



Vegan in Venice

Venice's only fully vegan restaurant, La Tecia Vegana, opened in February, run by Irishman Thomas Coffey and his Italian wife Cinzia Morandin. 'We previously ran a restaurant in Monza, near Milan, but always wanted to come to Venice,' says Thomas. 'Our food is mainly Italian, such as seitan lasagne or parmigiana with vegan cheese, and we get a lot of requests for *saor*, a Venetian fish dish which we make with eggplant. We do lots of raw food too, such as carrot tart with pistachio, raw Black Forest gâteau and Sachertorte. A lot of people find us on the HappyCow website and come for the tiramisu, but we also have chocolate cheesecake, apple pie, and walnut chocolate truffles.'

Facebook: La Tecia Vegana



VENICE

Travel journal

Alex Bourke lives *la dolce vita* vegan-style in the beautiful city of Venice.



Q Italian restaurants in the UK seem to put cheese on everything. How about in Italy?

A There are many traditional dishes that are naturally vegan, such as grilled and marinated veggies, antipasti like olives, bruschetta or artichoke hearts, and pizza marinara ('sailor's pizza'), made with tomato and garlic sauce.

Self-catering is a good option. Italian markets are bursting with firm, bright, local vegetables like juicy red plum tomatoes and aubergines, so it's no wonder Italians eat twice as many veggies as us Brits, always prepared with local olive oil rather than butter. Health-food shops are common, and most *gelaterias* have vegan sorbets in fruit flavours and dark chocolate, sometimes even soya ice cream. Supermarket chain Conad, the Italian equivalent of the Coop, recently added a dedicated vegan section in its stores to serve Italy's more than 1.5 million vegans.

ESSENTIAL EATING

Italian food in Italy is fresher, lusher and brighter than anything you'll find in the UK.

On the go

At Camoma veggie takeaway, between the Rialto Bridge and market, grab a lunch of panini or *tramezzini* crustless sandwiches and vegan tiramisu to enjoy by the Grand Canal.

Facebook: Vegan venezia



Buffet style

Le Spighe wholefood shop and café does a Mediterranean organic slow food buffet between the Venetian Arsenal and Biennale Gardens. Create a plate from grains, a tofu or pulses protein dish, and four salads and seasonal vegetables, such as aubergine. Desserts include vegan chocolate muffins, tiramisu, and cream of apricot.

Facebook: Le Spighe Cucina



Beach party

Venetians love to spend Sundays at the Lido beach.

You can go there any day by *vaporetto* waterbus. Have lunch or dinner at Bio Sound System vegetarian restaurant at Via Doge Michiel 2/C. The menu features Italian classics like bruschetta, lasagne, fettuccine and rigatoni, plus burgers, falafels, curry and couscous.



IN THE KNOW

Take a side trip to the huge Bologna Vegan Fest in September, which attracts 45,000 visitors.
www.veganfest.it

TO WHET YOUR APPETITE...

Prepare for your trip by tucking into Italian food at home – UK restaurant chains Zizzi and Pizza Express offer vegan cheese.