

Treasures of Milan and Venice

31 March 2019 River Countess Uniworld Waterways

As Rudy Bolasko from Cruise Critic says,

"A cruise on the Po River is not like other [European river cruises](#). [Uniworld](#)'s new itinerary has fewer ports and more coach trips, and half the week is spent in one city. But when that one city is [Venice](#), and you've got a room on the waterfront, who's complaining?

[River Countess](#) passengers also benefit from some very valuable perks, including queue-skipping and after-hours viewings of main attractions, private water-taxi transfers and scenic cruising around the Venetian Lagoon.

For the four excursions accessed by road, the driving time is only one to two hours and well worth the trip to see some wonderful inland destinations, such as Verona and Bologna. The lack of sailing days might even suit couples who can't agree whether to do Italy by boat or bus, or if one partner is not as fanatical about cruising.

Only a couple of other European companies ([CroisiEurope](#) and [European Waterways](#)) offer Po river cruises. Uniworld's offering is the most luxurious."





Treasures of Milan and Venice sails 31 March 2019. The itinerary visits Milan, Verona, Venice, Padua, Bologna, Ferrara, Chioggia, Burano, Torcello and of course Venice for the most part. You are actually in a floating boutique hotel with day trips out to other areas of the region. A full itinerary is included at the end of this email.

There are 4 categories available. If you do not wish to go to Milan, deduct \$600 from the prices below.

Classic cabin (lower level) \$3269 per person

Deluxe cabin (large picture window) \$3869 per person

French Balcony cabin \$4769 per person

Butler Suite \$5969 per person

Port charges are included.

The riverboat is practically all inclusive:

All gratuities are included All meals. Unlimited beverages-- wines, beer, champagne, premium spirits, craft beers, specialty coffee, soft drinks

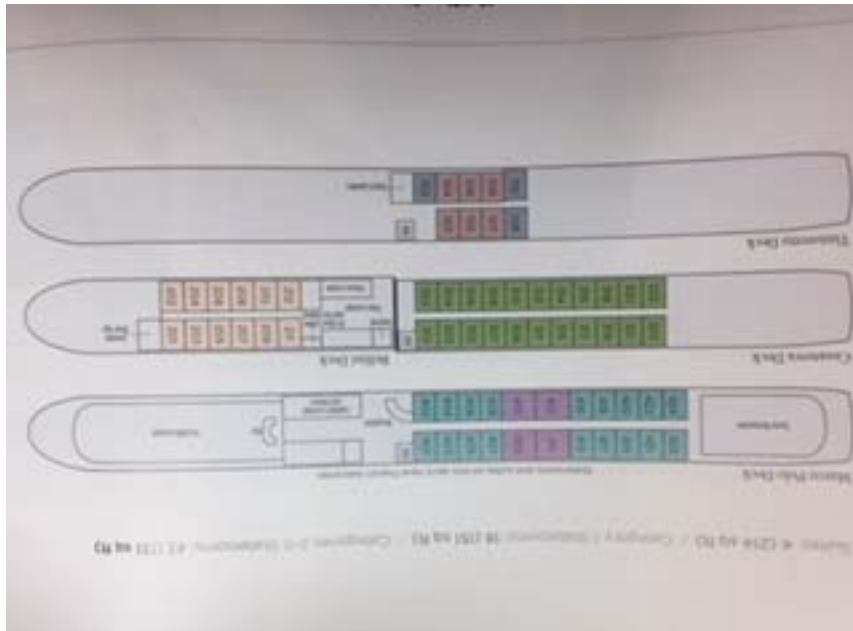
Ship-wide wi-fi. Onboard fitness center, complimentary bicycles and Nordic walking sticks

PressReader-complimentary access to your favorite newspapers and magazines to read on your devices

Deposit is 10% of the cabin total. If cancelled outside of 120 days from departure, penalty is only \$200 per person.

Early 10% booking discount if paid in full by 30 June 2018.

