



— A JOURNEY THROUGH THE —  
**VENETIAN GHETTO**



**500** YEARS  
COMMEMORATION

SPECIAL EDITION



Foreword by

# Prof. Shaul Bassi

UNIVERSITY OF VENICE



In 1516 the Republic of Venice decreed that all the Jews had to be confined in a peripheral area of the city called 'Geto', after its long abandoned foundry. Half a millenium later, the word Ghetto has taken a life of its own and very few people among the millions who use it on a daily basis in a profoundly unequal and divided world know that its origin lies here, in this small quarter in Cannaregio. Today we, the Jews of Venice, continue to cherish our traditions, rich and mutable, always remembering the tragedies that befell our ancestors and still proud of their achievements. They were locked up but they made substantial contributions to the world; they were persecuted but they fought and survived. Their legacy is an inspiration. Their example

also shows that we cannot take the Ghetto for granted, and every generation, in the best Jewish mode, has to reinvent it so that its values do not become ossified. The Quincentennial of the Ghetto is, in this light, less a point of arrival than a point of departure for us. We can restore the best spirit of this place, the historic vocation of the Ghetto as a meeting point and as a cultural center; we can generate a new, vibrant, plural, international Jewish life in the ancient Ghetto. For that we need artists, writers, scholars, students, curious individuals--dedicated visitors who are willing to experience this place not as simple tourists but as fellow explorers. We look forward to welcoming them.

”

*The key ghetto stories remain hidden and unexplored, buried under a layer of seductive and powerful clichés prompted by the now globalised word 'ghetto'*

”



My favorite Jewish spot in Venice  
**LEVANTINE SYNAGOGUE**



Introduction by

# Jack Gottlieb

WJH FOUNDER



Through this eBook The World Jewish Heritage Fund is proud to participate in the upcoming commemoration of the 500th anniversary to the establishment of the Venetian Jewish Ghetto – an institution which set precedent to the confinement of hundreds of thousands of European Jews for centuries to come.

This eBook is much different than our last one, [Israel's Top 100 Ethnic Restaurants](#). The latter explored the relationship between cultural heritage and food, taking us cross-country into the unexplored territory of Israel's unique culinary scene. It bridged a cultural gap between the diaspora's perception and reality of Israel's culinary heritage,

Here, we explore the legacy of a specific city, its institutions, and its community. We segway into the cultural heritage of a small but influential Jewish community in an effort to close the gap between the misconception and reality of what a ghetto is and what it represents. By honing our focus on the Venetian ghetto on its 500th anniversary, we tackle an event which is often misunderstood and is still being assessed in the context of its impact on our cultural heritage of today.

To do this, we have created the first ever interactive digital travel book about the ghetto, which gives you access to key sites, events, trails, guides, and tours – all at the click of a button. By digitally curating the smaller story of the Jewish Ghetto, we hope to tell the bigger story of the global Jewish community. The narratives

surrounding the German, Spanish, Levantine and Italian synagogues illustrates and exemplifies the recurring historical intersection between the Sephardic, Ashkenazi, and Oriental cultures.

The beauty of the ghetto is that its narrative will mean different things to different people. For me, the story of the ghetto is reminiscent of my own journey, relocating from 'ghetto to ghetto' in Boston, from Roxbury, Dorchester and Mattapan to my final destination, that of the upper-middle-class suburb of Brookline. Left in this journey's wake were the vestiges, memories, and traces of a once thriving Jewish community: the G&G Restaurant, the Lubavitcher Yeshiva, and the Woodow Ave 'Big Shul'. These 'ghettos' now stand bare, virtually emptied of their Jews, much like the Venice Ghetto of today.

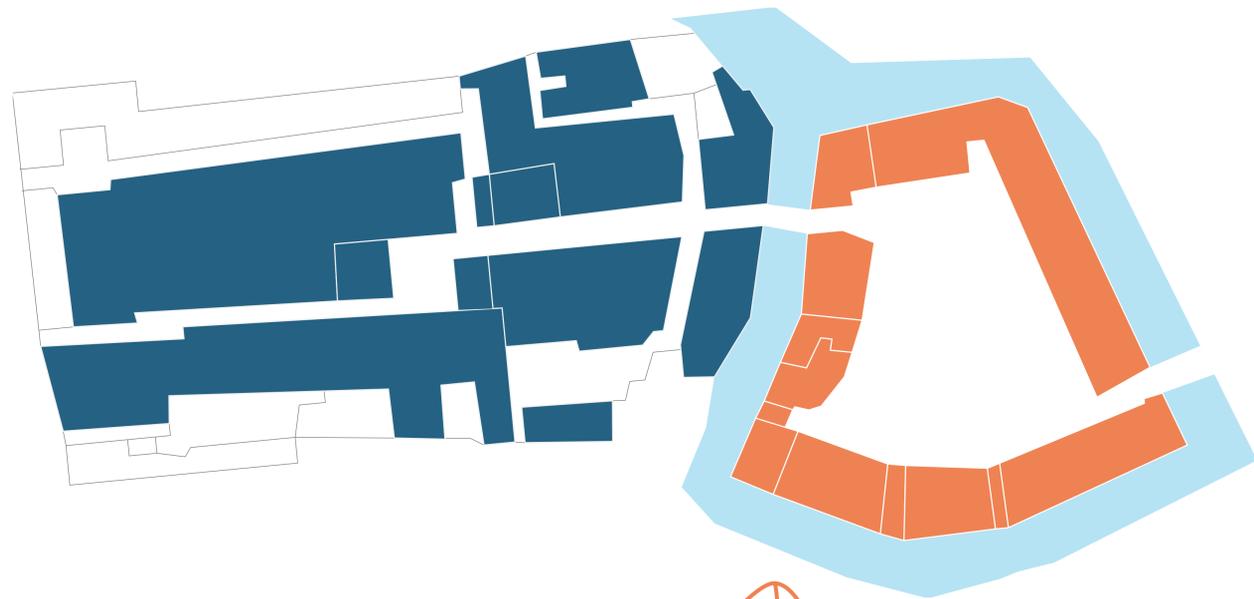
As you explore Venice and its historical Jewish community, take a moment, as Shaul Bassi suggests, to reflect and understand how its rich history parlays into your own life. Use our ecosystem to digitally curate more stories related to the ghetto. In that way, you can relate the narrative of the ghetto to a deepened understanding of your story, your family's history, and, by doing so, add to our collective Jewish heritage.



My favorite Jewish spot in Venice  
**THE JEWISH MUSEUM**

# THE JEWS OF VENICE

📍 OLD GHETTO    📍 NEW GHETTO



# THE JEWS OF VENICE

While Jews did not settle in Venice until the 13th century, many Jewish merchants and moneylenders visited and worked in the city beginning with the 10th century. Little by little, and despite alternating moments of “permission” and “prohibition”, the number and importance of Jews in Venice grew considerably, so much that on March 29, 1516, the Republic of Venice found it necessary to enact a decree to organize their presence. Beginning in 1516, Jews were obliged to live in an area of the city where the foundries, known in Venetian as “geti”, had been situated in ancient times, to wear a sign of identification and to manage the city’s pawnshops at rates established by the Serenissima. Many other onerous regulations were also included, in exchange for which the Community was granted the freedom to practice its faith and protection in the case of war. Ashkenazi Jews were the first to relocate to the ghetto, followed by the Sephardic Jews. The premises and adjacent canals were guarded come nightfall by Christian watchmen who ensured no man entered through the ghetto gates. Given the freedom of religion, the community erected various ‘scolas,’ (Synagogues) within the ghetto. Five holy structures were built between the 16th and 17th century, each corresponding to an ethnic group within the greater Jewish community. The Jewish population grew vastly throughout the centuries, yet living conditions remained substandard. Napoleon’s invasion in 1797 ushered in the

end of Jewish segregation. Jews were decreed equal to other citizens and granted full freedom. The rise of fascism in Italy brought the Jewish status to question once again, up until World War II, when it began to dwindle. As members of the community were sent to concentration camps, the community’s growth came to an abrupt halt. A Jewish community still remains in Venice, although of much smaller proportions than in its past. Current estimates count a population of about 500 Jews, 20 of which still reside in the ghetto.

