

TOURIOSITY®

T R A V E L M A G

CANALS
Touriosity

**EXPLORING
THE ARTERIES
OF THE EARTH**

*15 Canal cities
around the world*

India



Vietnam



Netherlands



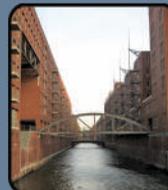
UK



France



Germany



Italy



Belgium



Artist's Impression of Venice



A unique travel horoscope





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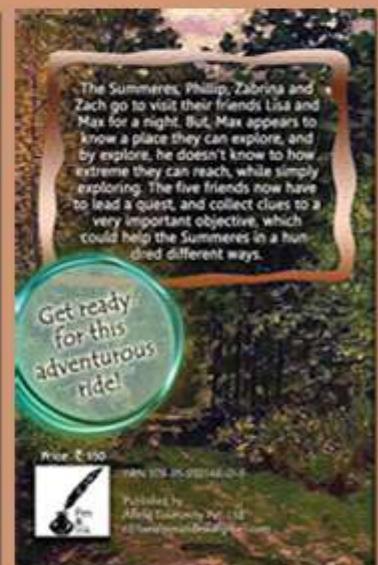
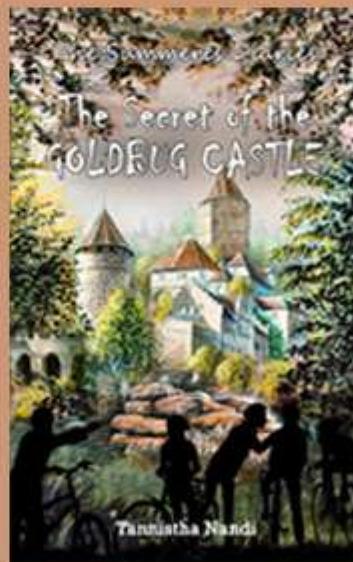


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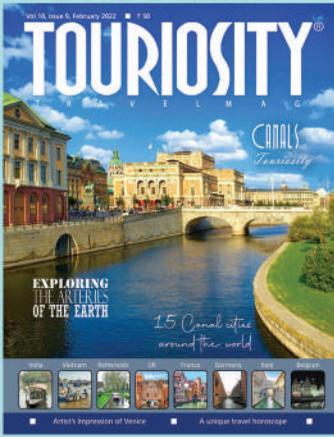
The Summers Diaries **The Secret of the Goldbug Castle**

by *Tannistha Nandi*



Send your proposal to
editorialpenandink@gmail.com
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Touriosity Travelmag
February 2022 Issue

Dear Reader,

If you would like to share your memorable experiences with us, please feel free to contact us with your write ups, articles, anecdotes, photos and others. Good pictures will be acknowledged and published in the Reader's Click section. For the Travel Humour section, you can send us any travel related funny photos or sketches.

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www.touriositytravel.com and
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Send us your feedback at:
touriosity2012@gmail.com or
ttmag.english@gmail.com

Photo Contributors:

Anjali Tiwari, Mumbai;
Dr Paritosh Nandi, Kolkata;
Sanghamitra, Kolkata;
Rupanjana De, Kolkata;

Illustrations By:

Joaquin Gonzalez Dorao, Spain;

COVER PHOTO:

The view of a canal in Stockholm
Sweden

Photo by

Sanghamitra, Kolkata

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Historically, waterways have played an important role in transportation of goods and trading between regions. As a result some cities around the world had a very developed canal system. Even today one can find many such beautiful cities with gorgeous canals at the very heart of them. While cities like Venice, Amsterdam and Hamburg are quite known the world over for their beautiful canals, there are others scattered across the globe that also abode a network of canals. This issue of Touriosity is dedicated to these arterial waterways that bind the regions of the Earth together.

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AN APPEAL TO TOURISTS

Waterbodies must be maintained clean and free of pollution. While taking boat trips across canal cities we must refrain from throwing garbage on the water and remember to bring back our trash with us. LET'S BE RESPONSIBLE TOURISTS.

Historically waterways have played a very important role both in transportation of people and of goods. They have facilitated trade between cities and hence helped in economic development of various regions around the world. As a result some cities around the world had a well developed canal system. Even today one finds many such beautiful cities with gorgeous canals on the very heart of them.

Canal tourism is popular in some cities of the world. Personally, I have a great liking for waterways and love to take boat trips; in fact experimenting with different types of boat also brings me great pleasure. I am sure the same is the case with many of our adventure loving readers as well. I have a strong belief that if there were to be fairy-tale like vacations, holidays in the picture perfect canal cities would have surely taken the crown for it. There's a certain peace and tranquility associated with it.

The canals, bridges and gondolas of Venice are generally the first images to pop up in our minds at the very mention of canals. Many people, including the travel enthusiasts, even do not know that there exists other canal cities around the world too. It's a pity, but it is the reality.

Each canal city has a charm of its own. Some of them are known for their castles, riverfront palaces or palazzos, some for the medieval buildings or churches, others for gardens, Chinese pagodas, lakes and architecturally splendid bridges. Some canal cities provide tours in boats, gondolas, catamarans or even water-buses. In others the only way to enjoy the beauty of the waterways is to look at them from the bridges. However, if possible, navigating the canals is definitely the best way of seeing the city, and hence, such tours, wherever available, shouldn't be missed.

While there is only one Venice, due to its sheer popularity as a canal city, other cities of the world that also have their own canal systems as an integral part of their life and culture, are traditionally, often named after Venice. These canal cities may be lesser-known, but they surely have all that beauty and amenities that it takes to make them as beautiful and as popular as Venice. So, in this issue we decided to go beyond just Venice, Birmingham or Amsterdam, the obvious options for canal tourism. We have brought to our readers 15 spectacular canal cities from four continents across the globe. Each one of them has something unique to offer. So for those tourists who love canals or those who want to navigate on them like one dreams of doing in Venice, and yet avoid the crowding and over-tourism that the latter is infamous for, the best option is to go for any of the other canal cities covered in this issue instead. Some of these cities have been built around canals, in some others canals were dug up manually for a variety of reasons.

The COVID-19 situation in the country is further improving and the 3rd wave seems to be receding. I sincerely hope this is the end of the pandemic. I urge our readers not to take hasty travel decisions just yet, although the news of borders finally opening and international flight services resuming is a great respite after almost two years of life in shakles and behind doors. I wish everyone a healthy and happy year ahead.

We hope our readers will find the issue interesting and enchanting. Please do send us your feedback at ttmag.english@gmail.com.

Happy sailing!

Rupanjana De
Rupanjana De

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WORLD**

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Artist's impression of Santorini Backpacker's adventure in Istanbul continues



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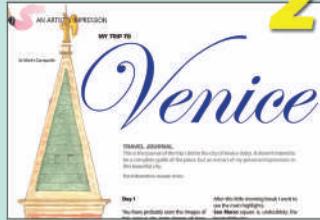
Canal cities of the world

There are some really stunning canal cities around the world that offer unparalleled travel experience to visitors. From gondolas in Venice and floating markets in Can Tho to putting up in a houseboat in Alleppey in Kerala, there is a whole variety of attractions

to tick off. This article lists the top 15 canal cities of the world.

Artist's Impression of Venice

Venice is situated on a group of 118 islands separated by 170 canals that are connected by 400 architecturally stunning foot bridges. It will not be an exaggeration to say that it is the most beautiful canal city on the planet. In this article, through his brushstrokes a watercolour artist seeks to bring alive the canal city while at the same time narrating his travel experience there.



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Touroscope

Here's the unique travel Horoscope that Touriosity brings to its readers every month. Get to know what life holds for you in the coming month as well as the best days and places to travel to based on the planetary positions.

TOURIOSITY
TRAVELMAG

Phone: +91-8902035452

Mobile: +91 9836511995

E-mail: tourosity@nvertgroup.com

Website: www.tourositytravel.com

EDITOR Rupanjana De

CONTENT WRITER Sanghamitra

DESIGN DIRECTION Rupanjana De

ADMINISTRATION Dr. Paritosh Nandi

MARKETING Himanshu Biswas

PUBLIC RELATION Piya Banerjee

CIRCULATION MANAGER Piya Banerjee

TEAM TOURIOSITY Dr. Paritosh Nandi

Sanghamitra

Tannistha Nandi

LOGISTIC Muktinath Shil

ASSISTANCE Prashanta Deb

Owner, Publisher & Printer

Afield Touriosity Pvt. Ltd

#E, B/6, Bapujinagar,

Kolkata - 700092, India

E-mail : ttmag.english@gmail.com

Distributor

K.K. Puri News Distributors Pvt.Ltd.

9, Decares Lane, Kolkata - 700069

DESTINATIONS IN THIS ISSUE





15 Canal Cities *of the world*



Hamburg, Germany

Despite being located more than 100 km away from the North Sea, Hamburg is an important port city and is home to the country's largest and Europe's second largest port (after Rotterdam in the Netherlands) and the fourth largest one in the world in terms of area.

The second largest German city after Berlin, both in area and by population, and the eighth largest city in the European Union, Hamburg is a unique blend of the old and the new. It has the largest port in Germany and is home to the maximum number of canals and bridges in the world. As compared to about 400 bridges in Venice, Hamburg has approximately 2500 bridges crossing its waterways. This gives us an idea about the innumerable number of canals that crisscross this second largest German city. Hamburg famously has more canals than those in Amsterdam and Venice

combined. Like the Venetians, the people of Hamburg are very proud of their canals and bridges. Life in the city revolves round its waterways.

