

Save Venice!
by Caroline Scannell

Venice, the name is derived from the ancient Veneti, who inhabited the area by the 10th century BC. The city was the capital of the Republic of Venice from 697-1797, which was a major finance and maritime power. Known as the “Queen of the Adriatic”, the lagoon and a part of the city are listed as a UNESCO World Heritage Site.



Vatican, Map of Venice, 1581 (block), June 6, 1972, Scott #519abcd



Vatican, St. Mark's Basilica, Scott 520



Vatican, St. Mark, Emilio Vangelli, #518

Although there are no surviving historical records dealing directly with the founding of Venice, tradition and available evidence have led historians to agree that the original population of Venice consisted of refugees from nearby Roman cities, as well as from the undefeated countryside fleeing successive waves of Germanic and Hun invasions.



According to tradition, the city was founded in AD452, when the inhabitants of Aquileia, Padua, and other northern Italian cities took refuge on the islands of the lagoon from the Teutonic tribes that invaded Italy during the 5th century. They established their own government, which was headed by tribunes for each of the 12 principal islands, the twelve founding families who elected the first Doge. The traditional founding is identified with the dedication of the first church, San Giacomo, on the islet of Rialto which is said to have taken place at the stroke of noon on March 25, 421. The last, and most enduring, immigration into the northern Italian peninsula was that of the Lombards in 568 who left the Eastern Roman Empire.



Italy, Schiavoni Shore,
Scott #1091, Mar 5, 1973

Spread over 120 islands formed by 177 canals in the lagoon between the mouths of the Po and Piave rivers, at the northern end of the Adriatic Sea. The islands on which the city is built are connected by about 400 bridges. The Grand Canal, about 2 miles long, winds through Venice. Long sand bars, or barrier beaches, on the outer side of the lagoon serve as protection against the sea. Today a railroad and highway causeway connect Venice with the mainland.

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Italy, Views from Venice, Tetrarchs, "Triumph of Venice", painting by Carpaccio, Bronze Horses of St. Marc Basilica, St. Mark Square. issued 10th April 1973, Scott #1092-5



Iran, the Lion of Venice,
May 5, 1974, Scott #1784



Algeria, Lion of St. Mark, Bridge of Sighs,
Jan 24, 1972, Scott #471-2.



The origin of the name Venice is unknown and much disputed, but is currently believed to be Phoenician. The Phoenicians, contemporary with the Etruscans, were the first to land in the lagoon and establish a trading place there. Looking at the word "Phoenician" and "transliterating" it to "Phenice", the name Venice comes immediately to mind. The city's patron is St. Mark, the Evangelist.



<< Tunisia, Gondolier,
Doge's Palace, Gondola
Prow, Rialto Bridge &
Hand Holding
Gondolier's Hat, Scott
571-4, Feb 7, 1972

Today no motor vehicles are permitted on the narrow, winding lanes and streets that penetrate the old city, and the bridges are for pedestrians only. For centuries the most common method of transportation was by gondola, a flat-bottomed boat propelled by a single oar. Today, the gondolas are used mainly by tourists; motor launches carry almost all the freight and passenger traffic in Venice.



San Marino Scott # 746-8, Mar 23, 1971. Paintings by Canaletto (1697-1768)

<< Canale Grande between Palazzo Balbi
and Rialto Bridge.

View of the San Marco Basin on the
Molo.

View of the Harbour of Venice and the
Customs' Office.

Though part of the Eastern Roman Empire, Venice was virtually autonomous. In 697 Venice was organized as a republic under an elected doge (duke), Paolo Lucio Anafesto (Anafestus Paulicius).

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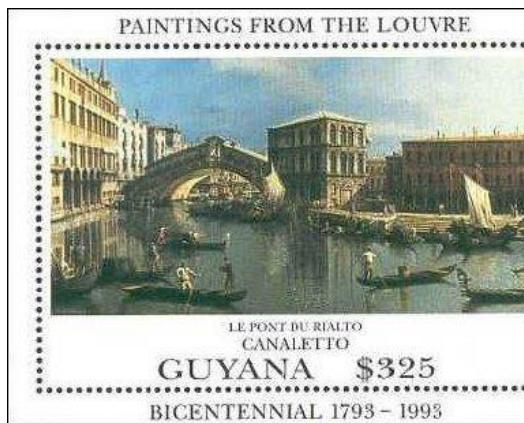
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Internal dissension undermined the government during the next century, but the threat of foreign invasion united the Venetians. Attacks by Saracens in 836 and by Hungarians in 900 were repulsed. In 991 Venice signed a commercial treaty with the Saracens, initiating the Venetian policy of trading with the Muslims rather than fighting them. The Crusades and the resulting development of trade with Asia led to the establishment of Venice as the greatest commercial center for trade with the East.

The whole city is an extraordinary architectural masterpiece as depicted in the stamps of Gabon, Guyana and Guinea Bissau.

Gabon, Grand Canal by Vinvitelli, Rialto Bridge by Canaletti,
Santa Maria della Salute by Vanvitelli,
Scott C123-5, Feb 7, 1972 >>



<< Guinea
Bissau 2003.
Sheet of
various views
of Venice
(photographs).

Guyana , Dec 6, 1993, "The Rialto Bridge" by Canaletto,
issued at the occasion of the bicentennial of the Louvre Museum, Paris.



