pm. Phone 800-568-866. <http://www.metro.na.it>.

### **Taxi**

Official taxis are white and have *Comune di Napoli* on the side. Make sure they have meters; however, all fares should be determined beforehand. Shop around, because overcharging is common. Cabdrivers are not accustomed to being hailed and may not stop. Instead, find official stands in piazzas around the city or order by phone: 081-2222 (centralized service), 081-570-7070, 081-556-4444 or 081-0101.

Catch a taxi from the Naples Central train station by exiting through the main entrance and going left. Taxis line up at a stand that is organized by an official representative. Fares double when traveling beyond the city limits.

**Kotor, Montenegro**

**OVERVIEW**

**Introduction**

The city of Kotor, Montenegro, is one of the best preserved medieval towns in the Mediterranean. Steep cliffs surround the Bay of Kotor, inviting its nickname "Europe's most southern fjord," and the city is still surrounded by its ancient walls. Don't miss the St. Tryphon Cathedral in old town, built in the 12th century.

**Port Information**

**Location**

Tucked away in the interior of the Bay of Kotor off the Adriatic Sea, Kotor is a convenient stop for cruises leaving from Venice.

**Montenegro**

**OVERVIEW**

**Introduction**

Declared independent from Serbia in June 2006, the small country of Montenegro features the best of both summer and winter vacation possibilities, including fabulous beaches.

Because of its geographical diversity—the Adriatic Sea lies at its southern border, and 70 mountain peaks are scattered inland—Montenegro's landscape varies tremendously, creating a great opportunity to explore many natural phenomena, including deep canyons, caves, lakes and bays, sandy beaches and the sea.



Montenegro has been a popular tourist destination for many years. Previously, vacationers from the former Yugoslavia populated the area heavily; more recently, visitors from Germany, the Czech Republic, Russia and the United Kingdom frequent the region.

The country is known for its friendly locals and for its well-organized holiday resorts. Montenegro's currency is the euro, which is readily available and makes shopping and traveling within the country easy for visitors.

Since its independence, Montenegro has been developing its tourist industry rapidly and renovating a lot of its infrastructure, including roads, buildings and public utilities.

Travelers who are looking for a quieter, yet still active, tourist destination will enjoy Montenegro. However, with the country's development, many more tourists will flock to Montenegro in the future, making it an even busier vacation destination.

**Geography**

Called Crna Gora (which means "black mountain") by the locals, Montenegro derives its name from its location, which is engulfed by rocky hills and high mountains.

Montenegro lies southwest of Serbia, southeast of Bosnia and Herzegovina and north of Albania, and it borders the Adriatic Sea. It is a small—only about 5,350 sq mi/13,800 sq km—and mountainous

country. However, the coastline stretches 182 mi/293 km, and there are approximately 70 mountain peaks reaching 6,562 ft/2,000 m.

## History

The original inhabitants of Montenegro were Illyrian and covered the present-day region of Montenegro and northern Albania. Romans, most notably the Docleats, were present in the country until the seventh century when Slavic bands arrived in the region. The location where they settled became known as Duklja (also referred to as Zeta) in the 11th century.

During this time, Macedonia's King Samuil defeated Prince Vladimir of Duklja, and when Samuil's reign ended in 1018, Zeta came under Byzantine rule. The country was finally liberated from the Byzantines by Stefan Vojislav, whose successors proclaimed the region a kingdom in 1099. Future descendants further extended the territory by unifying Raska and Bosnia with Zeta. However, during the 1280s, the leader of Raska gained control of Zeta and held it for 180 years.

Zeta eventually regained its power, and the country's name became Montenegro in the 15th century. During this time, Ivan Crnojevic, who ruled 1465-1490, established a new capital city that was besieged by the Turks but was defended successfully. When Ivan's son Durad took control in 1490, he faced constant attacks from the Turks. He eventually fled to Italy, and the Petrovic-Njegos dynasty ruled the country for some time. During this period, Montenegrin tribes were unified.

During the late 18th century and early 19th century, Petar I established the foundations for a state. His heir, Petar II, created the state's administration, and successor Danilo II further strengthened existing state institutions and established the border between Montenegro and Turkey.

When Nikola Petrovic came to office in 1860, Montenegro and the Turks were warring. However, Petrovic was able to get Montenegro officially recognized as an independent state at the Congress of Berlin in 1878. This also expanded Montenegro's territory and gave it an outlet on the Adriatic Sea. In 1910, Petrovic proclaimed himself the king of Montenegro (Nikola I).

During World War I, Montenegro invaded Albania and declared war on Austria. However, in 1915, the country was overrun by Austrian-German forces and ceased fighting. Nikola I fled to France, and the country declared a union with Serbia in 1918. This was the forerunner to the Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes, which in 1929 became the Kingdom of Yugoslavia.

During World War II, Montenegro fought on the side of the Allies but was invaded by the Germans. At the end of the war, the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia was established and included Montenegro as one of its six republics. This union lasted for decades and extended Montenegro's territory to part of the Dalmatian coast.

Recent years have seen much change to the region. In 1991, the Parliament of Montenegro adopted a declaration that proclaimed Montenegro as the first ecological state in the world. In 1992, when the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia was dissolved, Montenegro reunited with Serbia as the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. In February 2003, Montenegro and Serbia joined to form the State Union of Serbia and Montenegro, strengthening the region politically and economically. Then, the Referendum for the Independence of Montenegro was held on 21 May 2006. After many years as part of other countries, 55.5% of the voters voted for a totally independent Montenegro, leading the country to officially declare its independence from Serbia on 3 June 2006.

The future looks bright for Montenegro as it works toward strengthening its government, economy and infrastructure. It is also a candidate for membership of the European Union.

## **Snapshot**

The country's main attractions are historical sites, beaches, pretty lakes, spas, rafting, fishing, skiing, gorges, marvelous churches and monasteries, folk arts, fascinating culture, good prices, and spectacular coastal and mountain scenery.

Montenegro appeals to travelers who have already been to Europe once or twice and are ready to get off the beaten track.

## **Potpourri**

The settlement of Medun, located approximately 7.5 mi/12 km northeast of Podgorica, is the oldest in the area and dates back to Illyrian times.

Established in 1952, the Durmitor National Park is listed twice on the World Heritage List—once as a UNESCO reserve and once as a Natural World Heritage site.

Tara Canyon is the second-largest canyon in the world (following the Grand Canyon in Arizona).

Skadar Lake, home to the largest bird reserve in Europe, contains 270 different bird species.

The city of Kolasin was once a Turkish military watchtower. Over time, the tower developed into a town and was liberated from Ottoman rule in 1878.

Located north of Bar, the town of Canj features a pebble beach called the "Golden Coast" because of the sand's bright gold color.

Located in Ulcinj, Montenegro's "Great Beach" is 42,651 ft/13,222 m in length.

Montenegrins are among the tallest people in Europe, with the average man's height at 73 in/185 cm.

In the 1960s and '70s, Montenegro's best-known landmark, the island resort of Sveti Stefan, was a fashionable playground for Hollywood and British royalty, with Princess Margaret, Sophia Loren and Kirk Douglas among the regular starry guests.

## **SEE & DO Recreation**

Because of Montenegro's geographical diversity, many outdoor activities are available for visitors. The coast offers sailing, swimming and fishing. (Permits can be obtained at all Montenegrin sportfishing associations.) Windsurfers flock to the river island of Ada Bojana at Ulcinj beach, where the subtropical river waters flow into the Adriatic. Hikers of all abilities can trek through the virgin forests of Biogradska Gora National Park, which is also a popular spot for family picnics. The steep passes and exhilarating rapids of Tara Canyon make it an exciting place to try white-water rafting.

There are 18 glacier lakes spread throughout the Durmitor National Park, which attract swimmers in the summer. In the winter, the snow-covered park offers skiers some of Europe's least-known ski slopes.

Phone 382-31-321-357 for the Montenegro Sailing Federation, located in Herceg Novi, and 382-20-622-220 for the Mountaineering Association of Montenegro, located in Podgorica.

Throughout Montenegro, you can find such activities as tennis, and the Bjelasica, Durmitor and Komovi mountain resorts also have horseback riding. Boats make leisurely trips across Skadar Lake, giving bird-watchers the chance to spot some of the 280 species of birds including pelican and ibis.

Check with your accommodation about local recreational activities that it offers or can arrange for you.

## **Shopping**

Shop for wood carvings, ceramics, woolens, wines, lace, art, tapestries, embroidery, leather boxes, silver filigree jewelry, handmade carpets and other locally made items. In Montenegro, local markets where you can bargain with the vendors are prevalent. You will also find some specialty clothing boutiques and craft shops with quality goods at affordable prices.

When in Podgorica, be sure to visit the interesting Etno Galerija Rakocevic gallery, run by Vesna Rakocevic and located at Cvijetin Brijeg. It sells a variety of locally made handicrafts and art. Phone 382-67-840-882.

**Shopping Hours:** In general, most stores are open Monday-Saturday from 9 or 10 am-7 or 8 pm, with some food shops open until 10 pm; on Sunday, shops often close around 1 pm. During the peak tourist season (July and August), all shopping hours may be extended. Note that some stores may be closed during the Orthodox Christian Easter, which varies from year to year.

## **DINING**

### **Dining Overview**

Montenegrin food varies depending on whether you are dining by the sea or inland. For example, the traditional cuisine on the coast includes barbecue octopus, eel with rice, fish stew, mussel shells boiled in wine, deep-fried whitebait and other seafood delights, often served with local olives. Inland, however, you will find smoked ham, grilled meat dishes such as *cevapcici* and *raznjici*, various cheeses, *sarma* (cabbage rolls), *kastradina* (dried mutton), sausages, and veal and lamb dishes.

A popular and traditional way to bake meats and bread in Montenegro is under a *sac*, which is a large cast-iron lid. Hot coals and ash are placed on top of the lid, allowing the foods inside to slowly cook and retain all of their natural flavors and juices.

Local alcoholic beverages vary in Montenegro and include Niksicko beer (a favorite since 1896); Loza grape brandy; Vranac, a dry red wine; and Krstac, a white wine. Mead, a fermented honey beverage, is also a popular drink (both alcoholic and nonalcoholic variations), as is strong Turkish coffee.

For dessert, have some cheesecake, fresh peaches or watermelon. If available, try some *malisorske priganice*, which are flat fried donuts, served hot with honey.

Pizzerias, fast-food and other international restaurants can be found in the larger cities.

## **SECURITY**

### **Etiquette**

Montenegrins are gracious hosts, and, if you are invited to their homes, it is customary to take a gift, such as a bottle of wine or flowers. When dining with Montenegrins, especially for business, expect a long and lavish meal, often with various courses, wines and liquors served.

Because of Montenegro's location and tourist orientation, people are more laid-back, even in business settings. This is true especially during the summer when temperatures peak, and businessmen are often seen in meetings without ties.

Knowing a few phrases of Montenegrin/Serbian will go a long way. Important ones include *dobar dan* (good day), *hvala* (thank you) and *do videnja* (goodbye).

### **Personal Safety**

Travelers should avoid flashing money in public places and should use common sense in crowds to avoid pickpockets and other street crimes. In general, Montenegro is a safe place to visit if you travel smart and stick to well-traveled roads and locations. Note that organized tours can offer you the opportunity to explore the country while ensuring your safety.

In an emergency, dial 122 for the police, 123 for a fire or 124 for an ambulance. If driving, you can also telephone the Automobile Association of Montenegro (AMSCG) at 9807 for roadside assistance or dial 134 for information on traffic conditions.

For the latest information, contact your country's travel-advisory agency.

### **Health**

Good medical care is available in the larger cities, although some common, over-the-counter medications may not be available. Travelers needing medical care should ask their hotel's front-desk staff or their guide to direct them to the proper facility.

The tap water and food are generally safe in Montenegro.

The sun can be very strong at the coast, so use sunscreen liberally and wear a hat. Don't forget a comfortable pair of walking shoes or boots, especially if you plan on spending time in the mountains. Take insect repellent if you plan to visit Skadar Lake during the spring and summer.

For any emergency, dial 112.

For more information, contact your country's health-advisory agency.

### **Dos & Don'ts**

Do stop and take a photograph of the attractive village of Sveti Stefan, which sits on a small outcrop at the end of a causeway. Once a 15th-century fishing village, it is now a secluded resort that features a fantastic view of the surrounding area. If you want to explore the village, you need to be a guest of Aman Resorts or have a reservation at one of its restaurants.

Don't be afraid to travel inland: The road system is adequate, and you will get to see a different part of the country that offers skiing, hiking and rafting.

Do take a water taxi to the tiny island of Our Lady of the Rock in Bay of Kotor, home to an enchanting 17th-century church and museum.

Don't hesitate to ask locals for directions. Especially if you see a younger person, odds are that they will be able to communicate with you in English and answer any questions that you might have.

Do visit the Budva Riviera, where olive trees planted during the first millennium still grow.

Do take any personal appliances with you that you think you might need, including a hair dryer, travel iron and so forth. These items may not be supplied in some of the hotels. Also make sure to take the appropriate electric converter.



Do try some mead if you get a chance. The national drink of the Old Slavs, it is fermented honey brewed into both an alcoholic and nonalcoholic beverage.

## **FACTS**

### **Geostats**

**Passport/Visa Requirements:** Citizens of the U.S., Canada and European Union countries can stay for up to 90 days in Montenegro without a visa.

