



## Select Italy Press Release

Date: August 1, 2005

For Immediate Release

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### NO MORE TOURIST TRAPS: VENICE - VENETO TOUR IMMERSSES TRAVELERS INTO THE AUTHENTIC VENETIAN CULTURE

Select Italy Guides Travelers into the Heart of the Veneto Region and Culture

**Chicago, IL August 1, 2005-** When travelers book a tour to Venice, they often become stuck in the tourist trap that many interpret as the true Venetian Lifestyle. However, the Veneto region is much more than just Venice's St. Mark Square and Bridge of Sighs. Italian travel specialists Select Italy have created a tour of the Veneto region that takes travelers off the beaten path, and immerses them in Veneto's authenticity.

Upscale tour operator, Select Italy, announces the creation of the Venice-Veneto tour, a true look at the Veneto region. For six nights in September, travelers can experience the beauty and atmosphere of both the Veneto region and the cities of Venice, Asolo and Treviso. The Venice-Veneto tour begins at the Hotel Villa Soligo, and ends at the Hotel Ai Mori d'Oriente in Venice. In the first half of the tour, travelers will experience the rustic splendor of the Veneto's countryside by staying in the historical Hotel Villa Soligo. The Veneto segment of the tour includes guided visits to Treviso – one of the bustling small towns of the region, and to Asolo, one of the most celebrated destinations of the area. This small town, former Roman settlement and site of the splendid reign of Caterina Cornaro - Queen of Cyprus, has been celebrated by countless artists and poets including Giorgione, Robert Browning, Eleonora Duse and Igor Stravinsky to name a few. Food and wine – two of the leading traditions of this corner of Italy – are highlighted with multiple meals and wine tastings at the regions finest restaurants and vineyards. Once in Venice, during the second part of the tour, travelers will visit St. Mark Square, a Murano glass factory and a take a private Gondola tour of the canals. The Venice-Veneto tour will take place from September 17, 2005 to September 24, 2005.

#### **Veneto**

Travelers begin their tour of the Veneto region with a private transfer to the Hotel Villa Soligo. Located in the heart of the region, visitors will find this aristocratic eighteenth-century villa both tranquil and welcoming. The property, which belonged to the Brandolini Counts for five generations, is today a comfortable hotel surrounded by its own park and a successful restaurant. The Casa Rossa winery, one of the stops on the tour, is one of the finest of the Prosecco -producing region, and features on its list one of the favorites of former Pope John Paul II, the white wine called "L'Eremita". Locanda Da Lino is another culinary highlight – since 1961 Lino Toffolin and his family have entranced diners with their exuberant renditions of recipes handed down from generations of local cooks, featuring home-made pasta, local polenta and the wines of the region.

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While at the Villa Soligo, guests will roll up their sleeves for a hands-on cooking class in the hotel restaurant, and then feast on the fruits of their labor for lunch. That afternoon, a private minibus will ferry the hardcore shoppers of the group to the nearby outlet-shopping district.

### **Venice**

The second half of the trip is dedicated to Venice where travelers will stay at the Hotel Ai Mori d'Oriente. Located in Cannaregio, a neighborhood of Venice where actual Venetians live and socialize, allowing guest to experience one of the less touristy districts of the city. While staying in Venice, travelers will enjoy an An Introduction to Venice Half-day Private Walking Tour, led by an English-speaking guide. Any introduction to the city often referred to as 'La Serenissima' must have as its starting point the justly famous Piazza di S. Marco – or St. Mark's Square. Its graceful architecture is testimony to the East meets West merging of cultures that are so much part of the city's past, and is now complemented by some of the city's most elegant shops and historic cafes.

Guest to Venice will also enjoy a private tour of the islands of the Venetian Lagoon. The ephemeral beauty of blown glass is a perfect metaphor for Venice and its lagoon. Travelers will experience the wonder of this delicate art with a guided visit to the island of Murano. The island is only a short ride from Saint Mark's Square and boasts a miniature version of the Grand Canal lined on both sides with glass factories and shops. Watch the skilled artisans at work as they manipulate the molten glass into masterpieces of color and form; you will have the chance to question them about the age-old techniques of mouth blown and molded glass, as well as to purchase an exquisite example of their craft as a souvenir.

The Venice- Veneto tour begins September 17, 2005 and runs to September 24, 2005. The cost of the tour is \$3,199.00 per person and requires a minimum of eight participants. For more information of the Venice- Veneto tour, log onto [www.selectitaly.com](http://www.selectitaly.com). To discuss story ideas, contact Nathan Janitz at 1-800-877-1755 or by email at [Nathan@selectitaly.com](mailto:Nathan@selectitaly.com).

Select Italy is an award winning travel agency specializing in Italy. Select Italy offers a wide array of products and services, which include customized itineraries, museum reservations, tickets to music & cultural events, private guided services, transportation and accommodations. All of which are available for purchase online at [www.selectitaly.com](http://www.selectitaly.com). Select Italy has been on the Travel +Leisure "A-list of Super Agents" for 4 years, and in 2005 its website won an Ultra Web Award and was also nominated as a Webby Award finalist. Founded in 1997, company

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President Andrea Sertoli said, "Italy remains an unmatched destination with the warmth of its people, its heritage, its sheer physical beauty. With our specialized knowledge and insider information behind every travel plan we make, our clients enjoy everything Italy has to offer." More information through our press room at <http://selectitaly.com/pressroom.php> or by calling (800) 877-1755.

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