Monaco, Save Venice, April 27, 1972.
St. Mark's Square, (1740). National Gallery
of Canada (Ottawa), Bernardo Bellotto
(1720-1780)

San Pietro di Castello (date
unknown). Gulbenkian Museum, Lisbon,
Portugal, Francesco Guardi (1712-1793)

St. Giovanni & St. Paolo (1726). Gallery of
Old Masters, Dresden, Germany, Canaletto
(1697-1768)

The republic profited from the partition of the Byzantine Empire in 1204 and became the strongest European power in the Mediterranean region. The growth of a wealthy aristocracy gave rise to an attempt by the nobles to acquire political dominance, and although Venice was nominally a republic, she became a rigid oligarchy by the end of the 13th century. In the 13th and 14th centuries Venice was involved in a series of wars with Genoa, its chief commercial rival. In the war of 1378-1381, Genoa was compelled to acknowledge Venetian supremacy. Wars of conquest enabled Venice to acquire neighboring territories, and by the late 15th century, the city-state was the leading maritime power in the Christian world.

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<< Basilica of St. Mark, 900th Anniversary, Oct 8, 1994, Scott #2003 (Italy) & 1314 (San Marino) Joint Issue. Se-tenant "mirrored" set. The design is very nice, because the double-view symbolizes the Venetian canals mirroring the cathedral in the water. The stamp was issued in commemoration of the IX centenary of the inauguration of St. Mark's Cathedral in Venice.

Venice became an imperial power following the Fourth Crusade which veered off its course in 1204 culminating in the sack of Constantinople rather than the Saracens. This resulted in the plunder of the gilt bronze horses which were taken from the Hippodrome originally placed above the entrance to St. Mark's Basilica. The originals have now been replaced by replicas and are now stored within the basilica.



Romania, N. Darascu "The Marina". Ghorge Petrascu "View from Venice". Marius Bunescu "Venice". Marius Bunescu "Venice". Scott 1274-7, issued Oct 20, 1972



Ivory Coast, St Mark's Basilica, Scott #C49, Feb 5, 1972



Pakistan, The Grand Canal, Scott #38, Feb 5, 1972

Venice always traded extensively with the Byzantine Empire and the Muslim world. By the late 13th century Venice was the most prosperous city in Europe. Venice's leading families vied with each other to build the grandest palaces and support the work of the greatest and most talented artists.

Turkish invasions in the middle of the 15th century marked the end of Venetian greatness. The Black Death devastated Venice in 1348, and again between 1575 and 1577. In three years the plague killed 50,000 people.

Venice began to lose its position as a center of international trade during the later Renaissance as Portugal became Europe's principal trading nation with the East. The discovery of a sea route to the Indies around the Cape of Good Hope by the Portuguese navigator Vasco da Gama in 1497-1498 accelerated the decline.



Italy Lion Tower, Scott #514, Apr 12, 1949



Bulgaria, St Mark's Basilica & Castel d'Oro, Scott #2021-2, May 6, 1972

Republic of Dahomey (Benin) Ancient Mosaics from Venice, Scott #C159abc, Apr 10, 1972

Stork and Snake, Roosters carrying a Fox, Noah with a dove.



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In 1866, after the Seven Weeks War, Venice became part of the newly established kingdom of Italy.

After Venice was faced with devastating floods in 1966, to help save the remarkable city UNESCO began a worldwide effort to raise money and find a way to save the city. Many countries issued stamps to publicize the UNESCO effort to Save Venice in 1972. This was the second effort of the United Nations to use UNESCO for such a project, the first having been the Egyptian temples of Abu Simbel.

>>Italy 1968. Painting by Canaletto. St. Mark's Cathedral and the Ducal Palace, with the main landing in the background.

>>Italy 1993. Francesco Guardi: "View of Venice" towards the main landing.



Italy, Venice World Heritage Site, March 16, 2007, Scott #2800

From it's foundation, when Attila attacked Europe in 451, forcing the inhabitants of Veneto to seek refuge in a group pf sparsely inhabited coastal islands, Venice today is among Europe's most beautiful and popular vacation cities.

New Digs



Armenia, Mammoth, issued March 27, 2019

Modern Venice has faced many challenges, including loss of population to other areas and physical damage from flooding, sinkage, air and water pollution, and age. After severe flooding in 1966, an international effort to preserve historic Venice was coordinated by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), and many structures were renovated and preserved. Flooding has occurred throughout the history of the city; it is caused when high tides combine with storm winds, and has been combatted with experiments using mechanical barriers. The sinkage of buildings and other structures, caused by the drainage of underground aquifers, has been addressed by limits on groundwater usage and the construction of an aqueduct from the nearby Alps.

On March 27th, 2019, one postage stamp dedicated to the theme "Flora and Fauna of the Ancient World" was put into circulation. A mammoth is any species of the extinct genus *Mammuthus*, one of the many genera that make up the order of trunked mammals called proboscideans. The various species of mammoth were commonly equipped with long, curved tusks and, in northern species, a covering of long hair. They lived from the Pliocene epoch (from around 5 million years ago) into the Holocene at about 4,000 years ago, and various species existed in Africa, Europe, Asia, and North America. They were members of the family Elephantidae, which also contains the two genera of modern elephants and their ancestors.

Mammoths entered Europe around 3 million years ago; the earliest known type has been named *M. rumanus*, which spread across Europe and China. Only its molars are known, which show it had 8–10 enamel ridges. A population evolved 12–14 ridges and split off from and replaced the earlier type, becoming *M. meridionalis*. In turn, this species was replaced by the steppe mammoth, *M. trogontherii*, with 18–20 ridges, which evolved in East Asia ca. 1 million years ago. Mammoths derived from *M. trogontherii* evolved molars with 26 ridges 200,000 years ago in Siberia, and became the woolly mammoth, *M. primigenius*. The Columbian mammoth, *M. columbi*, evolved from a population of *M. trogontherii* that had entered North America. A 2011 genetic study showed that two examined specimens of the Columbian mammoth were grouped within a subclade of woolly mammoths. This suggests that the two populations interbred and produced fertile offspring. It also suggested that a North American form known as "*M. jeffersonii*" may be a hybrid between the two species.