

Italy

Venice, the islands of the Venetian Lagoon, Chioggia, Bianca Canal, Po Valley, Adria, Ferrara, Mantua



Ferrara



Mantua



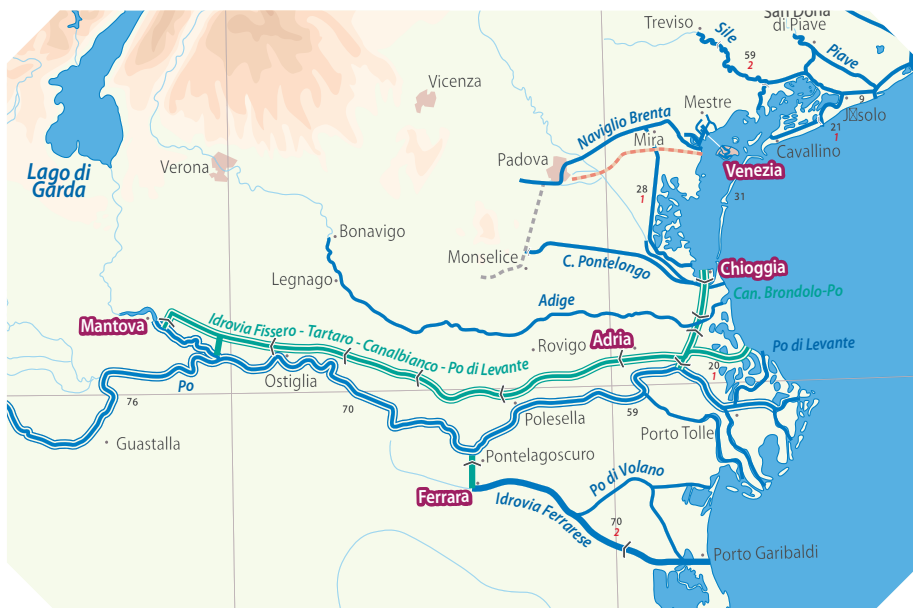
Chioggia

Venice, the Islands of the Venetian Lagoon, the Bianca Canal and the Po Valley...

The variety of charming waterways between Venice and Mantua promises a unique and magical cruising experience. The itinerary includes fascinating excursions that offer a real insight into the many cultures - Roman, Etruscan, Istrian, Byzantine and of course Renaissance - that have influenced the arts, architecture and history of the region over many centuries.

This special voyage also gives the opportunity to enjoy the diverse landscapes and nature en route, from picturesque lagoon islands with their colourful houses, to wild beach dunes and pine woods with an abundance of birdlife; from the charming Venetian port of Chioggia via the River Po and Bianca Canal to the captivating lakeside setting of the Renaissance city of Mantua.

Delicious regional cuisine, fine Italian wines and the services of an attentive crew will make this an unforgettable cruise.



Enjoy a Drink on Deck

Typical Italian Cuisine Aboard

Regional Specialities

Fegato alla Veneziana, Baccala Mantecato, La Polenta, Sarde in Saor, Risotto al Prezzemolo, Lagoon Seafood

Wine Cellar

Barolo, Garda Mantovano, Castel del Monte, Soave

Cheese Board

Gorgonzola, Mozzarella di Bufala, Pecorino, Taleggio, Provolone



La Bella Vita



Cruise Highlights

- ✦ Tour of historic Venice, including hidden gardens, The Naval Museum and the Pavilion of Gondolas
- ✦ Cruise on the Canal of the Orphans past picturesque lagoon islands
- ✦ Tour of Chioggia with its Roman, Etruscan and Byzantine history. Wonder at works of art by Carpaccio, Tintoretto, Tiepolo and Bassano
- ✦ Visit Chioggia's colourful fish market with your chef
- ✦ Tour of ancient Adria, including the archaeological museum, 6thC basilica, opera house and cathedral
- ✦ Private visit to the wine cellars of Villa Widmann-Borletti, renowned for its Friularo vintages since the 17thC
- ✦ Tour of the 14thC Estense Castle in Ferrara
- ✦ Visit to the Ducal Palace in Mantua, with its 15 gardens, 500 rooms and 12,000 paintings and sculptures

Daily Itinerary Aboard - Seven Days/Six Nights

Sunday, Day 1

VENICE

Guests are met at a designated meeting point in Venice on Sunday afternoon and transferred to La Bella Vita for a Prosecco welcome by the crew. Then a late afternoon cruise along the Giudecca Canal past some of Venice's most famous monuments: the Chiesa del Redentore, the impressive Basilica della Madonna della Salute and the Punta della Dogana, dividing the Giudecca Canal from the Grand Canal. Dinner aboard, followed perhaps by an evening stroll to St Mark's Square.

Monday, Day 2

VENICE TO PELLESTRINA/SAN PIETRO

IN VOLTA

Guided tour to the centre of Venice to experience its unique atmosphere and discover some hidden gems: gardens of the Biennale Exhibition of Modern Arts, Palladio's Church of San Pietro in Castello, the Naval Museum with a model of the Bucintoro (Doge's Boat) and the Pavilion of Gondolas housing Peggy Guggenheim's own vessel. Late afternoon cruise to Pellestrina which separates the Venetian Lagoon from the Adriatic Sea, then on the Canal of the Orphans passing lagoon islands such as San Sevelo, San Clemente and Poveglia. These islands sport brightly coloured houses, painted fishing boats and tiny churches. We moor in San Pietro in Volta for a Venetian aperitif in a typical local 'bacaro'. Dinner aboard.