**Population:** 666,730.

**Languages:** Montenegrin/Serbian. Throughout the region, English, Italian and German are the foreign languages spoken most frequently.

**Predominant Religions:** Christian Orthodox, Islam, Roman Catholic, Protestant and Jewish.

**Time Zone:** 1 hour ahead of Greenwich Mean Time (+1 GMT). Daylight Saving Time is observed from the end of March to the end of October.

**Voltage Requirements:** 220 volts. 50 Hz.

**Telephone Codes:** 382, country code; 30,Bar; 33,Budva; 41,Cetinje; 20,Danilovgrad; 32,Kotor; 20,Podgorica; 30,Ulcinj; 52,Zabljak.

### **Money**

#### **Currency Exchange**

The official currency of Montenegro is the euro, which is divided into 100 cents. In Montenegro, it's best to exchange foreign currencies at banks, such as Crnogorska komercijalna banka AD (CKB).

Additionally, the use of credit cards—including Visa, MasterCard and American Express—is commonplace. Most use the "chip and pin" system which requires you to enter your four-digit code.

Funds can also be accessed from ATMs linked to international networks via debit and credit cards.

### **Taxes**

In Montenegro, the value-added tax (VAT) is set at 17% for goods and services. However, a reduced VAT of 7% is applied to items of necessity, books, tickets to events and activities, and accommodations. There is no VAT applied to medicines.

#### **Tipping**

Tipping service personnel is not mandatory, but a tip of up to 10% can be given for exceptional service.

### **Weather**

May-October is an excellent time to visit since it's the warmest and driest time—great beach weather. Nights can get into the 40s-50s F/5-15 C in the central and mountain regions. A sweater may be needed in the evenings, even in summer. The winters can be very cold, often drizzly, snowy and windy, especially in the interior.

## What to Wear

When visiting Montenegro, pack clothes appropriate for the season and for the activities that you have planned. For example, at the coast, shorts, swimsuits and other casual wear are appropriate. During winter, especially in the higher elevations, take heavier coats and shoes.

Business attire is a standard suit and tie for men, dress or suit with skirt or slacks for women. During warmer months, business settings commonly see less formal attire, such as dress slacks and shirts without ties for men or sandals without hose for women. If you will be visiting churches, you should dress more conservatively.

## Transportation

Overall, traveling to and within Montenegro is fairly easy. The country supports two airports, both of which handle domestic and international flights. Travelers also use the airport at Dubrovnik in neighboring Croatia, which is only about 10 mi/17 km from the border with Montenegro. Land-based transportation includes buses and trains to local and international destinations, as well as a good highway system for those who rent cars or take taxis. Travelers going to or coming from Italy also can take a ferry.

## Taxi

Taxis are available at the airports, in all cities and at most tourist locations. Reliable taxi companies in Podgorica include Royal Taxi (phone 382-20-19702) and Taxi Plus (phone 382-20-19712).

## Train

Train service is affordable and dependable in Montenegro. Local routes include Bar to Podgorica and Podgorica to Kolasin. International routes include Podgorica and Bar to Belgrade and other cities in Serbia. For additional information on railway services, contact the main railway office in Podgorica at Trg Golootockih Zrtava 13 (phone 382-20-441-211). <http://www.zcg-prevoz.me>.

## Venice, Italy

### OVERVIEW

#### Introduction

Venice, Italy, is romance: a bridge arching over a canal, a gondola gliding by, the moon reflecting off water. Venice is history: the Palazzo Ducale (Doge's Palace), Piazza San Marco, the Grand Canal, great art and great museums. Venice is modern: the headline names and paparazzi of the Venice Film Festival, the buzzing excitement of Carnival in the 10 days before Lent begins.

Venice has a plethora of world-famous museums and artistic treasures. The Basilica di San Marco, with its spectacular Golden Altar; the Bridge of Sighs, where prisoners could enjoy one last glimpse of the beautiful city before entering the dark jail; the Gallerie dell'Accademia, with its collection of art of the 14th-18th centuries; the Peggy Guggenheim Collection of 20th-century art—the list is long. Pick and choose which places you'll visit in-depth, or just skim the surface and soak up the atmosphere.



Venice is set on islands connected by bridges, with the Grand Canal as its main street, and traffic moves by boats that range from the traditional gondolas to refuse barges. The absence of automobile

noise means you can hear the laughter of children from your window, as well as footsteps seemingly just around the corner. But what makes Venice so unique also challenges its existence. The rising sea levels of global climate change threaten the city, and even now high tides from the Adriatic Sea can flood whole sections of the city.

Although the resident population in Venice has declined as many young people have moved to the mainland, where real-estate prices and the cost of living are lower, the city continues to draw tourists. In fact, the central areas can be packed, people may be brusque, and prices are high. Even so, Venice remains a treasure to be savored.

### **Must See or Do**

**Sights**—Basilica di San Marco; Piazza San Marco; the Grand Canal by boat or gondola.

**Museums**—Gallerie dell'Accademia; Museo Correr; the Peggy Guggenheim Collection.

**Memorable Meals**—Ca' d'Oro for *cicheti* and baked mussels; *risotto alla Torcellana* at Locanda Cipriani; sea bass with asparagus and radicchio at Casin dei Nobili.

**Late Night**—Hanging out in Campo Santa Margherita; people-watching at Piccolo Mondo; strolling the Piazza San Marco under a full moon or on a foggy night.

**Walks**—Crossing the Rialto Bridge; getting lost in Sestiere di San Marco; wandering down Via Garibaldi.

**Especially for Kids**—Dressing up for Carnival and parading around town; *traghetto* rides; exploring the prisons and armory of the Palazzo Ducale (Doge's Palace).

### **Geography**

Venice sprawls across hundreds of low-lying islands in a lagoon in the northern crescent of the Adriatic Sea. A single bridge links it to the mainland city of Mestre. Traffic ends at Piazzale Roma, making the city serenely free of buses, cars and motorcycles—even bicycles are prohibited.

The city's main thoroughfare is the Grand Canal. The islands are also crisscrossed by 177 smaller canals and connected by more than 400 pedestrian bridges. Streets are narrow and winding—some little more than sidewalks between buildings. The city is divided into six *sestieri* (districts): Cannaregio, San Polo, San Marco, Dorsoduro, Castello and Santa Croce.

A map of the city resembles a labyrinth, but surprisingly, it is not too difficult to find your way to the main attractions. Yellow signs are posted on the buildings at most major intersections, with arrows directing you to Piazzale Roma, Ferrovia (the train station, Santa Lucia), Rialto Bridge, Accademia Bridge and Piazza San Marco.

Specific addresses, however, can be hard to find, as many streets are so small they aren't on maps. Phone directories usually list addresses by the name of the *sestiere* and the number of the building, with no reference to a street. Often the easiest way to find a shop or restaurant is to ask—most people are helpful, and many speak English. Hotel employees and shopkeepers are usually quite knowledgeable about their neighborhoods.

Several islands in the lagoon are also part of the city area or connected to the city by regular public boats. In addition to Giudecca (the large island across from the Zattere) and Lido (where you'll find beaches), the best known are the glassmaking island of Murano, colorful Burano and the lagoon's original seat of power, Torcello. The airport is on the mainland, north of Mestre.

## History

As invaders swept down from the Alps in the fifth century, the farmers and fisherfolk living along what is now Italy's northeastern coast sought refuge on nearby scrub-covered islands. From the safety of their lagoon in the Adriatic, Venetians began building a powerful trading empire. By the ninth century, religious and political power had moved from Torcello to the island of Rivoaltum, where the Venetian leaders began clearing the land and driving wooden piles into the mud beneath the water—laying the foundations of modern Venice.

The city's merchants and traders (including Marco Polo's relatives) amassed huge fortunes, which were invested in the city. The fortunes built grand palaces and huge churches, and funded precious art collections (some of which still adorn the Basilica di San Marco and the Palazzo Ducale).

At its peak in the 1400s, the Repubblica Serenissima (the Most Serene Republic, as it was known) ruled the Adriatic and eastern Mediterranean—its democratic-style government served as an international model for centuries. But the republic soon began to decay, weakened by expansion wars, famines, plagues and finally by invading French troops, led by Napoleon in 1797. French control ended when Venice was ceded to the Hapsburg Empire a few years later. In 1866 it switched hands again, joining the Kingdom of Italy.

Today, Venice is the capital of Italy's Veneto region and one of the country's most visited cities. Its watery setting and tourism-based economy bring modern challenges, such as structural erosion caused by motorboat wakes and a steadily decreasing population as younger generations move to less-expensive cities with more job opportunities. The proud Venetians are not ones to give in easily, though, and as measures are being taken to protect this fragile city, more travelers from around the world will have the opportunity to discover the treasures hidden within it.

## Port Information

### Location

The Venice Cruise Terminal (Terminal Venezia Passeggeri) has two main docking areas, San Basilio pier in the Giudecca Canal and the Stazione Marittima, the largest of the two areas and where the biggest ships dock. There's a free shuttle bus to Piazzale Roma, the gateway to Venice, Saturday-Monday for cruise passengers. Alternatively, the Piazzale Roma is only a 15-minute walk from the terminal. Another option is the Venice People Mover, a cable-operated tram system.

San Basilio is just a short walk from the Gallerie dell'Accademia. It takes more than 30 minutes to walk from the terminal to the Stazione Marittima and is not recommended. Instead, take a water taxi.

Because Stazione Marittima and San Basilio are part of the Terminal Venezia Passeggeri (Venice Cruise Terminal), they have tourist information, duty-free shops and refreshment facilities. All have water taxis. <http://www.vtp.it>.

### Potpourri

A traditional gondola is 36 ft/11 m long and weighs 1,325 lb/600 kg. They are almost always painted black.

In the 16th century, an anonymous writer published an escort guide for visitors that listed the names, addresses, looks, skills and costs of the most beautiful courtesans in Venice. In 1509, about 11,500 working girls are said to have offered their services in Venice, which had a population of 170,000 at the time.

*Amaretti* (dome-shaped cookies) were first made in Venice during the Renaissance period.

St. Mark is the patron saint of Venice. His symbol of a winged lion holding a book can be seen on many of the older buildings. If the book is open, Venice was at peace when the building was erected; if closed, Venice was at war.

Casanova made the city synonymous with lovers. Once imprisoned in the Doge's Palace, he escaped by fleeing across the rooftops.

City-son Marco Polo is attributed with introducing both pasta and window blinds to Italy from the Far East.

The still-standing "Bridge of the Tits" in San Polo was named after the working girls who displayed themselves on the bridge and in the windows of the nearby houses in a "tempting state of undress" while the light from oil lamps illuminated the spectacle.

In 2010, Giorgia Boscolo became Venice's first female gondolier. It's a lucrative business. In high season, a gondolier can make 5,000 euros a month or more (depending on his singing skills).

Glass production has a 700-year-old tradition in Venice and was once regarded as a state secret. Revealing the secret could mean the death penalty for the "traitor."

## **SEE & DO**

### **Shopping**

It's hard to convey just how many shops there are in Venice—the sheer number of establishments is overwhelming. You really don't have to go out of your way to find gifts or souvenirs, at least in the well-traveled areas of town. Deciding what to buy is the bigger problem. Many of the shops carry the same stuff—Murano glass in dizzying variety, Carnival masks, lace (much of which is made outside of Venice—you can tell the real handmade stuff by the astronomical prices), and leather and silk goods ranging from inexpensive to luxurious.

Because you'll see the same merchandise everywhere, it can be difficult to buckle down and actually make your purchases. But you'll kick yourself later if you leave empty-handed. Millefiore glass beads are a good bet in Murano; they're distinctive and hard to find elsewhere—and much more expensive when you do find them.

Lots of high-dollar fashion boutiques are clustered around the area just west of Piazza San Marco. You'll also find plenty of souvenir shops around San Marco, though stores in the Rialto Bridge area may be less expensive. Traveling to the islands of Murano and Burano won't lead to many bargains, but you may find larger selections of glass and imported lace. For unusual art and glass, seek out the smaller shops on Murano, where excellent work is done. And though there are hundreds of small stores and boutiques in Venice, you'll have to travel to the mainland to find a mall.

In Italy, tax is included in the price of the merchandise, and stores are required to post a price for everything being sold. Even in expensive boutiques, there will be a card in the window listing the prices of the items on display. This doesn't mean the prices are inflexible, however. In smaller stores, you will often find that the person waiting on you is the owner who will cut you a deal if it helps make a sale—especially if you pay in cash.

**Shopping Hours:** Generally Monday-Saturday 9 am-12:30 or 1 pm and 3:30-7:30 pm in winter or 4-8 pm in summer. In high season, many places stay open on Sunday and through lunch. Souvenir shops are often open later in the evening and closed on Monday morning.

## Department Stores

### Coin Rialto

This national chain store occupies a multistory Venetian Gothic *palazzetto* near the Rialto Bridge and stocks clothes, accessories, furnishings and housewares. Get a taste of what Italians really look for in their everyday shopping. Monday-Saturday 9:30 am-7:30 pm, Sunday 11 am-7:30 pm. Cannaregio 5787, Venice. Phone 041-520-3581. <http://www.coin.it>.

## Galleries

### BAC Art Studio

If you're looking for a memorable Venice scene to take home with you, be sure to stop at the BAC Art Studio. The eclectic gallery carries paintings, photographs, engravings, posters and sculptures that capture the unusual beauty of the city's landscapes and its people. It is well-known for mixing classic posters with quirky self-portraits by local artist David Dalla Venezia. Monday-Saturday 10 am-6 pm. San Vio 862 (between the Accademia Bridge and the Guggenheim Collection), Dorsoduro, Venice. Phone 041-241-2716. <http://www.bacart.com>.