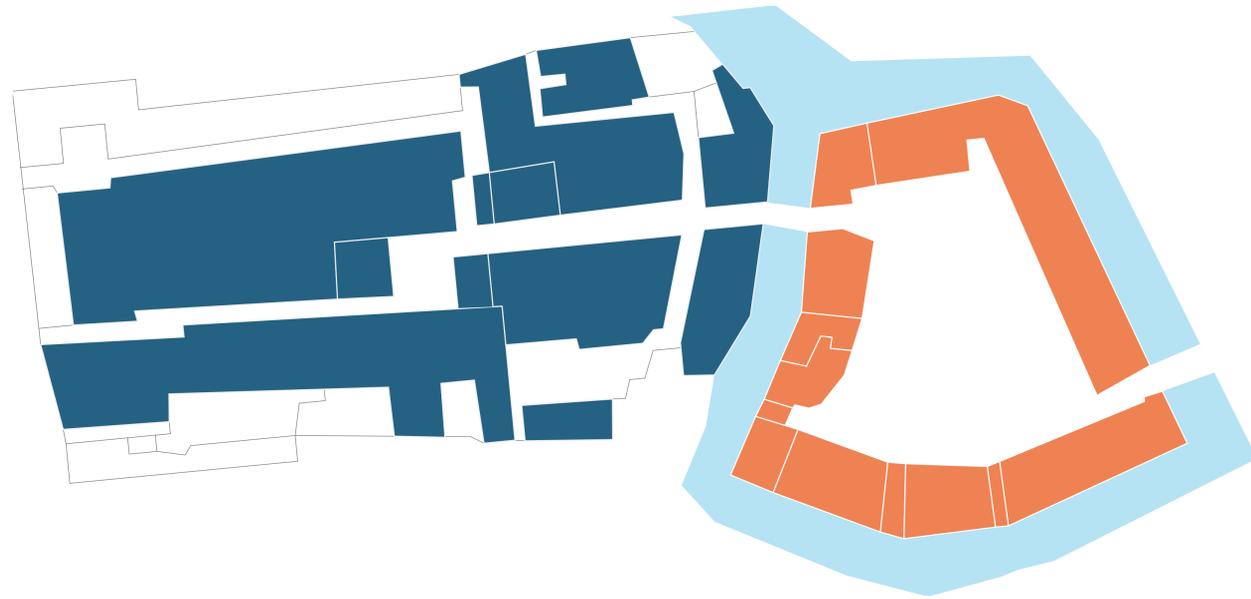


- 01 > Jewish community est. 1321
- 02 > Max population 5000
- 03 > Population today 500
- 04 > Ethnic Groups: Ashkenazi, Levantine, Ponetini (Castilian and Portuguese)

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# THE VENETIAN GHETTO



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Synagogues

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Guides

# THE VENETIAN GHETTO

The Venetian Ghetto, considered the world's oldest known ghetto, is credited with coining the term 'ghetto,' derived from the local dialect. Established in 1516, the ghetto was a gated-off space, perched in between several of Venice's many canals, in which the Jews were decreed to live. Located in the Cannaregio Sestiere district of Venice, the ghetto was divided into two areas: The "Ghetto Nuovo" (New Ghetto), and the "Ghetto Vecchio" (Old Ghetto), which, in reality, was actually the older space. The ghetto was highly populated and dense. Despite a growing population, the ghetto's area did not expand. Rather, buildings grew taller and living spaces grew to be more cramped. Living conditions were rather substandard and disproportionate to the size of the population which lived within the ghetto's confinement. The Jews led a life segregated from the greater Venetian community within the confines of the ghetto. During the day, community members were free to leave the ghetto in order to pursue their trade. Yet come nightfall, a curfew was instituted to ensure that that Jews did not roam streets and passageways beyond the ghetto's gates. Christian guards manned the ghetto's entrances, and were paid a salary levied from the Jews. Today, only 20 of the remaining Jews in Venice live inside the ghetto; Still, the legacy of the historic community lives on. As you explore the streets of the Jewish Ghetto on its 500th anniversary, notice the closeness of its high-slung buildings, their wearing paint, window layouts, and dull-greying-colors-made-bright with colorful laundry hanging out

to dry. Imagine how the wooden gates once stood tall and locked, limiting the movement of Jewish residents deemed less-significant by the greater Venetian community. Make sure to visit the ghetto's synagogues – often clandestine yet intricately-decorated within – and the monuments honoring members of the community who perished tragically come World War II. Most importantly, come to appreciate the ghetto's paradoxical nature: The fact that the ghetto, despite being built in an effort to contain and separate the Jewish community, enabled a diverse melting-pot community to come together and achieve great cultural feats behind its walls.



- 01 > Ghetto Establishment 1516
- 02 > Max population 5000
- 03 > Population today 20
- 04 > Record density 2 Square meters per head

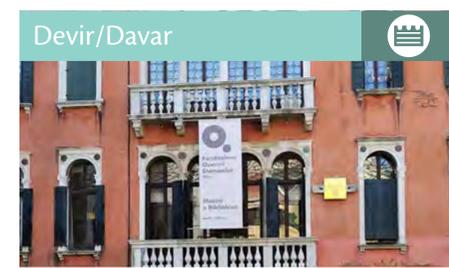
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# EVENTS INDEX





## GHETTO'S MAIN ENTRANCES

Several gates still surround the Jewish Ghetto, a real-life testament to the life-in-containment once lived by the community. Two of its main entrances can be spotted linked by a small bridge adjacent to the Old Ghetto, overlooking one of Venice's many canals. By day, these gates would be kept open, allowing the Jewish community free access to the labor market. Yet come nightfall, its doors would shut and Christian gatekeepers would take their post in guarding the premises. Fading marks from the gates' hinges are still visible to visitors.

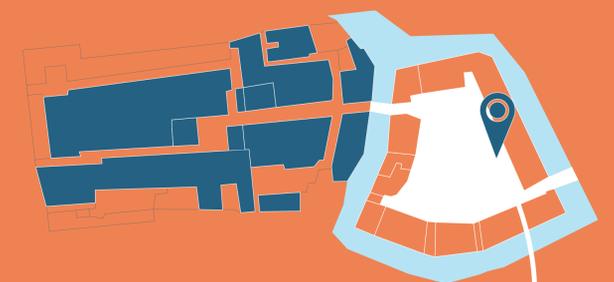


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### Story of the Ghetto's Main Entrances

Life for the Jews of Venice was characterized by a fluctuating relationship with the city's greater community. Fearing that Jewish merchants who thrived in the money lending business would gain power in other sectors of commerce, Venetians seesawed between acceptance and tolerance, to fear and intimidation of Jewish influence. Jews were first concentrated and forced to move to what is now known as the Jewish Ghetto in 1516. The ghetto, like most of the neighborhoods in Venice, was surrounded by water canals.



