The first-time visitor to Venice arrives full of expectations, most of which turn out to be well founded. All the photographs you’ve seen of the Palazzo Ducale, of the Basilica di San Marco, of the palaces along the Canal Grande – they’ve simply been recording the extraordinary truth. All the bad things you’ve heard about the city turn out to be right as well. Economically and socially ossified, it is losing hundreds of residents by the year and plays virtually no part in the life of modern Italy. It’s deluged with tourists and occasionally things get so bad that entry into the city is barred to those who haven’t already booked a room. And it’s expensive – the price of a good meal almost anywhere else in Italy will get you a lousy one in Venice, and its hoteliers make the most of a situation where demand will always far outstrip supply. Continue reading to find out more about... **Brief history of Venice**. **Places to see in Venice**. **Food and drink in Venice**. **The Canal Grande**. **The *sestieri* of Venice**. The islands of Venice. **Around Venice**. As soon as you begin to explore Venice, though, every day will bring its surprises, for this is an urban landscape so full of things to do that you can’t walk for a minute without coming across something that’s worth a stop. And although it’s true that the city can be unbearably crowded, things aren’t so bad beyond the magnetic field of San Marco, and in the off-season it’s possible to have parts of the centre virtually to yourself. As for keeping your costs down, Venice does have some good-value eating places, and you can, with planning, find a bed without spending a fortune. **Brief history of Venice.** Small groups of fishermen and hunters were living on the mudbanks of the Venetian lagoon at the start of the Christian era, but the first mass migration was provoked by the arrival in the [Veneto](https://www.roughguides.com/destinations/europe/italy/veneto/) of Attila the Hun’s hordes in 453, and the rate of settlement accelerated when the Lombards swept into northern Italy in 568. The loose confederation of island communes that developed owed political allegiance to Byzantium. But with the steep increase in the population of the islands the ties with the empire grew weaker, and in 726 the settlers chose their own leader of the provincial government – the first doge. The control of Byzantium soon became no more than nominal, and the inhabitants of the lagoon signalled their independence through one great symbolic act – the theft of the body of St Mark from Alexandria in 828. St Mark displaced Byzantium’s St Theodore as the city’s patron, and a basilica was built alongside the doge’s castle to accommodate the relics. These two buildings – the Basilica di San Marco and the Palazzo Ducale – were to remain the emblems of the Venetian state and the repository of power within the city for almost one thousand years. Before the close of the tenth century the Venetian trading networks were well established through concessions granted by Byzantium in the markets of the East. By the early twelfth century Venetian merchants had won exemption from all tolls within the eastern empire and were profiting from the chaos that followed the First Crusade, launched in 1095. Prosperity found expression in the fabric of the city: the basilica and many of its mosaics are from this period. The Fourth Crusade, diverted to Constantinople by the Venetians, set the seal on their maritime empire. They brought back shiploads of treasure (including the horses of San Marco) from the Sack of Constantinople in 1204, but more significant was the division of the territorial spoils, which left “one quarter and half a quarter” of the Roman Empire under Venice’s sway and gave it a chain of ports that stretched to the Black Sea. After the Sack of Rome in 1527 the whole Italian peninsula, with the exception of Venice, came under the domination of Emperor Charles V. Hemmed in at home, Venice saw its overseas territory further whittled away by the Turks as the century progressed: by 1529 the Ottoman Empire extended right along the southern Mediterranean to Morocco, and even the great naval success at Lepanto in 1571 was followed by the surrender of Cyprus. The decline continued throughout the 1600s and by the eighteenth century Venice had become a political nonentity: the playground of Europe, a city of casinos and perpetual festivals. Napoleon finally brought the show to an end: on May 12, 1797, the Maggior Consiglio met for the last time, voting to accede to Napoleon's demand that it dismantle the machinery of government. After Waterloo, Venice fell to the Austrians and remained a Habsburg province until united with the Kingdom of Italy in 1866. The need for a more substantial economic base led, in the wake of World War I, to the construction of the industrial centre across the lagoon at Marghera, adjacent to Mestre, which in 1933 was connected to Venice by a road link. After World War II Mestre-Marghera’s growth accelerated greatly, and the mainland conurbation has continued to expand, to the detriment of the centro storico. The factories of Mestre-Marghera are essential to the economy of the province, but have caused problems too: apart from polluting the lagoon, they have siphoned many people out of Venice and into the cheaper housing of Mestre, making Mestre-Marghera today more than three times larger than the historic centre of Venice and the outlying islands, where the population has dropped since World War II from around 170,000 to under 60,000. No city has suffered more from the tourist industry than Venice, but the place would barely survive without them. **Places to see in Venice.