Hamburg lies on the banks of three rivers, the Elbe (that resulted in the city becoming one of the most major ports in Europe), the River Alster and the River Bille. However the latter two are in fact tributaries of the Elbe. The Alster is the second most important river of Hamburg after the Elbe. The Alster flowing through the city were dammed resulting in two artificial lakes, the Außenalster (Outer Alster) and the smaller one, the Binnenalster (Inner Alster). The Binnenalster was later cut shorter to form the Kleine Alster later. The lakes located in the heart of the city are major parts of the cityscape of Hamburg today and provide beautiful recreational parks around.

The Alster is crossed by a number of bridges. A stretch of 9 km of the river is naviga-

ble and there are ferries that take tourists from the city center through residential and beautiful neighbourhoods across the city. The water of the river is relatively clean and rowing across it is a euphoric experience, an absolute must for visitors in the city. The tour presents spectacular views of the Hamburg skyline with copper church spires that have adopted a green colour over the years and beautiful bungalows along the canals. Fairytale-like bridges also come to sight and passing underneath them almost brings out the child in you.

1. *The Bridge of Sighs in Venice;*
2. *A typical canal in the commercial district of Hamburg;*
3. *The historic Speicherstadt area of Hamburg with its canals;*
4. *The beautiful Feenteichbrücke dating from 1884 AD;*
5. *The Ellermtorsbrücke bridge in Hamburg city built in 1668 AD.*



Amsterdam, Netherlands

Called Gracht in Dutch (Plural: grachten), canals have historically been the lifeline of Dutch and Flemish cities. Apart from drainage and sewerage systems, these have also been used for water supply and transportation. Naturally the Dutch capital city of Amsterdam has 160 grachten with a total length of more than 100 kms, as many as 90 islands and 1,500 bridges (including eight wooden bascule bridges). The small bridges on the canals look like beautiful illustrations from fairytale books.

Of the four main grachts one finds in the

Photos:

Various canals in Amsterdam, boats plying on them, shops and residential houses (including gabled houses from the medieval times) along the canals and an artist's impression of the canals of the Dutch capital city of Amsterdam.

city, Singel is the oldest and dates back to the Middle Ages (16th century) and the other three, being Prinsengracht, Keisersgracht and Herengracht, were dug as early as the 17th century. They form concentric belts around the city and the area they cover is called the Grachtengordel. The Canal belt is home to more than 1,500 historic buildings. In 2010 the Canal Belt was inscribed in the UNESCO World Heritage Site list.

Amsterdam is the main cultural centre of the Netherlands. It is also known for a plethora of museums, a huge flower market, its food, the Anne Frank House and the historic city centre. The Anne Frank Huis (Anne Frank House) is located by the side of the Prinsengracht canal and is a 'must visit' destination for tourists to the city. The Rijksmuseum and the Van Gogh Museums have a beautiful collection of art. The Dam Square is another great place to spend time in. Its greatest landmark is

the 17th century royal palace called the Koninklijk Paleis. The Nieuwe Kerk, the Westerkerk, the 14th century Oude Kerk and Madame Tussauds Wax Museum are other important places to check out. For upscale boutiques and restaurants one may visit the Jordaan neighbourhood. On Saturday mornings one may visit the Lindengracht Canal to buy local crafts, produces, flowers and more.

Amsterdam is famous for its canals, and not just canals, they are real beauty to look at. Taking a stroll along the canals is a pleasant experience. Most of the beautiful houses lining the Prinsengracht, Keisersgracht, Herengracht and Singel canals date back to the 17th century. While strolling along by the side of the waterways one can notice boats on the canals filled with tourists busy merrymaking, singing, dancing and drinking. Because of its beautiful canals Amsterdam is also often referred to as the 'Venice of the North'.



Stockholm, Sweden

Stockholm, the capital city of Sweden, is the country's largest city and the largest and most populated urban area in all of Scandinavia. The city was built in the year 1000 by the Vikings; today it is a bustling metropolis.

The city is famously built on 14 islands in the Lake Mälaren which are connected by about 57 intricately decorated bridges. A third of the city is composed of water. The canals that connect the islands can be crossed by boat or ferry and canal tour of the city is quite popular with tourists. Outside the urban area of the city is the Stockholm archipelago consisting of about 30,000 small and large islands on the Baltic Sea.

Due to its wide network of beautiful canals, Stockholm is often also referred to as the 'Venice of the North'. Boating is a great way to explore the city. One may take a boat tour around the city to enjoy the splendid views of Kungliga Slottet (the Royal Palace), Gamla Stan (the old town), and a variety of art galleries and museums, including the Vasa Museum. There are also canal-side beaches like the Rålambshovsparken which is popular with families for picnics.

One of the popular canal tours of the city starts from Strömkajen in central Stockholm and takes the tourists along the posh neighbourhood of Södermalm and Slussen and then the Djurgården Island (home to the famous Vasa Museum). During the hour-long tour along the canal across the various islands one can see many historical buildings, museums as well as parks. From the boat one



can also catch a glimpse of the Stockholm skyline. Certain views of the city are only possible from water and hence a trip to the city can never be complete without a canal tour.

During winter, the canals of the city freeze and offer a great opportunity to the locals for skating.

Alleppey, Kerala, India

The Indian state of Kerala is known for many things, one of these being its backwaters. These are a 1500-km-long series of lakes connected by a network of canals throughout the state. Putting up and travelling on these canals in house boats is one of the most sought after activities for tourists in Kerala. For visitors, it is also possible to hire speed boats to cruise through the canals. During the tours visitors get to have a glimpse of the culture and natural beauty of the state that are otherwise inaccessible from the mainland.

Of all the cities in the state, Alappuzha, earlier known as Alleppey, is especially known as the 'Venice of the East'. It is located on the Laccadive Sea in the southern Indian state. With a network of lagoons, rivers, canals and lakes, it is definitely the best canal city in India. The Vembanad backwater located in the city is also one of its most



Top: Canals across Stockholm, Sweden;

Left: Illustration of a houseboat in Alleppey in Kerala, India



famous destinations. With an area of more than 2,030 sq.km, it is the largest lake in Kerala.

Bruges, Belgium

Bruges, designated as a UNESCO World Heritage site, is one of the most postcard perfect destinations of Flanders region of Belgium. It is a cosmopolitan city that still maintains a fairy-tale look. Being here is like travelling back in time. Its sprawling medieval centre is known for its network of beautiful canals, cobblestone lanes, splendid market squares, lush green parks and centuries-old fortifications from the medieval period on both sides. People of Bruges go an extra mile to welcome tourists; no wonder the city is regarded as one of the friendliest cities in the world.

The city's canals date back to 1128 AD and, like veins, connect all major parts of the city. They pass by the homes, medieval city, churches and gardens before finally meeting the North Sea. Historically, the canals have played a very important role in the economic development of the city during the Middle Ages. A canal tour, therefore, is the best way of seeing the beauty of the city. It is available from multiple locations in the city and lasts for about 30 minutes. Such tours take tourists on ride across the town's various canals, many of which are far away from the streets and provide a different view to the town including a chance to see many of the town's medieval gates.

Canals in Bruges are called Reie (after the name of the river on which the city was originally built) and there are several of them. There are 80 prominent bridges crossing them. Some of the most beautiful canals are Augustijnenrei, Gouden-Handrei, Groeneriei, Coupure and Djiver. The Groeneriei (meaning green canal) is regarded as the most romantic canal in Bruges.

Bruges is an ideal destination for backpackers. There are buses available from the station for travellers with wheeled suitcases that are difficult to carry on uneven cobbled roads. One must re-

member that no motor vehicles are allowed inside the old town and all you get to see are bicyclists, horse-drawn carriages and pedestrians. Along the canals you catch glimpses of tourists enjoying a boat ride. Horse-drawn carts can be hired for a romantic trip around the old town. One can also rent a bicycle to move around the city. There are a number of bicycle rental companies to choose from.

Bruges is famous for its lace making. Belgium is also known for its beer, chocolates and fries. Shops selling these line the cobbled lanes and those interested in them can also go for buying some or even window shopping.

One interesting fact about the city is that it is often said to be haunted. There are a number of ghost legends associated with the Medieval city. One can also take a Ghost tour.

Ghent, Belgium

Ghent, the capital of East Flanders Province of the Flanders region, is the second most populous Belgian city after Antwerp and the fourth largest by area after Brussels, Liège and Antwerp. The historical city dates back to 630 AD, when St. Amandus chose the site of the confluence of the two rivers, Leie and Scheidt, to construct an abbey. It has hence been traditionally an important port city and a major



trading centre in this part of the world.

The history of Ghent goes back to the Stone Age. From the 11th to 16th century AD Ghent was one of the most important cities of Europe. In the 13th century it was the second largest European city only after Paris. Today it does not even feature in the first 200 big cities of Europe and the entire city is pretty walk-able. It has a historic centre where many of the building date from the beginning of the millennium. The quaint canals are crossed by spectacular bridges and are lined on both sides by very old brick buildings. There are innumerable medieval structures dotting the city.