Calle Convertite, 1104

[jvenice.org/en/main-entrances](http://jvenice.org/en/main-entrances)

## MAIN GHETTO SQUARE



The ghetto consists of an open square surrounded by “skyscrapers” on three sides. The lack of space in the ghetto resulted in many buildings having as many as seven stories (with no elevator)

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## THE WELLS

Like any other neighborhood or location in Italy's Venice, the Jewish Ghetto was not short on water. Water flowed freely in the ghetto – replacing streets with picturesque canals and passageways. Mixed in in the ghetto, amongst the community's Jews and their community centers, were water-well structures built to grant access to groundwater in underground aquifers. In the Ghetto Nuovo alone, three such ancient-wells were commissioned by the Brolo family. Their family coat of arms can still be found, slightly faded, on the ancient stones lining the wells. Of even greater historical significance is the fact that, hidden in between the synagogues and museums of Ghetto Nuovo 'downtown,' is the first well-curb of its kind in Italy – a testament to the technological savviness of the Venetian Jewish community.

## THE LAST TRAIN MONUMENT



The Last Train is a bronze-carved monument by Jewish artist Arbit Blatas honoring the Jews of the Venetian Ghetto who were deported during the Holocaust. Commissioned in 1979 on the 50th anniversary of the community's last deportation, the monument features intricate inscriptions of the names of 256 deportees who were pulled away violently from their homes. In The Last Train, Blatas' recalls what was the last-journey for many of the ghettos Jews. Most of the 256 deportees perished in concentration camps, and few returned to Venice post-war.

## HOLOCAUST MEMORIAL WALL



In the fall of 1943, the Venetian Jewish community found itself at a crossroads, as the state declared its members “enemy aliens” and decreed that they be arrested and their property seized. While some managed to escape to Switzerland, most were rounded up and housed in temporary locations before being deported in 1944 to concentration camps. A large portion of the community was sent to Auschwitz-Birkenau, where they faced their death – figures estimate that a little under 250 Venetian Jews lost their life in the brutal hands of the Nazis, and only eight emerged from death camps alive. The population faced a hard hit during the war, shrinking from 2000 to an estimated 1050. Arbit Blatas' “The Monument” honors those members of the community who perished, erecting their names in eternal stone.



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## GREAT GERMAN SYNAGOGUE

The Scola Granda Tedesca, or, Great German Synagogue, was born of Ashkenazi rite, a gift of Joseph and Samuel Matatia. On its exterior walls, you can find two inscriptions: one referring to the building as the “big synagogue of Ashkenazi rite,” and the other, blessing the “German Holy Community” with protection. Like other prayer houses in the Venice Ghetto, the synagogue camouflages easily with its surroundings, concealing its Jewish identity. An elegant motif of five white stone arches is the sole distinguisher of the building from its surroundings. The interior of the synagogue is more elaborate: numerous tablets line its walls and stair-landing, candelabras hug the staircase from each side, a unique 18th century walnut bureau stands in the halls, and a little fountain sits perched by the first landing.

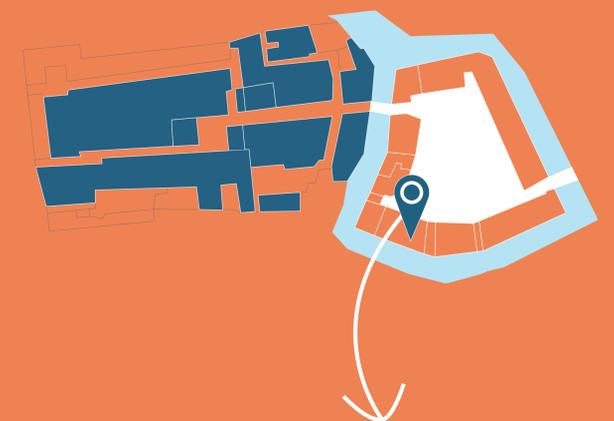


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### Story of the German Synagogue

Completed in 1529, the Great German Synagogue is the oldest of the holy-structures built by Venetian Jews in the ghetto. The asymmetry of the space posed a challenge to the anonymous architect tasked with its construction. To reduce the space to more regular proportions, a gallery was built to give the synagogue the depth it lacked. Furthermore, the synagogue was covered in intricate decorations of many shapes and proportions to bring in a harmony that the otherwise naked-space lacked.



Campo Del Ghetto Nuovo 30121

[jvenice.org/en/german-synagogue](http://jvenice.org/en/german-synagogue)

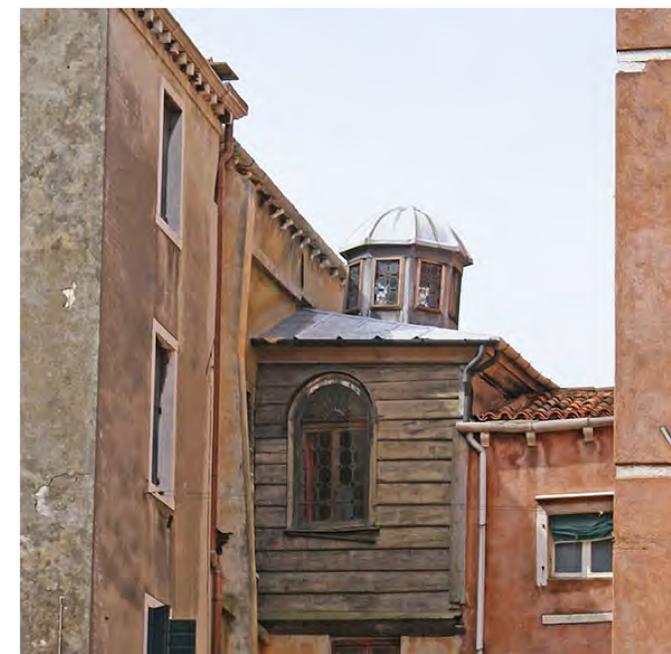


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## CANTON SYNAGOGUE

Built in 1532, the Canton Synagogue, which follows the Ashkenazi rite, is regarded as one of the oldest and most important Jewish establishments in Venice. Like other Jewish establishments, the Canton Synagogue is easily camouflaged with its surroundings and is easily overlooked by those who pass by it, hiding what lies within: an intricately decorated holy ark, a pulpit with Pompeian style-ornaments, columns enmeshed with interlacing branches, and walls adorned with a handful of inscriptions and marble tablets.

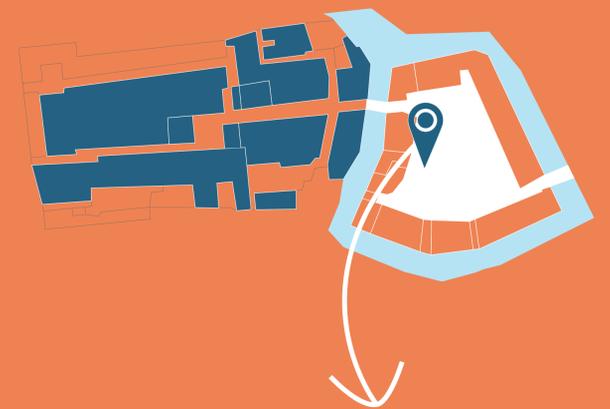


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### Story of The Canton Family

