



Life in Venice

Reports of the city's death have been greatly exaggerated. A shortlist of the new and recent openings that are breathing fresh energy into La Serenissima. *by Brian Noone*

FIRST IT WAS ENGLISH tourists that were said to have killed Venice, then it was the Americans and Chinese, and now it's the hulking cruise ships that tower over the city. But La Serenissima endures, an enchanted archipelago that has maintained the architectural dignity of its empire days and has never wavered from its beguiling, pugnacious spirit that

remains delightfully aloof to gloomy predictions. Restaurants, shops and – for now – hotels continue to open apace, proving that there's always something new to discover, no matter how congested the walkways of San Marco.

WHERE TO STAY

The peace on the private island of JW



Left page, clockwise from left: the Grand Canal view from Aman Venice; a serene sitting room at the new Palazzo Volpi; elevated dining at the Oro in the Belmond Cipriani; above: the team at Quadri with Philippe Starck, far left, who spearheaded the restaurant's redesign

Marriott Venice Resort & Spa (jwvenice.com) is most delicious while walking in the sprawling garden, the rarest of Venetian commodities. Opt for a room in La Residenza with a city view across the lagoon, and don't miss the spa. The wonderful **Palazzo Volpi** (palazzovolpi.com) is a three-suite masterpiece opened in January of this year which feels like your own

private 13th-century palace invigorated with modern style. For the utmost in sophistication, the standard bearer remains **Aman Venice** (amanvenice.com), its Grand Canal site festooned with Tiepolo frescoes, while the last luxe hotel to come to the city – following a recent semi-binding prohibition on new hotels – might just be the **Gran Meliá Ca' di Dio** (melia.com), slated to open at the end of the year.

WHERE TO EAT

In-house restaurants highlight many hostelrys, and some deserve a visit in their own right: **GLAM** at **Palazzo Venart** (palazzovenart.com) serves up Michelin-starred local fare, while the artistic plates at **Oro** at the **Belmond Cipriani** (hotelcipriani.com) match the panoramic views, and the extraordinary cuisine from chef Federico Belluco at **Dopolavoro** at the JW Marriott (jwvenice.com) makes the boat journey worthwhile. Another water taxi away, **Venissa's** (venissa.it) young team and on-site vineyard make it the place to go while up north on Burano. Casual fare is best at **AMO** (alajmo.it/amo), a pizzeria in the T Fondaco dei Tedeschi department

store by the Rialto Bridge – design there is by Phillippe Starck, who also gave a makeover earlier this year to sister property **Quadri** (alajmo.it/quadri), the venerable Piazza San Marco institution.

EXPLORE

Art continues, as always, to dominate the city's interiors: the season's standouts are Tintoretto's 500th anniversary exhibitions at both the **Doge's Palace** (palazzoducale.visitmuve.it) and the **Accademia** (gallerieaccademia.it) and the multi-artist Dancing With Myself show at François Pinault's **Punta della Dogana** (palazzograssi.it). There is, for some, even more beauty on display at the newly revamped **Dolce & Gabbana** (dolcegabbana.com) flagship, where the gold-starred High Jewellery room is a wonder in itself. More bookish visitors will appreciate the design-led hole-in-the-wall bookstore **Bruno (with Motto)** (b-r-u-n-o.it), while those with epicurean leanings should book a table at Venice's first speakeasy, **The Chapel Club** (fb.com/chapelclubvenice), which opens in the evening after its namesake chapel closes for the day.