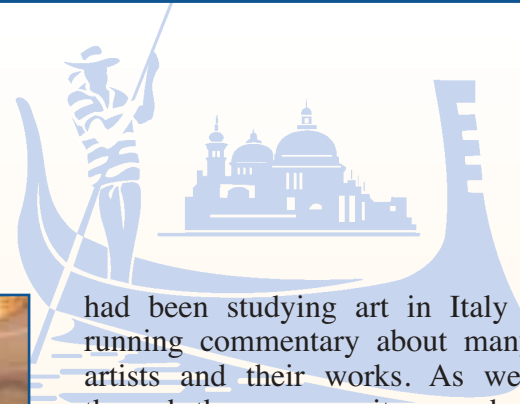




# Travel

## Venetian Magic



By Mira Temkin



With winding canals, singing gondoliers, exquisite museums and air of romance, Venice is a treasure of earthly delights. The focal point of the city is the celebrated Piazza San

Marco, called "the drawing room of the world." Home to the Doges Palace, Bell Tower and St. Mark's Basilica, San Marco Square has been the center of Venetian social life for almost a millennium. Today, the Square showcases historic buildings, Murano glass stores and artists at work, painting Venetian sights. And yes, flocks of pigeons. As I sat there sipping a cappuccino, I couldn't help but think I was on an fabulous movie set.



boat launch at San Marco Square, we were simply whisked away to another world. Our luxurious apartment in Palazzo Vendramin, a 15th century building linked to the hotel through an ancient courtyard, provided every extravagance, from exquisite marble baths to magnificent furnishings. Breakfast was served by our own private butler, who looked after our every need. Floor to ceiling windows afforded us breathtaking views. With champagne in hand, we watched the sun set over the Venetian skyline. It was hard to tell which was more glorious. For information about special events and packages, visit [www.hotelcipriani.com](http://www.hotelcipriani.com).



### Hotel Cipriani -- The Royal Treatment without the Title

I know what it's like to be treated like royalty. While Hotel Cipriani has hosted Princess Diana and other dignitaries, their desire to please every guest is what makes the experience so spectacular. Considered one of the finest hotels in the world, Hotel Cipriani presents the very best in Venetian hospitality in an atmosphere of calm and seclusion. Having added a Guest Stars Cooking School with renowned international chefs, botanical art classes as well as the world-renowned Casanova Beauty and Wellness Center, the Cipriani has become a destination unto itself. The Cipriani even harvests its own grapes! From their private



### The Peggy Guggenheim Collection

An American heiress and niece of Solomon Guggenheim, Peggy Guggenheim lived an eclectic life, collecting great works from 20th century painters. Her former home has been converted to a modern art museum with pieces from her own personal collection. Located along Venice's Grand Canal, the museum exhibits Picasso, Jackson Pollack, Chagall, Dali and other modern masterpieces. Our son, Ari, who

had been studying art in Italy gave us running commentary about many of the artists and their works. As we walked through the museum, it seemed more like visiting someone's lovely home and garden. For information, visit [www.guggenheim-venice.it](http://www.guggenheim-venice.it).

### Gam Gam in the Jewish Ghetto

The Jewish Ghetto is the oldest in the world and remains one of the most popular tourist spots in Venice. When it opened in 1516, the structures had to be "built up," rising as high as 9 stories. This created the tallest buildings in Venice, which were dubbed "skyscrapers" by locals. Today, five Synagogues remain, still serving the Jewish community. Among the 16th century buildings, you'll find Gam Gam, which means "More, More" in Hebrew. This delightful Kosher restaurant offers a delicious blend of both Italian and Middle Eastern cuisine, including falafel with tahini sauce, grilled fish and meat dishes, with fresh breads and desserts baked on the premises. The flourless chocolate cake is not to be missed.

Close to the ghetto, we happened on a holiday market, with roasting chestnuts, lively music and delicious marzipan creations. But all too soon it was time to leave Venice. As we glided back to the train station aboard a water taxi, I was filled with a sense of Venetian wonder that would stay etched in my mind forever.

For more information about traveling to Italy, visit [www.italiantourism.com](http://www.italiantourism.com).



*Mira Temkin is a North Shore freelance writer specializing in advertising, promotional marketing and public relations. As a travel journalist, she has ventured across Europe and the Caribbean. In addition, she is Editorial Consultant for Suburban Woman Publications. She can be reached at 847.433.2109 or [mtemkin967@aol.com](mailto:mtemkin967@aol.com).*