** The monuments that draw the largest crowds in Venice are the [Basilica di San Marco](https://www.getyourguide.com/venice-l35/st-mark-s-square-and-doge-s-palace-priority-entrance-tour-t234117/?partner_id=77VWGWU&utm_medium=online_publisher&utm_source=rough_guides&placement=content-middle) – the mausoleum of the city’s patron saint – and the Palazzo Ducale – the home of the doge and all the governing councils. Certainly these are the most dramatic structures in the city: the first a mosaic-clad emblem of Venice’s Byzantine origins, the second perhaps the finest of all secular Gothic buildings. But every parish rewards exploration, and a roll-call of the churches worth visiting would feature over fifty names, and a list of the important paintings and sculptures they contain would be twice as long. Two of the distinctively Venetian institutions known as the scuole retain some of the outstanding examples of Italian Renaissance art – the Scuola di San Rocco, with its sequence of pictures by Tintoretto, and the Scuola di San Giorgio degli Schiavoni, decorated with a gorgeous sequence by Carpaccio. Although many of the city’s treasures remain in the buildings for which they were created, a sizeable number have been removed to Venice’s museums. The one that should not be missed is the Accademia, an assembly of Venetian painting that consists of virtually nothing but masterpieces; other prominent collections include the museum of eighteenth-century art in the Ca’ Rezzonico, the Museo Correr (the civic museum of Venice), and the city’s superb showcase for contemporary art, the Punta della Dogana. Venice’s cultural heritage is a source of endless fascination, but you should also allow time just to wander – the anonymous parts of the city reveal as much of the city’s essence as the highlighted attractions. And equally indispensable for a full understanding of Venice’s way of life and development are expeditions to the outer islands of the lagoon. **Venice in flood.** Called the acqua alta, the winter flooding of Venice is caused by a combination of seasonal tides, fluctuations in atmospheric pressure in the Adriatic and persistent southeasterly winds, and has always been a feature of Venetian life. In recent years, however, it has been getting worse: between 2000 and 2013 there were eight highest-category floods, which is more than in the preceding fifty years. If the siren sounds, you can expect a serious flood in three to four hours’ time. A system of plank walkways is immediately set up in the low-lying parts of the city. The usual high-tide season is October to March, with the worst flooding between November and February. Most floods, though, are minor, and cause no disruption at all. A grand plan is being implemented to protect the city, involving building a tidal barrier across the three entrances to the lagoon. The barrier has aroused considerable opposition, both to its cost and to its potential environmental impact. However, mounting concern about global warming gave the matter some urgency and work finally began on the barrier in 2003. Delays, corruption and engineering problems have dogged the project, which is now scheduled for completion in 2021, though few Venetians think it’ll be functioning by then, if ever. **Food and drink in Venice.** Venice specializes in fish and seafood, together with exotic ingredients like pomegranates, pine nuts and raisins, harking back to its days as a port and merchant city. The surrounding [Veneto](https://www.roughguides.com/destinations/europe/italy/veneto/) vies with Lombardy for the risotto-making crown. The end product tends to be more liquid than those to the west, usually with a seafood base although peas (*bisi* in the local dialect) are also common, as are other seasonal vegetables including spinach, asparagus and pumpkin. The red salad-leaf radicchio also has its home in the Veneto, as does the renowned Italian dessert, tiramisù. Polenta is eaten, too, while pork in all forms features strongly, together with heavy soups of beans, rice and root vegetables. Pastries and sweets are also an area of Venetian expertise. Look out for the thin oval biscuits called *baicoli*, the ring-shaped cinnamon-flavoured *bussolai* (a speciality of the Venetian island of Burano) and *mandorlato*, a