



# VENICE BIENNALE, The Veneto and Milan

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Journey with Claire Chamberlain to the Venice Biennale and beyond in September 2026.

Fiona Pardington is our Venice representative in 2026. Find her work and much much more from around the world in both the Giardini, Arsenale and other sites scattered around Venice and the lagoon.

This tour will include time at **La Biennale** as well as other historical sites around Venice. A visit to the craft exhibition by **Homo Faber** is a must, as well as day trips into the Veneto to Verona and **Carlo Scarpa's Brion Tomb**.

After a week in Venice, we will cross northern Italy and finish in Milan.

A journey from the Renaissance to Contemporary Art with an amazing guide.

## TOUR DATES

22 September - 6 October  
2026

## LOCATIONS

Venice, Vicenza, Verona,  
Brescia and Milan.

## TOUR PRICE

Approx \$16999 twin share.

## TOUR DEPOSIT

\$4500 payment due on  
confirmation.

## GROUP SIZE

Minimum 12 and maximum 16.

## INCLUSIONS

All hotels and transport,  
breakfasts and meals,  
sightseeing, and galleries.  
Claire Chamberlain as your  
tour guide.

## EXCLUSIONS

International flights. Visa and  
ETAs. Travel Insurance.

\*Subject to change.

# Art Travel

# DETAILED ITINERARY

## DAY 01

TUESDAY 22 SEPTEMBER

ARRIVAL

Check in to our hotel.

Welcome drinks and an orientation walk around our neighbourhood of Castello. Visit to the Aotearoa NZ Pavilion. We are well placed for our first visit to **Dr Fiona Pardington's** presentation, which will be located close to our hotel. (The title and specific location of the pavilion will be announced later)

## DAY 02

WEDNESDAY 23 SEPTEMBER

VENICE

**La Biennale Giardini** - We will visit the central pavilion where the Biennale's central theme is showcased in the International Exhibition.

We will also meet the work of Venetian architect Carlo Scarpa (1906-1978) who redesigned the central pavilion and created the sculpture garden within the same buildings.

Next up, we will stop for lunch in the street which divides the two sides of La Biennale, Via Giuseppe Garibaldi.

**La Biennale Arsenale** International exhibition. In the afternoon, we'll experience the second half of the international exhibition in the Corderie of the Arsenale. We will exit back through the entrance bookstore and return to our hotel after viewing any significant collateral exhibitions en route.

## DAY 03

THURSDAY 24 SEPTEMBER

BRION TOMB AND TREVISO

Today we'll leave Venice by water taxi and then travel by private coach for Carlo Scarpa's **Brion Tomb** and Sanctuary, widely considered the Venetian architect's masterpiece. En route, we'll make a short stop in Treviso for morning tea and a walk around the central square.

After our visit to the Brion Tomb, we will make the short journey to **Bassano del Grappa**, an historic town in the Venetian Prealps. Located on the Brenta River, it's famous for its bridge originally designed by Andrea Palladio (1508-1580).

We will have lunch in the town and visit the small Museum of the Alpino Bassano which looks at experiences in World Wars I and II and enjoy the architecture of the central square.

Then we will make our return to Venice with free time for the remainder of the day.



Pursuit of Venus, Lisa Reihana, 2017



Central Pavilion, Venice Biennale



La Biennale Arsenale



## DAY 04

FRIDAY 25 SEPTEMBER

VENICE

This morning we'll return to the Giardini and La Biennale and concentrate on the highlights amongst the national Pavilions. We'll walk around as a group, but then break for lunch within the Giardini after which you can return to those Pavilions we've missed. You're welcome to meet your guides for a return to our hotel for a rest or explore further.

In the late afternoon, we'll re-group and return to the Arsenale to view the national Pavilions there.

We'll stop for a recuperative drink near the famous crane and enjoy the setting sun before continuing to the close of the Arsenale exhibition and exiting through Giardino delle Vergini all'Arsenale to make a local stop for dinner or a return to the hotel. Alternatively, you can jump in a buggy and make a return to the beginning of the Arsenale and exit through the gift store.

Please note the Arsenale is open until 8 pm if you'd like to stay later.

## DAY 05

SATURDAY 26 SEPTEMBER

VENICE

We'll hop over to the island of San Giorgio via vaporetto (water bus) for **Homo Faber** at the Cini Foundation. Homo Faber is a biennial exhibition of global art and artisanship and literally means 'human as maker'. It is an extensive exhibition throughout the luxurious buildings and gardens of the Foundation.

In the Palladian church of **San Giorgio Maggiore**, we will visit a collateral event of La Biennale (yet to be announced). Next, we'll hop back on a water bus and make our way to **Palazzo Grassi** for a contemporary art exhibition presented by The Pinault Collection.

Enjoy a free evening once back at our hotel.