### Bressanello Art Studio

This elegant little studio near Campo Santa Margherita offers well-priced original photographs, small sculptures and unique paintings by young local artists that avoid the stereotypes of most Venetian artwork. Particularly strong are the Mondrian-like photographs of Burano by the gallery owner, Fabio Bressanello. Monday-Saturday 10 am-1 pm and 3-7:30 pm. Ponte dei Pugni, Campo San Barnaba, Dorsoduro 2835, Venice. Phone 041-724-1080. <http://www.bressanelloartstudio.com>.

## Shopping Areas

### Mercato di Rialto

The little shops lining the Rialto Bridge and surrounding area are usually less expensive than similar places in the San Marco area. When you cross the bridge, walk the inside route—you'll find stands and little shops with jewelry, masks, Murano glass and much more. An interesting side trip is to the nearby fish market. Together with the adjacent Erberia (fruit and vegetable market), the Pesqueria is busy in the morning (except Monday). Most shops near the bridge are open daily 10 am-7 pm.

### San Marco

Venice hosts a collection of some of the top names in Italian fashion. The area around Piazza San Marco, especially Calle Vallaresso, Via XXII Marzo and Frezzaria, has a particularly high number of *alta moda* shops. Be prepared to pay.

Borsalino. Calle del Loro, San Marco 4822. Phone 041-241-1945. <http://www.borsalino.it>.

Giorgio Armani. Calle Goldoni, San Marco 4412. Phone 041-523-4758. <http://www.giorgioarmani.com>.

Gucci. San Marco 2102 and San Marco 258. Phone 041-522-9119. <http://www.gucci.com>.

Max Mara. Mercerie, San Marco 5033. Phone 041-522-6688. <http://www.maxmara.com>.

Roberto Cavalli. Calle Vallaresso, San Marco 1314. Phone 041-529-9020. <http://www.robertocavalli.com>.

Prada. Salizada San Moise, San Marco 1464-1469. Phone 041-528-3966. <http://www.prada.com>.

Versace. Frezzeria, Campo San Moise, San Marco 1462-1523. Phone 041-520-0057. <http://www.versace.com>.

## Specialty Stores

### Attombri

Talented young brothers string together unique Byzantine-style necklaces and decorative delights in the old goldsmiths' area near Rialto Bridge. Two other locations at Campo S. Maurizio, San Marco (phone 041-521-0789) and Calle Frezzeria, San Marco (phone 041-241-1442). Sottoportico Degli Orafi 74, Rialto, Venice. Phone 041-521-2524. <http://www.attombri.com>.

### Ballarin

Some of the most interesting and original glass designs in objets d'art, tableware and jewelry. The colors are vibrant, the designs fresh and the prices reasonable. Definitely a standout amid the sameness surrounding it. Open daily. Fontamenta Lorenzo Radi 14, Murano. Phone 041-739-375. <http://www.ballarin.com>.

### Campiello di Arras

A cooperative near the Ca' Foscari University that produces original hand-woven fabrics, garments and bags in lively colors. Monday-Saturday 9 am-1 pm and 2:30-6:30 pm. Campiello Squelini, Dorsoduro 3235, Venice. Phone 041-522-6460.

### Cartavenezia

At this shop, you'll find artistic, handmade paper products, from stamped reliefs to paper shoes, as well as unique, high-quality paper for travelers wishing to capture their view of Venice in paint or ink. Open Monday 3:30-7:30 pm, Tuesday-Saturday 11 am-1 pm and 3:30-7:30 pm. Calle della Chiesa, Santa Croce 2125 (near Ca' Pesaro and Campo Santa Maria Mater Domini), Venice. Phone 041-524-1283. <http://www.cartavenezia.it>.

### David's Shop

This store carries a wide variety of art objects with Jewish themes, such as millefiori Stars of David and glass menorahs, many made of Murano glass. Open daily except Saturday 10 am-6:30 pm. Campo del Ghetto Nuovo, Cannaregio 2895, Venice. Phone 041-275-0418. <http://www.davidshop.com>.

### Giovanna Zanella

This shop offers unique and stunning shoes and accessories designer-made by a Venice native. Open Monday-Saturday 9:30 am-1 pm and 3-7 pm. Most major credit cards. Calle Carminati 5641, San Lio, Castello, Venice. Phone 041-523-5500.

### Il Canovaccio

All the classical Venetian carnival masks made of papier-mache are for sale in this shop, which is proud of its expertise in the application of traditional techniques and materials. You'll recognize the important people of the Commedia dell'Arte: There's Colombina, the doctor with the long nose, funny Arlecchino or the merchant Pantalone. But keep in mind that Venetian masks have a long history of being worn during promiscuous activities. Castello 5369/70, Venice. Phone 041-521-0393. <http://www.ilcanovaccio.com>.

### L'Isola

The beautifully lighted showroom sells elegant, vibrantly colored Murano glassware by the famous Venetian designers and manufacturers, Carlo and Giovanni Moretti, who established their brand name in 1958. Glasses, vases, bowls, plates, decanters, lighting and modern-art pieces all show bold primary colors and minimal design, which is characteristic for the Moretti style. Everything is of the highest quality, with prices to match. Each piece is handmade in limited numbers and signed. It also ships overseas. Open in summer daily 9 am-7 pm. Campo San Moise, San Marco 1468, Venice. Phone 041-523-1973. <http://www.lisola.com>.

### Massimo Micheluzzi

Massimo's gorgeous modern glass sculptures and vases put the overwrought products of most Murano factory-produced glass works to shame. His work is rapidly being collected by museums, including the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York. Dorsoduro 1071 (just steps away from the Ponte delle Maravegie bridge), Venice. Phone 041-528-2190.

### **Ottica Vascellari**

A fresco in the cloister of the San Nicholas church in Treviso (not far from Venice) painted by Thomas of Modena between 1348 and 1352 shows the earliest image of a pair of glasses, which were worn by Cardinal Hughes of Provence. The image is the symbol of this family business run by Roberto and his sister Cristina Vascellari. Most frames are handmade and show a very individual style, but they are not expensive at all. Your eyes will be professionally checked, and you can usually pick up your glasses the next day. Open Monday-Saturday 9 am-12:30 pm and 3-7:30 pm. Closed Monday in winter. Ruga Rialto, San Polo 1030, Venice. Phone 041-522-9388. <http://www.otticavascellari.it>.

### **Paolo Brandolisio Workshop**

*Forcole*, the sculptural oarlocks that are unique to Venetian boats such as gondolas, are works of art as well as utilitarian tools. Paolo Brandolisio is one of only four active *forcole* makers in the world. Calle Corte Rota near the Ponte dei Greci, Castello 4725, Venice. Phone 041-522-4155. <http://paolobrandolisio.altervista.org>.

### **Paolo Olbi**

They often call Paolo Olbi the "Gutenberg of the Lagoon." Indeed, he may be the last of his kind in Venice. Tourists who drop by may think of his place as just another beautiful shop with business cards and stationery printed on mold-made paper. But Paolo's hand-bound notebooks in rainbow-colored marbled paper and soft vegetable-tanned Tuscan leather, photo albums and pencils with striking patterns are, as Johnny Depp wrote into Paolo's guest book, "the most beautiful books I've ever seen." You can visit Paolo's dark but atmospheric workshop in Castello (make an appointment in one of his two shops), where he and Beppi, the typesetter, create wood plates of the patterns for the book covers, inspired by old Venetian designs such as the lion or the gryphon, and do the typesetting by hand using old plates and type. In fact, Casanova would have his love letters printed there. Second shop in Campo Santa Maria Nuova (Cannaregio 6061; phone 041-523-7655). Open Monday-Saturday 10 am-12:30 pm and 3:30-7:30 pm. Calle della Mandola, San Marco 3653, Venice. Phone 041-528-5025.

### **Pasticceria Marchini**

Choose from classic chocolates, freshly dipped fruits, and delicious cakes and cookies at Venice's most intriguing sweets shop. There are also oddities such as chocolate cell phones and wrenches. Fragile cookies are prepackaged to travel safely. Daily 9:30 am-8 pm. Calle Spadaria, San Marco 676, Venice. Phone 041-522-9109. <http://www.pasticceriamarchini.net>.

### **Perle e Dintorni**

Colorful glass beads strung together into bracelets, collars, brooches and other beautiful jewelry. The design is often based on antique models. You can assemble your own unique pieces in the store with the help of the two charming owners. Calle della Mandola, San Marco 3740, Venice. Phone 0346-588-1618. <http://www.perle-e-dintorni.it>.

### **Pierangelo Masciadri**

Beautiful silk scarves for ladies and elegant silk ties for gentlemen made by an artist from Como who designed the tie that Bill Clinton wore in 1992 when he was elected President. Masciadri also designs an unique collection of masks and bags made of leather and silk. Campo Bandiera e Moro, Castello 3725, Venice. Phone 041-099-0085. <http://www.masciadri.tv>.

### **Rivoaltus**

Handcrafted paper and tooled-leather books from this tiny shop on top of Rialto Bridge make beautiful souvenirs. Daily 9 am-7 pm. Ponte di Rialto, San Polo 11, Venice. Phone 041-523-6195.

### **Sent**

Incredible glass jewelry is created by the amazing Sent sisters, who descend from a centuries-long tradition of glassmakers from Murano. Their main Venice showroom is near the Guggenheim Collection at Campo San Vio. Other locations at Ponte San Moise, San Marco (phone 041-520-4014) and Fondamenta Serenella, Murano (phone 041-527-4465). Dorsoduro 669, Venice. Phone 041-520-8136. <http://www.marinaesusannasent.com>.



### **Serena Vianello**

Near Rialto Bridge, Serena Vianello, a former glass-jewelry designer, creates timeless, refined Venetian designs using sumptuous silks, soft velvets and warm tweeds mixed together with color schemes that bring to mind famous Venetian paintings. Buy your jackets, scarves, stoles, bags and colorful silk or velvet shoes (with rubber soles) there and stroll through Venice like a true classy Venetian lady. Monday-Friday 10 am-1:30 pm and 2:30-7:30 pm, Saturday 10 am-7 pm, Sunday 11 am-1:30 pm and 2:30-7 pm. Campo San Aponal, San Polo 1226, Venice. Phone 041-522-3351. <http://www.serenavianello.com>.

### **Tabarro San Marco di Monica Daniele**

Monica Daniele is famous for crafting the *tabarro*, the historical Venetian cape made of lamb's wool and cashmere. You'll find a wonderfully chaotic selection of hats and coats in her shop. Calle del Scaleter, San Polo 2235, Venice. Phone 041-524-6242. <http://www.monicadaniele.com>.

### **Venetia Studium**

In the late 19th century, the Spanish fashion designer and lighting engineer Mariano Fortuny (1871-1949) developed a complicated pleating technique in his palazzo in San Marco (a museum only open for temporary exhibitions) to create tiny folds in silk. This enabled the production of light, airy clothing that accentuated the natural curves and shape of a woman's body. His famous Delphos dresses inspired by Ancient Greek civilization were worn by such celebrities as Eleanore Duse. But Fortuny also used his methods to create silk lamps, table linens and handkerchiefs. Venetia Studium is a group of designers founded in 1984, which has the exclusive rights to reproduce the stunningly elegant and beautiful Fortuny lamps. The group also restores old silk lamps. Check out the sophisticated scarves, shawls, stoles, pillows and purses made of colorful silk and velvet fabrics. The famous pleated Fortuny dresses will max out your credit cards, though. Open daily 9 am-7:30 pm. Calle Larga XXII Marzo, San Marco 2425, Venice. Phone 041-523-6953. <http://www.venetiastudium.com>.

### **Vetreria Artistica Archimede Seguso**

There you'll find art glassware produced by one of the most renowned masters from Murano. Particularly famous for glass sculptures in intense colors. Two showrooms are located in Piazza San Marco; if you have time, schedule an appointment to visit the furnace on Murano. Daily 9:30 am-7:30 pm. Serenella 18, Murano. Phone 041-739-234. <http://www.aseguso.com>.

### **Vittorio Costantini**

Vittorio, born on the island of Burano, is one of the greatest glass masters of Venice. Some of his multicolored insects, iridescent butterflies, bugs, birds, fish and colorful flowers have been shown in numerous exhibitions worldwide and even in renowned museums of natural science because of their faithful reproduction of nature. Calle del Fumo, Cannaregio 5311 (near Fondamenta Nuove), Venice. Phone 041-522-2265. <http://www.vittoriocostantini.com>.

### **Vizio Virtu**

A paradise for chocaholics, this place called "Vice-Virtue" offers a mind-blowing selection of hand-crafted chocolates with exotic flavors. Some creations are filled with Barolo wine, blueberry, basil, tobacco, ginger or pumpkin. Do drink the iced chocolate in summer—it's wonderfully refreshing. Second location at Campiello San Toma 2815-16 (phone 041-244-0301). Daily 10 am-7:30 pm. Hours vary on holidays, during August and in summer; call ahead. San Toma, Calle de Campaniel, San Polo 2829A, Venice. Phone 041-275-0149. <http://www.viziovirtu.com>.