cross between nougat and toffee, made with almonds. The Veneto has been very successful at developing wines with French and German grape varieties, notably Merlot, Cabernet, Pinot Bianco, Pinot Grigio, Müller-Thurgau, Riesling, Chardonnay and Gewürztraminer. The quintessentially Italian Bardolino, Valpolicella and Soave are all from the [Verona](https://www.roughguides.com/destinations/europe/italy/veneto/verona/) area, while the increasingly popular prosecco is produced in vineyards around Conegliano. Grappa, the local firewater, is associated particularly with the upland town of Bassano di Grappa, where every *alimentari* stocks a dozen varieties. Made from grape husks, juniper berries or plums, grappa is very much an acquired taste. **The Canal Grande.** Below is a selection of the most impressive buildings to be seen on the Canal Grande. To see both banks at once, make sure you get a seat at the front or the back of the vaporetto; and don’t miss the experience of a nocturnal boat ride. Book a [private gondola ride](https://www.getyourguide.com/venice-l35/private-gondola-ride-up-to-6-people-t169207/?partner_id=77VWGWU&utm_medium=online_publisher&utm_source=rough_guides&placement=content-middle) for the ultimate experience. **1. Calatrava Bridge.** The newest feature of Venice’s cityscape is officially known as the Ponte della Costituzione, but Venetians generally use the name of its designer, Santiago Calatrava. The elegant arc of steel, stone and glass is modelled on a gondola’s hull. **2. Scalzi Bridge.** The successor of an iron structure put up by the Austrians in 1858–60, which had to be replaced in the early 1930s to give the new steamboats sufficient clearance. **3. Fondaco dei Turchi.** A private house from the early thirteenth century until 1621, the Fondaco dei Turchi was then turned over to Turkish traders, who stayed here until 1838. Though over-restored, the building’s towers and arcade give a reasonably precise picture of what a Veneto-Byzantine palace would have looked like. It’s now the natural history museum. **4. Palazzo Vendramin-Calergi.** Begun by Mauro Codussi at the very end of the fifteenth century, this was the first Venetian palace built on Renaissance lines. The palazzo’s most famous resident was Richard Wagner, who died here in February 1883. It’s now the casino. **5. Ca’ Pésaro.** The thickly ornamented Ca’ Pésaro, bristling with diamond-shaped spikes and grotesque heads, took half a century to build – work finished in 1703, long after the death of the architect, Baldassare Longhena. **6. Palazzo Corner della Regina.** This palazzo was built in 1724 on the site of the home of Caterina Cornaro, Queen of Cyprus, from whom the palace takes its name. **7. Ca’ d’Oro.** Incorporating fragments of a thirteenth-century palace that once stood on the site, the gorgeous Ca’ d’Oro was built in the 1420s and 30s, and acquired its nickname – “The Golden House” – from the gilding that used to accentuate its carving. **8. Ca’ da Mosto.** The arches of the first storey of the Ca’ da Mosto and the carved panels above them are remnants of a thirteenth-century Veneto-Byzantine building, and are thus among the oldest structures on the canal. **9. Rialto market.** Today’s Rialto market may be a lot tamer than that of Venice at its peak, but it’s still one of the liveliest spots in the city, and one of the few places where it’s possible to stand in a crowd and hear nothing but Italian spoken. There’s a shoal of memento- sellers by the church and along the Ruga degli Orefici; the market proper lies between them and the Canal Grande – mainly fruit stalls around the Campo San Giacomo and vegetable stalls and butchers’ shops as you go through to the Campo Battisti, after which you come to the fish market, which is now threatened with closure because of the city’s declining population. **10. Fondaco dei Tedeschi.** The fondaco was once headquarters of the city’s German merchants, who as early as 1228 were leasing a building here. In 1505 the Fondaco burned down; Giorgione and Titian were commissioned to paint the exterior of its replacement. The remnants of their contribution are now in the Ca’ d’Oro. **11. Rialto Bridge.** The famous Ponte di Rialto (Rialto Bridge), the perpetually thronged link between. San Marco and San Polo, superseded a succession of wooden structures – one of Carpaccio’s Miracles of the True Cross, in the Accademia, shows what one of the old drawbridges looked like. The decision to construct a stone bridge was taken in 1524, and the job was awarded to the aptly named Antonio da Ponte, whose top-heavy design was described by Edward Gibbon as “a fine bridge, spoilt by two rows of houses upon it”. Until 1854, when the first Accademia Bridge was built, this was the only point at which the Canal Grande could be crossed on foot. **12. Palazzo Loredan and Palazzo Farsetti.** These neighbouring palazzi are heavily restored Veneto-Byzantine palaces of the thirteenth century; now the town hall. **13. Palazzo Grimani.