Cabins can only be reserved with a name on the booking and deposit paid.



Itinerary:

Day 1: Milan

Arrive at Milan Malpensa Airport. If your cruise/tour package includes a group arrival transfer or if you have purchased a private arrival transfer, you will be greeted by a Uniworld representative and transferred to the hotel.

Day 2: Milan

Milan is a mecca for Italian fashionistas, famous for its innovative design and stylish flair. Venture inside the city's hulking Gothic cathedral, as well as its cathedral to capitalism, Europe's oldest shopping arcade. The highlight today is pure genius—Da Vinci's revolutionary The Last Supper mural, the most famous religious painting in history. Fashion and finance, opera and furniture design, telecom companies and trade fairs—bustling Milan, Italy's financial and industrial center, is a modern global city whose roots sink deep into the history of Italy. Founded 2,500 years ago, Milan retains traces of every epoch, from Roman, medieval and Renaissance up to the current moment, and it boasts a dazzling bounty of artistic and cultural landmarks, which are yours to experience today.

Featured Excursion:

Milan city tour with visit to Da Vinci's The Last Supper

Generations Excursion:

Marvel at Da Vinci's masterpiece

This excursion is only available on sailings that belong to the Generations program.

Milan city tour with visit to Da Vinci's The Last Supper

Your hotel is in the heart of the city, so it's easy to see the highlights of the neighborhood on a short walk with your guide. Il Duomo, the magnificent cathedral begun in the 14th century and finished 500 years later (the last part to be finished, one of its five great doors, wasn't installed until 1965), offers one of the most spectacular Gothic façades in the world. Step inside with a local expert for a tour of the ravishing interior, then walk across the square and under the splendid triumphal arch that welcomes visitors and shoppers into the Galleria Vittorio Emanuele. Learn a bit about the history of this area as you stroll through the beautiful 19th-century glass-covered arcade; it's the oldest shopping mall in Europe and is still wildly popular, housing the flagships of leading fashion designers and trendy restaurants. You'll emerge in Piazza della Scala, home to the internationally celebrated opera house whose name comes from the square, Teatro alla Scala. Directly opposite it is Milan's city hall—which happens to be a stunning Renaissance palace. It's just one of the palaces and fortresses that were the heart of medieval civic power, where the Viscontis and then the Sforzas reigned, each ruler adding to the city's splendor and tumultuous history. It's hard to pinpoint a highlight among so many, but Santa Maria delle Grazie, a beautiful Gothic and Renaissance church, offers you a sight you will never forget. The Last Supper is not in the church itself; it adorns the walls of a modest adjoining building that was the Dominican refectory. Your tour ends after you've had an opportunity to admire Da Vinci's revolutionary work or spend some free time exploring the area on your own. Note: The order of sightseeing varies according to the availability of time slots at Santa Maria delle Grazie.

Generations Excursion: Marvel at Da Vinci's masterpiece

Do you know the difference between a gargoyle and a grotesque? Gargoyles are downspouts—that's why they lean away from a building with their mouths open; they are designed to spit rainwater. Get a look at some of the 135 gargoyles decorating the magnificent Duomo from the rooftop terrace, as well as the figures that top the spires and the city below. Thousands of people worked on this cathedral over the centuries (it wasn't finished until Napoleon conquered the city and insisted on its completion—so he could be crowned king of Italy in it). Check out the way a whisper carries in the great market square, and cross the dry moat into the great Sforza castle, where the dukes of Milan lived and ruled for centuries. The Piazza d'Armi once held a huge clay statue of a horse by Leonardo da Vinci, but Napoleon's troops used it for target practice and destroyed it. Leonardo lived in Milan for 14 years, so the city holds many of his works—the greatest one is still exactly where he painted it, on the walls of a dining room. Seeing The Last Supper is a never-to-be-forgotten experience.

This excursion is only available on sailings that belong to the Generations program.