## **DINING**

### **Dining Overview**

There are a number of good places to eat in Venice, especially if you're in the market for seafood or regional dishes. In fact, with such a prolific number of places to get a meal, it may be hard to choose. If you're looking for a break from Italian food, your choices are dramatically lessened. As a general rule, reservations are recommended.

Seafood is king of the table in traditional Venetian cuisine. One local delicacy, *sarde in saor* (fresh sardines, fried and then marinated in onion, vinegar and raisins), gives an idea of the strong and tasty

flavors to be found in Venice. *Baccala* (salt cod) dishes are on many menus, as is crab (variably called *granseola*, *moleche* and other names), as well as exotic seafood salads and squid. Risottos of all colors are common.

Don't look for genuine Venetian recipes (or even particularly good food) in restaurants with a menu of the day prominently displayed in four languages. You'll find better meals elsewhere, usually just off the main streets. If you are on a budget (or even if you aren't), follow the locals to a *bacaro* or *osteria* (small public restaurant). The delicious *cicheti* (little appetizers often made of fish or meat) and *ombre* (glasses of wine) are too good to pass up. There are several choices around the Rialto area.

Vegetarians usually don't have problems in Venice, as many pasta dishes, salads and pizzas are made without meat. If you drop by a *bacaro*, you'll also find a variety of Venetian-style vegetables to choose from. Families will gravitate to pizzerias, which really aren't just for children and will probably offer more variety in toppings than you expect. Pizza is a common meal for adults and children alike. Restaurants are generally open for lunch 12:30-3 pm and for dinner 7 pm-midnight, and most close one or two days a week.

At coffee and pastry shops, as well as *bacari*, you'll find two prices for every item on the menu—the standing price and the sitting price. Often you will see a sign added to the price list, letting you know that it refers to products consumed at the bar only.

Dining in Venice (and the whole of Italy) has become far more pleasant for nonsmokers, as all restaurants by law have posted "no smoking" signs in their indoor dining rooms.

Expect to pay within these general guidelines for a dinner for one, not including drinks: \$ = less than 30 euros; \$\$ = 30 euros-40 euros; \$\$\$ = 41 euros-50 euros; \$\$\$\$ = more than 50 euros. Tax is legally included in menu prices, but watch out for an extra *servizio* (service charge) and *coperto* (cover charge). Tips are automatically included at the more expensive places.

## Local & Regional

### Al Covo

This restaurant's kitchen is gaining one of the best reputations in town. Its chef and owner is Cesare Benelli, but its soul is Diane, Cesare's American wife. Not far from Piazza San Marco and tucked away in a quiet alley behind the Riva degli Schiavoni, it serves innovative Venetian dishes, such as *tagliatelle con moleche e peperoni* (pasta with soft-shelled crab and peppers), and *gnocchetti with go* (goby, a type of fish), *scampi* and clams. Excellent wine list. Open Monday-Thursday for dinner only, Friday-Sunday for lunch and dinner. Closed late December-late January. Reservations required. \$\$\$\$ . Most major credit cards. Campiello della Pescaria 3968, Castello, Venice. Phone 041-522-3812. <http://www.ristorantealcovo.com>.

### Al Mascaron

Beautiful old trattoria decorated with old photographs and paintings done by friends of the restaurant, but its greatest asset is Gigi, who has been in charge of this Venetian classic for more than 30 years and is famous for his heavenly spaghetti *alle seppie, in nero* (black pasta with ink fish). Also try *sepioline* (small fried cuttlefish) and if you happen to be in town in late autumn, do order *canocchie* (delicious Mediterranean mantis shrimps), which taste most tender and aromatic at that time of the year. Another culinary classic is *fegato alla veneziana* (liver Venetian style). Monday-Saturday for lunch and dinner. Reservations required. \$\$\$ . No credit cards. Calle Lunga Santa Maria Formosa, Castello 5225, Venice. Phone 041-522-5995. <http://www.osteriamascaron.it>.

### Antiche Carampane

Francesco and his mother Piera Bertoluzzi Librai run a fabulous small trattoria tucked away in an untouristy corner of Venice (but only a short walk away from Rialto Bridge). It's attended by local fishermen in the know and is definitely proud of its slogan: "No Pizza, No Lasagne, No Menu Turistico." Fish and seafood are freshly bought at the nearby Rialto fish market. Try the *fritto misto* with *moleche* (also spelled *moeche*); those delicious soft-shell crabs are picked straight from the lagoon and are

said to be the best in Venice because they are fried without eggs. The spaghetti with crab meat is also recommended, or go for the fiery pasta made with small mussels and tomatoes. The delightful *branzino* (sea bass) is prepared in a pepperoni crust. Leave room for the heavenly desserts. The wines are also recommended. In summer, you can dine under umbrellas in the small alley. Tuesday-Saturday for lunch and dinner. Reservations recommended. \$\$\$\$. No credit cards. Rio Terra delle Carampane, San Polo 1911, Venice. Phone 041-524-0165. <http://www.antichecarampane.com>.

### **Avogaria**

Cuisine from Puglia in Italy's south is combined with local tastes and served in this stylish eatery not far from the Zattere. Steamed mussels in a light white sauce or a puree of broad beans with shrimp are typical offerings. The wine list concentrates on the Friuli and Veneto regions. Daily except Tuesday. \$\$\$-\$\$\$\$. Most major credit cards. Calle Dell'Avogaria, Dorsoduro 1629, Venice. Phone 041-296-0491. <http://www.avogaria.com>.

### **Bancogiro**

Luscious, light meals served in what used to be Venice's first private bank. On the edge of the Rialto market district, this place has divine outdoor seating on the Grand Canal. No pasta, but fresh fish served with vegetables, such as *branzino con arancia e cumino* (sea bass with orange and cumin) and regional cheeses and sausages. Excellent wines. Daily except Monday. \$\$\$-\$\$\$\$. Most major credit cards. Campo San Giacomo, San Polo 122, Venice. Phone 041-523-2061. <http://www.osteriabancogiro.it>.

### **Ca' d'Oro**

A favorite of locals, Ca' d'Oro is a beautiful example of simple Venetian cuisine. It's an extremely popular spot for *cicheti* and can get chaotic and crowded. Try the freshly grilled squid or the mussels, *schie fritte* (fried tiny gray lagoon shrimp) or the delicious *fegato alla veneziana* (liver Venetian style). Open daily except Thursday for dinner, Sunday for lunch also. \$\$-\$\$\$\$. Calle del Pistor, Cannaregio 3912 (across Strada Nova from the Ca' d'Oro museum), Venice. Phone 041-528-5324.

### **Dalla Marisa**

Signora Marisa hails from a dynasty of butchers. Her small place may not be very comfortable, but you will rub shoulders with locals, *gondolieri* and the odd tourist lucky enough to find it (try to avoid the "rush hour" between noon and 1 pm if you arrive without a reservation). Winter is high season for meat and fowl. Expect delicacies such as filled pheasant, pasta with wild boar sugo or veal ragout. The beef risotto is wonderful. In summer more fish dishes appear. Try marinated sea bass or grated scallops. It's best to go for a set menu, which includes a decent house wine. Open Monday, Wednesday and Sunday for lunch only; Tuesday and Thursday-Saturday for lunch and dinner. Reservations highly recommended. \$\$\$. No credit cards. Fondamenta San Giobbe, Canareggio 652/B (as you walk down the Lista di Spagna from the train station, take the last left before crossing the first bridge; walk past Ponte dei Tre Archi bridge), Venice. Phone 041-720-211.

### **La Bitta**

This establishment just off Campo San Barnaba serves meat dishes ranging from duck to Tuscan beef—but no seafood. Enjoy the *agnolotti* (big ravioli) filled with seasonal vegetables, such as spring asparagus with a Taleggio cheese sauce, but leave plenty of room for the divine desserts, rich in chocolate and hazelnut cream. Good wine list. Open Monday-Saturday for dinner only. \$\$-\$\$\$\$. No credit cards. Calle Lunga San Barnaba, Dorsoduro 2753/A, Venice. Phone 041-523-0531.

### **Le Bistrot de Venise**

Between Campo San Luca and Piazza San Marco, this small restaurant pursues the rediscovery of Venetian cuisine and wines from the Renaissance to modern times with a selection of seasonal and regional offerings. Good French and Italian cheeses and wine list. Occasional live cabaret or jazz music in the evening, as well as an extensive art and literary program that includes late-afternoon discussions (in Italian) as well as food and wine tastings. Open daily for lunch and dinner. Reservations recommended. \$\$-\$\$\$\$. Most major credit cards. Calle dei Fabbri, San Marco 4685, Venice. Phone 041-523-6651. <http://www.bistrotdevenise.com>.

### **Osteria Da Alberto**

Of the many *bacari* or *osterie* in the city, we especially love this one. One reason is that you'll see

older Venetian specialties on the menu that are almost impossible to find in other restaurants, such as *polenta con le seppie in nero* (polenta with ink fish in black sauce). These delicacies practically cry out for an *ombra* (glass of wine). Open Monday-Saturday for lunch and dinner. Reservations recommended. \$\$\$\$. Most major credit cards. Calle Giacinto Gallina (near SS Giovanni e Paolo hospital), Cannaregio 5401, Venice. Phone 041-523-8153.

### **Osteria Vivaldi**

Drop in for an *ombra* (glass of wine) and *polpette* (fish or meatballs that are baked or fried) around noon when the *cicheti* are fresh. It offers up local ambience and traditional Venetian food, including the homey, delicious salt cod with polenta and *fegato alla veneziana*. (Even if you think you don't like liver, try this.) \$\$\$. Most major credit cards. San Polo 1457 (near Campo San Polo), Venice. Phone 041-523-8185. <http://www.osteria-vivaldi.com>.

### **Ribot**

Smart surroundings highlight the artistic presentation, beginning with appetizers of tuna carpaccio or a creamy fennel soup with steamed shrimp. Lamb is paired with the slightly bitter, red Treviso chicory (available throughout the winter). The cheese selection is very good. Open Monday-Saturday for lunch and dinner. \$\$\$\$. Most major credit cards. Fondamenta Minotto Santa Croce 158, Venice. Phone 041-524-2486.

### **Cuisines**

#### **Italian**

### **Ai Gondolieri**

This restaurant has a menu that's unusual for Venice—no fish. Good for meat lovers, but vegetarian dishes are also available. Try the salad with duck and 30-year-aged balsamic vinegar, or the beef fillet in Barolo wine and porcini. The tasting menu is also recommended. Look there for the local favorite, *cavallo*: horsemeat. Daily except Tuesday for lunch and dinner. Closed for lunch July and August. Reservations recommended. \$\$\$\$\$. Most major credit cards. Dorsoduro 366 (near the Peggy Guggenheim Collection and the Ponte del Formager), Venice. Phone 041-528-6396. <http://www.aigondolieri.com>.

### **Al Nono Risorto**

A few minutes' walk away from Rialto Bridge, the "resurrected grandfather" (actually managed by a young team) caters to young locals and travelers with a small purse. It serves great inexpensive pizza (starting from 8 euros), pasta, huge salads and grilled fish and meat dishes. Lovely garden with a leafy canopy, something hard to find in Venice. Friday-Tuesday for lunch and dinner, Thursday for dinner only; closed Wednesday. Reservations recommended Friday-Sunday. \$\$\$. No credit cards. Sotoportego Bettina, Santa Croce 2338, Venice. Phone 041-524-1169.

### **Andri**

Popular during the Venice Film Festival, Andri is an old-fashioned trattoria. It's at its loveliest in the summer, when dining under the quiet pergola is a pleasure. The *fritto misto* (a selection of fried seafood) is memorable, as is the simple and classic *risotto di pesce* (seafood risotto). Open Wednesday-Sunday for lunch and dinner. Reservations required during the Venice Film Festival. \$\$\$\$. Most major credit cards. Via Lepanto 21, Lido, Venice. Phone 041-526-5482.

### **Caravella**

This restaurant is located in a fashionable shopping area, a few steps from Piazza San Marco, in the Hotel Saturnia. An elegant spot for romantic dinners in either the nautical ambience inside or the garden courtyard, but don't expect to meet many Venetians there. Traditional cuisine with a good wine list and delightful staff. Daily for lunch and dinner. Reservations required. \$\$\$\$\$. Most major credit cards. Via XXII Marzo, San Marco 2397, Venice. Phone 041-520-8901. <http://www.restaurantlacaravella.com>.

### **Casin dei Nobili**

The chef has a way with fish, whether in the delicate melt-in-the-mouth treatment of sea bass with asparagus and radicchio or the meatier monkfish in a supportive sauce of leeks, cherry tomatoes and basil. The pasta and sweets are all made in-house, as is the bread—so good that it's easy to devour

the whole basketful while reading the menu. Open daily except Monday for lunch and dinner (pizza served until 7 pm). \$\$-\$\$\$\$. Most major credit cards. Calle Lombardo (Calle della Toletta becomes Lombardo before entering Campo S. Barnaba), Dorsoduro 2765, Venice. Phone 041-241-1841.

### **Do Forni**

A Venice standard. Heads of state and ambassadors can often be found dining there. Two of its renowned dishes are *capesante alla Casanova* (a scallop dish with porcini mushrooms) and *risotto al Tiziano*, but you can't begin a meal any better than with the deceptively simple scallops and shrimp on arugula served with olive oil, lemon, salt and pepper. Daily for lunch and dinner. Reservations required. \$\$\$\$. Most major credit cards. Calle del Forno, San Marco 457-470, Venice. Phone 041-523-2148. <http://www.doforni.it>.