** Work began on the immense Palazzo Grimani in 1559, to designs by Sanmicheli, but was not completed until 1575, sixteen years after his death. **14. The Mocenigo palaces.** Four houses that once belonged to the Mocenigo family stand side by side on the Canal Grande’s sharpest turn: the Palazzo Mocenigo-Nero, a late sixteenth-century building, once home to Byron; the double Palazzo Mocenigo, built in the eighteenth century; and the Palazzo Mocenigo Vecchio, a Gothic palace remodelled in the seventeenth century. **15. Ca’ Fóscari.** The largest private house in Venice at the time of its construction (c.1435), Ca’ Fóscari was the home of Doge Francesco Fóscari, whose extraordinarily long term of office (34 years) came to an end with his forced resignation. **16. The Palazzi Giustinian.** These twinned palaces were built in the mid-fifteenth century for two brothers who wanted attached but self-contained houses. **17. Ca’ Rezzonico.** Longhena’s gargantuan Ca’ Rezzonico was begun in 1667 as a commission from the Bon family, but they were obliged to sell the still unfinished palace to the Rezzonico, a family of stupendously wealthy Genoese bankers. Among its subsequent owners was Pen Browning, whose father Robert died here in 1889. **18. Palazzo Grassi.** This vast palazzo was built in 1748–72 by Massari, and was the last great house to be raised on the Canal Grande. **19. Accademia Bridge.** As the larger vaporetti couldn’t get under the iron Ponte dell’Accademia built by the Austrians in 1854, it was replaced in 1932 by a wooden structure, later reinforced with steel. **20. Palazzo Venier dei Leoni.** In 1759 the Venier family, one of Venice’s richest dynasties, began rebuilding their home, but this palazzo, which would have been the largest palace on the canal, never progressed further than the first storey. The stump of the building is occupied by the [Guggenheim Collection](https://www.getyourguide.com/venice-l35/venice-the-peggy-guggenheim-collection-tickets-t64077/?partner_id=77VWGWU&utm_medium=online_publisher&utm_source=rough_guides&placement=content-middle). **21. Palazzo Dario.** This exquisite little palazzo was built in the late 1480s, and the multicoloured marbles of the facade are characteristic of the work of the Lombardo family. **22. Palazzo Corner della Ca’ Grande.** The palace that used to stand here was destroyed when a fire lit to dry out a stock of sugar ran out of control. Sansovino’s design – built from 1545 – is notable for its rugged lower-storey stonework, which makes it the prototype for the Ca’ Pésaro and Ca’ Rezzonico. **The *sestieri* of Venice.** The 121 islands of central Venice are divided into six districts known as *sestieri*, and the houses within each *sestiere* are numbered in a sequence that makes sense solely to the functionaries of the post office – this explains how buildings facing each other across an alleyway can have numbers that are separated by hundreds. Venice’s main thoroughfare, the Canal Grande, divides the city in half – three *sestieri* to the west and three to the east. On the east side of the Canal Grande is the *sestiere* of San Marco, the area where the majority of the essential sights are clustered, and accordingly the most expensive and most crowded district of the city. East of San Marco is Castello, and to the north is Cannaregio – both of which become more residential, and quieter, the further you get from the centre. On the other side of the Canal Grande, the largest of the *sestieri* is Dorsoduro, stretching from the fashionable quarter at the southern tip of the canal to the docks in the west. Santa Croce, named after a now-demolished church, roughly follows the curve of the Canal Grande from Piazzale Roma to a point just short of the Rialto, where it joins the smartest and commercially most active of the districts on this bank – San Polo. **San Marco.** The section of Venice enclosed by the lower loop of the Canal Grande – a rectangle smaller than 1000m by 500m – is, in essence, the Venice of the travel brochures. The plush hotels are concentrated here, in the *sestiere* of San Marco, as are the swankier shops and the best-known cultural attractions of the city. “The finest drawing-room in Europe” was how Napoleon described its focal point, the Piazza San Marco – the only piazza in Venice, all other squares being *campi* or *campielli*. Less genteel phrases might seem appropriate on a suffocating summer afternoon, but the Piazza has been congested for centuries. Its parades, festivities and markets have always drawn visitors, the biggest attraction being the trade fair known as the Fiera della Sensa, which kept the Piazza buzzing for the fortnight following the Ascension Day ceremony of the Marriage of Venice to the Sea; nowadays the Piazza is the focal point of the Carnevale shenanigans. The coffee shops of the Piazza were a vital component of eighteenth-century high society, and the two survivors from that period – Florian and Quadri – are still the most expensive in town. [**The Basilica di San Marco**](https://www.getyourguide.com/venice-l35/st-mark-s-square-and-doge-s-palace-priority-entrance-tour-t234117/?partner_id=77VWGWU&utm_medium=online_publisher&utm_source=rough_guides&placement=content-middle)**.