A walk through the canal-side and other roads of the city takes one across history of the city over the next 1400 years. There is a spectacular medieval castle surrounded by a moat, an imposing cathedral, a beautiful belfry and 3 beguinages. Because unlike most European cities Ghent did not suffer any major ravages or bombings during the First and Second World Wars, most of its medieval buildings still remain intact and present a treat to the eyes. One can also take a boat ride along the canals to view the Medieval part of the city.

Suzhou, Jiangsu Province, China

From European cities we now move to the Orient. The historic Chinese city of Suzhou is known for its dream-like gardens and beautiful canals and is often referred to as the 'Venice of the Orient'. The city is home to a network of about 15 canals located close to the 1200-miles-long Grand Canal of China (built between 581 and 618 AD). The latter has the distinction of being the longest man-made waterway in the world.

Located in the centre of the Yangtze Delta, the city of Suzhou has stunning architecture and has been designated as a UNESCO World Heritage Site. The city is more than 2,500 years old and provides a glimpse of ancient Chinese culture. It is easy to reach by a 30-minute bullet train ride from Shanghai. Visitors can take a boat ride to get a up-close view of ancient stone houses, beautiful pagodas and gardens.

Bangkok, Thailand

Bangkok is located on the delta of the Chao Phraya River. While the Thai capital city is known for a host of other attractions, very few people are aware of the importance and heritage of its canal system. It is one of Asia's oldest canal city. The lives of local farmers and fishermen still largely revolve round the city's canals and elevated walkways. Today there are close to 1,700 canals (locally referred to as 'khlong') in the

Across page:

Sint-Janshospital on the bank of a canal in Bruges and other canals and boat cruises;

Top:

Canals, beautiful bridges and medieval architecture in Ghent, Belgium;

Below:

An artist's impression of the canals, bridges and Chinese Pagoda in Suzhou in China.





city with a total length of more than 2,700 kms. These waterways have earned the Thai capital the name of 'Venice of the East'.

Canals have been present in the city of Bangkok since the 18th century, the first being built for the purpose of protection of its border. In the 19th century the canal system was expanded rapidly for irrigation, transport and flood drainage purposes. However, in course of the centuries many of them were drained due to the risk of cholera. But even today, many of the city's canals play an important role in transportation across the country.

The main canal in Bangkok is the 18-km-long Khlong Saen Saeb which lies close to important historical places and shopping centers. Those who want to take a boat ride for sight-

seeing must opt for Khlong Saen Saeb.

The floating markets, with a number of local merchandises being sold by the locals from their boats, are a significant attraction of the Bangkok waterways. This is an experience not to be missed while in the city.

Some of Bangkok's famous floating markets are Damnoen Saduak (local shopping), Amphawa (local seafood), Taling Chan (massages), Khlong Lat Mayom (food and more), Lam Phaya (home cooked food), Bang Phli (oldest floating market) and Bang Nam Pheung (Thai food).

Apart from its canals, Bangkok has many other attractions, It is especially known for its temples (Wat Pho, Wat Arun, Wat Traimit and Wat Suthat), the Grand Palace, a variety of

street food options, the Khao San Road, shopping Malls and so on. River cruises in Bangkok are also popular.

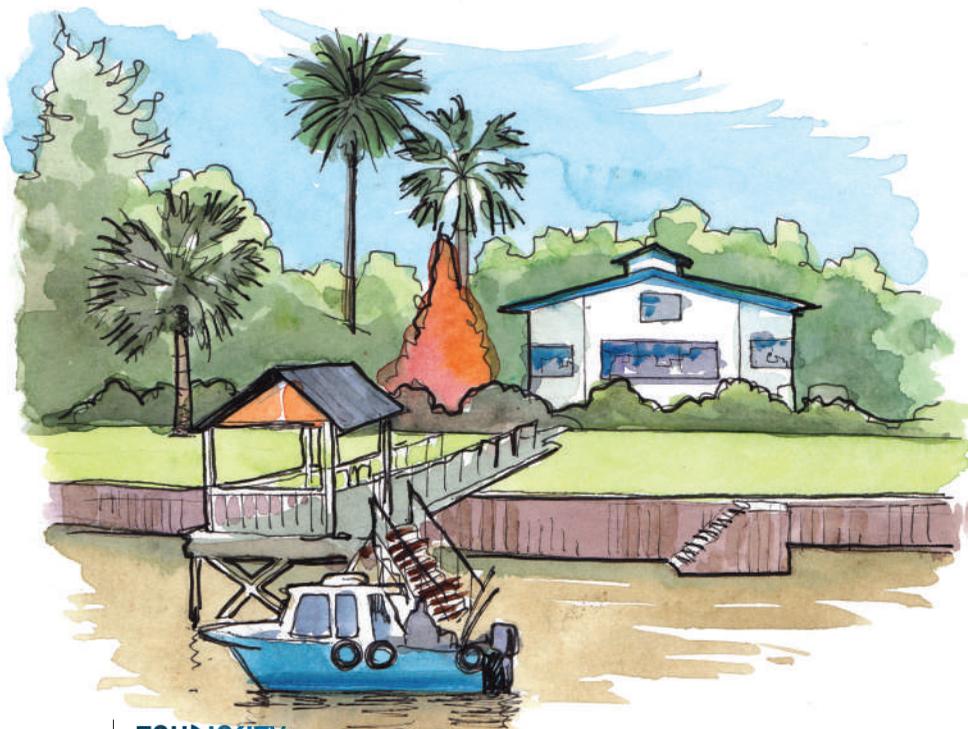
Tigre, Argentina

Located north of Greater Buenos Aires, Tigre is an important tourist and weekend attraction on the Paraná Delta in Argentina. It is an important waterway entry into South America. On the other side of the river in Tigre is Uruguay, but it is too far away for anyone to be able to have a glimpse of it.

The place was named after tigers because in the past this particular place was known for hunting of tigers. It was also later known for its fruit imports and markets. But nothing in Tigre is reminiscent of those hunting or trading days, today it is known mainly for tourism.

At Tigre visitors can take vintage mahogany boats or even a catamaran for a ride along the canals, and the Luján and Sarmiento Rivers. During the trip one can see English-style rowing clubs, luxurious marinas, humble dwellings and nice houses of 'Belle Époque' style, such as the Tigre Club. There are also many lodges, restaurants, teahouses and charming picnic sites.

Being just a short train ride away, it is a popular place for the inhabitants of Buenos Aires for spending their weekends away from the rush and traffic of the big city.



Top:

A typical waterbody in Thai capital city of Bangkok with a temple in the background;

Left:

An artist's impression of Tigre in Argentina.

Birmingham, England

Birmingham's biggest claim to fame is that it was the first manufacturing town in the world. It is the second most populous city in England after London. But the city has a rather quaint side also. Birmingham's canal system once covered a distance of almost 174 miles, but today it stretches up to 100 miles which constitutes the Birmingham Canal Navigations (BCN). The city is said to have more canals than Venice and these navigable waterways system is also one of its biggest attractions. Some important canals in the city are the Grand Union Canal, Worcester Canal, Birmingham Canal, Stourbridge Canal and Stratford Canal.

During the Victorian era Birmingham was known as the 'City of a 1000 Trades' and also as the 'Workshop of the World'. It was the heart of the industrial revolution that swept across the United Kingdom. Digging up of its first canal (starting from 1769) was pretty much part of this industrial revolution. This first canal of Birmingham connected it with Wednesbury town and was meant for transportation of goods and materials like coal and iron from Birmingham and the Black Country to other towns and cities.

The canals of Birmingham pass through many important parts of the city like the Town Hall, the Arena Birmingham and the Brindley Place. There are waterbuses plying on these canals and a cruise through the waterways brings to visitors unparalleled views of the city. This canal tour must not be missed by visitors during their visit to the city.

Anney, France

Anney is also often referred to as the 'Venice of the Alps'. This dreamy Alpine town is named after the Anney Lake and is located at the place where the lake meets the Thiou River. The Anney Lake is said to be one of the cleanest



lakes in the world. Apart from the river, there are three canals cutting through the beautiful town.

Anney's greatest claim to fame is the view of its pastel coloured houses with colourful facades and the cobbled streets that skirt the borders of the famed canals. Also crossing the canals are beautiful bridges that look like the ones from illustrations on books of fairy tales. The Old Town, surrounded by greenish waters of the canals, is as picturesque as one can dream of.

The town of Anney also abodes the imposing Château d'Anney that was once the home of the Counts of Geneva. One also finds here the 12th century Palais de l'Île located on the bank of the Canal du Thiou. The castle has been renovated to add to the sheer beauty of the town.

The origin of these waterways in Birmingham was for help in transportation of good for the purpose of trade for the locals. Canals were also dug to protect the city. But today, there has been a sharp rise in tourism centred round the beautiful canals and an alpine lake of Anney. There are several cozy restaurants and bars by the side of the canals. The Jardin de l'Europe located between the Thiou River and the Canal du Vassé is quite popular for picnics.





Venice, Italy

Venice is one of the most visited tourist destinations around the world. It is not only crowded by visitors from all around, but also frequented by film makers who come here to capture a glimpse of the city in their movies. Naturally, Venice is crowded all the year round.