### **Harry's Bar**

In the past, this place was a haunt of great artists and writers such as Orson Welles, Truman Capote and Ernest Hemingway, who mentioned it in his novel *Across the River and into the Trees* (1950). Arrigo Cipriani's restaurant now welcomes everyone from movie stars to tourists. The carpaccio, risotto, *pasta e fagioli* (pasta and beans), *fritto di scampi* (fried prawns) and flambéed sweet *crepelle* (similar to crepes) are tasty. Around 1950, the carpaccio (named after the Venetian painter Vittore Carpaccio) was invented in this place: Giuseppe Arrigo Cipriani, who founded the bar in 1931, allegedly prepared it for the Contessa Amalia Nani Mocenigo, who had been told by her doctor to abstain from cooked meat. Harry's Bar is also the birthplace of the Bellini: Ordering this drink is yet another pleasurable way to break the bank in Venice. Daily for lunch and dinner. \$\$\$\$. Most major credit cards. Calle Vallaresso, San Marco 1323, Venice. Phone 041-528-5777. <http://www.cipriani.com>.

### **Harry's Dolci**

The view of the Giudecca Canal from the terrace with (unfortunately) plastic chairs or through the quayside windows is to die for, and "Death in Venice" appears to be even sweeter once you learn that the sister of Harry's Bar offers almost the same menu but at much lower prices. This includes the famous Bellini made with juice of white peaches and Italian Prosecco. It's still not a bargain, but do try the risotto Cipriani and other famous classics such as the carpaccio alla Cipriani or *vegato di vitello alla veneziana con polenta* (veal liver with polenta). The fabulous dolci include *meringata alla crema* and triple-layer chocolate cake, and if you look like you can't (or shouldn't) eat it alone, the discreet waiter will bring a second spoon. Daily for lunch and dinner; closed Tuesday in winter. Reservations highly recommended. \$\$\$\$. Most major credit cards. Fondamenta San Biagio, Giudecca 773, Venice. Phone 041-522-4844. <http://www.cipriani.com>.

### **Locanda Cipriani**

Travel to the tranquil island of Torcello and you'll find this much-extolled restaurant, host to royalty and the famous. Immersed in vegetable gardens, history and silence, Locanda Cipriani is an experience to savor. Our favorite time to go is in the spring. Try a specialty of Torcello, the delicious *risotto alla Torcellana*, prepared with fresh vegetables from local gardens. Open daily except Tuesday for lunch and dinner. Closed in January. Reservations required. \$\$\$\$. Most major credit cards. Piazza Santa Fosca 29, Torcello, Venice. Phone 041-730-150. <http://www.locandacipriani.com>.

### **Pizzeria Birraria La Corte**

Formerly an old brewery, this place has been transformed into a modernly furnished pizza restaurant. Popular with a young crowd. Pleasant outdoor seating in summer. Open daily except Monday for lunch and dinner. \$-\$\$\$. Most major credit cards. Campo San Polo 2168, San Polo, Venice. Phone 041-275-0570. <http://www.birrarialacorte.it>.

### **Pizzeria due Colonne**

If you're looking for a place to eat outside in good weather (in winter there is a large heated tent), head to this pizzeria. Sit under the gazebo in the picturesque square and drink chilled white wine. Locals seem to love the pizza with horse meat. Open Monday-Friday for dinner, Saturday and Sunday for lunch and dinner. \$-\$\$\$. No credit cards. Campo Sant'Agostin, San Polo 2343, Venice. Phone 041-524-0685.

### Trattoria alla Madonna

An old (it's been there for more than half a century) favorite with locals and repeat visitors alike, this place is a little touristy, but the seafood is fresh and consistently good. Efficient service. Open daily except Wednesday for lunch and dinner. Closed in January and for two weeks in August. Reservations not accepted. \$\$\$-\$\$\$\$. Most major credit cards. Rialto, Calle de la Madonna, San Polo 594, Venice. Phone 041-522-3824. <http://www.ristoranteallamadonna.com>.

### Vini da Gigio

This tiny, relaxed, well-known restaurant run by Laura and Paulo Lazzari (they are siblings) has excellent traditional food and a nice selection of wines and vegetarian dishes. Specialties include *moeche frite* (fried crabs), which are available only in winter and early spring. Consider ordering the mixed seafood plate, with succulent scallops (*capessante*) on the half-shell, baby shrimp on monkfish medallions and carpaccio of the market fish of the day. In autumn, duck, pheasant and rabbit are on the menu and are brought in by hunters who are friends of the restaurant. Paulo will recommend the right wine to go with your meal. Open Wednesday-Sunday for lunch and dinner. Reservations highly recommended. \$\$\$-\$\$\$\$. Most major credit cards. Fondamenta San Felice, Cannaregio 3628/A (just off Strada Nuova behind the Billa supermarket), Venice. Phone 041-528-5140. <http://www.vinidagigio.com>.

### Seafood

#### Ai Mercanti

This is a good choice for a romantic evening for two. You'll find seasonally inspired takes on classic Venetian seafood dishes. The delicate *risotto agli scampi e carciofi* (risotto with prawns and artichokes) is wonderful. Among the best wine cellars in Venice. Menu changes according to season. Open Monday for dinner only, Tuesday-Saturday for lunch and dinner. Reservations recommended. \$\$\$\$ . Most major credit cards. Calle dei Fuseri, Corte Coppo, San Marco 4346, Venice. Phone 041-523-8269. <http://www.aimercanti.com>.

#### Alle Testiere

It's strictly seafood only in this small but refined osteria with only a few tables and 20 seats. Start with *antipasto misto di frutti di mare al vapore* (mixed steamed traditional seafood appetizers), *baccala mantecato con polenta bianca di mais Biancoperla* (cod fish puree with polenta of Biancoperla white corn) or *cozze in cassopipa* (mussels cassopipa style), before you move on to *filetti di rombo alla Mediterranea* (turbot fillets Mediterranean style) or grilled *calamaretti caciarioli* (small calamari). The menu with its creative dishes changes frequently. Excellent wines by the glass. Tuesday-Saturday for lunch and dinner. Reservations required. \$\$\$\$ . Most major credit cards. Calle del Mondo Nuovo, Castello 5801, Venice. Phone 041-522-7220. <http://www.osterialletestiere.it>.

#### Corte Sconta

It's not easy to find this little trattoria near the church of San Martino and the monumental entrance to the Arsenal, but the search is worth it. Ask the charming owner, Lucia Zambon, and she will recommend to start with the *antipasti degustazione*, a platter full of delicacies that swim or crawl in the lagoon. Then try the *cozze ripiene e gratinate* (stuffed mussels) and *baccala mantecato* (pureed salt cod, often served on polenta wedges). In winter you simply must order the fried *moleche* (small soft-shell crabs). Open Wednesday-Saturday for lunch and dinner. Closed early January-early February and mid-July to mid-August. Reservations required. \$\$\$\$ . Most major credit cards. Calle del Pestrin, Castello 3886, Venice. Phone 041-522-7024.

#### Dalla Morra

Shaded tables sit right along the canal, and the menu features seafood from the lagoon—best sampled in the gigantic *gran fritto della laguna* or the grilled equivalent. The *branzino* (sea bass) is excellent, or you can opt for the local classic *sarde in saor*, sardines in a tangy onion sauce. Open Monday-Thursday for lunch only, Friday-Sunday for lunch and dinner. \$\$\$ . Most major credit cards. Fondamente Manin 75, Murano. Phone 041-736-344. <http://www.ristorantedallamora.com>.

#### Fiaschetteria Toscana

Specializing in seafood dishes, Fiaschetteria Toscana uses only seasonal, fresh produce. Among its acclaimed dishes are polenta with *schie* (tiny lagoon shrimp), spaghetti with *vongole veraci* (clams) and Venetian-style liver. Also one of the few places in Venice with an impressive assortment of

cheeses. More than 600 wines are also available. Open for lunch and dinner Friday-Tuesday, Wednesday for lunch. Closed the last week in July and the first three weeks in August. Reservations recommended. \$\$\$\$ . Most major credit cards. Salizzada San Giovanni Crisostomo, Cannaregio 5719, Venice. Phone 041-528-5281. <http://www.fiaschetteriatoscana.it>.

### **Osteria da Fiore**

The cuisine has been called some of the best in the world. Mara and Maurizio Martin's restaurant is in a narrow *calle* between Campo San Polo and Campo San Giacomo dell'Orio. The all-seafood menu is composed of reinvented traditional recipes, such as *penne alle capesante* (pasta and scallops) with broccoli. Strictly fresh seasonal ingredients are used. We think it's a little overpriced, but there's no doubt the food is delicious. Open Tuesday-Saturday for lunch and dinner. Reservations required. \$\$\$\$ . Most major credit cards. Calle del Scaleter, San Polo 2202, Venice. Phone 041-721-308. <http://www.dafiore.net>.

### **Poste Vecie**

One of the city's oldest eateries, this place is located next to the fish market near Rialto and reached by its own little bridge (you may have to kick some empty fish crates out of the way to get there at lunchtime). Not surprisingly, seafood is the specialty, including *sarde in saor* (sardines in onion sauce) and *baccala mantecato* (salt cod). Best, though, is the simple grilled, fresh fish from the market. Open daily except Tuesday for lunch and dinner. Reservations recommended. \$\$\$\$ . Most major credit cards. Pescheria di Rialto, San Polo 16020, Venice. Phone 041-721-822. <http://www.postevecie.com>.

## **SECURITY**

### **Etiquette**

Contrary to the relaxed image many have of Italy, the Italian business world emphasizes formality and procedure. Get assistance from a local contact, go through proper channels and always present yourself and your firm as well-polished and accomplished.

**Appointments**—Having an intermediary is essential. Without someone to make the appropriate contacts, you'll find it hard to get much accomplished. Your go-between can help schedule meetings, which should be set up well in advance. It is difficult—nearly impossible, in fact—to call on a businessperson unannounced. Confirm your meetings a day or two before they're set to take place. Punctuality is expected. Your Italian counterparts may or may not be as prompt: Those in the northern part of the country generally are; those to the south are less so.

**Personal Introductions**—Greet others with a handshake and a slight nod. Titles are important: Use any professional titles that are supplied on introduction or, better yet, ask for a list of the participants and their official titles in advance of the meeting. Continue to use the title and last name unless you are instructed otherwise. Many Italians have two business cards: One with their business contact information that they use for formal contacts; the other has personal contact information and is used for more social occasions. Do not exchange business cards at social events.

**Negotiating**—The pace of negotiations is slow, and final decisions are not made by lower-level functionaries. The chain of command in Italian business is both vertical and horizontal, and decision-making can take a long time. Last-minute demands can be made by a person who enters the negotiations late in the game. In fact, this is sometimes used as a negotiating tool. Remain patient and calm at all times.

**Business Entertaining**—Business dinners are common but will typically involve only a few key players. If you are hosting the dinner, ask your Italian contact whom to invite. If you want to pay, tip the waiter ahead of time and ask that the bill be quietly given to you. If you do not make such arrangements in advance, you will have to ask for the check; it will not be brought to you automatically.

**Body Language**—Italians typically converse while standing close to one another. They tend to gesture when talking, and handshakes can extend longer than in other cultures.

**Gift Giving**—Small but high-quality gifts are appropriate in some situations: Ask your intermediary for advice. If you are invited to a home, take flowers or gift-wrapped chocolates. Exercise caution in giving wine: Many Italians are experts; if you're not, ask for advice and make sure what you chose is an excellent vintage.

**Conversation**—Very little is off-limits in Italian conversation, but avoid being critical of Italian society and culture, even if your host is. Soccer is a passion and an easy topic, as are art, travel and Italian culture. Politics, religion and the less-positive sides of Italy, including Mussolini, World War II and the mafia, are probably better avoided.

### **Personal Safety**

In Venice, as in most major tourist cities, the main danger is theft—watch out for pickpockets and purse snatchers. Secure your wallet and bags when visiting crowded sites, including the area near the Rialto Bridge, Piazza San Marco and Ponte della Paglia (in front of the Bridge of Sighs), as well as when traveling on crowded ferries. Places where tourists stop to contemplate the city's beauty are favorite "working areas" of pickpockets. Do not leave backpacks or other bags unattended on boats or in public places.

It is a good idea to have a small purse or wallet with an ATM card and some currency in a securely zippered pocket and keep other cards, passports and so forth out of sight in a money belt or neck wallet hidden under clothing.

Attractive young women may draw stares and unwanted attention. Though this may sometimes be uncomfortable, it's not a threat. Remember that a sharp look or word will almost always deter undesired Romeos.

For police (*polizia*) assistance, dial 113; you can also contact the military police (*carabinieri*) by dialing 112.

For the latest information, contact your country's travel-advisory agency.

### **Health**

No vaccinations are necessary to enter the country, and both food and tap water are safe to consume. Local habit is to drink bottled water, but it isn't a necessity. Sanitation is the same as in any major European city. The canals are nowhere near as dirty as they once were, but we would still caution against taking a dip. Summertime hazards include mosquito bites and sunstroke, so be prepared or visit a pharmacy for protective creams in both cases.