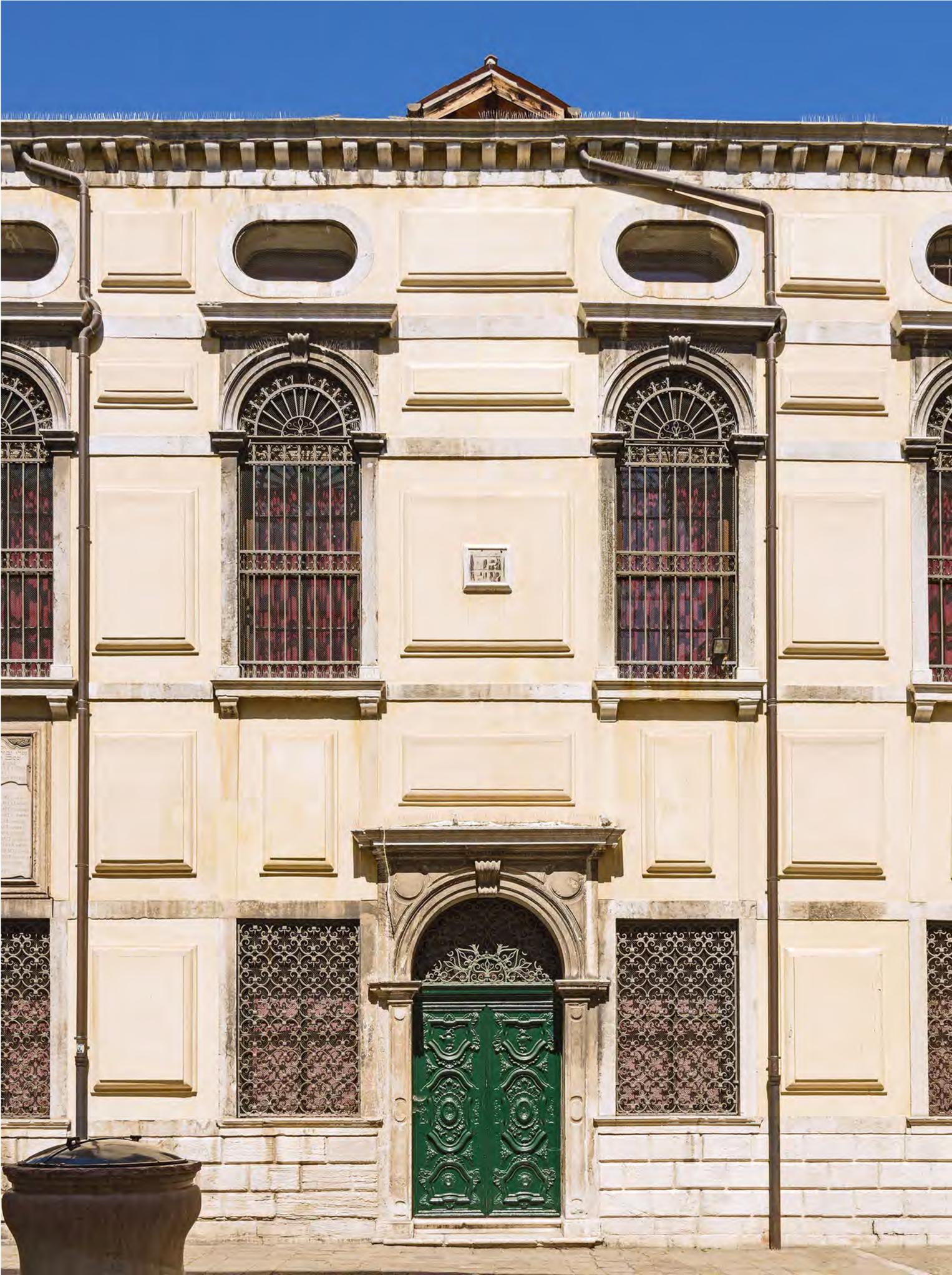
It remains uncertain whether the Canton Synagogue was named after the family that had it built, or after its location in the square of the Venetian Ghetto. 'Canton,' in Italian, means corner - the very location in which the synagogue was built. Construction on the synagogue began in 1532, and was expanded upon through 1780. The building stands largely clandestine, hiding the vibrancy, which lies within.



 Sestiere Cannaregio, 2902/b, 30121

 +39 041 715359

 [jvenice.org/en/canton-synagogue](http://jvenice.org/en/canton-synagogue)



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## LEVANTINE SYNAGOGUE

The Levantine Synagogue is the only Venetian synagogue whose original features have been kept fully in tact over time. Built by Jews hailing from the Eastern Mediterranean between 1538 and 1561, the structure is made up of two simple facades, three orders of windows, and a polygonal niche – a distinct feature of Venetian architecture. The Levantine is the sole synagogue to boast an impressive exterior rather than a humble one, which blends in with its surroundings.

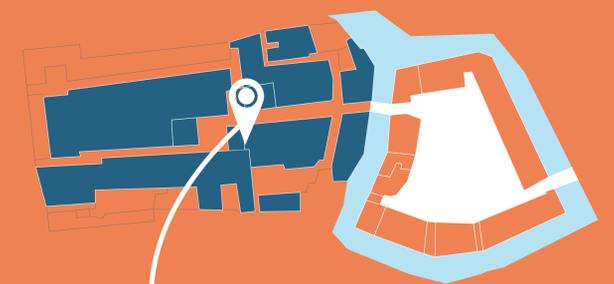


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### Story of the Levantine Synagogue

Midrash Luzzatto can be found on the ground floor of the Levantine Synagogue. Small and compact, it is perfect for peaceful study and prayer. The Midrash, which was only introduced to the synagogue in the last century, is a relatively new addition to the Jewish house of prayer. Despite relocation to the synagogue, followed by restoration in 1950, the Midrash has remained in tact with its original form. Its walls are adorned with various Jewish hymns and poems which, upon close observation, form the acrostic "Eliahu Aron Hazach."



 Calle Ghetto Vecchio, 1228 30121

 [jvenice.org/en/levantine-synagogue](http://jvenice.org/en/levantine-synagogue)



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## SPANISH SYNAGOGUE

The Spanish Synagogue, recognized locally as the “Scuola Spagnola,” is one of two currently-operating synagogues situated in the Venetian Ghetto, offering services from Passover through the High Holiday season. The building’s humble exterior, which blends in easily with its surroundings, conceals its religious-nature. Yet its intricately decorated interior, which includes dozens of chandeliers and a sculpted wooding ceiling, is sure to impress visitors.



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### Story of The Spanish Synagogue

The Spanish Synagogue was built by formerly-Spanish Jews who relocated to Venice in the 1550’s following expulsion from the Iberian Peninsula. Italian architect Baldassarre Longhena, renowned for the use of baroque elements in his designs, is credited with designing the four-story clandestine synagogue which was built in 1580 under the condition that its religious association be concealed. In accordance, the structure is covered in a yellow-stone exterior, hiding the elaborate interior found within.

[Calle del Forno, 1154 30121](#)

[jvenice.org/en/spanish-synagogue](http://jvenice.org/en/spanish-synagogue)



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## ITALIAN SYNAGOGUE

The Italian Synagogue was founded in 1575 to serve the Italian Jews, considered to be the poorest ethnic group living in the ghetto. While it is the smallest and simplest of the Venetian ghetto synagogues, it is also the most brightly-lit one, due to its five large windows on the south side of the square; it is also the most restrained one, lacking the glitter of the gilded Ashkenazi synagogues. The Italian synagogue, which resides on the third floor of its building, was restored to its current state in 1970, as part of a comprehensive restoration project of the city of Venice, led by UNESCO. This extremely small synagogue accommodates only 25 worshippers. The main features of the room are the Ark and the Bimah, which is remarkably high, making it one of the synagogue's main identification features.



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### Story of The Italian Synagogue

The Italian synagogue was originally built as a 'clandestine synagogue' - a type of synagogue that is concealed within an average appearing building, lacking any exterior elements suggesting it is a house of worship, whilst its interior is elaborately decorated.



