Venezia - Spring '05

Left to Right:
Michael Klenda
Matt Tomko • Patrick Lucy • Hilma Hans • Catherine Baker • Justin St. Pierre • Erika Libero • Anna Love • Dana Brudowsky • Caitlin Bauman • Dr. James Hans • Rachel Waters • David Leung
It was the best of times, it was the... best of times. True, the winter was a cold, seemingly endless series of 35-degrees days. But it was almost always sunny, and Helma and I have woken up every morning since January 6th more than happy to find ourselves in Venice.

True, at times the student kitchen was dirtier than it should have been. But usually Helma and I enjoyed the banging pans, slamming cabinet doors, and regular jabber among the students: the persistent rhythm of everyday life.

True, every now and then we heard the sounds of students preparing meals at 2:30 AM, or loud whoops and yells way too late at night. But there was also the regular talk of travels that were and travels to come, the sounds of boat protests on the Grand Canal, and the streams of the gondoliers chanting odd choral notes to their captive audiences.

Each of our students added warmth to the house (which it really needed) as did Laura, Anamaria, Massimo, Luciana, Marcus, Chiara.

Our weekly dinners were yet another source of enjoyment, especially in the kitchen when the food was being prepared, generous souls sharing their winning skills with everyone. Helma and I will miss the conversations, just as we shall find it hard to replace the endless church bells, the sloshing of the canal against the house, and the paintings of Bellini, Tintoretto, and Veronese (to say nothing for the 107 churches and the endless bridges). How does one replace such treasures? Or the everyday walks? Or gelato? Immeasurable!

We hope to carry with us part of the spirit of Venice and the prospect of friendships started here that will endure in the years to come. That should almost be enough to sustain us during our exile from the special pleasures that could only have been found in Venice in the spring of 2005 with our unique group of students.

Jim Haus, 4/22/05
This semester flew by quicker than I anticipated, and now it will be over in 3 days. Being able to spend a semester in a different country is a once in a lifetime experience (for most of us), so use it as a time to grow, to learn about another culture (what matters in life). Everyone's experience will be unique so I'm not going to try to tell you all how to live it. However, make sure that you explore often and put yourself out there. Although you may feel uncomfortable (simply because it is such a different culture) at times, still make the effort to learn as much as you can about this country. I written a couple tips and favorite places in Venice that you may find helpful especially for when you first get here. -Caitlin Baum, 4/24/05 5:55PM

Favorite(s):
- Gelato: Gelateria Nico's (esp. Mint choc)  
- Bar: Caffe Blue - ask drinks to be "molotov"  
- 2nd fav: Bar: Caffe Noir  
- Pizza: Pizza al Volto - great late night snack  
- Cheap dinner: San Trovaso - try the cooked spinach

Tip(s):
- Watch where you step at all times when walking through Venice  
- Go to Piccolo Mondo at least once - experience the sketchiness  
- Try to speak Italian as much as possible, you will be surprised by how much you will learn  
- Pack light when traveling on the weekends or during a 40-day break. There is nothing worse than carrying a heavy bag during your trip and then to and from the train station  
- Go to the Rialto Fish Market - try the fresh tuna!  
- Cook different things whenever possible. Try the fresh fish, eat the rabbit and horse (at the Billa!) try 20 different types of cheeses etc. You will never get the same selection of foods in the US  
- Travel whenever you can, you will be surprised how quickly the semester flies by. Make sure you spend a couple weekends in Venice too. Places I suggest to visit are: Rome, Florence, Capri, Positano, Dolomites, London, Dublin, Glasgow, Edinburgh, Verona

Tip(s): (cont.)
- Billa: make sure you wear plastic gloves when touching produce when checking out, fight for your position in line. Because Italians form clusters and don't be surprised if a 70-80 y.o. woman... or man... cuts in front of you, it's their god given right to go directly to the front of the line.  
- Italian Men: whether they whistle, cat call, or bark - NEVER look at them unless A. you want to start a conversation with them or B. you want some action because looking at them = you are inviting them over / it's an invitation for them to flirt with you  
- Purposely get yourself lost, then try to find your way back to the house. Ask for directions in Italian if necessary. This is the best way to truly learn about the city. Some of the best experiences that I have had in Venice occurred when I was "getting lost."  
- Try the Italian wine whenever possible. By the end of the semester you will be a wine connoisseur! Seriously though, house wine can be cheaper than water at some restaurants so there is no excuse not to try it. Also, house wines are different depending on which region in Italy you are currently in, so try different wines wherever you go.
Venice is amazing! By far my favorite city. The best part about being here was simply walking around and getting lost. It was definitely worth buying the "Chorus Pass" so that you can go around to all of the chapels that charge an entrance fee. Try not to spend a lot of time in the Casa - we have a great mansion but don't waste your time by staying INSIDE. Favorite spots: CAFE BLUE, The Corner CAFE I call "Chiara's Place," Diego + Max + "Black" the Dog = Corner Pub, The Park by Santa Elena, Via Garibaldi, The 1 Euro Spritz place, Chiesa di S.S. Giovanni e Paolo. As an art dock I love all of the museums + churches, but I don't think I would have had as good a time if I hadn't spent time trying to meet people and learn about the life here. Venice is a completely unique place and I think you can only really enjoy it if you stop comparing it to other places and just try to get to know it the best you can. Drink lots of SPEZERES (APEROL)