In case of a medical emergency, dial 118. Having an Italian speaker on hand would be a good idea. Some hotels have English-speaking doctors on call, and you should be able to communicate with doctors in the hospitals, although most aren't fluent in English. Pharmacies, called *farmacie*, are marked by a red or green cross and are plentiful in the tourist areas of Venice. Even simple drugs, such as aspirin, are available only at pharmacies. Though there is no single 24-hour pharmacy; individual stores stay open late on a rotating basis. Pharmacies post the necessary information on their doors about which locations are open at night, and a list is published in local newspapers as well.

The city hospital Ospedale Civile, located at San Giovanni e Paolo, has high-quality health care, and its emergency room is open 24 hours (phone 041-529-4111). Ambulances are high-speed launches and can be summoned by phoning 118.



Also, check with your insurance company before departure about travel insurance and reimbursements for medical assistance overseas.

Smoking is prohibited in all enclosed public places, and the ban is surprisingly well-respected.

### **Disabled Advisory**

Venice is not very friendly to visitors with physical disabilities. Only a few bridges have platforms for wheelchairs. Steps are everywhere. Hotels, restaurants and museums are often inaccessible to disabled visitors. Though people are generally kind and helpful, you should plan your trip carefully.

Visitors in wheelchairs should avoid Venice late October-February, when Piazza San Marco and other low-lying areas are often flooded. The temporary walkways are not accessible to wheelchairs. Although the landing stages for all the vaporetti are accessible, these, too, may be unusable when high water makes them unusually slick. Vaporetto access is free to those in wheelchairs. The public toilets near the main sites (such as Piazza San Marco) have special disabled facilities.

The tourist offices at Piazza San Marco, the airport and the railway station have transportation information and maps indicating which areas are more accessible. Also note that at Stazione de Santa Lucia, in front of platform 5, there's an office that offers assistance to the disabled, such as getting in and out of the station and on and off trains. Attendants on the public boats are generally helpful getting disabled passengers on and off. Special water taxis from the airport to Venice are also available—you can book a taxi by calling Cooperativa San Marco (phone 041-523-5775).

The helpful Informahandicap can assist disabled visitors to Venice. Informahandicap, Venice Council Office, Ca' Farsetti, San Marco 4136 (ground floor, URP office). Phone 041-274-8144. For additional information, visit the city of Venice's Web site. <http://www.comune.venezia.it/handicap>.

### **Dos & Don'ts**

Do dress appropriately and be respectful when visiting churches. The official dress code in all churches requires that your shoulders, knees and midriff must be covered. Women rarely cover their heads upon entering a church anymore, and you will see as many bareheaded locals as tourists. Also remember to turn off cell phones when visiting churches, art galleries and museums.

Don't wear jeans to restaurants in the evening, except in *pizzerie* and small *osterie*. You will be better received if you respect this convention.

Do keep your voice low in restaurants, and remember that even though those around you are speaking Italian, they may be perfectly able to overhear and understand what you say in English.

Do learn a few polite words and phrases, such as "please" (*per piacere* or *per favore*) and "thank you" (*grazie*). This simple courtesy will set you apart as having made an effort to be polite. Before beginning a question in English, it is polite to ask first if the person speaks English. The reply will nearly always be "a little" even when the speaker's English is nearly perfect.

Do attempt to pronounce Italian words correctly. Just remember that the letter "c" followed by an "i" or "e" has the English "ch" sound, while a "ch" followed by an "i" or "e" has the English "k" sound. Thus, *che citta!* (what a town!) is pronounced *KAY chee-TAH*.

## FACTS

### Geostats

**Passport/Visa Requirements:** Citizens of Canada and the U.S. need passports but not visas. All visitors must present proof of sufficient funds and onward passage. Reconfirm travel document requirements with your carrier before departure.

**Population:** 270,884.

**Languages:** Italian.

**Predominant Religions:** Christian (Roman Catholic, Protestant).

**Time Zone:** 1 hour ahead of Greenwich Mean Time (+1 GMT). Daylight Saving Time is observed from the last Sunday in March to the last Sunday in October.

**Voltage Requirements:** 220 volts. 50 Hz.

**Telephone Codes:** 39, country code; 041, city code;

### Money

#### Currency Exchange

Along with most of Europe, Italy uses the euro. Payment at most hotels, shops and restaurants can be made with credit cards. Where accepted, payment in foreign currency cash will be subject to a hefty fee.

ATMs are easily found in areas frequented by tourists, including the train station, and tend to provide the best exchange rates. Currency-exchange agencies offer decent rates, but their commissions may be high. Most post office branches offer currency-exchange service at a fair commission rate.

Banks are commonly open Monday-Friday 8:30 am-1:30 pm and 3:30-4:30 pm. Some banks are also open on Saturday morning (confirm with the individual bank).

### Taxes

The Italian tax on the purchase of goods, called IVA or VAT, is roughly 21% on most items (some items and may have reduced rates of 10%, 6% or even 4%). It's included in price tags. Look for shops that display a *Tax-free for Tourists Service* sign on their windows: It may be possible for non-European Union residents to get the 21% back. When you spend a minimum of 154.95 euros (VAT included) in the same shop on a single receipt, ask for the necessary tax-free declaration form (you'll need to show your passport). Generally, shop owners will be quick to use the possible discount as incentive for you to buy and will give you all of the necessary details to receive an easy refund. Show this form at airport customs before you enter the gate and be prepared to show the original receipt and the unused items. Have the customs officer stamp the form. Depending on the refund company, you may receive a cash refund on the spot, or you may have to mail the form and then receive a credit on your credit card.

In 2011, the City of Venice introduced a new tourist tax for visitors staying overnight, which is levied on the first five consecutive nights of any overnight stay. Tariffs vary according to season, location and to the type of accommodation (4.50 euros for five-star hotels). Children ages 10-16 pay half the tax fare, whereas children younger than 10 are not be charged at all.

## **Tipping**

Tipping is not obligatory in Venice restaurants and hotels, as service is often included in your bill (check first); however, it is always appreciated. One or two euros can be left as a sign of good will if the service and the restaurant are above average. But in some cases, tips are expected and not tipping might mean unsatisfactory service.

It is customary to tip the hotel porter between 0.50 euros and 1 euro per piece of luggage. At the end of a gondola tour, especially if you had a singer and accordion music, tip the musicians 10%-20% of the trip price. When visiting a small church, a guide may show you around. He or she won't ask for money but will greatly appreciate a donation for the church.

## **Weather**

Venice is nearly always humid. The water that makes the city so unique also keeps the humidity level at about 80%. Keep this in mind, as the temperatures will feel more extreme. December-February, the average temperature is 32-37 F/0-3 C. Fog and wind often roll in with the coldest months. In summer, the humidity can become very uncomfortable. The hottest months are July and August, with average temperatures ranging 86-91 F/30-33 C.

In the fall and winter, sometimes even through spring, the water often rises above usual levels and floods many of the streets and squares, usually for a few hours at a time. Called *acqua alta*, or high water, the locals are used to dealing with it—tall rubber boots become de rigueur.

## **What to Wear**

The city's hot summers and cold winters seem even more extreme because of high humidity levels. In the hottest months (July and August), lightweight cotton clothes are preferable. Be sure to wear a hat and apply insect repellent and sunscreen before venturing out in the heat of the day.

In winter, dress in layers so that you can adjust to different temperatures when you stop at bars, museums and shops. In the coldest months (December-February), a scarf, hat and gloves are suggested, as well as an overcoat. You may also need a pair of waterproof boots in case of high water (*acqua alta*). Some hotels provide them, but you can buy an inexpensive pair if necessary. Do not, however, wear boots to a business meeting or a concert—take your shoes along in a bag and change before or upon entering the building.

Comfortable shoes are essential in Venice, whether you are there on business or for pleasure. Walking is often the only way to get around the city. The city's business dress code is quite flexible. For men, a suit and tie are always best. There are no rules for women, as long as you dress fashionably (this is Italy, after all).

## **Transportation**

Transportation in Venice means traveling by water. Everything in the city is moved either by boat or on foot. No cars are allowed, and you won't see any bicycles or mopeds, except on the Lido.

Traveling the length of the Grand Canal on a vaporetto, or water bus, from the train station to Piazza San Marco is a lovely way to get a sense of how the city functions. But you can also take a water taxi or gondola. The vaporetti are analogous to city buses in other cities—but cost more than you'd expect. If you are staying for any length of time or plan on taking them a lot, consider one of the money-saving passes available. The water taxis are similar to auto taxis on terra firma. They carry two to four passengers—again, for a higher fee than you'd expect.

Gondolas are the most expensive boating option. But if you don't want to shell out the fees asked for a romantic gondola ride, you can step aboard the gondola's simpler cousin, the *traghetto*. Used often by Venetians to save time and shoe leather, they are the same type of boat, but their sole purpose is to cross the Grand Canal when there is no bridge nearby. Like the locals, you should stand for the journey, which takes all of three minutes and costs about 0.50 euros.

Crossing the Grand Canal without backtracking to one of the bridges is the point of the *traghetto*, but the same thing can be accomplished via vaporetto. Successive stops are on alternate sides of the Grand Canal, and you can travel one stop—or to the next one on the other side—free with a day or multiday pass. For the full fare of 7 euros, you can travel the entire length of the Grand Canal, getting on and off at will, for a total of 60 minutes.

### **Public Transportation**

The main form of public transportation in Venice proper is the vaporetto (water bus). If you will be traveling extensively, you might want to purchase a Venice Connected Card. It can be purchased at all Azienda Consorzio Transporti Veneziano (ACTV) ticketing booths or online. It has an exceedingly complicated pricing structure, but it usually includes unlimited travel on both the water and overland services provided by ACTV, as well as use of all public restrooms. Prices range 18 euros (12-hour tourist travel card ACTV) to 60 euros (seven-day ACTV tourist pass plus Vaporetto dell'Arte). Full details are available on the Web site. Phone 041-2424. <http://www.veniceconnected.com>.

The water buses operate on several lines that are numbered and color-coded on maps that are available and posted at every stop. Some lines run in one direction only, but most go in both directions. The water buses are most useful when you need to get from one end of town to the other. They also stop regularly at the islands of Murano, Burano, Torcello, Giudecca and the Lido.

Buy tickets before boarding and validate them if the seller didn't do so—you may have to ask. You don't need to show them when boarding, just hold on to them for the duration of the trip. If you are caught riding without a ticket, or with an unvalidated one, you'll be fined on the spot. A single ticket costs 7 euros and lasts for 60 minutes from the time of stamping. Return tickets don't exist—just buy two singles. One- and three-day passes are available for 23 euros and 38 euros (these are valid on most lines but not all; also valid for trips to and from the airport). Though not astounding bargains, they may save you money and a lot of time and energy walking between points. After midnight, service slows or halts on most routes, but the N (for nocturnal) line continues serving major stops all night.

### **Ship**

Venice is a popular stop on the cruise-ship circuit. There are multiple port facilities, the largest centered on the area below the train station. You'll also see smaller ships docked at the quay at the east end of Riva degli Schiavoni, a 20-minute walk from Piazza San Marco.

### **Taxi**

Conventional taxis are only of use to get back and forth to the mainland or the airport. There are stands in Piazzale Roma and at the airport. It isn't easy to find one to hail on the mainland streets, so you're better off phoning a reputable taxi company to arrange a pickup. If you need one early in the morning, book it the night before. Beware of unlicensed cabs; look for the usual sign and meter. Radio Taxi offers four-wheeled service on the mainland. Phone 041-595-2080.

Venice water taxis are snazzy little boats. The official fare starts at 15 euros, with the meter adding about 1 euro for every two minutes. It costs roughly 60 euros to take a water taxi from the train station to Piazza San Marco. There are extra fees tacked on for various things, such as holiday and night surcharges, which all add up to a very expensive ride but may be worth it if you are traveling

with a larger group with unwieldy baggage. Also, booking one through a hotel is usually more expensive, because the hotel will get a commission. Among those offering water-taxi service is Consorzio Motoscafi Venezia. Phone 041-522-2303. <http://www.motoscafivenezia.it>.

## Train

Arriving in Venice by train is more remarkable than arriving in most cities, especially for first timers. Setting foot outside the station, you are immediately confronted by the beauty of the Grand Canal. It's breathtaking on a sunny day. From there you can walk to Piazza San Marco in 40 minutes. The vaporetto docks and ticket booths are just outside the station. For vaporetto No. 2 (fast boat down Grand Canal), turn left. For vaporetto No. 1 (slow boat down Grand Canal), turn right.

## Venezia Santa Lucia

The Venice train station is called Venezia Santa Lucia (S. Lucia), though it's also referred to as the *ferrovia*, which simply means railway. Don't get off the train at Venezia Mestre, the station on the mainland just before Venice itself, unless you intend to. Some trains do terminate at the Venezia Mestre station, in which case you'll have to get on another train for one stop. Connections between the Mestre and Venice stations are frequent (1 euro if you don't have a train ticket to Venice already). For rail information, phone 041-785-670. <http://www.ferroviedellostato.it>.

The rail station links Venice with other Italian cities as well as major European cities. You needn't arrive by train to take advantage of a useful service at the station. The Cooperativa Trasbagagli operates a porter stand, which will transport your luggage to your hotel for a fee. Depending on your hotel's location, it would be wise to consider it as an option. If you are laden down with bags, navigating your own way over bridges and canals can be daunting. Phone 041-713-719. <http://www.trasbagagli.it>.

## Other

Like so many other tourists, you may find the urge to be ferried around in a gondola irresistible. It's one of those things to be done in a lifetime. Just think of paying through the nose as part of the experience. The main gondola stand is at Bacino Orseolo, near Piazza San Marco. Gondoliers are required to remain in particular areas, so if there is a certain area such as the Grand Canal or out front of Piazza San Marco that you'd like to traverse, choose a gondolier in that zone.