** The Basilica di San Marco is the most exotic of Europe’s cathedrals, and no visitor can remain dispassionate when confronted by it. Herbert Spencer loathed it – “a fine sample of barbaric architecture”, but to John Ruskin it was a “treasure-heap … a confusion of delight”. It’s certainly confusing, increasingly so as you come nearer and the details emerge; some knowledge of the history of the building helps bring a little order out of chaos. **The Palazzo Ducale.** Architecturally, the Palazzo Ducale is a unique mixture: the style of its exterior, with its geometrically patterned stonework and continuous tracery walls, can only be called Islamicized Gothic, whereas the courtyards and much of the interior are based on classical forms – a blending of influences that led Ruskin to declare it “the central building of the world”. Unquestionably, it is the finest secular building of its era in Europe, and the central building of Venice. The [Palazzo Ducale](https://palazzoducale.visitmuve.it/) was far more than the residence of the doge – it was the home of all of Venice’s governing councils, its law courts, a sizeable number of its civil servants and even its prisons. All power in the Venetian Republic and its domains was controlled within this one building. At the head of the network was the doge, the one politician to sit on all the major councils of state and the only one elected for life; he could be immensely influential in policy and appointments, and restrictions were accordingly imposed on his actions to reduce the possibility of his abusing that power – his letters were read by censors and he wasn’t permitted to receive foreign delegations alone. The privileges of the job far outweighed the inconveniences though, and men campaigned for years to increase their chances of election. **Dorsoduro.** Some of the finest architecture in Venice, both domestic and public, is to be found in the *sestiere* of Dorsoduro, a situation partly attributable to the stability of its sandbanks – Dorsoduro means “hard back”. Yet for all its attractions, not many visitors wander off the strip that runs between the main sights of the area – Ca’ Rezzonico, the Accademia, the Salute and the Punta della Dogana. **The Accademia.** The [Galleria dell’Accademia](http://www.gallerieaccademia.it/en) is one of the finest specialist collections of European art, following the history of Venetian painting from the fourteenth to the eighteenth centuries. With San Marco and the Palazzo Ducale, it completes the triad of obligatory tourist sights in Venice, but admissions are restricted to batches of three hundred people at a time, so queues can be huge in high season. Occupying the former church and convent of the Scuola della Carità, the Accademia has recently been expanded to create new ground-floor galleries for some three hundred paintings that were previously in storage; the upper floor will focus on art up to the seventeenth century, with the lower galleries being devoted to later artists. One-off exhibitions of modern and contemporary art will also be held in the new space. Once the new galleries are all open, the layout of the upper-floor galleries will be somewhat different to that described below. **The Punta della Dogana.** On the point where the Canal Grande and the Giudecca canal merge stands the huge, late seventeenth-century Dogana di Mare (Customs House), which in 2009 reopened as the Punta della Dogana exhibition space. Financed by François Pinault, the co-owner of Palazzo Grassi, the Dogana – like the Grassi – has been beautifully renovated to designs by Tadao Ando, and is unquestionably one of the world’s great showcases for contemporary art. The entry charge is savage, but well over one hundred works from Pinault’s collection are usually on display here at any one time, and he has invested in most of the really big names of the current art scene, so you can expect to see pieces by the likes of Cindy Sherman, Luc Tuymans, Thomas Schütte, Jeff Koons and Marlene Dumas, to name but a few. **Ca’ Rezzonico.** The eighteenth century, the period of Venice’s political senility, was also the period of its last grand flourish in the visual and decorative arts. The main showcase for the art of that era, the [Museo del Settecento Veneziano](https://carezzonico.visitmuve.it/) spreads through most of the enormous Ca’ Rezzonico, which the city authorities bought in 1934 specifically as a home for the museum. Recently restored, it’s a spectacular building, furnished and decorated mostly with genuine eighteenth-century items and fabrics: where originals weren’t available, the eighteenth-century ambience has been preserved by using modern reproductions. The applied arts of the eighteenth century are not to everyone’s taste, but the paintings by the Tiepolo family and Pietro Longhi’s affectionate Venetian scenes should justify the entrance fee. **Cannaregio.