 Sestiere Cannaregio, 2902/b, 30121

 [jvenice.org/en/italian-synagogue](http://jvenice.org/en/italian-synagogue)



## THE JEWISH MUSEUM

Since 1953, The Jewish Museum has offered an extensive, treasure-trove display of historical documents and artifacts, which offer a glimpse into the lives of the ancient Venetian Jewish community. Among the gems on display in the halls of this museum are silver-made ritual objects, Judaica collections, and illustrated handmade religious scriptures (including Passover Haggadot and Esther's Scrolls), which are sure to spark your intrigue and draw you into the lifestyle of this unique diaspora community.

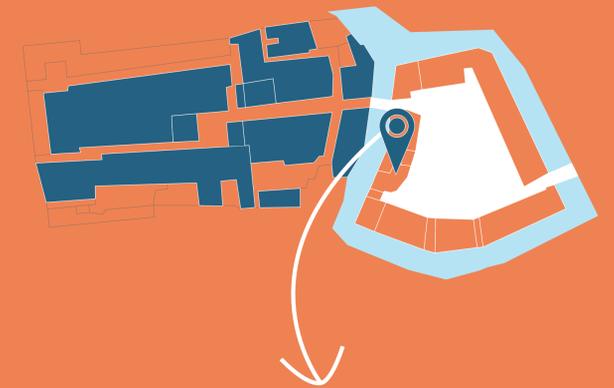


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### Story of The Jewish Museum

The local community established the Jewish Museum in 1953 in a compact space of architectonic uniqueness in the Campo of the Ghetto Novo. The museum, situated in between the Italian and German synagogues, offers displays of objects which bear witness to Jewish tradition within the Venetian community; Goldsmith and textile manufacture, ancient books and manuscripts, and items used for liturgy, are amongst the wide selection that lines its shelves.



Sestiere Cannaregio, 2902/b, 30121

<http://www.museoebraico.it>



## SOTOPORTEGO DE GHETO NOVO

The “Sotoportego de Gheto Novo,” the main entrance to the Jewish Ghetto, is marked by a small gate and considered a particularly evocative entry into the ghetto. Nestled within the historical “Cannaregio sestiere” district, the gate was a symbolic boundary distinctly separating Venetian Jews from the rest of the community. Jews were permitted to leave the ghetto through the “Sotoportego de Gheto Novo,” by day – donning an identifying badge and cap – to pursue trades in the money lending, textile, and medicine industries. Yet come nightfall, the Jews were contained and locked within the gate’s confinement. Christian watchmen, whose wages were levied from the Jewish community, patrolled the gates and ensured that no Jew fled post-lockdown. To this day, fading marks from the gates hinges can still be found on the “Sotoportego de Gheto Novo,” a testament to the harsh lifestyle inflicted upon the Jews by the greater Venetian community.



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### Story of the Sotoportego De Gheto Novo

A ‘sotoportego’ is a passage often times found in Venetian urban structures, which connects streets through a ground-floor passage. It typically crosses through the main body of a building, and is usually the sole access point to a courtyard or private garden. The ‘sotoportego’ is regarded as a quintessential feature of Venetian architecture, which can be often be spotted hidden in the midst of the city’s charming streets and alleyways.



Rio della Misericordia

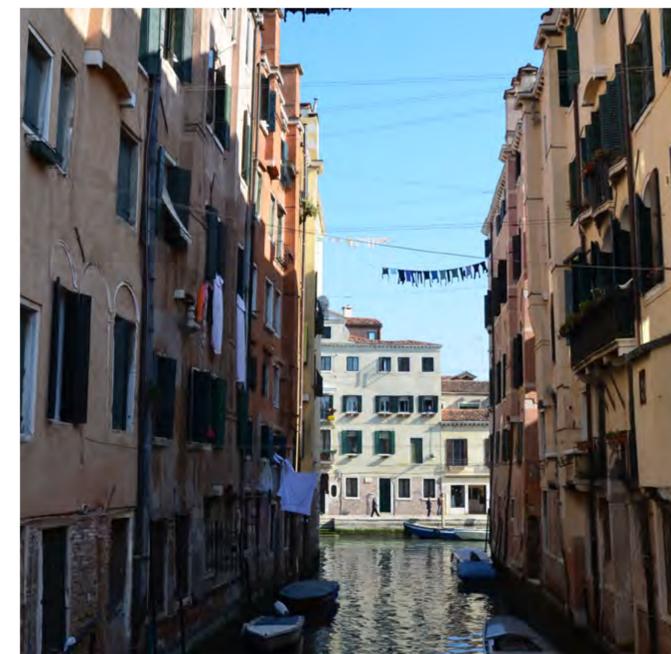


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## MIDRASH LEON DA MODENA (INFO POINT OF JEWISH COMMUNITY)

If you find yourself lost or overwhelmed while touring Venice, or you are seeking a more-enriching immersion in the history of the city's Jewish community, look no further than the Midrash Leon de Modena. As the Information Point on the Jewish Community, this site is the go-to spot for your tourist needs – its staff will guide you to Jewish attractions in Venice and provide you with insightful information on their historical value. In addition, the site serves as a “bet midrash,” a study house, for engaging in Jewish conversation.



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### Story of Leon de Modena

Leon de Modena was a highly-regarded rabbi in the Venetian Jewish community of the seventeenth century. The rabbi, highly praised for his preachings and writings, taught in the Old Ghetto's midrash (school) that still bears his name today. Modena was considered an eclectic spirit. He dabbled in music as head of a music academy, and engaged in intellectual musings with wise men of that period. His thoughts of Jewish life and biblical language were chronicled in his two books: History of Jewish Rites, and The Exile of Yehuda.

[Cannaregio 1222 30121](#)

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[www.jvenice.org/en community](http://www.jvenice.org/en community)

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## BAKERY VOLPE

Nestled in the streets of the Jewish Ghetto is Bakery Volpe, a kosher bakery sure to evoke similarity to any traditional New York kosher eatery with its pastry and baked-goods offerings. Located in the Cannaregio sestieri district of Venice, the bakery is of high quality and superb taste. Its offerings include traditional Venetian pastries, such as fruit-filled "Orecchiette di Amman," an s-shaped "Bisce," the donut shaped "Zuccherini," and "Sweet Azime." The bakery shuts its doors on Saturdays – so make sure to head to the bakery any time on Monday through Friday to fulfill your sweet-tooth cravings.



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### Story of Bakery Volpe

The Impade, Volpe bakery's flagship pastry, is a unique local dessert, with dominant flavors of lemon zest and almond paste. The pastry, believed to originate from the Spanish Empanada, was a traditional Sephardic dish served in Purim. While nowadays this flavorful delicacy can be found in numerous bakeries around Italy, you should definitely taste the one in Volpe bakery, for an authentic culinary experience.



Cannaregio, 1143 30121

# GAM GAM

Calle Cannà, 630 30121 +39 366 250 4505 <http://gamgamkosher.com>

Nestled in the former Jewish ghetto with a canal-front view is Gam Gam, Venice's first Kosher eatery and brainchild of Orthodox Jews originally from New York. The restaurant opens its doors to customers Sunday through Friday for lunch and dinner, drawing in crowds with their diverse menu offerings, ranging from Mediterranean Middle Eastern foods, to traditional Italian and Spanish dishes. Opening hours are as follows: Sunday-Thursday 12:00pm – 10:00pm, Friday 12:00pm – two hours before Shabbat (all year), Saturday Nights (winter months) one hour after Shabbat ends until 11:00pm.