Day 3: Milan, Verona (Valpolicella), Transfer to Venice (Embark)

En route to Venice, you'll stop in the literary hometown of Shakespeare's famously star-crossed teen lovers to see the sights and the famous balcony—yes, that balcony. Later, enjoy lunch at a historic wine

estate owned by descendants of Dante, the great Italian poet who penned *The Inferno*. You'll check out of your hotel this morning and head toward the Adriatic coast and magical Venice, but the day includes two delightful stops en route: Verona, forever associated with Romeo and Juliet, and the Valpolicella wine country.

Featured Excursions:

Verona, "City of Romeo and Juliet"

Exclusive Valpolicella wine estate lunch

Generations Excursion:

Roam Romeo & Juliet's hometown

This excursion is only available on sailings that belong to the Generations program.

Verona, "City of Romeo and Juliet"

Discover the real roots of Shakespeare's tragic tale with a visit to fair Verona. The Scaligeri family ruled the city for two centuries, routinely murdering one another to gain power; an echo of these savage family feuds found their way into the Bard's tragedy. Your walking tour passes the house where Romeo purportedly lived, as well as the pretty 14th-century stone house where legend says Juliet listened to her Romeo's vows. (It's certainly a destination for lovers now: They leave love notes on the walls). Stop by the imposing Scaligeri tombs, ramble along Via Mazzini and through Piazza delle Erbe, the bustling city square laid out where the ancient Roman forum once stood. You'll have a little free time to explore on your own after your tour. You might step into one of the beautiful and historic churches nearby or take an elevator up to the top of Torre dei Lamberti for a great view of the old city and its surroundings.

Exclusive Valpolicella wine estate lunch

Your journey continues from Verona through the lovely vine-clad hills of the Valpolicella wine country. These vineyards grow Corvina, Rondinella and Molinara grapes—and even Garganega, the grape used for Soave wines. While the everyday Valpolicella red wine is popular and easy-drinking, the region also produces Amarone, a lush and unmistakable red that is the result of a unique wine-making process: Grapes are air-dried on bamboo racks for several months before being crushed for fermentation, giving the wine a luscious depth of flavor. Modest farmhouses and great estates alike produce delightful wines, but the Serego Alighieri estate, which belongs to descendants of Dante Alighieri, is one of the oldest and loveliest. The stately villa stands amid gracious gardens and fertile vineyards, welcoming you in for a tour of the grounds and cellars. You'll see the drying racks and learn about the process before savoring a delectable three-course lunch carefully paired with Serego Alighieri wines.

Generations Excursion: Roam Romeo & Juliet's hometown

Discover the real places and even the real people who inspired the Bard's tale of star-crossed lovers: The stone walls of Romeo's family home still exist, and Juliet's balcony draws romantics from all over the world. They write notes, and some of them even get married there nowadays. If you prefer action to romance, you'll want to explore the ancient Roman arena, which is still used for theatrical productions. Climb stone stairs built 2,000 years ago and take a look down to the floor of arena: Gladiators fought there, lions roared, and you might have a chance to clamber up on the stage and perform a little bit yourself too. If you're ready for a break, hit one of Verona's great gelato shops for a cool treat before

boarding the bus and heading off through the countryside to lunch in Valpolicella—and then to the ship in Venice.

This excursion is only available on sailings that belong to the Generations program.

This evening you'll arrive in Venice and embark. Unpack, relax and enjoy your first evening on the Venetian Lagoon.

Day 4: Venice

If ever there was a city that could be described as “bewitching” and “ethereal,” Venice is it. An expert guide will show you iconic sites as well as quiet lanes and secret spots known only to locals (shhhh....). Also on deck today: a scenic cruise around the Venetian Lagoon and an experience that's sure to be a highlight of your trip—an extremely rare after-hours visit to St. Mark's Basilica. Hoping to escape marauding Huns, Goths and Vandals as the Roman Empire collapsed in the fifth century, refugees built a little settlement they called Venice on tiny islands in a lagoon in the Adriatic Sea. By the 12th century, Venice was the wealthiest and most powerful city-state in Europe, controlling the Mediterranean and all European trade with the East. Its merchant-aristocrats lavished their wealth on palaces and churches, art and music, creating a city that is truly like no other. Now, seawater laps at the foot of thousand-year-old houses— and sometimes rises above the doorsteps—but the glorious palaces and romantic canals enchant visitors just as they have for centuries. Today you will embark on your own personal voyage of discovery through this entrancing city.