Gondola fees depend primarily on the duration of the trip, and bargaining does occur. Fees vary according to time of day and start at 80 euros for the first 30 minutes, for up to six people, and about 40 euros for each additional 20 minutes. It goes up to 100 euros 7 pm-8 am, 50 euros for each additional 20 minutes. For better or worse, you won't be automatically serenaded. That's an extra fee and comes with group trips.

## Dubrovnik, Croatia

### OVERVIEW

#### Introduction

Like something out of a picture-perfect fairy tale, the Old Town of Dubrovnik, Croatia, is a walled medieval city, with drawbridges (used in the 1991-92 war) and 18-ft-/6-m-high gates guarding the main entrances. The entire city is a UNESCO World Heritage site, but it's also very much a living, breathing city.

From the 1.2 mi/2 km of crenulated ramparts and watchtowers there are some perfect views of the city and the Adriatic Sea. Also, because the Old Town is blissfully free of traffic, the main streets (Placa or



Stradun), squares and alleyways are perfect for exploring the city on foot.

Most of the inhabitants of Dubrovnik live outside of the Old Town's city walls. However, inside those walls, the streets and alleyways are crammed with tiny shops, bars, cafes and restaurants that spill out onto the street at every conceivable point.

The serious damage from the Serbia-Croatian War has been completely repaired. Locals are still keen to point out the shrapnel and bullet damage that has been retained as a reminder of those dark days, which still come up frequently in conversation.

### **Must See or Do**

**Sights**—Views of the city and the sea from the city walls; religious relics and baroque architecture at the Dubrovnik Cathedral and Treasury; a tour of historic Fort Lovrijenac; a Concert by Candlelight in St. Saviour Church; the view from Cafe Buza (the Hole in the Wall) and a jump off the cliff—if you dare; a ride up the cable car to the peak of Mount Srd for breathtaking views over the city.

**Museums**—The Cloister of the Franciscan Monastery and its paintings of the city from times gone by; the museum at the Dominican Monastery; the city's naval history at the Maritime Museum.

**Memorable Meals**—Dalmatian cuisine at Restaurant Mimoza; "black risotto" at Locanda Peskarija; the mixed seafood platter at Rozarij; the freshest local seafood at Proto; immaculately presented Croatian food at Gil's.

**Late Night**—Live music and wine at Arsenal Taverna; international DJs at Klub Lazareti; cool jazz at the outdoor Trubadur Hard Jazz Cafe; local wine at the D'Vino Wine Bar; hot disco at the EastWest Beach Club.

**Walks**—A walking tour of the Old Town; a stroll along Sunj Beach; a morning walk through the Farmers Market on Gundulic Square.

### **Geography**

Dubrovnik is a coastal town overlooked by a range of mountains, the largest of which is Mount Srd. Just 3 mi/5 km across the mountains is Bosnia and Herzegovina, and 25 mi/40 km to the southeast is the border with Montenegro. Westward across the Adriatic Sea is mainland Italy.

The old walled city is seated on a small peninsula. Residential and tourism development extends southeast (the Ploce District) along the coast for a short distance and northwest to the nearby port of Gruz. But most people live to the west of the Old Town on the larger bifurcated peninsula, where one part is called Lapad and the other Babin Kuk.

The wide, marble-paved Stradun runs from the Pile gate to the Ploce gate and separates the old city of Ragusa to the south from old Dubrovnik to the north. The Ragusa side has all the grand buildings, churches and squares; the other side has steep climbing paths and steps to the city walls.

Just 15 minutes by boat from the town harbor is the peaceful and undeveloped island of Lokrum, and 25 minutes northwest from the main port of Gruz are the beautiful Elaphite Islands.

The island-studded coast of Croatia is generally referred to as the Dalmatian coast.

## History

The history of Dubrovnik is complex and checkered. Roman and Illyrian (from ancient Albania) remains have been found in Dubrovnik, but the site was more permanently occupied in the seventh century. People from the Roman city of Epidaurum, fleeing the invading Avars, settled on the rocky outcrop south of a marshy channel—this eventually was filled in to become the Stradun, the city's present-day main thoroughfare. On this site, they built a fortified city called Ragusa or Ragusium.

Croatian people who settled on the slopes of nearby Mount Srd and on the northern side of the Stradun called their city Dubrovnik. Over the years, the populations mixed, and the city was unified. The Stradun was paved in 1468, but the name Dubrovnik was not officially adopted until the early 20th century.

In the 11th century, Dubrovnik and most of Croatia fell under the dominion of Venice, the eastern Mediterranean's greatest maritime power. After 150 years of Venetian rule, Dubrovnik was transferred to the authority of the Hungaro-Croatian kings. As a republic, the city was left to run most of its own affairs, heavily paying off nearby countries in order to maintain its valued independence.

General unrest in the Balkans forced Dubrovnik to develop into a maritime trading power that stretched from England to Goa, India. In 1588, the city sent ships to join Spain's "Invincible Armada," which was defeated by the English fleet (led by Sir Francis Drake) off the French coast. Dubrovnik sailors also accompanied Columbus on his journeys west to the New World.

In 1806, Napoleon Bonaparte arrived under the pretext of preventing a Russian invasion—but his troops stayed put. When Napoleon was defeated at Liepzig in 1813, the Austro-Hungarian Empire annexed Dubrovnik.

After World War I, Dubrovnik joined the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes, which in 1929 became known as the Kingdom of Yugoslavia. In 1944, Joseph Broz Tito's Partisans liberated the city from German occupation.

In the aftermath of the war, Tito's dictatorship and particular brand of communist rule kept Yugoslavia united. His liberalized travel and economic policies provided Croats with a better quality of life than others in the Eastern Bloc. However, after Tito's death in 1980, and the fall of the Soviet Union a decade later, a power vacuum allowed ethnic and nationalistic disputes to take hold of the region.

Resisting President Slobodan Milosevic's attempts to keep a unified Yugoslavia with power centered in Belgrade, Croatia declared independence from Yugoslavia. Serbs within Croatia, who had the support of the Yugoslav People's Army, then declared their own borders within the Croatian state. These actions precipitated an invasion by the Yugoslav army.

Dubrovnik was not part of the Serb-Croat disputed territory but fell under siege from October 1991 to August 1992. The bulk of Yugoslav forces attacking Dubrovnik were from neighboring Montenegro. On just one day (6 December 1991), 5,000 shells rained down on the city. During the siege, snipers shot people in the streets, 70% of the city's buildings were damaged, and 200 defenders and 100 civilians were killed. Residents were saved by the thick ancient city walls, behind which they lived during the siege.

Today, Dubrovnik has been restored to its former glory. Five-star hotels have emerged to pamper travelers, an airport serves the city, it's one of the world's most popular cruise ports, and the only visible war damage was left there intentionally to remind people of what was lost in the war.

In July 2013, Croatia is scheduled to become the 28th member of the European Union, which is another major milestone for Croatia and its people.

## Port Information

### Location

There are two options for incoming cruise ships. The main port for large cruise ships (and Jadrolinija ferries) is called Gruz and is about 15 minutes by bus from the Old Town. However, some ships anchor in the deepwater bay opposite the Old Town, and passengers from these ships are tendered to shore.

The port of Gruz is a busy shopping area featuring Dubrovnik's two main department stores, a fish market, a tourist information office, banks, taxis and a bus station. For docking boats, amenities offered at the port include access to fresh water, trash disposal, and connections to the Internet, electricity and telephones. The port of Gruz recently underwent an expansion that included the addition of a new pier.

Additional information on the port can be obtained through the Dubrovnik Port Authority. Phone 020-313-333. <http://www.portdubrovnik.hr>.

### Potpourri

The city of Dubrovnik was named Ragusa until around 1918. At that time, the name Dubrovnik, which is derived from the Croatian word *dubrava* (oak forest) became the city's official name. Mount Srd was once covered in oak forests, which were torn down over the years for ship-building purposes, giving the area a barren and gray look.

The Republic of Dubrovnik was the first state to recognize the U.S. as a sovereign country.

Croatian-born actor Goran Visnjic, perhaps best known as Dr. Luka Kovac in the television drama *ER*, was the six-year reigning prince of the Dubrovnik Summer Festival for his lead in *Hamlet* before heading to Hollywood.

According to local history, Richard the Lionheart gave funds to the city of Dubrovnik to build its cathedral after he found refuge in the city from a storm during his return from a crusade.

The winds through the Adriatic have names, habits and even moods. *Maestral* is the light summer daytime breeze from the northwest; from the north comes the *bora*, which is cold and dry but considered good; the *jugo* blows warm and moist from the southeast and puts the locals in a bad mood.

Near Dubrovnik is the island of Mljet, considered by some to be the location of Calypso's island, where Odysseus was held captive by the sea nymph.

Dubrovnik's city walls represent some of the most durable fortress walls in the region. They encircle the city with a length that spans 6,365 ft/1,940 m. The walls saved the lives of thousands of residents during the siege in 1991-92.

Fort Lovrijenac is perched on a high steep cliff that is actually an Eocene thrust fault—there's a visible rusty red fault line rolling up the cliff face. The fort was damaged in the earthquake of 1667, along with many other parts of Dubrovnik.

The Feast of St. Blaise, the city's iconic patron saint, is arguably the most important date of the year in Dubrovnik. On 3 February, the celebrations begin with the release of doves from the St. Blaise Church. Processions, Masses, games and parties follow.



## **SEE & DO Shopping**

Dubrovnik is not a great shopping destination; however, you will find many souvenir and other shops that sell Dubrovnik mementos throughout the city. There are two department stores at the port of Gruz and another rather ordinary shopping precinct on the Lapad Peninsula.

On Stradun, Old Town's main street, you'll find banks, bookshops and clothing stores, but Od Puca, which runs to the south, has a number of small shops that sell jewelry, watches, photographic equipment and other merchandise. There are also several butchers, bakers and a minimarket. Silver filigree, linens and lace are local crafts specialties.

**Shopping Hours:** Shopping hours are not consistent from shop to shop and vary throughout the year. Small shops may shut down during the day while the owner goes out for a coffee or an extended lunch break. Generally these shops open around 8-9 am and close around 7-8 pm, but bigger stores and supermarkets stay open all day and into the early evening.

## **Galleries**

### **Galerija Sebastian**

A private gallery featuring established and new artists from the region. Most artwork is for sale. Monday-Saturday 9 am-7 pm. Svetog Dominika 5, Dubrovnik. Phone 020-321-490.

### **Lobel Galerija**

A top-notch, quality furniture shop that specializes in individual architectural designs. It also offers free interior-design assistance and assistance with shipping. Monday-Saturday 9 am-3 pm. Od Domina br. 1, Dubrovnik. Phone 020-324-940. <http://www.lobelgalerija.com>.

### **Photo Gallery Carmel**

Exhibits and sells the work of talented local and international photographers. Dubrovnik images by Lana Obad Slezic, a Canadian of Croatian heritage, are as striking as the city itself. Monday-Saturday 9 am-4 pm. Zamanjina 10, Dubrovnik. Phone 020-321-222. <http://www.photogallerycarmel.com>.

### **Romana Milutin Fabris**

Renowned painter of Dubrovnik scenes and buildings in larger-than-life color and size. Monday-Friday 10 am-1 pm and 5-9 pm, Saturday 10 am-noon. Marojice Kaboge bb, Dubrovnik. Phone 91-501-3318. <http://www.romana-milutin.com>.

## **Markets**

### **Farmers Market**

The Farmers Market has fresh vegetables and fruits, homemade jams and honey, olive oil, wine, brandy, bread and pastries, and more of what grows fresh and plentiful. Look for figs, pomegranates and oranges when they are in season; otherwise dried figs and candied orange peels are available, too. Monday-Saturday 7 am-1 pm. Gundulic Square, Dubrovnik.

## **Shopping Areas**

### **DOC Kerum Shopping Center**

This small above- and underground shopping mall has a large supermarket, shoe shops, clothing stores, souvenir shops, a cafe and more. Monday-Saturday 8:30 am-8:30 pm. Kralja Tomislava 7, Lapad, Dubrovnik. Phone 020-323-887.

## Specialty Stores

### Aromatica Dubrovnik

At once an ancient art and a current trend, the products in Aromatica are herbal-based remedies and beauty treatments. Scented oils, herbal extracts, creams, soaps, salt scrubs and sea sponges are all produced from local natural ingredients and plant resources. Daily 10 am-10 pm. Zlatarska 3, Dubrovnik. Phone 020-321-270.

### Boutique Croata

The cravat and its derivative modern-day necktie were invented in Croatia, so this is the place to get them. Beautiful women's scarves are sold as well. Open Monday-Saturday 9 am-9 pm. Pred Dvorom 2 (Stari Grad), Dubrovnik. Phone 020-638-330. <http://www.croata.hr>.

### DM Drogerie Markt

Part of an international drugstore chain that offers everything from cosmetics and toiletries to health foods, small gifts and other everyday items. Although you can pick up some health-related items there, prescription and other medicines can be obtained only at a pharmacy. Multiple locations throughout Dubrovnik, including one in the DOC Shopping Center. Monday-Friday 9 am-9 pm, Saturday 8 am-2 pm. Vukovarska 13, Dubrovnik. Phone 020-362-6097. <http://www.dm-drogeriemarkt.hr>.