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## Story of Gam Gam

Gam Gam has been serving both local and international customers in Venice for over fifteen years, and is the best-known kosher restaurant in the Jewish hub. This food-gem is renowned for its menu, cultivated from the finest ingredients by its renowned house chef, its laid-back atmosphere, and very friendly staff. The spot retains in authenticity with a 'resident Venetian' – a staff member whose local blood runs deep, tracing back to the Venetian Jewish community of the 15th century.



# RISTORANTE GHIMEL

Campo del Ghetto novo 2873 +39 346 473 5061

For a dairy kosher dining experience head to the Ghimel Garden, sure to satisfy a wide array of cravings with its diverse menu, offering foods ranging from the traditional chickpea-based falafel, to the tomato-heavy stew of Shakshuka, creamy Italian pastas, veggie-rich salads and herb-infused fish. Ghimel is vegan and gluten-free friendly. It's menu is infused with Mediterranean and traditional "Jewish cuisine" influences. The family-friendly space is open for business Sunday through Saturday, but is closed during Shabbat hours.



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# FRULALA

Laguna Veneta +39 338 191 9294 <http://www.frulala.com/>

For a fun-infused modern dining experience in the old-stoned streets of Venice head to Frulala, a part-time juice, part-time cocktail bar, which is sure to quench your thirst for fruity liquid concoctions. Operating under the slogan "lions by day, panthers by night," the establishment offers juice sans-alcohol by day in a calm family-friendly environment. Yet come nightfall, the space is transformed into a hip bar with funky music, and a menu that includes fruity-cocktail and wine offerings.



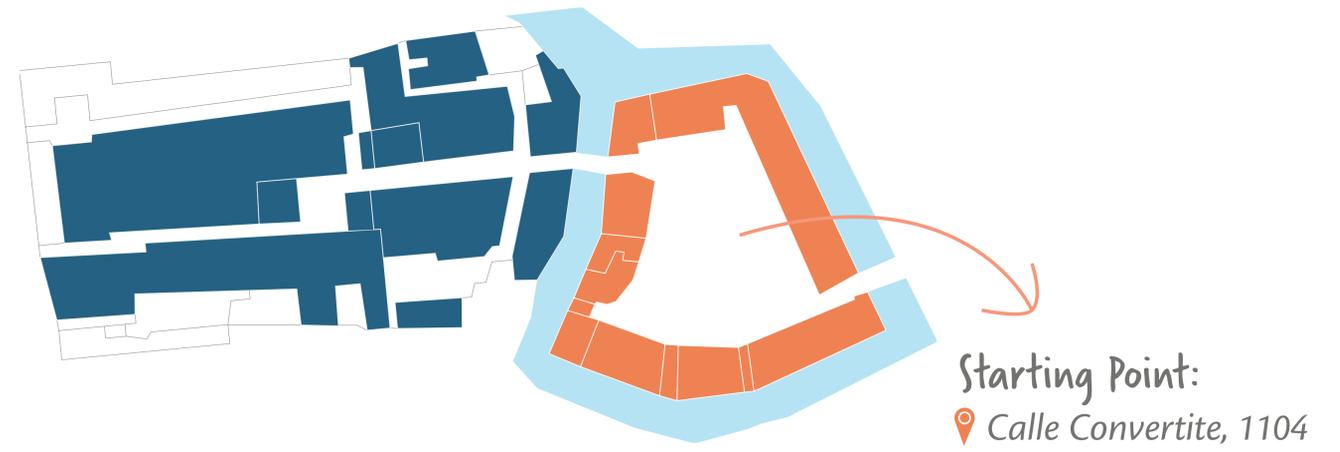
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# TRAIL OF THE JEWISH GHETTO - INDEX