Featured Excursions:

Venice walking discovery tour

Exclusive evening opening of St. Mark's Basilica

Generations Excursion:

Venetian magic

This excursion is only available on sailings that belong to the Generations program.

Venice walking discovery tour

Venice has no need to designate a pedestrians-only historic district: No cars are permitted within the island city; all transportation is by foot or water. Begin your exploration—on foot, of course—by strolling through the historic Castello district. It's the largest of Venice's six districts; back in the 13th century it was home to the Arsenal, where Venice's ships were built (Venetians boasted that they could build a complete ship in a single day) and where the famous Biennale art exhibition now takes place. As you pass 800-year-old homes, you'll hear the murmur of the soft local dialect through the open windows, clothes flap from lines strung over tiny canals and kids kick soccer balls along cobbled alleys—it's a real, living, breathing neighborhood, not just a historic site. You will soon arrive at the most famous plaza in Italy, St. Mark's Square, and the Doge's Palace. Venetians elected their first doge, or duke, in AD 697 and began building the palace around AD 800. The palace complex, as it exists now, mostly dates to the 14th and 15th centuries, and it brims with jaw-dropping artistic gems, including Tintoretto's wall-sized Paradise and works by Veronese, Tiepolo and Titian. Justice—and sometimes injustice, for Venice was a supremely political city—was meted out in the palace, and those convicted of crimes were led across the Bridge of Sighs to prison. Follow their footsteps to the prison and gaze into the cells: Casanova

escaped from one of these cells; other, less fortunate prisoners whiled away their time by inscribing graffiti on the walls, which you can still read. Your tour ends at the Rialto (the oldest part of the city) and the famous 16th-century stone bridge spanning the Grand Canal. After a scenic cruise around the Venetian Lagoon, you can spend the afternoon exploring on your own. In addition to its well-known museums, Venice is also home to some highly specialized ones: Displays at the Correr are devoted to the history of Venice; the Museo della Musica contains 17th- and 18th-century musical instruments and exhibits about composer Antonio Vivaldi (known as the Red Priest for his hair color), who taught music to the daughters of Venetian noblemen; and the Museo Ebraico examines the history of the Jewish community that was confined to an island known as Ghetto Nuovo. The latter was one of Europe's wealthiest and most cultured Jewish communities, made up in part with refugees from the Spanish Inquisition.

Exclusive evening opening of St. Mark's Basilica

The doors of this icon open especially for you tonight, so you can see the glorious church in the evening light— without the crowds. You'll find it almost impossible not to gaze heavenward as you enter St. Mark's. High overhead, magnificent domes are sheathed in mosaics telling the story of the New Testament, but you should not miss the intricate pattern of marble and mosaic tile under your feet. Ahead of you is the famous altarpiece made by 10th-century Byzantine artisans who gilded it and decorated it with precious gems (some of which were subsequently stolen by Napoleon). The building, which exemplifies the city's historic connection to Byzantium and the Eastern Mediterranean, was finished in the 11th century and incorporates the remnants of earlier churches; gold glass-tile mosaics line the interior walls and cupolas, giving the church its nickname, Church of Gold. It houses treasures collected—one way or another—by Venetians over the centuries: The relics of St. Mark, patron saint of the city, were stolen from Alexandria, and the Tetrarch, a group of four crowned figures, was looted from Constantinople during the Fourth Crusade. Every successful Venetian voyager returned with something to decorate the basilica—a frieze, a statue—and the result is one of the most stunning works of art and architecture in this amazing city. Note: It is not always possible to arrange an after-hours visit to St. Mark's Basilica. If religious functions or festivities are taking place in the evening, we will visit during regular hours.