The unique city of Venice is situated on a group of 118 islands separated by about 170 canals. The islands of Venice are connected by about 400 foot bridges. While there are other cities that surpass it in the number of canals or bridges, no city in the world can truly compete with it in beauty and splendor of architecture. The local culture and vibes that surrounds this city is also distinct from that in any other canal city. Hence, it wouldn't be wrong to conclude that Venice is one of the most beautiful cities in the world. No wonder that under normal situations, the city receives footfalls of more than 50,000 visitors every day.

Venice has the distinction of being the largest vehicle-free city in Europe. Gondolas, a type of traditional rowing boat, are the main mode of transportation in this city. A visit to Venice can never be complete without a ride on the gondola.

Of all the canals the 3.8-km-long Grand Canal is the main waterway in Venice and most of the city's traffic passes through this canal. It has a width varying between 30 to 90 metres and an average depth of 5 metres. One end of the canal leads to the lagoon near the Santa Lucia railway station while the other end joins the basin at San Marco. It is believed to follow the course of an ancient river in Venice. The Grand Canal is lined on both sides by beautiful buildings most of which date back from the

13th to the 18th centuries. Most of these were built as palazzos for the opulent Venetian nobility. Some of the buildings are prominent landmarks and tourist attractions today. Some have been converted into museums. There are also a host of churches along its bank. The canal is also the venue of the annual historical Regatta.

A gondola cruise through Grand Canal is very popular. The scenic view one is presented with during such ride includes glimpses of beautiful old palazzos and historical buildings. During the cruise visitors also pass under four bridges including the very old Ponte di Rialto or the Rialto Bridge dating from 1173 AD. The other three bridges are Ponte Degli Scalzi, the Ponte dell'Accademia and the Ponte della Costituzione.

Of all the four bridges spanning the Grand Canal in Venice the Rialto Bridge is the oldest one. It was built in 1591 to replace a wooden bridge dating back to 1173 at the same site that had collapsed in 1524. When the plan to design a new bridge here came up, some of the best architects in history, including Michelangelo and Palladio, offered their designs but the design submitted by Antonio da Ponte was accepted. Many architects were skeptical of his plans and predicted failure of the bridge. But he succeeded in proving his metiere. The bridge is built of stone and is aesthetically very appealing. No wonder millions of tourists from all across the globe flock here to see it amidst the other sights and sounds of the city of Venice.

Talking of bridges, another bridge to see in Venice is the Bridge of Sighs on the narrow canal of Rio di Palazzo. Also called Ponte dei Sospiri in Italian, this is the bridge of final sigh of prisoners. Made of white limestone, the bridge has windows with stone



2



3



4



5

bars and connects the New Prison to the interrogation rooms in the Doge's Palace. Built in 1600 with the design of Antonio Contino this bridge shot to fame as it was from here that convicts could see the city of Venice one last time before being imprisoned in dark cells. However, there is a lot of controversy as to the veracity of the legend, but nevertheless it makes this bridge an attraction to watch out for while visiting the city.

One big cause of concern for the city of Venice is that due to the rise in sea-level caused by climate change, the city has become very prone to flooding. The water level in Venice has risen more than five inches in general in the last century.

1. The Ponte di Rialto or the very famous Rialto Bridge dating from 1173 AD over the Grand Canal;

2. Tourists on a gondola on the Grand Canal. In the background is the Basilica di Santa Maria della Salute;

3. A gondola approaching a beautiful bridge on a very narrow canal in Venice;

4. A pair of gondolas waiting to be hired;

5. Common view across the narrower canals across Venice.



Cape Coral, Florida, U.S

This city in Florida is known for its 400 mile long waterfront (consisting of more than 1,50,000 canals), longer than the canal system of any other city in the world. Cape Coral has both freshwater and saltwater lakes. The 400 mile long man-made canals of Cape Coral were dug in the 1970s for irrigation and for protecting the city from flood. The city has earned the nickname of 'Waterfront Wonderland' and is known for its Gulf Coast beaches, verdant golf courses, the Yacht Club Community Park, the Four Freedoms Park and the Sun Splash Family Waterpark. There are many waterfront restaurants in Cape Coral where one can have good food.

Giethoorn, Netherlands

This is a picturesque canal village in De Wieden nature preserve of the Overijssel province of Netherlands. Historically, the village was a swampy marshland; so in the 12th century the farmers dug canals to transport their goods. Today the village is crisscrossed by canals (measuring four miles in total) and the land is connected by 180 small bridges. The village doesn't have vehicular roads and sailing on boats, cycling and walking are the only ways of getting around. Interestingly, swimming on the canals is not banned. So you can actually travel by swimming too. There are footpaths, bicycle trails and idyllic thatched-roof houses dating back few centuries.

There are footpaths, bicycle trails and idyllic thatched-roof houses dating back few centuries in some cases. The boats in Giethoorn are installed with silent electric motors making them noiseless as well as pollution free. Hence they are known as 'whisper boats'.



Can Tho, Vietnam

This Vietnamese city is located in the Mekong Delta in southern Vietnam, in the middle of a network of canals and rivers. The total length of waterways in the city is about 1,157 km. The biggest branch of Mekong River, the Hau River passes through the Northern part of the city.

A big attraction of Can Tho is its floating markets. The Cai Rang floating market is the largest and most popular of all floating market in the city. Local merchants riding on their boats down the river sell a variety of items. Taking a tour of the floating markets is a great cultural experience as well as a good chance to buy local items at reasonable prices. The best place to start a boat trip is the Ninh Kieu Waterfront area.



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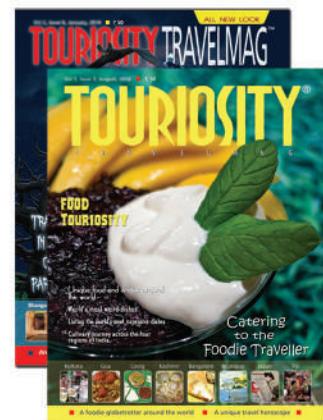
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Women Travel Network

ADVERTORIAL

Women have many roles to play in various arenas. Her place in society is punctuated with many tasks. While accomplishing such tasks she compromises with her love to explore the unknown. Kayaking through seas, relishing exquisite delicacies of various countries, experiencing deep water snorkelling or just seeing the world can be any woman's dream waiting to be fulfilled. Making such dreams come true for many women are the new era all-women travel services.

Why Women Travel Network?

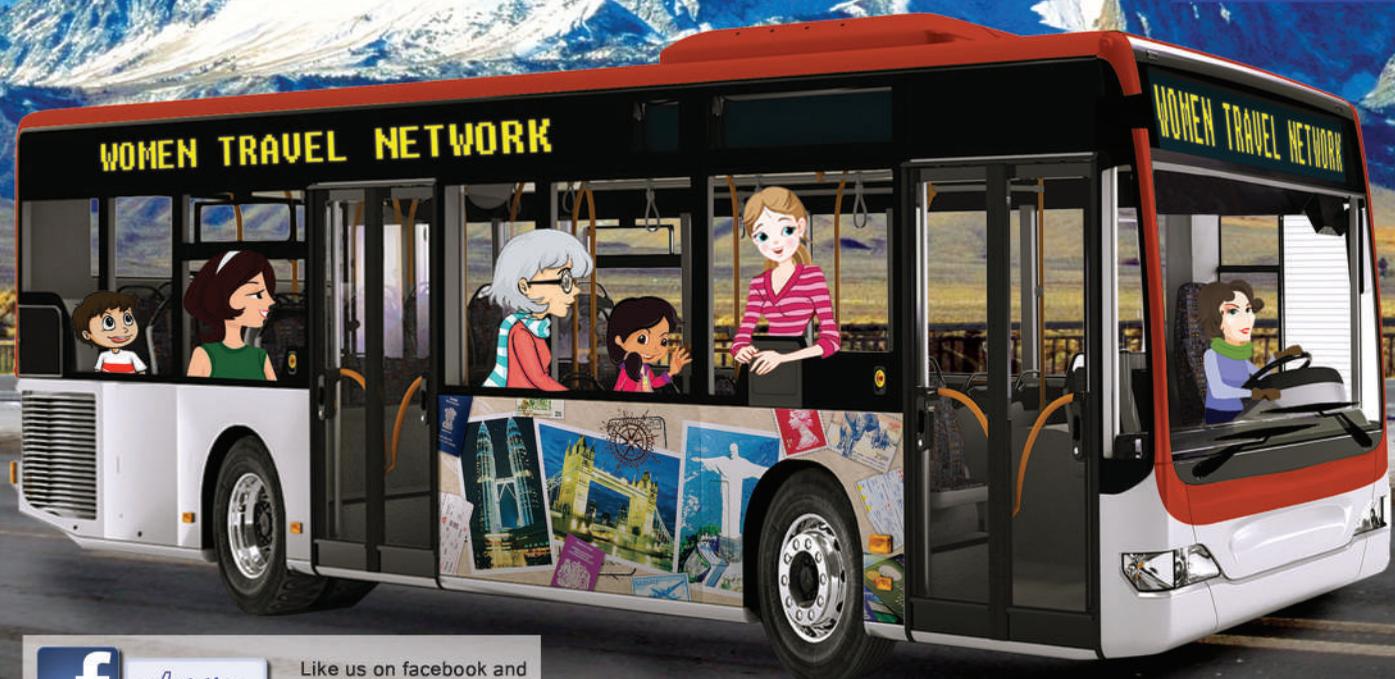
Many a times, when your skin thirsts for a touch of mist or dew drops and your heart yearns for an escape far from the daily life routine or the load of work in your respective jobs, you start seeking for people eager to accompany you. You try convincing your husband or children to take some time out of their busy schedules, but many times in vain. At those difficult times, the Women Travel Network (WTN) gives you the grand idea to set out alone to evaluate the passion of you. Personal safety is of great concern to some of these women, maybe fearing to set sail for your

maiden venture all by yourselves. WTN takes this into account and enables you to indulge in thrilling vacations with a group of spirited women tourists of all ages all geared with the same vigour. Things can be made easy and trouble-free yet well organised by WTN as it reduces the prime inconveniences like buying tickets, booking for lodging and drawing up itinerary.

