

My Trip to Venice City, Italy

My trip to Venice City in Italy still lingers in my mind as though it happened just yesterday. I have never forgotten the exhilaration that Mr. Pumice caused in us when he broke the news about this exceptional trip to Venice seaport in northeastern Italy, Veneto Region, the capital of Venice Province, ten years ago. Well, it had been the custom of our school to take all the sixth grade students on an international trip every year before they pass their final examinations. The only mystery with our class was that none of us had an idea what place we were to visit. A number of students were obliged to engage in a betting game trying to predict the kind of place that the teacher would unveil to the class. Our Geography teacher, known as Pumice as his pseudonym, was the bearer of good news. He suddenly emerged from the blues and disclosed the name of the place that none of the bets had thought of.

Venice had for long been the subject of discussion in our Geography studies, but none of us had ever imagined that time would come when we would have an opportunity to tour it. The city is famously known for hosting more than one hundred islands which were formed by numerous canals in the lagoon between the mouths of the Po and Piave Rivers. It is situated at the northern extremity of the Adriatic Sea. Following its historic role as a commercial center and a naval power, the city is known as the “Queen of the Adriatic”. We could not help the excitement, imagining how it would feel when we finally landed at Venice in less than twenty four hours. Seemingly, it was going to be a fascinating experience altogether. Our travel documents were ready, and in a twinkle of an eye, all of us were about to take a flight.

The sixteen-hour voyage seemed to take ages. After our first and second stops in Brussels and Amsterdam respectively, nothing seemed different from other trips we had had in the past. However, as the plane took off again, we began preparing ourselves for the last and ultimate stop. After about three hours, the captain announced that we were almost

landing. Everybody was instructed to buckle as it was the rule whenever the plane took off or landed.

Venice had been a renowned city in the western world for over two hundred years according to the history that was read in books. We could not believe our eyes walking on the streets of the onetime independent republic and the capital of a vast commercial empire. Everything here seemed strange. The vegetation, economic activities, language, culture and the climate among others – everything was different from what we were used to in Alaska. We had to learn to adapt as quickly as possible so as to learn as much as we could. Quite conspicuous were the stunning works of architecture erected along the canals of Venice. The artifacts created a city of unparalleled charm, inspiring masterpieces of art, literature as well as music. Here, we took as many photographs as we could for our future references. Some of my classmates also interacted with the locals in an effort of learning one or two things about the artifacts. As such, we were amazed by the hospitality that the merchants expressed as some of them ended up giving us some artifacts free of charge.

Despite the fact that none of us understood the Italian language, we managed to learn a number of facts about the city from some of the locals with whom we interacted. Although the city sustained its historical beauty and renown for being one of the most prosperous cities in Adriatic region, we discovered that it had a series of dangers that beset it. Venice had in the recent past become vulnerable to serious flooding, which put its glorious facades in jeopardy as a result of pollution. It also transpired that the land was gradually sinking, putting its future as well as the lives of inhabitants in total doubt. Nonetheless, we noted some fraction of optimism sounding from a number of city dwellers following the government's efforts to save this major cultural legacy although the strategies set in place never seemed to be time bound.

Conversely, Venice is a strategic place for many travelers from all over the world. The place is a hub of innumerable recreational activities that attract a plethora of tourists. No one

doubts in the capability of this town to rise and sustain its fame as the most prosperous state in the western world. For two weeks that we pitched camp in this historic city, we engaged in many sporting events some of which were quite strange for us. For the first time in my life, I learnt how to surfboard, ride a motor boat, swim, and play water polo game. The most spectacular scene was the Grand Canal, which is the main traffic route of Venice. The canal extends past many historical palaces winding under three bridges. Here, we enjoyed viewing colorful gondolas carrying tourists along the scenic canal whereas motorized boats would provide freight and passenger services. The place was busy for twenty four hours, and it was presumable to contribute a large portion of the GDP of Venice.

Basilica di San Marco, which Mr. Pumice had shown us from the air when we were just preparing to land, closed our itinerary. The basilica stands at one end of Venice's Piazza San Marco and had five domes on top with a marble facade. Of the many significant structures of Venice, this basilica best represented the city's historic wealth and glory. The trip to Venice City will forever remain the most memorable one in my life.