## DAY 06

SUNDAY 27 SEPTEMBER

VENICE

This morning we will travel to the **Ghetto**, the original Jewish Quarter of Venice and be guided to various sites within the quarter. We'll stop for a canal-side lunch at one of the famed local osteria (casual restaurant) before continuing to **AMA Venezia**, a new private art foundation which opened in early 2025.

It houses a significant collection of contemporary art, with a particular emphasis on American artists from the 1960s to the present. Then, it's by vaporetto to the **Rialto Bridge** where we'll walk back to the Castello sestiere (district) to visit the **Foundation Querini Stampalia** to one side of the campo with a break in the on-site café.

Our focus is the renowned Carlo Scarpa watergate and garden.

We'll then make our way to Campo S.S. Giovanni e Paolo where Claire will introduce us to **The Equestrian** statue of Bartolomeo Colleoni sculpted by Andrea del Verrocchio in the late 15th century. En route to our final visit for the day, **OCEAN SPACE** we'll pass the Libreria Acqua Alta before we arrive at the home of OCEAN SPACE, the deconsecrated church of San Lorenzo. This is a foundation geared towards art and science. Back at the hotel, we'll enjoy a late afternoon spritz.



Palladio's Teatro Olimpico, Vicenza



Basilica Palladiana, Vicenza



Villa La Rotonda, Vicenza



Peggy Guggenheim, Venice



Pala di San Zeno by Andrea Mantegna



Castelvecchio Museum, Verona

## DAY 07

MONDAY 28 SEPTEMBER VENICE

The Biennale di Venezia is closed today, so we will instead depart by vaporetto to the Dorsoduro side of the Grand Canal. After a quick caffeine fix, we will visit the **Gallerie dell'Accademia**, where Claire will lead us on a tour of some of the highlights of the Venetian Renaissance.

After visiting the Accademia, we'll stop for a bite at either one of two nearby bacaro - Enoteco Schiavo or Osteria al Squero, both look out on a famous ship building site. We'll then retrace our footsteps to continue on the so-called Dorsoduro Museum Mile.

We will make a stop at **Palazzo Cini** for a La Biennale collateral event before continuing to Punta della Dogana, a contemporary art museum in one of Venice's old customs buildings. Please note that the Peggy Guggenheim Museum is likely to be closed for renovations.

The rest of the afternoon and early evening is free before we enjoy a last meal in Venice at a local restaurant and celebrate La Serenissima.

## DAY 08

TUESDAY 29 SEPTEMBER VERONA

Today we leave Venice.

Please be ready to depart at 8.30 am and meet in the reception with your luggage. A private water taxi will take us to Tronchetto where we will catch a private bus to the famed city of Verona.

Before we check into our second hotel, we'll make a stop in the periphery of the city and enjoy lunch in a local trattoria before we visit the majestic Romanesque church of **San Zeno** with its vast bronze doors and a frescoed interior rich in religious art, including Andrea Mantegna's extraordinary 1460 altarpiece still located at the high altar.

It's then a short further bus ride to our hotel in the heart of the city. After checking in and getting settled, we'll re-group for a walking tour of the historic centre.

Verona is renowned for its rich history, captivating architecture, and association with the love story of Romeo and Juliet. It's a UNESCO World Heritage site, famed for its well-preserved Roman ruins, particularly the **Arena di Verona**, the third-largest surviving Roman amphitheatre. Beyond the Roman past, Verona boasts stunning Romanesque and Gothic churches, picturesque piazzas, and the charming Adige River.

Before returning to our hotel, you may like to enjoy a spritz in one of the many bars that line **Piazza Delle Erbe**. The rest of your evening is free.





## DAY 09

WEDNESDAY 30 SEPTEMBER

VERONA TO VICENZA

Today we are hopping back on our private coach for the short trip to **Vicenza**, known as the 'City of Palladio' and listed as a UNESCO World Heritage Site since 1994.

En route, we will visit **Villa Almerico Capra Valmarana**, handily known as **La Rotonda**, designed in 1566 by the famed Veneto architect Palladio and built on a hillside with amazing views over the city of Vicenza and the surrounding countryside.

In the city itself, we will enjoy a walking tour through the historical centre with the famous **Basilica Palladiana**, symbol of Vicenza and a further masterpiece of Palladio and the architecture lining the squares of Piazza dei Signori and Piazza della Erbe where we will enjoy lunch and free time to shop or just sit and people and 'place' watch. We will then reconvene and visit one of Palladio's most famous buildings, the Teatro Olimpico.

On the way back to Verona, we can stop at **Pieropan** winery near Soave and visit the nearby castle before returning to the city for a free evening (and possibly a sleep).



