

## Ah, Venezia

After claiming our bags at the airport, we found our way to the bus which took us to the train which took us across the Laguna Venetia to Venice and the vaporetto (water bus) which took us to...Ospedale! After a bit of orienting ourselves, we found our lodging...

We dropped our bags in our room and were off to explore Venice... The Ospedale district, we discovered, is the Hospital district. We bravely set off, sans map (didn't have one yet), in the hopes of finding both a map and also food.

Venice is a maze of narrow, narrower, and the very narrowest streets I have ever seen. Alleys is more like it.

But the reward for traversing those graffiti-filled passages is entering a **piazza**, which will have a church, a canal, a bridge, a statue or **campanile** (bell tower), and lotsa people. The two photos below are of the same piazza but from opposite sides. Now, class, let's see if you can find five of those six in the two



pictures above.

The canals vary in width and also carry restrictions as to the types of boats that may travel through them. Signs are posted at the intersections (picture later) to indicate what is permitted on that stretch on that canal. This canal was a bit narrow for these boats; the gondola had the right of way; the blue boat paused on the side as the gondola passed beneath the bridge I'm photographing from. The blue boat was under power, so rules similar to power/sail rules may apply to power/poled boats.

There is no land for cultivation, so one sees flowers everywhere; this vine had

found a tenuous hold in a crack.



Church, canal, bridge, water, flowers boats. No surprises here.  
Look carefully at all of the canal-side pictures. You will see that the first floors are unoccupied. During times of *alta acqua* (high water) those lower levels will flood.



As ubiquitous as the flowers in almost every window is the laundry drying high above the street. Naples also was similarly decorated.

Most of us think of Mark Twain when the term 'local color' comes to mind....I'm not sure that this is what they meant...;^)



Early in the day the gondoliers prepare their craft for the day's tourist trade. Only the gondola and smaller craft are allowed off the main waterways; the **vaporetti** (water taxis) are restricted to the main canals.

Everything comes into or leaves Venice proper via water. The craft in the lower right is loaded with packages for delivery. Even the



garbage is collected by men pulling carts through the streets; the garbage is then loaded onto boats to be taken from Venice.

1/2 block from our lodging was not just the **Laguna Veneta** but also Canottieri Querini. It appeared to be a family-owned enterprise... making a type of racing scull. They kindly allowed me to go into their shop and photograph the interior.

The weather vane stood watch on the dock outside the shop.





A city of contrasts...the old & the new.



The grocery...only a short block away.

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End of part 1.

Part 2 will visit the Plaza de San Marco and the Doges Palace..and lots of 'local color.'