What exactly WTN does?

With WTN you have the option of getting the best possible accommodation that would not harm your budget and the discretion of staying alone in rooms or sharing with someone. WTN also ensures that a suitable poise is maintained between seeing around and resting not making someone too fatigued with consistent tours. This network looks after all the formalities giving you a chance to pack your belongings without any hesitation. The organised travel plans will help gather fruitful travelling experiences in the company of like-minded women. WTN gives you the scope of bonding, and at the same time helps you make new friends. So if you are looking for a getaway, an escapade and your husband's/son's/father's/boyfriend's/friend's dates are bothering, Woman Travel





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Network is the best solution for you.

So what's so special about WTN?

Imagine meeting college friends after a huge gap of time, or getting chance to spend some quality time with kids or elders or just escaping the daily hustle and bustle of life in the company of colleagues or friends.

WTN offers to make those unfulfilled travel wishes come true for many women. With a number of national and international tour packages of WTN you can travel the world, alone, with your son (below 8 years) or your daughter (no age bar) and make unforgettable journeys. Whether you travel alone, or with a kid, friends, neighbours or relations, Women Travel Network can give you memorable trips. Absolutely hassle-free and comfortable, yet adventurous and safe fun trips are what this Network has in bag for you. A real boon for a n y woman!

If you have your own group of women

It is also possible to make your own preferred groups and Women Travel Network will take care of all the formalities of booking, ticketing and managing the tour. You just need to enjoy your trip and forget about everything else. So get geared up ladies and make your dream come true.

How to go about it?

Email us your requirements and plans. You will hear from us soon.

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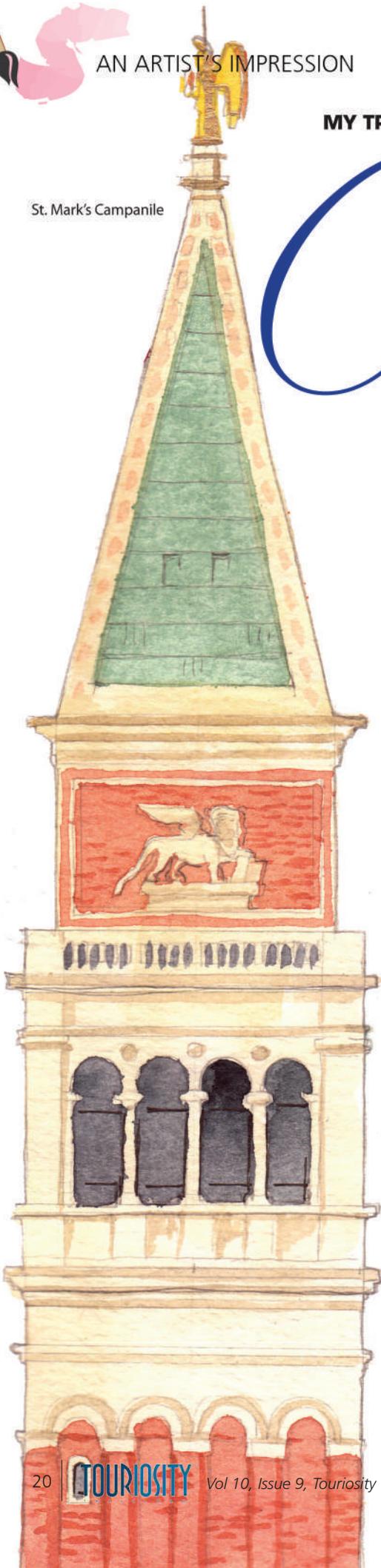
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MY TRIP TO

Venice

St. Mark's Campanile



TRAVEL JOURNAL

This is the journal of the trip I did to the city of Venice (Italy). It doesn't intend to be a complete guide of the place, but an extract of my personal impressions in this beautiful city.

Text & illustrations: Joaquín Dorao

Day 1

You have probably seen the images of this unique city state dozens of time, but no matter the previous impressions, the running canals, gondolas, Basilica di San Marco and Ducal Palace never fail to impress when you see them for the first time in the flesh, in spite of the unavoidable hordes of tourists that invade Venice every day of the year.

But there is also a quiet Venice, always romantic and secret. If you wake up soon enough, when the tourist buses haven't arrived yet, when only cats and garbage men stroll around the narrow alleys and canals, you will discover a different Venice, timeless, kind and absolutely beautiful.

And that is what I did on my first day at the city of canals. That day at dawn a thick mist made the alleys and waterways even more mysterious and magical. I sat at a terrace in an unknown street and watched the daily life of Venice pass by: kids on their way to school, merchants opening their shops, busy workers on their way to the office... Venice, in spite of its monumental side, is also a lively city and it's nice to get lost in it and feel part of the daily life.

After this little morning break I went to see the main highlights.

San Marco square is, undoubtedly, the heart of the city.

Venice's history as an autonomous republic started in the early Middle Ages, after the collapse of the Western Roman Empire, and lasted more than 1,100 years until the Napoleonic era. With the conquest of Constantinople in 1204 she became the dominant power in the Levant and a great Mediterranean naval power, greatly strengthened by her role as intermediary between East and West. And the dux (maximum authority of Venice) palace was built here, as well as its main church, the San Marco Basilica.



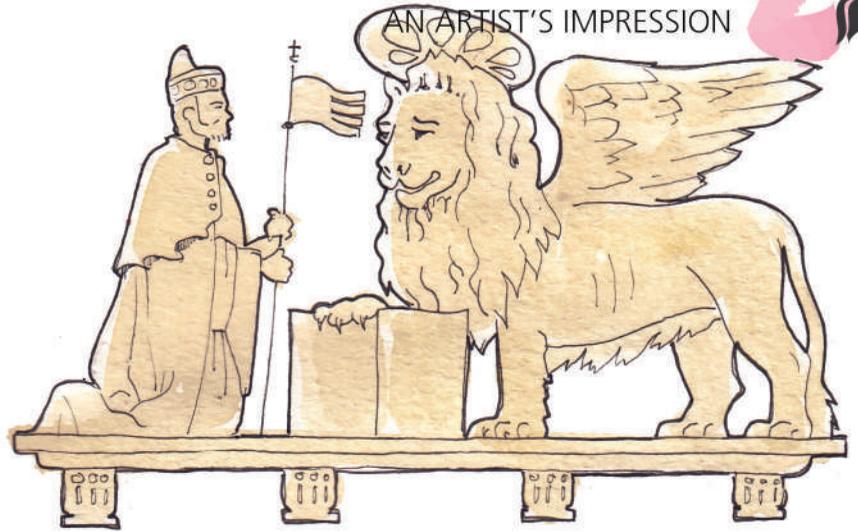
St. Mark's Basilica



AN ARTIST'S IMPRESSION

This huge square was the place where all official ships and dignitaries arrived, the centre of the political power. Nowadays it remains the centre of activity, touristic this time.

The **Basilica** may be visited for free, like most European churches, although you have to pay a small fee to enter the museum and the main balcony facing the square. Its was founded after the trip that two venetian merchants did to Alessandria to get the saint's relics. In order to justify the theft of St. Mark's body, legend says that when the Evangelist went to the lagoon, an angel came and said: "*Pax tibi Marce, Evangelista meus*" (Translation from Latin : peace to you, Mark my Evangelist. This is written in the book that St. Mark's lion holds in every statue of the city), showing how God had determined Venice as the final resting place of the Saint. St. Mark's remains were initially buried in a chapel in the Doge's Palace but later a church was built that was to be his perpetual resting place. As Venice always held a tight connection with Byzantium, the interior of the Basilica highly reminds the *Hagia Sophia* basilica in Istanbul, with byzantine mosaics and golden decoration. Its domes, added after some time, have a certain oriental flavour too. The main attraction of the museum is the quadriga (a four-horse carriage used for chariot racing), which has been on the facade of St Mark's Basilica since the sack of Constantinople in 1204.



St. Mark's lion and the Doge

Venetian window







San Giorgio Maggiore



After the Basilica I visited the **Doge's Palace**. The palace, was first built in the ninth century with a very different aspect, as a castle. But after some restorations it was completed in the Renaissance period with its present look, much finer and delicate. The upper storey is faced with white and rose-coloured marble, that gives it its characteristic look. This was the center of all the politics in Venice through the years and its many imposing halls with high decorated ceilings may be visited, as well as the nearby prison, linked to the Palace by the world-known **Bridge of the Sighs**, so called for being the passage where all the condemned prisoners sighed from before being thrown to the doge's prisons. The sight of the bridge from the *Riva degli Schiavoni* is the typical image of Venice, that appears in many postcards.