~ ANNA LOVE
To Whom It May Concern:

You may find yourself searching for the advice of an experienced resident of Casa Romeo. If you find yourself in that position, read on. I suggest you take part in the following actions:

1. Ride the Vaparettoes without a ticket (If you look suspicious, you will get caught)
2. Lose money at the casino
3. Buy a painting from Mauro
4. Go to dinner with a true Italian
5. Drink Spritz of your choice (Don't drink "Blu" if you dislike it)
6. Sleep on the dock
7. Go to Croatica
8. Get a Biblia Card
9. Picnic on Lido
10. Hug the cleaning ladies

Don't Lie No:

They don't know nothing about my soul, like some heat maddened summer fly. Keep buzzing at the sill. 😬Buzz Buzz (Emojis: buzz, bee, half of its you, half is me, his goal in life was to be an echo, and it's an illusion that we were ever alive. Watch the accordion lights following you as you walk and reject this archaic craving to be a hearthman of the immortals. Until they trample you down in still the bedman's bay among these giants and ridges of Laurel. On a clear day look for the mountains beyond the cemetary's Adventurous rest itself in the dark backward and abysm of time. And like the useless fabric of this vision, the drinking heads, the tumbling information of time, the dead dark canals, your love and memories wrap themselves in beautiful silence.

Michael Knolde

Summing up my experience here in Venice would be simply impossible. Words could never do this city any justice. I will go on with some suggestions for the stay since that seems to be what to do here. Eat gelato as often as possible. By wine with dinner. Go to the guggenheim not once, not twice but 3 or more times. Sit on the boats dock and watch gondola's and vaporetto's go by (be sure to be in pajamas or with beverage just to really confuse the tourists). Hit San Trovo at least once a month and order 1 litre of wine. But don't ever pay for water. Go to San Marco @ night. Cafe Blue is the place to be! became a regular and maybe you can earn some free spritzes.

Above all, don't waste your time reading my memories... go make some of your own.

Ciao Ciao Venezia,

Catherine Baker

Man, this isn't easy. Its hard to say good bye. But I have had one of the best semesters ever. There's no way that writing anything here can capture even a sliver of the magic of Venice. I could say that there were no thing I wish I had done, but there is much more that I've been blessed to have had the chance to do. There were ups and downs, but there was not one thing I would take back because it made this whole trip what it was. Now I've learned a lot about myself, and grown a lot. The only thing left to say is "I'll be back soon." Ciao Venezia.
May 1, 2005 5:30 P.M.

I've been putting this off until I can.

I had no idea - I don't want to write in this notebook, no longer. I'm leaving Venice.

Because it's kicking me out (actually, I just have to leave) in 30 minutes but even now it seems so surreal to deport this magical place.

This has been the greatest semester for me - Venice opens up an entirely new perspective and allows you to make it what you want it to be. Never let yourself get bored here - always get lost because in the end you'll find yourself there.

The friends I've made here are amazing. Living with people in a house like this always creates dynamics - but in the end, you'll all be closer for it.

Making dynamic Venice together. The life of the house is just as important as the city - and I've been lucky to have had so many unforgettable memories.

Walking through streets, getting past all the bars at 2am, seeing the Gondolas sail past, the wind blowing from the buildings, our laughter, the music, the bars (bar & Blue) Agora & the rest of San Trovano, the sunsets... the list is endless.

Make Venice yours... don't become a tourist... let the grandeur of the city surround you. Wake up and then do it again for the next four months. It'll be the fastest four months you've had yet.

— Ciao Ragazzi

David "Dave" Davide Leung
May 11, 2005
This place has become home for just a short visit.
It will always be in my heart. It has made great
impressions and will return shortly.

May 12, 2005
Another few minutes
and this awesome visit
will come to an end.
Thank you for an
unforgettable week!

Memories Last a
Lifetime

May 12, 2005
A once in a lifetime opportunity
to become better educated
and enriched by one of the
most fabulous cities of
the world. I am fortunate to
be here and to stay at Casa
Faitino and to have Dr. Peter
Fairoff as our professor. I
hope to return someday.

May 12, 2005

May 13, 2005
The chance to live a life that
the world dreams of, to be in Venice.
Thank you Prof. Kainoff, because
without you I would not have lived
in the United States.

Babbi A. Bos

May 12, 2005

Elizabeth Holmes
MAAS-WFU '08

May 13, 2005
Thank you for new knowledge, new friends, and an
experience of a lifetime!

Jean Teitel

May 31, 2005
I wrote enough last
time (Fall 2004) so I will
only say that it has
been a blessing to return
here and spend time in
this beautiful city with
good friends and the woman
I love. (Tina)

May 12, 2005

Michal

Thank you for new
knowledge, new friends, and an
experience of a lifetime!