



The True Cost of Traveling to Venice



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The architectural wonder of Venice, Italy has, in recent years, become an archetype for overtourism, sounding the alarm several years ahead of many other popular European destinations and making global headlines for its [ban of large cruise ships to its city center in 2021](#) and, more recently, its tax on daytrippers intended to deter them from visiting during high tourism seasons.

So with new anti-overtourism measures making travelers more cautious about potential higher prices and plenty of discussions surrounding if travelers should even visit Venice these days, let's take a look at the true cost of traveling to Venice.

What's Behind Venice's Overtourism Problem?

Before we get into the nitty-gritty, we need to understand why residents in Venice have been protesting against its current tourism model for years, and why many are leaving the city altogether.

First, it's not hard to understand why travelers all across the globe want to visit Venice: it's a city unlike any other, literally built atop the ocean. An architectural marvel, it boasts an impressive history as an economic powerhouse and is today listed within UNESCO's World Heritage list.

But with great popularity comes waves of tourists that often swamp the city worse than its seasonal floods: in fact, according to [Statista](#), the city has the second-highest number of tourists per resident in Europe—for every resident of Venice, there are 21 tourists.

Due to the ensuing housing crisis created by a short-term rental boom that's left the city with a housing crisis with lack of inventory and soaring prices Venetians simply can't afford, and you have a problem of residents leaving the city for other parts of Italy.



“A common misconception is that overtourism is only referring to overcrowding, but that’s not the case. Overcrowding is an issue that is only specific to high-season, but overtourism is more of a macro issue,” explained Co-founder and COO of The Tour Guy, Brandon Shaw. “Locals aren’t worried about lines at museums or the busy streets during July and August. They’re worried about not being able to afford to rent an apartment because foreigners have bought up all the property to list on vacation rental sites. Overtourism is a much larger and more complex issue than just busy city streets.”

Data from 2023 reports that there were less than 50,000 residents living in the historic city center as Airbnbs and Vrbos took over. [World Population Review](#) reports that the entire city’s population is roughly 257,000.

Remember the number of tourists per resident? For every one of the city center’s residents, there are 21 tourists: multiply 50,000 by 21, and you get 1.05 million. Multiply the entire population of Venice by 21, and you get 5.4 million travelers.

World Population Review estimates that around 20 million travelers visited Venice in 2024.

The sheer number of travelers visiting Venice, particularly during its high season in summer or during specific celebrations or holidays, has led the residents that are left to protest for change.

More recently, part of the government’s attempt at change has been the daytripper tax, [which has been extended for 2025](#), requiring daytrippers to pay to visit on popular days, including each Friday through Sunday as well as popular holidays and event days, for a total of 54 days.

Those who book their day to visit last-minute, within four days of visiting Venice, will also be charged double the \$5.40 charge, at \$10.80.

While it's not curbing the number of tourists to an effective degree, it is generating more income for the city, which officials say will be used to keep the city clean and preserve its delicate architecture.

The number of tourists also hurts the tourist experience: too many visitors leave the city overcrowded, increases pollution, creates long queues and generally makes the experience worse for everyone there.

How to Visit Venice Responsibly



Bridge Rialto on Grand canal in Venice.

Now that we know the issues behind the unsustainability of Venice's tourism economy, for residents and for the people who visit it, let's look at the ways we can still visit the amazing place while creating a positive impact, shall we?

The daytripper tax, which is only for travelers who visit the city without staying overnight during popular tourism days, isn't too expensive to pay, ranging from \$5.40 to \$10.80. However, visiting only for a day, and during the popular times for travelers to visit, will significantly impact your experience.

We suggest planning ahead to visit Venice during its off-season when the crowds are lighter—and it turns out, the experts agree, too.

Steve Perillo, President and Owner of Italian travel experts [Perillo Tours](#), noted that the operator makes a few special considerations for travelers visiting Venice, notably visiting the city during the week when there are typically less crowds: “Perillo does not bring travelers to Venice on weekends when crowds are at an all-time high and encourages travelers to visit during off-peak months such as May or September.”

To make a further positive impact, we suggest avoiding a short-term rental and instead staying at an independently owned hotel. This injects much-needed money into the local economy and doesn't contribute to the current housing crisis.

“I would recommend traveling to Venice in late spring, around late April and early May or in September or October,” said Sandi Freeman, travel agent at Let's Go Lux Travel and two-time visitor to Venice. “This way, it won't be as overcrowded as it is during the

summer and the weather will be cooler. I suggest staying in Venice for at least three days; this will allow time to visit the other islands nearby such as Burano, famous for lace, and Murano, famous for glass blowing.”

Another important consideration for travelers heading to Venice this year is the [2025 Jubilee](#): be aware of high hotel prices, lack of availability and larger crowds as faithful pilgrims visit the country to participate in the annual religious event.

“Travelers should keep in mind that Italy is celebrating its Jubilee this year, with crowds expected to hit an all-time high,” said Steve Perillo. “While Venice may not be impacted by Jubilee events to the extent that a city like Rome is, many travelers include Venice as part of a multi-city experience. Because of this, a tour operator that negotiated hotel, dining, and attraction rates years ago is the ideal, and maybe only, option to ensure a memorable experience, especially as hotel availability will be scarce at certain times throughout the year.”

Venice is an amazing place, and that’s why it’s so popular. Yet it also deserves to be protected for its residents and for future generations. The next time we consider going someplace popular, let’s consider the true cost, and how we can make a more positive impact.

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