Generations Excursion: Venetian magic

What's it like to live here in the lagoon, surrounded by history? Your family guide can give you some special insight into the daily life of Venice as well as its amazing (and gory) history as you take in the most famous landmarks of the city known as La Serenissima. The pigeons in St. Mark's Square may bother the city fathers, but they are a traditional feature kids are likely to love. Take the elevator to the campanile of San Giorgio Maggiore for a bird's-eye view of San Marco, and indulge in the world's best ice cream. Just being on the water via vaporetto (water taxi) is so much fun for your youngest travelers, and when you all arrive on the little island of Giudecca, they can try their hand at glassblowing and mask-making (both legendary Venetian crafts). And as the sun begins to set, you'll be treated to more magic at St. Mark's Basilica, where the doors of this icon open especially for you, so you can see the glorious church in the evening light—and without the crowds.

This excursion is only available on sailings that belong to the Generations program.

A special Captain's Welcome Reception and Dinner will be prepared for you this evening.

Day 5: Chioggia

Join a local expert for a stroll around this picturesque fishing village, a popular place for artists, or “Go Active” with a bike ride along the beaches lining the lagoon. The seaside air and sweeping views are simply spectacular. The River Countess sails from Venice, cruising through the lagoon, past the Lido, the colorful fishermen’s houses of Pellestrina and the huge ongoing flood-control project called MOSE (which is designed to protect Venice from rising seawater), before docking in Chioggia, sometimes called “Little Venice,” at the southern end of the lagoon. Special attention to: We are obliged to comply with Italian Maritime Authorities who require that the ship is only manned by crew during the Adriatic Sea passage. We thank you for your cooperation.

Featured Excursion:

Choice of Chioggia walking discovery tour or Exclusive guided “Let's Go” bicycle tour of Chioggia’s beaches

Generations Excursion:

Biking at the beach

This excursion is only available on sailings that belong to the Generations program.

Chioggia walking discovery tour

Chioggia spreads over several islands, and though it boasts notable landmarks, including a 17th-century cathedral graced with work by Tiepolo, it’s essentially a fishing village. As you stroll through the picturesque town, you’ll see immediately why it’s a favorite destination for painters. Canals are lined with colorful fishing boats, fishermen mend nets and neighbors chat from their windows. Fishermen bring their catch into this port every day before it’s sent to Venice and other destinations, and the fish market is an amazing sight—and sound, as the market criers vie with one another to call attention to their catches. You’ll have a lovely view of Vena Canal from the white marble bridge at the end of Corso del Popolo, the town’s main boulevard, but if you are ambitious and would like a view of the whole village, climb the bell tower of San Andrea.

Exclusive guided “Let's Go” bicycle tour of Chioggia’s beaches

Meet your local bike guide dockside for a scenic ride along the lagoon. Your first stop is Piazza Vigo, with its famous—and beautiful—white marble bridge that links the square to San Domenico, a church standing on its own little island (you’re likely to see your ship cruise past right about now). Mount your bike again to pedal around Lusenzo Lagoon, the placid body of water between Chioggia and Sottomarina, delighting in the gloriously luminous air and serene views. Take a break at the end of San Marco street before heading back to Chioggia and the cathedral—you may extend your tour with a visit to the cathedral, which has a 14th-century bell tower, though the church itself was rebuilt in the 17th century and given an unusual white-and-gray interior. Or you could simply spend a little free time enjoying Chioggia’s broad main boulevard, Corso del Popolo, with its inviting shops and sidewalk cafés.

Generations Excursion: Biking at the beach

Leave the ship in Chioggia, a colorful fishing port, and get out and about for a bike ride along the beach. The Adriatic laps against the sand, and the path is flat and makes for easy pedaling.

This excursion is only available on sailings that belong to the Generations program.