In front of the Doge's Palace there is a big **gondola** embankment, a good place to start a small trip by the canals and waterways. A visit to Venice is not complete if you don't take a little ride on one of these vessels, that slowly wander around and let you discover Venice's hidden corners that can't be seen in other ways.

After this I went for lunch at one of the many restaurants and pizzerie that you can find everywhere. As a rule, the further from San Marco Piazza, the

cheaper, so I just wandered around comparing menus and terraces until I found a cozy little place with a terrace by the shore of a quiet canal, with not too many tourists around. I enjoyed a dish of pasta and a delicious pizza as I watched people and vessels pass by. In the afternoon I took a **vaporetto** (the equivalent to public buses) along the **Grand Canal**, Venice's most beautiful "avenue", flanked by gorgeous palaces. Some of them can only be admired from the vaporetti, as there are no "side-walks" at the Grand Canal.

I disembarked at the **Rialto Bridge**, one of the most famous bridges in the world. Its main characteristic are the many shops located by the arcades that form the bridge. It has three walkways: two along the outer balustrades, and a wider central walkway leading through two rows of small shops that sell jewelry, linens, Murano glass, and other items for the tourists. It joins the quarters of San Marco and **San Polo**. This is a less famous but still charming area of Venice. You can find here many beautiful alleys, squares and churches, without the hassle of the flocks of tourist that invade San Marco area.

I stopped at a quiet terrace by a lost square to enjoy a wonderful salad and a tasty fish from the lagoon. Being a coastal city, fish is a delicious choice when dining in Venice.

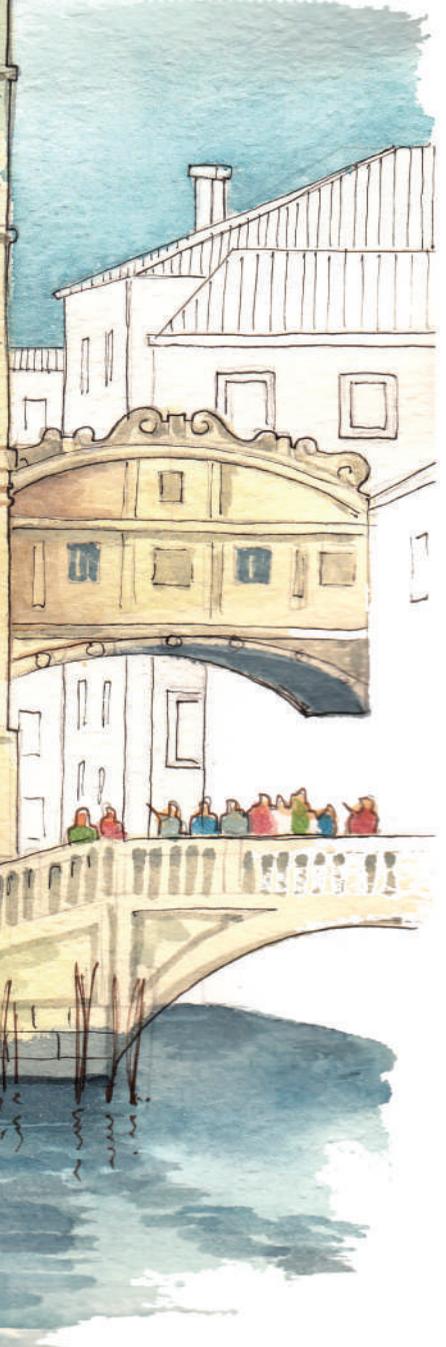


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AN ARTIST'S IMPRESSION





AN ARTIST'S IMPRESSION

St. Mark's Basilica

On the second day, I went in the morning to visit some palaces. I started at the **Ca'Rezzonico**, which is also the Museum of the Venetian 18th century. Built in 1667 by the Bon family the palace passed by a series of misfortunes until it was finally completed by the Rezzonico family in 1712. Its interior shows the Venetian life as it was in the 18th century. There is a great quantity of treasures, furniture, paintings and decorative objects found in numerous villas and Venetian palaces.

You can visit a huge ballroom, decorated by a series of remarkable architectural perspectives, a throne room with a marvellous rococo ceiling painted by Tiepolo, the last of the great Venetian painters. You can dream about the fastuous Venice period when Giacomo Casanova organized its famous orgies, games, balls and masquerades.

The second Venetian pal-



Santi Apostoli tower



ace I visited was the **Ca' d'Oro**, a magnificent Gothic building at the Grand Canal. Its name (Golden House) comes from 1400, when it was covered in gold leaf, although the gilding that once covered its facade eroded away long ago. The façade shows some oriental influence in its roof and many pointed arches.

It is nowadays a museum, where its architecture and decor compete with the exhibited works. Some compare its majesty to that of the Ducal Palace, though in a smaller scale. It was restored in the 20th century, when it was converted into a museum showing its owner's valuable private collection of paintings, sculpture, and furniture, all donated to the Italian government during World War I.

For lunch I chose the nearby **Mercato del Pesce** (Fish Market), at the opposite

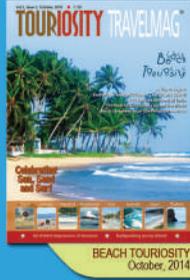
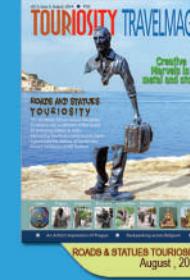
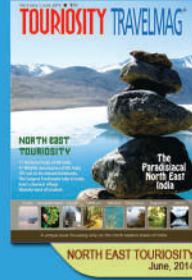
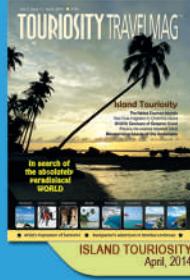
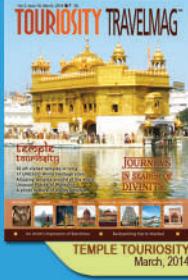
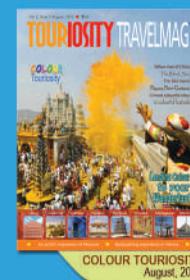
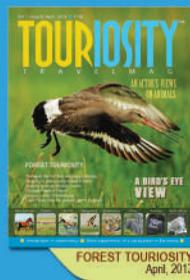
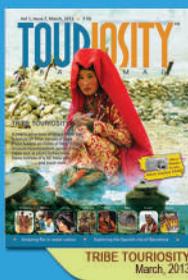
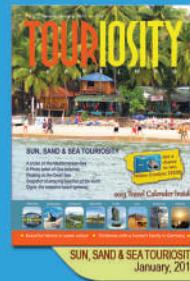
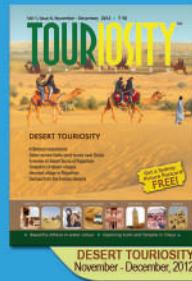
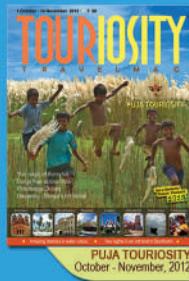
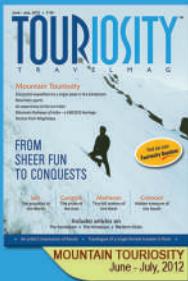
shore of the Grand Canal. There is a nice ambiance here and you can feel the daily life of the city at the many colourful stands of the market. It's nice to sit at a terrace and watch the constant activity. In the evening I went along the Riva dei Schiavoni, until the **Arsenal**, Venice's maritime industrial complex.

The Arsenal represents a vast, striking and strategic area of the inner city covering about 32 hectares of shipyards, that once were the heart of the Venetian economy.

From here I went to see the sunset over **San Giorgio Maggiore**, the tiny island located just in front of San Marco. Its skyline, continued by that of San Marco bell tower and Basilica, has been represented by many artists, from Turner to the impressionists and make a perfect finale for the visit to this amazing and eternal city.