** In the northernmost section of Venice, Cannaregio, you can go from the bustle of the train station and the tawdry Lista di Spagna to areas which, although no longer rural (Cannaregio comes from canna, meaning “reed”) are still among the quietest and prettiest parts of the whole city. The district also has the dubious distinction of containing the world’s original ghetto. **Castello.** Bordering both San Marco and Cannaregio, and spreading right across the city to the housing estates of Sant’Elena in the east, Castello is the largest of the *sestieri*. In terms of its tourist appeal, centre stage is occupied by the huge Santi Giovanni e Paolo. Within a few minutes’ walk of here are two other fascinating churches, Santa Maria Formosa and San Zaccaria, as well as the beguiling Carpaccio paintings in the Scuola di San Giorgio degli Schiavoni. Much of the eastern section of the Castello *sestiere* is given over to the Arsenale, once the industrial hub of the city and now a large naval base. Beyond it lies a predominantly residential quarter that has little to offer of cultural significance, except when the Biennale art and architecture shows are on, though its open spaces – the Giardini Garibaldi, Giardini Pubblici and Parco della Rimembranza – offer a little green relief. **The Scuola di San Giorgio degli Schiavoni.** The ground-floor hall of the Scuola di San Giorgio degli Schiavoni is one of the most beautiful rooms in Europe. Venice’s resident Slavs (Schiavoni), most of whom were traders, set up a *scuola* to look after their interests in 1451; the present building dates from the early sixteenth century, and the whole interior looks more or less as it would have then. Entering it, you step straight from the street into the lower hall, the walls of which are decorated with a superb cycle of pictures created by Vittore Carpaccio between 1502 and 1509. Outstanding among them is The Vision of St Augustine, depicting the moment that Augustine, while writing to St Jerome, had a vision of Jerome’s death. **The islands of Venice.** The islands lying to the north of Venice – San Michele, Murano, Burano and Torcello – are the places to visit when the throng of tourists in the main part of the city becomes too oppressive; Murano has been a glass-producing centre for hundreds of years, while Burano was once renowned for its lace work. To get to the northern islands, the main *vaporetto* stop is Fondamente Nove (or Nuove): all of the island services start here or call here. The islands in the section of the lagoon to the south of the city, enclosed by the Lido and Pellestrina, are scattered over a larger expanse of water than the northern lagoon, but the nearer islands – notably San Giorgio Maggiore, La Giudecca and San Lazzaro – are the more interesting ones. The farther-flung settlements of the southern lagoon have played a significant role in the history of Venice, but nowadays they have little going for them other than the pleasure of the trip. **Around Venice.** Tourism is far from being the only strand to the economy of the [Veneto](https://www.roughguides.com/destinations/europe/italy/veneto/), the surrounding region of which Venice is the capital. The rich, flat land around the Po supports some of Italy’s most productive farms and vineyards, and industrial development around the main towns rivals even the better-known areas around Milan, making the region one of the richest in Europe. At Marghera, just over the lagoon from Venice, the Veneto has the largest industrial complex in the country, albeit one that is now in decline. [Padua](https://www.roughguides.com/destinations/europe/italy/veneto/padua-padova/) and [Verona](https://www.roughguides.com/destinations/europe/italy/veneto/verona/) are the main tourist attractions after Venice, thanks mainly to the former's masterpieces by Giotto, and the latter's gorgeous medieval centro storico. None of the other towns of the Veneto can match the cultural wealth of these two, but there are nonetheless plenty of places that justify a detour – the Palladian city of [Vicenza](https://www.roughguides.com/destinations/europe/italy/veneto/vicenza/), for instance, the fortified settlements of Castelfranco and Cittadella, and the idyllic upland town of Asolo. For outdoor types, the interesting terrain lies in the northern part of the Veneto, where the wooded slopes of the foothills soon give way to the savage precipices of the eastern Dolomites. Because most of the high peaks of the Dolomites lie within Trentino-Alto Adige, and the eastern Dolomites are most easily explored as part of a tour of the range as a whole, the area of the Veneto north of Belluno is covered under Trentino-Alto Adige. Similarly, the eastern shore of Lake Garda is covered as part of the Lombardy and the lakes.