Day 6: Polesella (Bologna or Ferrara)

Bologna or Ferrara? Let your passions be your guide today. If you have an appetite for pasta, head to Bologna—the heart of Italian culinary traditions—and learn how to make (and eat!) your own lunch. Or indulge your appetite for art with an excursion to Ferrara, an ancient center for the arts that once rivaled Medici Florence. Today you face a tough decision: Do you spend a full day in Bologna, the culinary capital of Northern Italy, or visit UNESCO-designated Ferrara, a beautifully preserved Renaissance city?

Featured Excursion:

Choice of Full-day excursion to Bologna with exclusive pasta-making workshop and lunch or Half-day excursion to Ferrara with lunch onboard

Generations Excursion:

Make your own pasta

This excursion is only available on sailings that belong to the Generations program.

Full-day excursion to Bologna with exclusive pasta-making workshop and lunch

Does Bologna have the best food in Northern Italy? Taste and decide for yourself today. Of course there's Bolognese sauce, but that's just one possible topping for the exceptional pasta available here. There are those who believe that the best tortellini in the world is made in Bologna. Locals also claim to have invented the first chocolate bars, and even if others dispute that claim, there's no denying that the chocolate shops offer some very special treats. Bologna's green market brims with local produce, and its specialty food stores and food halls are unmatched; locally made mortadella, luscious balsamic vinegar from nearby Modena, ham from Parma and, of course, great rounds of Parmesan cheese all contribute to the lavish displays. Participate in a workshop on making pasta, enjoy lunch at a celebrated restaurant and then stroll with your guide under the famous arcades to see some of the lovely, historic buildings in the city center: The huge basilica dates to the 14th century, and the two leaning towers that loom above Piazza di Porta Ravegnana were built in the 12th century, as were the structures that housed Europe's first university.

Half-day excursion to Ferrara with lunch onboard

Square towers rise sternly above the moat that still surrounds Castle Estense, the huge fortress the Este family built in the center of Ferrara in the 14th century. It was a demonstration of both power and caution, since the Estes had just put down an uprising, but it is just one of the family palaces to grace the city they developed. They turned Ferrara into a center for the arts and artists—particularly for musicians and composers—that rivaled Medici Florence. Here the Renaissance concept of the ideal city took shape—it was the first planned city in Italy that did not follow a Roman model—and as you take a brief walking tour through the historic center, you will see the Estes' vision throughout it, from the street layout that parallels the river to the many family palaces. But not all of Ferrara is Renaissance: The medieval walls still surround the old city (providing a popular walking and biking route for locals and visitors alike), the Gothic cathedral dates to the 12th century, and tiny cobbled lanes might make you think you were visiting the Middle Ages—were it not for the bicycles that Ferrara's citizens ride everywhere. Your local expert will introduce you to the highlights of Ferrara, and you'll have some time to explore on your own before returning to the ship for lunch.

Generations Excursion: Make your own pasta

Elegant Bologna is a city of arches and towers. Arcades line the streets, offering shade from the sun and shelter from rain, and will lead you to two tall, narrow, leaning towers. Are you ready for a climb? Almost 500 wooden steps wind around the interior of Asinelli Tower to the top—and when you get there, you have a great view out over the red-tile rooftops of the city. Back on the ground, check out the deliciousness that is Majani, a shop that has been making chocolates since 1796; there's a reason the king of Italy awarded it his seal of approval—and you will taste that reason before getting your hands on some pasta dough and making your own tortellini (a Bolognese specialty) for your lunch.

This excursion is only available on sailings that belong to the Generations program.

Day 7: Taglio di Po, Chioggia

Chioggia is such a delight that we'll return there today to experience something completely different. You can visit the village's bustling once-a-week market—a colorful and boisterous scene, and quintessentially Italian—or for something really unique, hop aboard a small boat to go mussel harvesting with local fishermen out in the lagoon. Dip into a lively local scene with a stroll through Chioggia, or, if weather permits, take a small boat out to the lagoon to take part in a mussel harvest. Special attention to: We are obliged to comply with Italian Maritime Authorities who require that the ship is only manned by crew during the Adriatic Sea passage. We thank you for your cooperation.