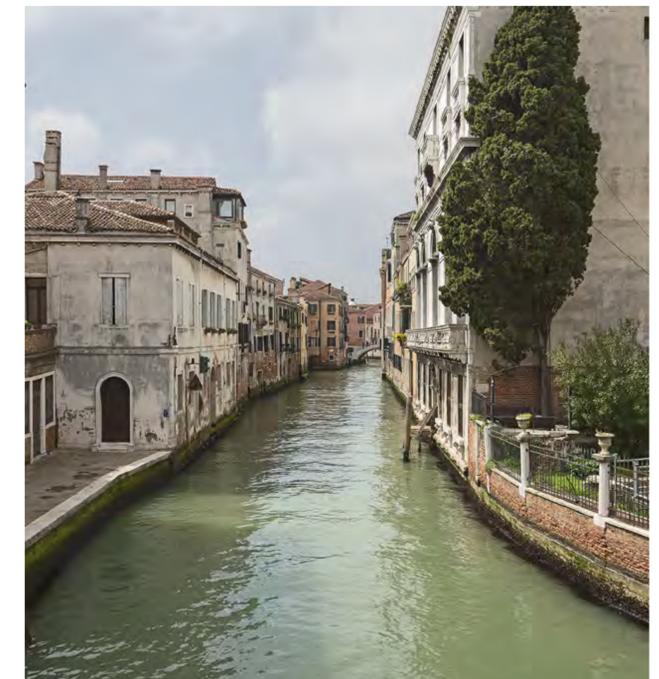
# TRAIL OF THE JEWISH GHETTO

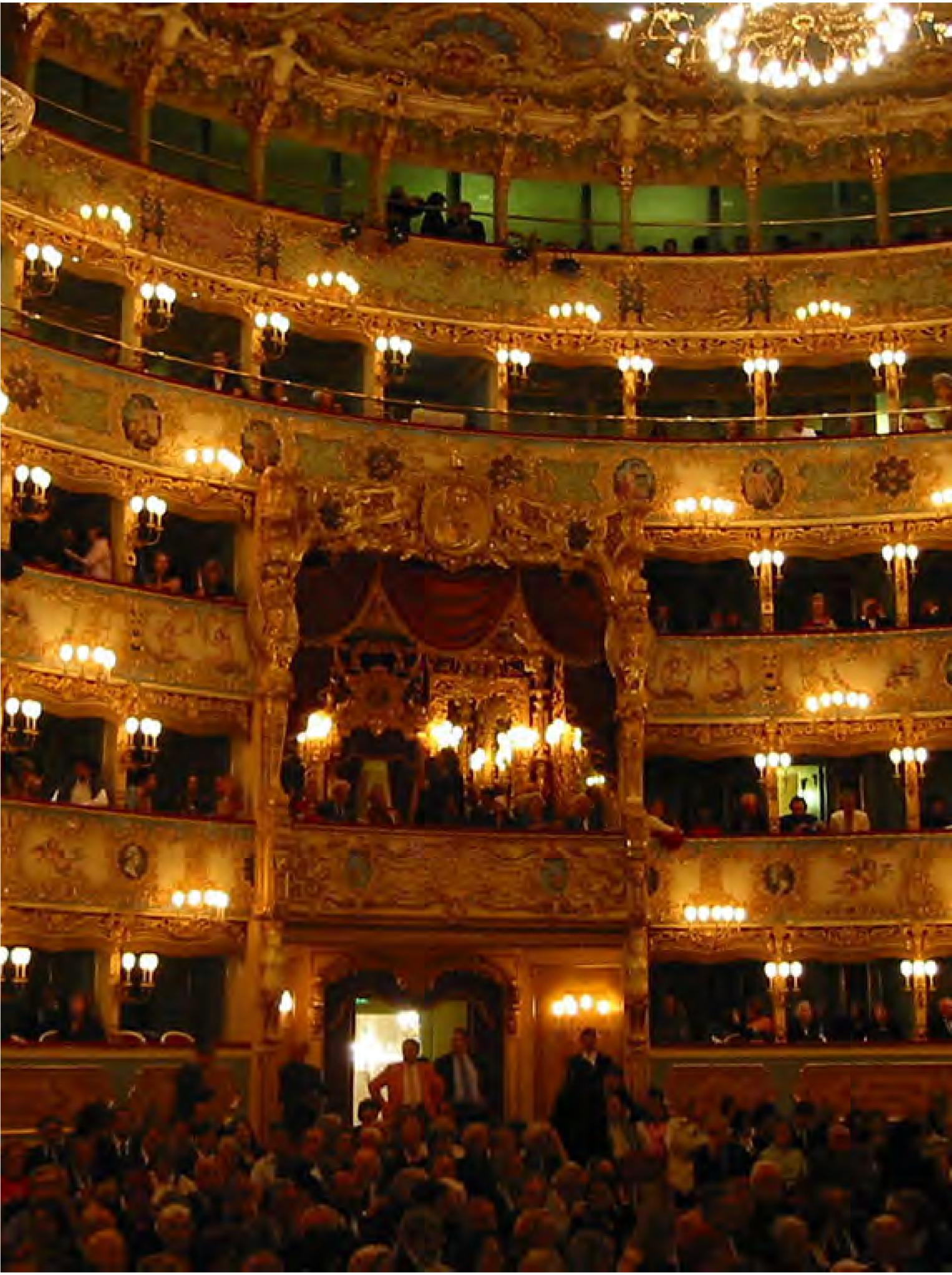


Starting at the entrance to the Nouvo Ghetto, take a moment (or a few) to grasp how much of a history and how many stories lay within the ghetto's extremely limited stretch. You'll then enter the Jewish museum, where you'll get a glimpse of what the Venetian Jewish life looked like throughout the centuries. Walking through the museum, you'll discover three of the five synagogues of Venice, residing in different floors across the museum's building. After exploring the depths of faith and culture, indulge your taste buds with some delicious traditional Venetian-Jewish pastries, found at the Volpe Bakery, for a complete authentic experience of the ghetto.

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- 2 > The Jewish Museum
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- 4 > Great German Synagogue
- 5 > Canton Synagogue
- 6 > Bakery Volpe

\*Entrance to the synagogues must be done in coordination with the museum. See [website](#) for more details.





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## OPENING CEREMONY: 500 YEARS COMMEMORATION EVENTS

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The spectacular La Fenice Opera House will be opening its doors to exclusive guests including Jewish leaders from around the world for the official opening ceremony to this series of commemorative events. To the tunes of La Fenice Symphony Orchestra, the Venice Ghetto will reach the 500 year mark since its establishment. In collaboration with La Fenice, UCEi (Union of Italian Jewish Communities) and with the support of the World Jewish Congress and the European Association for the Preservation and Promotion of Jewish Culture and Heritage (AEPJ), this event will be used as a major platform to spread messages of peace.



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### Story of **The Venetian Ghetto**

In 1516, the Venice Ghetto was established. On March 29, 2016, this ghetto turns 500. There will be an opening ceremony on the day of the anniversary at Teatro La Fenice to officially mark the quincentennial. Attendees will be treated to a symphony orchestra concert, led by special guest conductor, Omer Wellber.

### Event Details

- March 29th
- The Venice Opera House - San Marco
- 39 041 786677
- <http://www.veniceghetto500.org>

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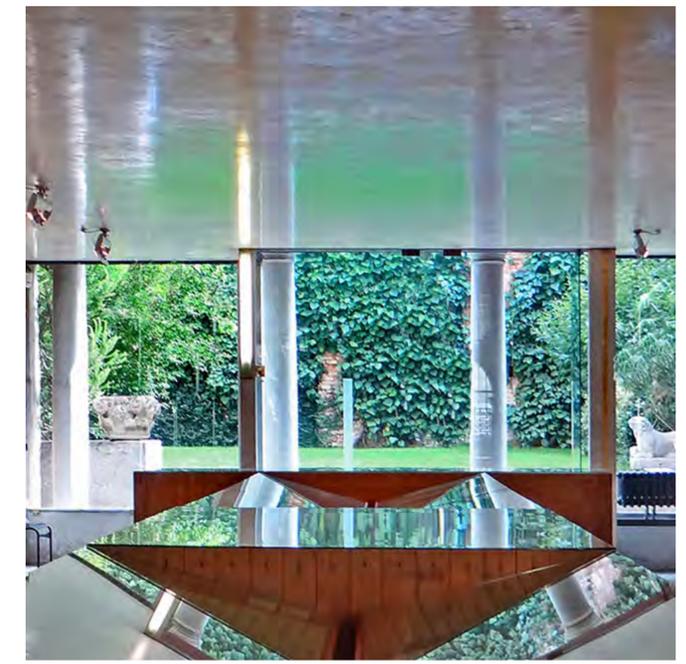


Events

## DEVIR/DAVAR

Exhibition

Messages of tolerance and mutual acceptance will be conveyed through this moving and commemorative exhibit. This project is particularly thought provoking, promising visitors an educational yet refreshing experience! Messages of hope for the Jewish people have been preserved for centuries even in the most tragic circumstances, and will be expressed using two overarching metaphors at this event.



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### Story of Dvir/Davar

Minimizing conflict and respecting one's neighbor are just a handful of the peaceful premises on which our culture has been built. In contrast to these principles, there is no shortage of racial or religious hatred and violence enveloping our world. The chance to commemorate the founding of the Venice Ghetto is an opportunity to reflect on philosophy and culture through the experience of art.

### Event Details

- May 1st to June 10th
- Querini Stampalia Foundation
- 39 041 522 4793
- <http://www.veniceghetto500.org>

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Events

## THE BIRTH AND EVOLUTION OF THE VENETIAN GHETTO (1516-1797)

Conference

The magnificent Sala del Piovego at Doge's Palace will set the atmosphere for this enthralling international conference. The Birth and Evolution of the Venetian Ghetto (1516-1797) Conference is scheduled to take place on May 5-6, 2016, organized by the Medici Archive Project, Beit Venezia, as well as the Committee for the 500 Years of the Jewish Ghetto of Venice.



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### Story of The Venetian Ghetto

It is the Senate of the Venetian Republic who is responsible for the establishment of the world's very first ghetto- The Venice Ghetto. It was on March 29, 1516 that this urban perimeter defined 'home' for Jews mainly from northeastern regions of Europe, who were restricted by rules of separation and socioeconomic marginalization. A few decades later, these horrible restrictions were also imposed upon Venetian Jews originally from the Iberian Peninsula and the Levant.

### Event Details

- May 5th to June 6th
- Doge's Palace - San Marco
- 39 041 271 5911
- <http://palazzoducale.visitmuve.it>

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## MUSIC WITHOUT BORDERS

Music

An incredible concert by Compagnia del Madrigale – Il Pomo d’Oro will warm the hearts of those attending the opening night of the exhibition ‘Venice, the Jews and Europe. 1516- 2016’. At the astounding Doge’s Palace, the concert will be conducted by Riccardo Minasi, with music by Benedetto Marcello, Salomone Rossi, Louis Saladin, and Abraham Casseres to name a few. Jewish musicians and dance masters from the Renaissance to present day will be celebrated throughout the events surrounding the 500 year anniversary of the Venice Ghetto.



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### Story of **Music Without Borders**

From Jewish classical music composers who resided in the Venice Ghetto to Christian composers who wrote solemn Jewish music inspired by classic prayers—everything was possible in Venice. The ‘Music without Borders’ concert will bring the fascinating musical contrasts between the ghetto life and city life in Venice to the ears of guests at the opening night of the exhibition.