Touriosity Travelmag brings to you

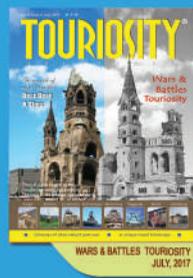
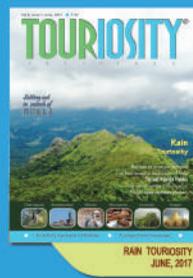
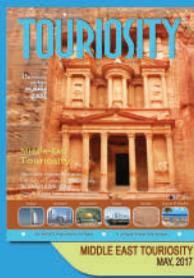
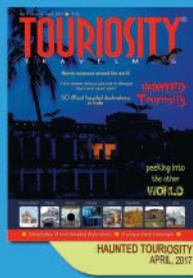
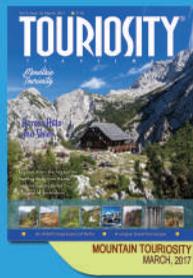
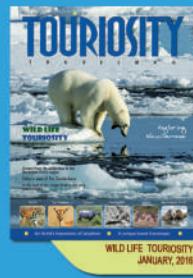
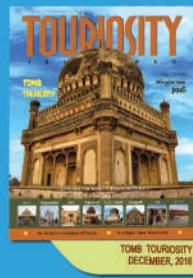
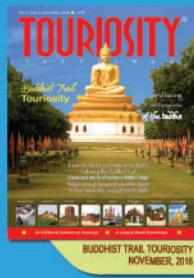
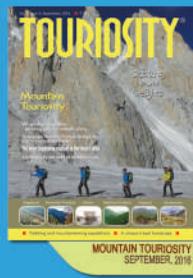
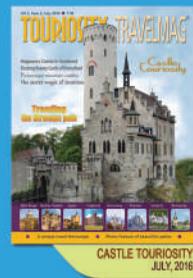
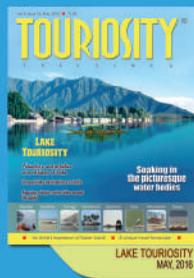
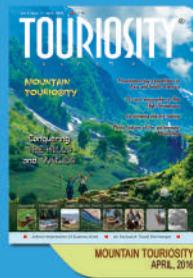
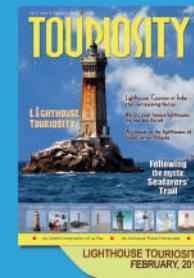
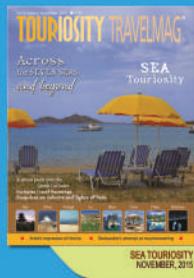
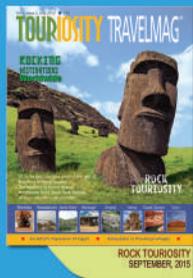
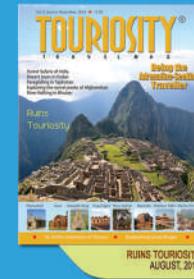
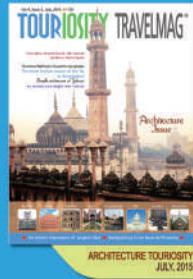
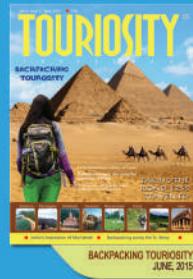
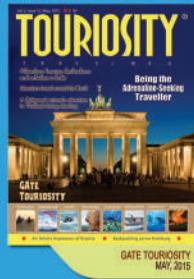
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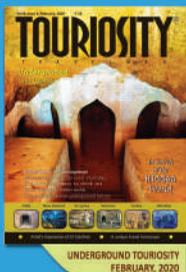
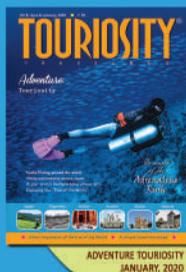
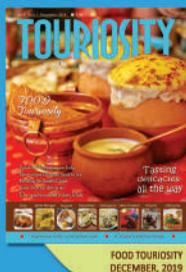
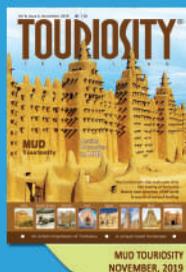
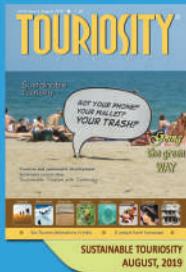
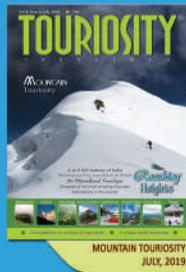
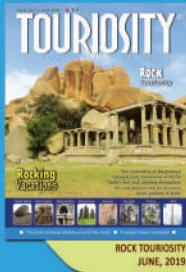
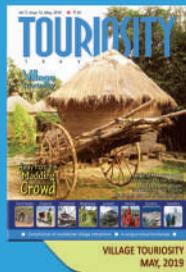
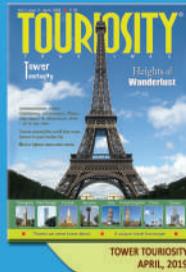
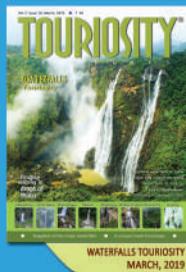
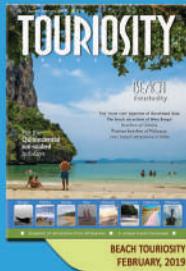
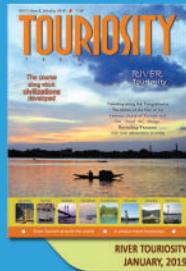
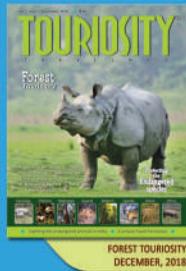
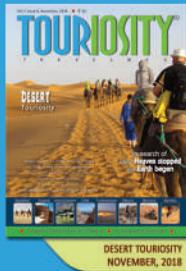
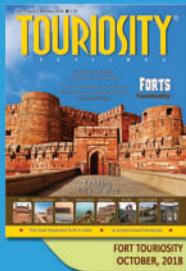
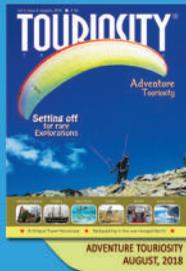
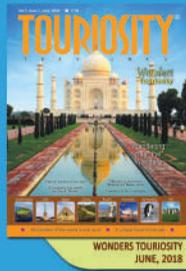
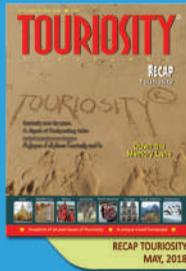
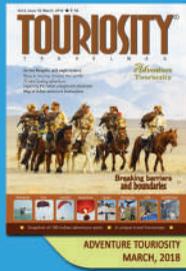
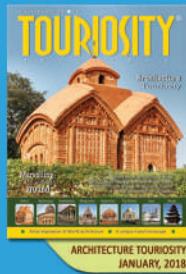
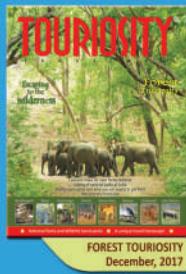
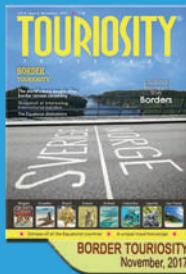
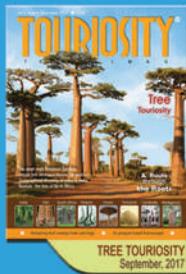
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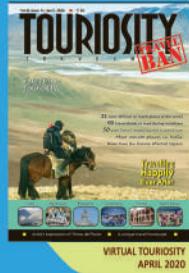
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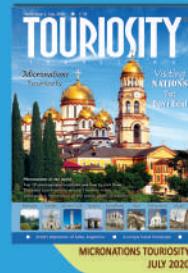
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APRIL 2020



VIRTUAL TOURIOSITY
MAY 2020



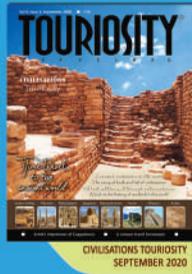
SNOW & ICE TOURIOSITY
JUNE 2020



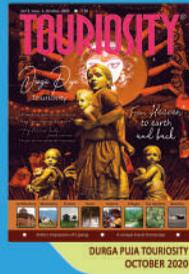
MICRONATIONS TOURIOSITY
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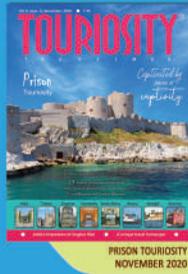
WILDLIFE TOURIOSITY
AUGUST 2020



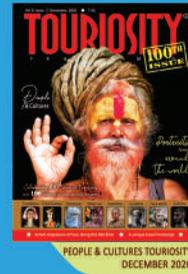
CIVILISATIONS TOURIOSITY
SEPTEMBER 2020



DURGA PUJA TOURIOSITY
OCTOBER 2020



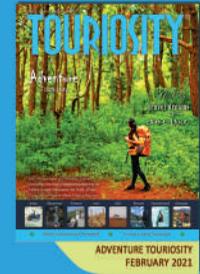
PRISON TOURIOSITY
NOVEMBER 2020



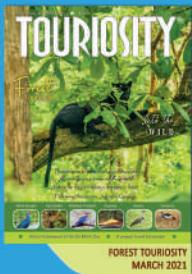
PEOPLE & CULTURES TOURIOSITY
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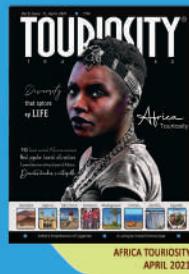
JOURNEYS TOURIOSITY
JANUARY 2021



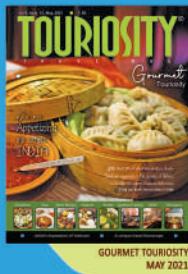
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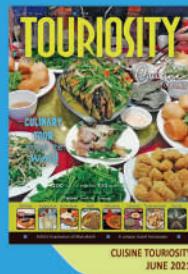
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AFRICA TOURIOSITY
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GOURMET TOURIOSITY
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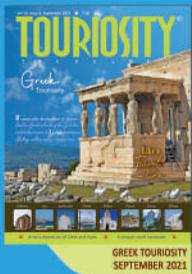
CUISINE TOURIOSITY
JUNE 2021



NEIGHBOURHOODS TOURIOSITY
JULY 2021



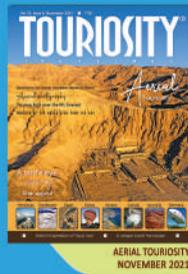
ISLANDS TOURIOSITY
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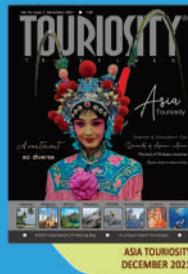
GREEK TOURIOSITY
SEPTEMBER 2021



POLAR TOURIOSITY
OCTOBER 2021



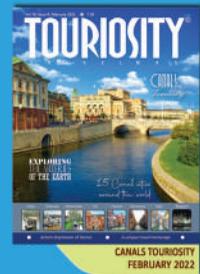
AERIAL TOURIOSITY
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Aries
(21 March – 19 April)

You may develop new attributes, adding them to your operating style by giving form and method to latent abilities. There may be romance that comes through friendships or social contacts. Refresh and reinvigorate your relationship with loved ones.