Featured Excursion:

Choice of Chioggia market visit with lunch onboard or Chioggia mussel harvesting experience

Generations Excursion:

Harvest your own mussels

This excursion is only available on sailings that belong to the Generations program.

Chioggia market visit with lunch onboard

Chioggia is the quintessential Venetian Lagoon fishing village. Founded in the fifth century, it was known as the pantry of Venice because of its many small truck farms, which supplied Venetian households with produce until just a few decades ago. It is still a thriving fishing port; its wholesale fish market is one of the largest in Italy. On Thursdays, Chioggia also hosts a huge outdoor market along its main thoroughfare, Corso del Popolo, where stands sell everything from locally grown melons and beets (pretty candy-striped Chioggia beets are treasured by U.S. chefs) to colorful straw handbags. Spend some time exploring the market before heading back to the ship for lunch.

Chioggia mussel harvesting experience

Do you love succulent, salty mussels? They've been a staple of Venetian cooking for many years, in part because the waters of the lagoon support such a bounty of fish and shellfish. Board a small boat and head out to the mussel banks, the area where the mollusks thrive, to take part in a mussel harvest. You'll see mussel ropes suspended from poles in the shallow waters and, after a little instruction from the fisherman, help harvest the shellfish. Then return to the ship for lunch.

Generations Excursion: Harvest your own mussels

Take part in the day's regular program but with a special family focus, courtesy of your family guide, who will show you how to navigate the fish market like a local (after all, Chioggia is a fishing village), shop for fun finds at the street market, and sail across the shallow lagoon waters to a fisherman's hut, where you'll help harvest and cook mussels.

This excursion is only available on sailings that belong to the Generations program.

You'll sail back to Venice this evening.

Day 8: Venice Islands (Burano, Mazzorbo, Torcello)

Venice is an island surrounded by hundreds of smaller islands, three of which you'll visit today—Burano, famous for its lace-makers and houses painted in eye-popping colors; Mazzorbo, where you'll taste a historic golden-hued wine; and Torcello, home to beautiful Byzantine mosaics.

Featured Excursion:

Full-day "The Magical Islands of Venice"

Generations Excursion:

Venice's enchanting outer islands

This excursion is only available on sailings that belong to the Generations program.

Full-day "The Magical Islands of Venice"

The Venetian lagoon is dotted with islands, each with its own history, heritage and charm. Your first island of the day is an exceptionally colorful one. Hot pink, chartreuse, orange, lemon yellow—Burano's brightly painted fishermen's cottages are an artist's dream. The sizzling colors may look random, but they are strictly regulated: An owner needs state permission to change the color of the house. Burano is even better known for its lace-making tradition than for its colors; the exquisite craft has been practiced here for 400 years, handed down from mother to daughter since the first workshop was set up at the end of the 16th century. Visit a historic lace-making atelier to see some of this delicate work and, if you like, purchase items to take home. Enjoy lunch on your own at one of Burano's charming restaurants, then rejoin the group for a visit to the neighboring island, Mazzorbo. Here you'll find a different craft practiced: wine-making. Visit an ambitious wine estate devoted to making wine with Dorona grapes, which tolerate the salt air—and the occasional saltwater bath during very high tides—and produce a luscious golden wine. These grapes grew here long ago in a walled vineyard that has been brought back into verdant production. Enjoy a tasting in lovely surroundings. Then it's on to Torcello, perhaps the most surprising of all these islands. It was settled before Venice was founded, and at one time it was the greatest, most populous city in the lagoon; now, however, only a handful of people live there. Its centerpiece is the basilica of Santa Maria Assunta, the oldest church in the lagoon and a monument to Torcello's lost might. The doors open early for you so you can see the stunning 11th-century mosaic of the Last Judgment without the crowds—and with expert commentary from your art historian guide.