## DAY 10

THURSDAY 1 OCTOBER

VERONA

In the morning, after breakfast, we'll walk to Verona's **Castelvechio Museum**. It is housed in the rather foreboding Scaligeri Castle, built in the 14th century as a defensive citadel over Roman walls on the banks of the rushing Adige River. The museum houses an extensive collection of medieval, International Gothic and Renaissance works, but is also notable for the architectural interventions of Carlo Scarpa in the 20th century.

It is widely considered to be one of Scarpa's most important works, particularly of his ability to create sophisticated work within a complicated historical context and one of the finest examples of Scarpa's sensitivity towards the nature of materials. In the afternoon, we will have considerable free time before we dine together for our last night in Verona.





The Seven Heavenly Palaces



Palazzo Belgioioso



Villa Necchi Campiglio

## DAY 11

FRIDAY 2 OCTOBER

MILAN

Today we depart Verona for Milan.

Our private coach will collect us from our hotel, and we will make a pit stop en route for morning tea. Once we arrive in Milan, we will go straight to our first visit, the **Pirelli Hangar Bicocca**, located in the industrial outskirts of the city. We will have a tour scheduled of Anselm Kiefer's 'The **Seven Heavenly Palaces**', a monumental installation which is permanently housed here and is one of Kiefer's most important site-specific works.

While the programming for later in 2026 has yet to be launched, exhibitions characteristically involve both established and emerging international artists and include both existing works as well as new commissions. There is a single restaurant onsite, Jute Bistrot where we will break for lunch before hopping back on our coach and making the short journey to our hotel.

After we have checked into our hotel and freshened up, we will have a walk around to see what's in the neighbourhood, including **Galleria Vittorio Emanuele** before enjoying a spritz in a nearby bar.

Over the course of our stay in Milan, we will do our best to visit Leonardo's Last Supper in the church of Santa Maria delle Grazie and the refectory where Leonardo painted his renowned, but experimental fresco of 'The Last Supper'. Tickets are scarce and sourcing them is difficult, so we'll schedule our visit when we can over the four-day stay.

Entry is on a timed short visit, but Claire will explain the work and its wider context before we enter the church complex.

## DAY 12

SATURDAY 3 OCTOBER

MILAN

After breakfast, we will head to **Thaddeus Ropac**, a major contemporary art gallery. The space in the centrally located Palazzo Belgioioso is the Austrian gallery's seventh location and opened in late 2025.

We will then walk to **Villa Necchi Campiglio**, a 1930s architectural gem. We will have lunch in the Villa Necchi Cafeteria nestled in the gardens of the villa before travelling by taxi to **Casa Museo Boschi di Stefano**. It is a once-private collection of 20th-century Italian art displayed in the owners' art deco apartment.

After which, we will well deserve a visit to the nearby famed Bar Basso said to be the home of the Negroni cocktail.

There's free time in the evening.



## ART TOUR GUIDE

Claire Chamberlain (MA Art History, PGDipEd) is an art historian and educator with over 25 years' experience. She teaches at Te Tuhi, co-leads the Patrons of NZ at the Venice Biennale, and has led international art tours since 2024. A passionate advocate for Aotearoa artists, she makes art history engaging and accessible.

## WEATHER

Venice in late September to early-October is mild and comfortable, with temperatures ranging from 14–22°C (57–72°F). Pack light layers, a warm sweater or jacket for the evenings, comfortable walking shoes, and a compact umbrella just in case.

## FITNESS REQUIREMENTS

Expect moderate daily walking, especially around museums, parks, and historic sites. Comfortable footwear is essential.

# Art Travel

## DAY 13

SUNDAY 4 OCTOBER

MILAN

Today we are off to **Pinacoteca di Brera**. The collection of the Pinacoteca includes some of the greatest masterpieces of Italian and international art. The works are displayed on the first floor of the building, where the **Academy of Fine Arts** is also located.

In December 2024, the **Brera Modern** opened a few doors along from the Pinacoteca di Brera to house its modern collection.

The Brera district is the home of fashion and of great restaurants - following our visits to the two galleries, enjoy free time after lunch perhaps hunting out vintage Armani, Prada, Bottega Veneta and Versace or enjoy a walk back to the hotel around the Sforzesco Castle.

We'll reconvene in the late afternoon to make a visit to Palazzo Reale which offers an array of contemporary and historical exhibitions.

Free time in the evening.

## DAY 14

MONDAY 5 OCTOBER

MILAN

First thing this morning, we will then have a tour of the roof top terraces of Italy's largest Gothic church, the **Duomo di Milano** (ascending first via the lift).

The afternoon can be spent as you wish on our last day in the city. Meet back later at the hotel for our last supper at a beautiful Milan restaurant.

## DAY 15

TUESDAY 6 OCTOBER

DEPARTURE

Depart Milan for home or further travels. Arrive *derci Italia!*