### Event Details

June 19th

The Doge’s Palace in Venice - San Marco

39 041 271 5911

<http://www.veniceghetto500.org>

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 Events

## VENICE, THE JEWS AND EUROPE

Exhibition

Highlighting the unbelievable 500 year anniversary of the Venice Ghetto will be the eye-opening exhibition: Venice, the Jews and Europe. 1516-2016. Curated by leading expert on the urban history of the Venetian Ghetto, Donatella Calabi, this event will be a symbolic and moving experience, featuring recently restored historical artifacts of extraordinary importance! Using multimedia and artwork, this virtual reconstruction of the ghetto in its various historical phases will allow visitors to discover the fascinating development of the neighborhood. Organized in collaboration with MUVE foundation of Venice in the prestigious venue Doge's Palace, this exhibition recounts the story of the ghetto with the best of Jewish Venetian art.



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### Story of Venice the Jews and Europe

The exhibition, curated by Donatella Calabi, leading expert on the urban history of the Jewish Ghetto of Venice, aims at underscoring the wealth of relationships between the Jews and civic society throughout the history of their long residence in the lagoon, in the Veneto, and in Europe and the Mediterranean. It will recount the story of the Ghetto's settlement, its growth, its architecture, its society, its trades, its daily life, and the relationships between the Jewish minority and the city at large.

### Event Details

-  June 19th to November 13th
-  The Doge's Palace in Venice - San Marco
-  39 041 271 5911
-  <http://www.veniceghetto500.org>

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## THE GHETTO OF VENICE: THE FUTURE OF MEMORY IN A DIGITAL AGE

Conference

Looking to pick apart the complexity of the Venice Ghetto as a concrete space and as a global metaphor? Join young scholars in testing Walter Benjamin's algorithm- "The past can be seized only as an image which flashes up at the instant when it can be recognized and is never seen again." This workshop will examine and analyze the intense and complicated history of this region, exploring political, economic, and social elements of this misunderstood modern Jewish space.



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### Story of **The Jewish Ghetto**

Both branches of the Veneto Institute are located in the San Marco district of Venice, offering scholars volumes upon volumes of sixteenth and seventeenth century works. This institute is dedicated to promoting culture and research both in Italy and to international visitors.

### Event Details

- June 28th to July 5th
- Istituto Veneto di Scienze, Lettere e Arti - Campo S. Stefano 2945
- 39 041 240 7711
- <http://www.veniceghetto500.org>

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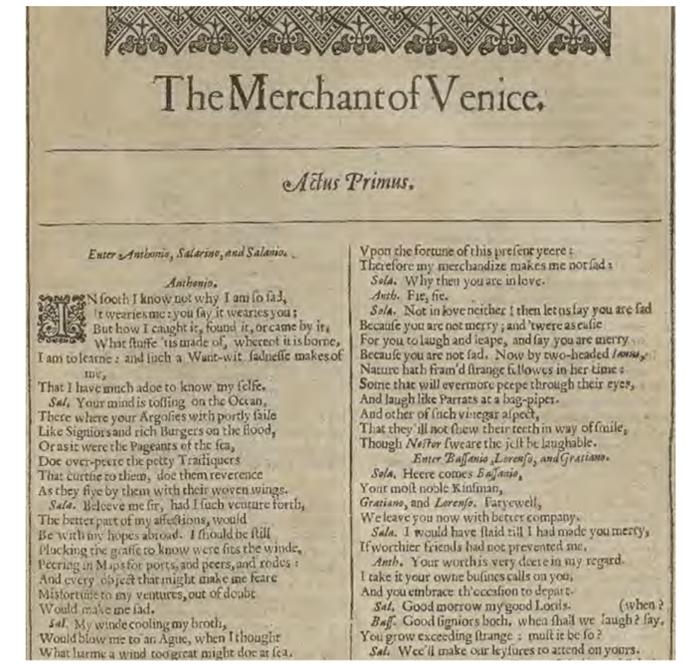




# THE MERCHANT OF VENICE

Shows

Bringing Shakespeare’s vision to the stage, the audience of The Merchant of Venice will be truly privileged to see the first ever performance of this play where it was set- the historical Venice Ghetto! Although only a creation of Shakespeare’s imagination, one of the main characters, Shylock, is perhaps the most famous Venetian Jew of all times! To this very day, critics still debate the play’s stance on antisemitism, and this performance in the Ghetto is sure to be riveting and extremely thought provoking.



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## Story of The Merchant of Venice

“Hath not a Jew eyes?” This line of the dramatic speech by character Shylock in William Shakespeare’s ‘The Merchant of Venice’ may be one for which this compelling play is most remembered! This famous play tells the story of a merchant in 16th-century Venice who must default on a large loan provided by an abused Jewish moneylender.

## Event Details

- July 26th to July 31st
- The Jewish Ghetto
- 39 334 371 1427
- <http://www.themerchantinvenice.org>

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Events

## ART OF THIS CENTURY: PEGGY GUGGENHEIM IN PHOTOGRAPHS

Exhibition

One of the most important museums in Italy is the Peggy Guggenheim Collection, which showcases European and American art of the 20th century. In commemoration of the Venice Ghetto, guests are invited to Guggenheim's former home on the Grand Canal in Venice, Palazzo Venier dei Leoni! This museum features her personal collection of works, masterpieces from the Hannelore B. and Rudolph B. Schulhof Collection, the Nasher Sculpture Garden, as well as special exhibits in honor of the event.



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### Story of Peggy Guggenheim

With masterpieces ranging in style from Cubism and Surrealism to Abstract Expressionism, The Peggy Guggenheim Collection is a paramount museum for modern art in Europe. Located on the picturesque Venice Grand Canal, the collection has become one of the most respected and popular cultural attractions in the city.

### Event Details

- September 6th to September 10th
- Ikona Gallery, Campo del Ghetto Nuovo 2909
- 39 041 786677
- <http://www.veniceghetto500.org>

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Events

## JEWISH MUSIC IN THE 19TH CENTURY

Exhibition

With the Jewish demographic decreasing in Italy, traditional Jewish-Italian music is sadly also disappearing. This conference is dedicated to this special genre, and under covering its development over the last two thousand years. The impact of the complex relationship between the Jewish minority and Christian majority on this genre of music will be explored. Guests will also learn about the fascinating differences between Sephardic, Ashkenazi, and Italian cultures, and their influence on the distinct sounds of Jewish music in the 19th century.



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### Story of Jewish Music

From dying traditions to the disappearance of small communities, Jewish Italian music is suffering. In recent decades in particular, this genre has begun to disappear, and if not preserved, the loss of this special element of Italian Jewish culture will be a painful one for the community.

### Event Details

December 12th to December 13th

39 041 522 4793

<http://www.veniceghetto500.org>

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## RESTORATION OF THE JEWISH MUSEUM

Exhibition

“The Ghetto of Venice sits at a nexus of world history for Venice, Europe, and Jewish culture as a whole. It needs to be saved, its story told.” -Joseph J. Sitt (Chairman). From high quality exhibits overflowing with the rich history of the Jews in Venice, to hosting three exquisite, ancient synagogues dating to nearly half a millennium ago, the Jewish Museum of Venice tells the story of this historic region in a captivating manner. Located within the original Jewish Ghetto, visiting this museum is both engrossing and educational.



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### Story of The Jewish Museum

Thanks to the Restoration Project for the Jewish Museum and Synagogues, this special place will be revamped! Renovations will both modernize and expand the facilities, allowing recently discovered artifacts and treasures to go on display for the public, including 'Treasures of the Jewish Ghetto of Venice'.

### Event Details

- Sestiere Cannaregio, 2920/b 3012
- 1 212 421 0062
- <https://vh-council.org>

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