Generations Excursion: Venice's enchanting outer islands

Spend the early part of the day amid the brightly colored houses of Burano, learning the secrets of lace-making. You might want to shop for a picnic lunch on the grass at the park, where there's a playground

for the younger family members. Later in the day, tweens and teens can take to the water aboard a gondola or a kayak, learning how to paddle these tricky vessels while standing up.

This excursion is only available on sailings that belong to the Generations program.

Day 9: Venice

Lovers of food and wine flock to Italy to immerse themselves in a true farm-to-table epicurean experience. If that sounds like you, you'll love today's walking tour to the famous fish and produce market next to the Rialto Bridge. Prefer a more visual feast? Join an art historian for a highlights tour of the Accademia gallery. Further your acquaintance with the city called the "Queen of the Adriatic" with a tour of its marvelous food markets (your ship's chef might just lead your expedition) or take a tour of the stunning Academy museum.

Featured Excursion:

Choice of Exclusive "Do as the Locals Do" Venice walking tour or "Venetian Painters at the Accademia" tour with art historian guide

Generations Excursion:

Spooky Venice ghost walk

This excursion is only available on sailings that belong to the Generations program.

Exclusive "Do as the Locals Do" Venice walking tour

Back when Venice was at the height of its power, only the Rialto Bridge spanned the Grand Canal—and the city's famous Rialto markets for fish and produce have sprawled at its feet as long as the bridge has arched over the water. Here you'll find violet artichokes from the nearby island of Sant'Erasmus, honey from the salt marshes, white asparagus from Giare—and Venetians shopping for their dinners in the historic heart of the city. Join them as you explore the colorful, noisy and fun arcades with your guide (the ship's chef often leads this expedition), who knows Venice's culinary arts intimately. Freshly caught local fish is sold to knowledgeable customers under the Gothic arches of the covered fish market, which was probably originally built in the 11th century. At the end of the tour, join your guide at a bacaro (a casual wine bar) for the Venetian version of happy hour, called ombra e cicchetti—a drink (often a glass of prosecco) with a bite of something delicious— perhaps crostini with salt cod spread or another Venetian fish specialty.

"Venetian Painters at the Accademia" tour with art historian guide

Join an art historian on an exclusive guided visit to the Academy. Probably the greatest collection of Venetian Renaissance paintings in the world, it includes works by Tiepolo, Veronese, Tintoretto, Bellini and Canaletto. There are more than 20 galleries, each one containing extraordinary masterpieces, with exhibits generally laid out in chronological order. There are far too many to see in a single visit; fortunately, your guide brings a specialist's knowledge to the history of Venetian painting and will show you what was unique about Venetian art as it developed from the 14th through the 16th centuries. Note: Photography is not permitted inside the Academy, and large bags, especially backpacks, must be left in lockers.

Generations Excursion: Spooky Venice ghost walk

How many Lions of St. Mark can you spot as you take a magical mystery tour of Venice? The winged lion, with his paw on a book (and sometimes a sword) is everywhere— carved into stone walls, atop columns, set into mosaics— and your guide knows all the city's secrets: where the hidden passages are, which squares conceal cemeteries beneath the cobblestones, who were the ghostly noblemen that haunt the stairs and bridges. Your guide has been uncovering the city's lore for years and will share some of these secrets with you. Gondola ferries— traghetti—crisscross the Grand Canal all day; they're the city's favorite shortcut, and you'll feel like a local aboard one. You do have to stand up in the narrow boat, so they're best for older kids.

This excursion is only available on sailings that belong to the Generations program.

A special Captain's Farewell Reception and Dinner will be prepared for you this evening.

Day 10: Venice (Disembark)

Disembark the ship. If your cruise/tour package includes a group departure transfer or if you purchased a private departure transfer, you will be transferred to Venice Marco Polo International Airport for your flight home.