Places to visit: Kuala Lumpur in Malaysia -The beautiful skyline, adorned by Menara KL Tower and Petronas Tower, is a must-see. The Perdana Lake Gardens is another great sight.

Kaziranga - From wildlife photographers to travel enthusiasts, Kaziranga National Park is the lifetime aim to witness, to capture the different poses of one-horned rhinoceros.

Favorable Dates: Mar 1, 4, 10, 13, 19, 22

Favorable Colors: Blue & Yellow

You can get ahead with your projects and ambitions on the condition that you get involved, struggle and fight. New knowledge combined with a good orderly approach and effective health routines will see you flourish.

Places to visit: Edinburgh Castle: It is a true icon of Scotland and has dominated the skyline of the capital for centuries. Unusually, it's set atop of an extinct volcano.

Shillong - It is famous for its spectacular beauty. Popularly known as the 'Scotland of the East' as it resembles the Scottish lands, Shillong's landscape has to be seen to be believed

Favorable Dates: Mar 2, 5, 10, 14, 19, 23

Favorable Colors: Blue & White



Taurus
(20 April – 20 May)



Gemini
(21 May – 20 June)

Your wishes will be very intense and will demand their immediate fulfilment. If you're in a relationship, work out what you're going to do and how you're going to do the same. If you're single, you may have to put romance aside while you work towards something important.

Places to visit: Moscow - Home to the mighty Kremlin, legendary Red Square and iconic St Basil's Cathedral, Moscow is the political and cultural heart of the country.

Nettukuppam Beach in Tamil Nadu – It is the perfect spot for you where you can spend some time close to nature.

Favorable Dates: Mar 4, 8, 13, 17, 22, 26

Favorable Colors: Red & Grey

You may discover new things about who you are through realization or revelation. You may take up new forms of creative expression while others may find that psychic or intuitive skills develop.

Places to visit: Black Sea Coast - Warm climate, miles of sand beaches, ancient monuments, vineyards and modern resorts invite travellers to seriously consider Romania's Black Sea Coast as their vacation destination.

Tezpur - Tezpur literally means "The Town of Blood" is the "Cultural Capital of Assam" provides loads of magnificent tourist attractions and Chitralekha Udyan is one of these stunning tourist destinations.

Favorable Dates: Mar 2, 5, 11, 14, 20, 23

Favorable Colors: White & Green



Cancer
(21 June – 22 July)



Leo
(23 July – 22 August)

You will be able to advance your situation through good planning and the cooperation of others. The development of a close knit community or family group may contribute. Your powers of concentration may slip for a time as you focus on your inner state.

Places to visit: Munich - Explore the Romantic Road Running 400km from Wurzburg to Fussen in the south, this scenic road trip route is lined with some of the best places to visit in Germany.

Hampi - Famous for its massive, beautifully carved temples, especially the Virupaksha Temple, dedicated to the patron deity of the empire.

Favorable Dates: Mar 4, 7, 13, 16, 22, 25

Favorable Colors: Yellow & Red

You may need to make a new start, either emotionally or with how you see or present yourself. The need for this may come from unexpected developments or plans that have gone astray.

Places to visit: The Matterhorn – Switzerland's iconic pointed peak. At the foot of this mighty peak, lies the charming village of Zermatt, a top international resort with horse-drawn carriage rides, quaint chalets, and world-class restaurants and hotels.

Daranghati Sanctuary - Located 150 kms from Shimla, it is one of the most important tourist attractions. It was a hunting reserve in the past for Rampur Bushahr royal family.

Favorable Dates: Mar 4, 5, 11, 16, 20, 24

Favorable Colors: Green & Red



Virgo
(23 August – 22 Sept)

Manish Kumar Arora is a renowned KP Astrologer, Numerologist, Tarot Reader and Vastu Consultant. He will be with Touriosity Travelmag to bring to our readers monthly predictions based on zodiac signs with special emphasis on travel predictions. Our readers can plan their tours accordingly. He can be reached at manish@manishastrologer.com



New ideas will come for some and there will be new ways of communicating and thinking. Education may play a role for some, taking you in new and different directions. You'll go through a period in which keeping your health will depend a lot on your emotional status and a balanced lifestyle.

Places to visit: Burj Khalifa in Dubai: The glorious tower is one of the most prominent attractions in all of the Middle-East. It displays exceptional work of art.

Summer hills in Simla offers spectacular views of the valley and the greenery around. The hill is a part of a cluster of seven hills, which form Shimla and hence you are sure to have breathtaking sights from the top.

Favorable Dates: Mar 2, 3, 11, 12, 20, 21

Favorable Colors: Blue & Red

You may go through a period of revision with regard to your hopes and wishes. You may need to freshen up your ideas and someone with an unusual perspective may be of assistance.

Places to visit: Rila National Park in Romania - This is a wonderful sanctuary, containing mountains and a variety of interesting animals and plants. You'll find eagles, deer, goats, bats, and owls and other species of wildlife.

The Gateway of India is the most popular tourist attraction in Mumbai and also one of the most visited places in the city.

Favorable Dates: Mar 2, 5, 11, 14, 20, 23

Favorable Colors: Grey & Red



New people and opportunities will open the doors that you've been knocking at for some time and you could really sail ahead. Good fortune may come from proper attention to domestic matters.

Places to visit: Jungfrauoch - The Top of Europe - One of the most popular experiences in the beautiful Bernese Oberland is the train journey to Jungfrauoch, the "Top of Europe", with an observation terrace and scientific observatory perched at 3,454 meters.

Chitrakuta Udyan, Tezpur -- With various exciting and amusement activities tourists can enjoy rowing and paddling opportunity with many more water sports.

Favorable Dates: Mar 2, 6, 11, 15, 20, 24

Favorable Colors: Blue & Yellow

The important issue with career development is to keep a clear sense of method and sequence in what you do. There may be opportunities all of a sudden or unexpected nature. There may be a split or separation affecting business matters or connections.

Places to visit: Nagarkot : It is known for offering mesmerizing Himalayan views. Visiting this place to enjoy the magnificent views of the sunrise is loved by tourists.

Sambalpur, the land rich in culture and natural beauty in Odisha, it has some of the best gifts of nature thanks to the lush forests and picturesque waterfalls.

Favorable Dates: Mar 4, 8, 13, 17, 22, 26

Favorable Colors: Red & Yellow



This would be a prosperous month and it will bring financial worries to an end. You will discover new potentials, skills and experiences that reveal different sides of you. The month end will bring peace with former adversaries.

Places to visit: Lourdes in France – It draws people worldwide for the "healing" waters that have made Lourdes an enthusiastic place for believers and tourists alike.

Nagarahole National Park - It belongs to the Kodagu district of Karnataka. It is a home for great wilderness, the most popular attraction in this national park is spotting the elephants and other animals.

Favorable Dates: Mar 2, 8, 11, 17, 20, 26

Favorable Colors: Blue & White

This is a time to open to wider horizons and to study or learn whatever you need to set you on the upward road. Some may find new partnership in career. The advent of a new relationship could change the state your life's direction. Single or committed, some may have to leave a lot behind in order to pursue something new.

Places to visit: Tiger's Nest Monastery in Bhutan - It is one of the most revered pilgrimages in the Himalayan province and one of the most visited tourists places in Bhutan. It showcases the country's great traditional values.

Mussoorie - Its green hills and varied fauna and flora make it a colourful and picturesque hill station, commanding a wonderful view of extensive Himalayan snow ranges .

Favorable Dates: Mar 4, 8, 16, 17, 22, 26

Favorable Colors: Yellow & Purple





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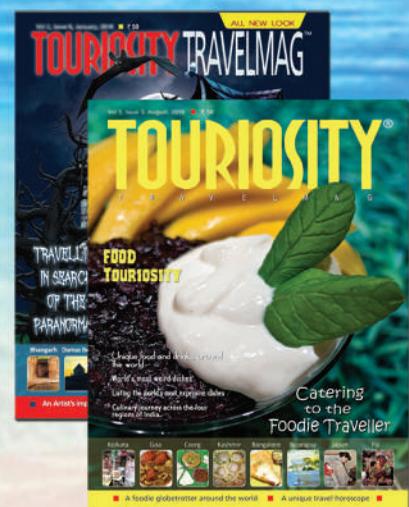
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