

We are on the last evening of a one week trip to Italy. We spent four days in Venice and another four in Florence—two of our favorite cities in the entire country, if not the world. We have visited both on several occasions so it was nice to be able to spend more time here without the “pressure” to see everything and visit all the sights. It was particularly fortunate as the weather has been oppressively hot with temperatures at least 95F every day and above 100F most days here in Florence. The humidity was also very high in Venice (perhaps not too surprising) so Florence has felt somewhat better. In both cities, however, we kept our days out to about 5 hours before collapsing in the air-conditioned hotel room until it was time to venture out for dinner. Needless to say, we have had some excellent evening meals and have even taken to enjoying a lunch outdoors towards the end of our daily sightseeing.

Despite the heat and the lack of a need to do everything, we have nevertheless seen many of the tourist attractions in both cities. We stayed just off St Mark’s Square in Venice and rode the Grand Canal as well as visiting a number of beautiful cathedrals and churches. Simply roaming the pedestrian streets in this city is a very pleasant experience and, while it is easy to get lost, it is difficult not to find something of interest—and eventually to find a way “home”.

## **VENICE**







## ***Florence***

In Florence we saw the beautiful Church of Santa Maria Novella (right), the Ponte Vecchio (with its silver and gold merchants) and, of course, the world famous Duomo—the enormous cathedral that dominates the city.



Now it's back to the cooler weather of Northern England for a few days before returning to Cincinnati on August 3.

More from our next trip,

Bob and Molly