### Foto Studio Placa

Film and digital processing, batteries, memory cards, film, Internet access and Internet phone calls, and general accessories. Open Monday-Friday 9 am-9 pm, Saturday 9 am-7 pm. Dropceva 3, Dubrovnik. Phone 098-945-0019.

### Modni Kantun

This elegant shop stocks the stylish silver and stone jewelry made by Croatian designer Ivana Bacura. Monday-Friday 9:30 am-6:30 pm, Saturday 9:30 am-12:30 pm. Zlatarska 3, Dubrovnik. Phone 098-500-377. <http://www.ivanabacura.com>.

### Ronchi Hat Factory

A great place to purchase unique, handmade hats at a good price. Exceptional quality and craftsmanship ensure you a durable hat that is also fun to wear. Monday-Friday 9:30 am-1 pm and 6-8 pm, Saturday 9:30 am-1 pm. Lucarica 2, Dubrovnik. Phone 098-820-416. <http://www.dubrovnik-online.com/ronchi>.

### Turbo Limac

Located at the Tommy business center, this is a fair-sized toy store with the usual range of children's goods. Open Monday-Saturday 8 am-9 pm, Sunday 8 am-8 pm. Put Republike 36, Dubrovnik. Phone 020-358-687. <http://www.turbolimac.com>.

## DINING

### Dining Overview

The local food, known as Dalmatian, is classic Mediterranean cuisine, which means that it's mainly seafood: red snapper, squid, cuttlefish, octopus and shellfish. And the preparation couldn't be any simpler—most seafood, fish and vegetables are simply grilled with olive oil, garlic, rosemary and lemon juice. The most popular meat dishes are pork, lamb and veal. Just about every restaurant seems to have a special risotto dish.

You'll find restaurants all over the city, but the Prijeko (a thoroughfare running parallel to the Stradun) is packed with tables and chairs during the summer.

There are very few international restaurants in Dubrovnik. The big luxury hotels offer multiple restaurant options and a broader range of international cuisine. But all offer fish and other local specialties in a more elegant and refined (and more expensive) atmosphere.

In true Mediterranean style, opening hours are variable and inconsistent; if business is quiet, an eatery may close early, or it may stay open later if it's busy.

Expect to pay within these general guidelines, based on the cost of a dinner for one, not including drinks, tax or tip: \$ = less than 100 HRK; \$\$ = 100 HRK-250 HRK; \$\$\$ = 251 HRK-400 HRK; and \$\$\$\$ = more than 400 HRK.

## **Local & Regional**

### **Arsenal Taverna**

Part of a group that also owns other local restaurants and a wine shop, this restaurant has a rustic, nautical interior and a large terrace that overlooks the old city port. Dalmatian cuisine and pizzas are served, and live music and musical shows are offered in the evenings. No cover charge. Pred Dvorom 1 (part of City Cafe complex), Dubrovnik. Phone 020-324-747. <http://www.mea-culpa.hr>.

### **Gil's**

This hot spot is a top contender for one of the country's finest restaurants. It serves immaculately presented (and prepared) Dalmatian and Continental food with expertly sourced ingredients. The location, at the top of the old port, isn't bad either. Daily for lunch and dinner. \$\$\$\$ . Most major credit cards. Sv Dominika 2, Dubrovnik. Phone 020-322-222. <http://www.gilsdubrovnik.com>.

### **Locanda Peskarija**

This restaurant is very popular with locals and serves mainly seafood. There's a small bar downstairs with additional tables upstairs and outside in summer for views of the harbor. This is definitely the place to try "black risotto," a local seafood specialty consisting of rice cooked with cuttlefish, colored and flavored with its own ink (hence its black color). Daily for lunch and dinner. \$\$-\$\$\$\$. Most major credit cards. Na Ponti (harbor front), Dubrovnik. Phone 020-324-750. <http://www.mea-culpa.hr>.

### **Maestoso**

Grilled meat and local vegetables—as well as fish—are the specialties at this popular restaurant. It has views of the harbor and city walls, but the busy road nearby makes dining on the terrace somewhat off-putting. Daily 10 am-1 am. \$\$-\$\$\$\$. Most major credit cards. Hvarska bb (just outside the Ploce gate), Dubrovnik. Phone 020-420-986. <http://www.restaurantmaestoso.hr>.

### **Proto**

A stylish fish restaurant, open since 1886, with a popular terrace and a waitstaff in traditional dress. Dishes there, though simple, are some of the city's finest examples of how to prepare the local fish. It is very popular with the locals and somewhat less expensive than Nautika, its sister restaurant. Daily for lunch and dinner. Reservations recommended in summer. \$\$\$ . Most major credit cards. Siroka 1, Dubrovnik. Phone 020-323-234. <http://www.esculaprestaurants.com/?proto=dubrovnik&dubrovnik=restaurant>.

### **Restaurant Konavoka**

Family-oriented restaurant that specializes in regional seafood and meat platters. Also popular are its dessert crepes filled with fruit, nuts and ice cream. Daily for lunch and dinner. \$\$-\$\$\$\$. Most major credit cards. Setaliste Kralja Zvonimira 10, Lapad, Dubrovnik. Phone 020-435-105. <http://www.dubrovnik-online.com/konavoka>.

### **Restaurant Mimoza**

Established in 1953, this long-standing restaurant offers a variety of local specialties as well as traditional favorites, including pasta and pizza. Along with great food, the spacious restaurant is conveniently located. Daily for lunch and dinner. \$\$\$ . Most major credit cards. Across from the Hilton Imperial Hotel, Dubrovnik. Phone 020-411-157. <http://www.esculaprestaurants.com/?mimoza=dubrovnik&dubrovnik=restaurant>.

### **Wanda**

Popular Mediterranean restaurant that offers both indoor and outdoor dining options. Grilled fish and meat dishes are available along with local and international wines. Complete meals for a fixed price are also offered. Daily for lunch and dinner. Reservations recommended. \$\$-\$\$\$\$. Most major credit cards. Prijeko 8, Dubrovnik. Phone 098-944-9317. <http://www.wandarestaurant.com>.

### **Seafood**

#### **Kamenice**

This small restaurant serves local seafood and, as the Croatian name suggests, it has an oyster bar that's very popular with the locals, especially during market hours. The tables outside are the best place to sit. Open daily February-October for breakfast, lunch and dinner; November-January for breakfast and lunch. Reservations not accepted. \$\$\$. Visa, MasterCard and American Express only. Gunduliceva Poljana 8 (beside the Pucic Palace Hotel in the market square), Dubrovnik. Phone 020-323-682.

### **Nautika**

A step up on the dining ladder, Nautika has great sea-view terraces, and uniformed waiters graciously attend to your needs. The kitchen serves mostly seafood and meat seasoned with Dalmatian herbs. Daily for lunch and dinner. Reservations recommended. \$\$\$\$. Most major credit cards. Brsalje 3 (located just outside the Pile gate), Dubrovnik. Phone 020-442-526. <http://www.nautikarestaurant.com>.

## **SECURITY**

### **Personal Safety**

Crime is not much of an issue in Dubrovnik, perhaps because it's a bit like an island with only three narrow exit points. There are no neighborhoods to avoid, although the alleyways leading off the Stradun do seem dark and creepy at night. Plenty of people are always nearby even in the relatively quiet winter period.

However, as with most busy tourist areas, pickpockets are present: Be sure to use commonsense precautions, especially during the crowded Summer Festival.

In an emergency, dial 92 for the police, 93 for a fire. You can also dial 112 for any emergency situation.

For the latest information, contact your travel-advisory agency.

### **Health**

Dubrovnik's General Hospital is on the Lapad Peninsula, about a 15-minute drive from the old city. It has a 24-hour accident and emergency service. Phone 020-431-777 or 94 for an ambulance.

There are plenty of pharmacies in greater Dubrovnik—three are located on the Stradun. Hours are generally Monday-Friday 8 am-8 pm, Saturday 8 am-2 pm. There is also an off-hours pharmacy system, which alternates locations between the Stradun and the port of Gruz.

The city water is safe to drink, and the produce also is safe. Summer days are hot, and it's important to use hats, sunglasses and sunscreen lotion against the heat of the day. Be sure to drink plenty of water to stay hydrated.

## Disabled Advisory

The city of Dubrovnik has made significant strides in assisting disabled visitors to see its sights. Besides making it possible to rent a wheelchair on location, the city also provides a transporter free-of-charge, which enables wheelchair-bound individuals to access stairs at museums, churches and other buildings. For information on using these services, phone 099-915-2834. Larger hotels, as well as travel agents or tourist offices, can also help answer any questions a disabled person might have on getting around in Dubrovnik.

For additional information on disabled access in Croatia, contact the Croatian Union of Physically Disabled Persons Association (CUPDPA). Phone 385-1-4812-004. <http://www.hsuti.hr>.

## Dos & Don'ts

Do shop for handmade tablecloths and other linens when in Dubrovnik. The craftsmanship is top-notch, and the cloths reflect local patterns and customs.

Don't be afraid to ask locals for directions if you are lost or looking for a site. Croatians are very friendly and often speak other languages fluently.

Do reserve hotel or other accommodations well in advance of your visit to Dubrovnik, especially if you plan to visit in the summer. Rooms are frequently booked solid during peak tourist seasons, and accommodations are hard to find without prior reservations.

Don't forget to stop in one of the many smaller cafes that line the alleyways of Dubrovnik. These cafes offer a glimpse into Dubrovnik's local culture, and you can taste some great coffees and other local drinks there.

Do eat as much local seafood as you can. It is top-notch and ultrafresh. It goes down well with the local wines *posip* and *plavac mali*.

Do learn a few phrases of Croatian to speak with the locals, such as *zdravo* (hello) and *hvala* (thank you). The townsfolk will appreciate your efforts immensely.

## FACTS

### Geostats

**Passport/Visa Requirements:** Passports, but not visas, are needed by citizens of Australia, Canada, the U.K. and the U.S. for stays of up to three months. Reconfirm travel document requirements with your carrier before departure.

If arriving by land from the north, don't forget that the highway crosses through a small portion of Bosnia. Bosnia has similar visa requirements, but do double check to avoid problems.

**Population:** 28,113.

**Languages:** Croatian. However, English, Italian, German and other languages are spoken, especially in tourist-oriented locations.

**Predominant Religions:** Christian (Roman Catholic, Eastern Orthodoxy).

**Time Zone:** 1 hour ahead of Greenwich Mean Time (+1 GMT). Daylight Saving Time is observed from the end of March to the end of October.

**Voltage Requirements:** 220 Volts, 50 Hz.

**Telephone Codes:** 020, Dubrovnik; 385, Croatia;

### **Money Currency Exchange**

The local currency is the kuna (HRK), which is divided into 100 lipa. It is a stable currency, but as a convenience prices often are quoted in both kunas and euros, which are widely accepted (although Croatia is not yet a part of the European Union). Paying for goods and services in U.S. dollars may result in an unfavorable exchange rate for the purchaser. Therefore, using U.S. dollars in Dubrovnik is not recommended.

Most large hotels will change any foreign currency into kunas, and surprisingly, they offer excellent rates. ATMs are widespread, including one at the airport, and are the second-best way to exchange currency. Changing traveler's checks is not a problem in banks or exchange bureaus.

Credit cards are widely accepted in hotels and larger restaurants. Cash is best for general day-to-day transactions.

Bank hours vary, but they are generally open 7 or 7:30 am until 7 or 8 pm Monday-Friday and 7:30 am-1 pm Saturday.

### **Taxes**

The value-added tax (VAT) is 25%, but this is usually included in the price of goods and services. There is also a city accommodation tax per night of about 7.56 HRK for each adult; this tax is half-price for each child age 12-18.

The VAT is redeemable on purchases larger than 740 HRK. To redeem this tax, make sure the store fills out the appropriate tax reclaim form, called a *porezni cek*, and get the form stamped by a customs official before departure (at the port or airport). The refund should arrive some months later in the mail.

For additional information, see the Global Blue Web site at <http://www.global-blue.com/traveller-services/regulations-in-croatia>.

### **Tipping**

Tipping is informal, and it's not universally expected. Usually rounding up with some small change is sufficient. You should tip taxi drivers and other service personnel whose service was exemplary—10% is considered generous. In a nice restaurant with a significant level of personal service, 10% is also appropriate.

### **Weather**

The weather is typically Mediterranean, with mild, wet winters and hot, dry summers. Snow is very rare, and the temperature rarely drops below 40 F/5 C. Heat can be a problem in high summer, but the mercury rarely exceeds 85 F/30 C (although the temperature can be magnified if you're strolling inside the city walls). Spring and autumn are the best months to explore the city unless you're there for a sun-and-sea vacation. It can rain at any time during winter, and you will often need to wrap up in warm layers or a lightweight winter jacket.

## **What to Wear**

Hats and sunscreen are the most important accessories to wear in the summer months; a light sweater might be needed occasionally in the evenings, especially in spring and autumn. Swimming shoes make the pebble beaches more accessible. Comfortable, even sturdy, footwear is recommended for the many steps and the stone-paved streets. T-shirts and shorts are acceptable around town in the daytime, but showing too much flesh is considered disrespectful when visiting religious buildings. Don't wear swimsuits in town or to cafes.

Women do dress fashionably, and businessmen wear suits and ties but can dress casually at times. Croatians are very easygoing, and even very stylish restaurants are happy with casual wear.