

Europe

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If you've ever dreamed of seeing Europe, cruising is an enticing way to go. Many of Europe's great cities were built on the sea: Venice, Copenhagen, Istanbul, St. Petersburg, Dubrovnik, Amsterdam. As your ship sails smoothly through Europe's waterways, you'll move effortlessly from one country to another, avoiding the hassle of long train rides, immigration lines, language barriers, and unexpected costs.



EUROPE'S RICH HERITAGE Every day, you'll pull into fabulous ports that will thrust you into a kaleidoscope of cultures. Bargain with rug merchants in Istanbul. Delight in centuries-old architecture in Venice. Tour the baroque churches of Dubrovnik. Relive the glory of ancient Olympians. Stare in awe at the magnificent ruins of biblical Ephesus. Can you ever get bored? Not likely.

- 1 Exquisite ceramic art lies within Istanbul's mosques.
- 2 Built in 114 AD, the library at Ephesus is the centerpiece of one of the world's greatest ruined cities. (Ephesus is a 30-minute bus ride from Kusadasi.)
- 3 The 7th Century BC Temple of Apollo at Didyma is one of the few surviving Wonders of the Ancient World. (Didyma is a 45-minute bus ride from Kusadasi.)
- 4 An unspoiled Croatian outpost of Venice, Dubrovnik is a charming city for strollers.



CRUISING EUROPEAN STYLE

Attending a conference on a cruise ship offers many advantages over a land conference. A major difference is the informal socializing that will occur continuously during every glorious day. Talk one-on-one with seminar presenters. Pick up discussions started earlier with fellow Geek Cruisers. Network practically around the clock.

Come and experience cruising European style. Relax and learn in an atmosphere of graciousness and attention to detail that will make your cruise vacation a truly memorable one.

"It's been mind blowing to spend a week amongst like-minded people."

Alfredo Matias Reed

<pathos@newsguy.com, pathos@ingole.org>

"I just wanted to drop you a note to let you know how much we've enjoyed the [conference] and what a fantastic job we think you did. Not only was it educational, it was truly fun. Again, Neil, thank you so much for putting this all together . . . not only have I learned more [programming], you've made our wedding/honeymoon so memorable."

Jasmine Merced <djasmine@tnsgroup.com>



VENICE

What is it about Venice that has caused so many writers to wax poetic about its charms? "The gorgeous and wonderful reality of Venice," wrote Charles Dickens, "is beyond the fancy of the wildest dreamer." "This was Venice," wrote Thomas Mann, "the flattering and suspect beauty—this city, half fairy tale and half tourist trap, in whose insalubrious air the arts once rankly and voluptuously blossomed, where composers have been inspired to lulling tones of somniferous eroticism." "Venice," wrote Truman Capote, "is like eating an entire box of chocolate liqueurs in one go."

What arouses such outpourings of adoration? Perhaps it's the city's dreamlike quality. Perhaps it's the light that inspired Renaissance painters. Perhaps it's the very improbability of its existence. Whatever it is, visitors to Venice have been awed, enthralled, and enchanted for centuries.

Venice's major landmarks are familiar to even the most casual traveler: the Grand Canal, St. Mark's Square, the Ducal Palace. But nothing quite prepares you for your first visit.

St. Mark's Square is surely Venice's most famous and beautiful piazza. Facing the square is the opulent St. Mark's Basilica, laid out in the form of a Greek cross. The effect of light shimmering against the 43,000 square feet of mosaics has been described as nothing short of magical.

Transportation is by foot or by water. The city's famous gondolas, and equally famous gondoliers, serve as both a tourist attraction and a means of getting around. During the Renaissance, when Venice reached its heyday, 14,000 gondolas traversed the city's canals.

Today, the city's Golden Age is reflected in the 15th and 16th century masterpieces by Bellini, Giorgione, Titian, and Tintoretto that hang in the Academy Gallery. Masterpieces by more modern artists—Picasso, Kandinsky, Pollock, Motherwell, and Ernst—can be found in the Peggy Guggenheim Collection, housed in the heiress's former apartments in the Palazzo Venier dei Leoni.

Certainly, Venice has a reality that is at odds with its romantic image. But that reality takes a back seat as La Serenissima—the most serene one—continues to seduce visitors with an unrivaled beauty. And that is the true reality.