Tuesday, Day 3

PELESTRINA/CHIOGGIA/ADRIA

After a stroll or cycle along the 18thC Istrian sea wall overlooking the Adriatic, we cruise past wild dunes and pine woods and may spot Kingfishers, Cuckoos or Little Terns. Entering Chioggia, city of Goldoni's plays, we visit the Piazzetta Vigo, Vigo bridge and 12thC Vigo column. At the Chiesa di San Domenico, we see Carpaccio's St Paul, his last recorded painting and works by Tintoretto and Bassano. Then Chioggia's cathedral beckons with works by, among others, Tiepolo. After a visit to the colourful fish market with your Chef to choose tonight's seafood delights, we enter the Bianca Canal which follows the Po River and cruise to Adria. Dinner aboard.

Wednesday, Day 4

ADRIA TO BUSSARI

Our day opens with a short walk to Adria's Archaeological Museum. The Greeks, Etruscans, Gauls and Romans left a

precious historical insight, with earlier artefacts dating back to the Iron Age. We stroll through ancient Adria and see the 6thC Basilica Santa Maria Assunta, the Opera House and Cathedral of Saints Pietro and Paolo.

Afternoon cruise to Bussari and visit to the gardens and wine cellars of 17thC Villa Widmann-Borletti. For over 1,000 years, wine, balsamic vinegar and truffles have been farmed in the Dominio di Bagnoli estate, famed for its exclusive D.O.C. Friularo vintages. Dinner aboard.

Thursday, Day 5

BUSSARI TO CANDA/TREVENZUOLO

Morning cruise to Canda, then a guided tour of Ferrara's 14thC Estense Castle and Renaissance surroundings. This ancient ducal fortress with moat, drawbridges and unusual battlements, houses marble balconies and sumptuous apartments. We see the Cathedral façade with its sculpted images, described as an Illustrated Bible. Ferrara has a rich cultural heritage, with renowned artists, writers, musicians and scientists all leaving their mark. We enjoy a delicious lunch ashore and further time to wander Ferrara's Renaissance-inspired setting, before our evening dinner cruise to Trevenzuolo, to the accompaniment of live piano music. Dinner aboard.

Friday, Day 6

TREVENZUOLO TO MANTUA

Our final cruise is a dramatic approach to the imposing capital of Lombardy, Mantua, home to the poet Virgil, artists Mantegna and Donatello and with its captivating lakeside setting. Mantua has early Etruscan origins but today displays extraordinary neo-classical and baroque architecture, perhaps best portrayed in the 14thC Ducal Palace housing some 15 gardens and courtyards, a museum, basilica, theatre and over 500 rooms. The intricate frescoes, the Gallery of Mirrors and exquisite Rivers Room, some 12,000 paintings and sculptures all create a wonderful Grand Finale to our Italian adventure. Captain's Farewell Dinner aboard.

Saturday, Day 7

MANTUA

After breakfast, passengers disembark for transfers to Venice or Verona airport, or a local hotel.

This is a sample itinerary and subject to change. On alternate weeks the cruise is in the reverse direction.

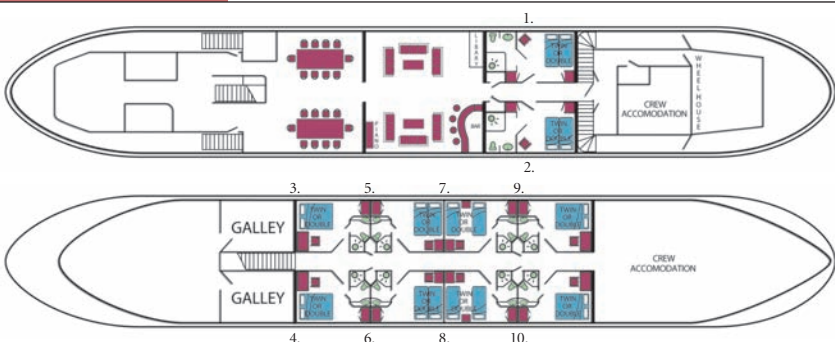
Cruise the Venetian Lagoon, Canals and Po Valley

- Aboard the 20 passenger La Bella Vita

La Bella Vita is a stylish twenty-passenger vessel that started life as a sand dredger barge but has been newly refitted in 2010 to high standards to offer comfortable, fully air-conditioned accommodation. She has two upper-deck suites and eight cabin staterooms, all en suite, and a bright and spacious dining room/bar area where delicious Italian specialities will be served. Louvred doors open to the side decks to give a perfect viewing platform, whilst above is a huge sun deck with comfortable sun loungers from which to enjoy the wonders of the region. La Bella Vita is the perfect vessel from which to immerse yourself in Italian Renaissance culture as you cruise the Venetian lagoon and the calm waters of the Po Valley to the elegant city of Mantua.

CABIN NAMES

1. LEONARDO
2. MICHELANGELO
3. TIZIANO
4. CANALETTO
5. MANTEGNA
6. BOLDINI
7. TINTORETTO
8. VERONESE
9. CARAVAGGIO
10. TIEPOLO



- 140 FEET LONG, 3 DECKS
- 20 PASSENGERS (PLUS TOUR LEADER)
- 7 CREW
- 8 STATEROOMS
- 2 SUITES
- AIR CONDITIONED
- CENTRALLY HEATED
- ROOFTOP SUN DECK
- 10 TOURING BIKES
- AIR-CONDITIONED MINIBUS