

CITTA' DI
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“The Time of Casanova”: The Venice Carnival Begins on February 14, the Day of Love. In St. Mark’s Square, lovers will be “Heart to Heart” with performances and music of every kind

Venice, January 28th 2025 - **Between Giacomo Casanova and Valentine's Day. Venice, the ultimate city of love, is ready to celebrate the Carnival by opening the festivities on Valentine’s Day with an unforgettable evening inspired by the legendary figure of Giacomo Casanova, a symbol of passion and seduction. On Friday February 14, starting at 6:30 PM, the spotlight will shine on “Valentine’s Night: Heart to Heart” on the stage of St. Mark’s Square. This event is dedicated to lovers of all ages, featuring comedy sketches, daring romance, historical dances, music, and performances.**

The evening will be hosted by Marco Maccarini and Chiara Perale, with appearances by the eclectic Prince Maurice playing a sophisticated Casanova and an unlikely Valentino portrayed by the jester Manuel Bruttomesso (also known as “Nespolo Giullare”).

Throughout the night, couples will have the chance to make romantic declarations of love from the stage of St. Mark’s Square, thanks to the initiative “Shout Your Love.”

The countdown has begun for the highlight of Venice’s winter calendar, which, for twenty days, will transform the lagoon city into a magnificent open-air theatre. Here, the irresistible charm of the past will intertwine with the energy of the present, offering residents and visitors an unforgettable experience.

From February 14 to March 4 2025, the Venice Carnival will celebrate the figure of Giacomo Casanova with the evocative theme “The Time of Casanova” and a programme of events dedicated to the timeless Venetian seducer, a symbol of an era of splendour, freedom, and contradictions. The event calendar was presented this morning at Ca’ Farsetti by the councillor responsible for the Protection of Traditions, Giovanni Giusto, along with the artistic director of the Carnival and set designer of La Fenice Theatre, Massimo Checchetto, and the operational director of Vela Spa, Fabrizio D’Oria.

“On the 300th anniversary of his birth, the city of Venice, through the company Vela Spa, wishes to pay tribute to Giacomo Casanova, who embodies not only charm and audacity but also an idea of freedom and authenticity, which finds its fullest expression in the spirit of the Venice Carnival. The 18th century is a

unique period in Venice's history, remembered in chronicles as a time of freedom and libertinism, with Casanova becoming its symbol in collective memory," said Giusto. "In reality, he was a man of endless and extraordinary talents: an adventurer, yes, but also a magician for the gullible, who—like Goldoni—died almost forgotten in Bohemia, far from his Venice. Thanks to his writings, much like Marco Polo, we can now learn a great deal about his life and biography and, by extension, the popular and political life of his time. What we want to represent is not just Casanova, but an entire century, with all its facets, during which Venice experienced both its peak and its decline. The opening show will take place on the Grand Canal: a grand performance on the waters of the Grand Canal will inaugurate the Carnival, renewing the bond between popular tradition and the water, without which none of this would exist."

A seducer, adventurer, writer, and intellectual, Casanova is a symbol of the "golden age" of the Republic of Venice - the 18th century - embodying the spirit of freedom, passion, and mystery that has defined the Venice Carnival for centuries. Born in 1725 and renowned for his adventurous life—as well as for his versatility, wit, and love of art and beauty—Casanova will be the central theme of the 2025 edition.

With the Carnival, the official start of events dedicated to the figure of Giacomo Casanova begins. For these celebrations, the Venice City Council, on the proposal of Mayor Luigi Brugnaro, has formalised the process of establishing a Steering Committee.

"With the title 'The Time of Casanova' we want to encompass a broad period, as the 18th century was a pivotal time in our history," explained artistic director Massimo Checchetto. "Casanova embodies playfulness, love, and madness. He was a central figure in that incredible century—the golden age of performance and art. Just think of Baroque theatre, the beginning of modern stage design, which remains unmatched to this day. I hope this edition will transport us all to that fertile era and allow us to experience it as protagonists, just like Casanova did. An elusive and ever-changing character, he remained tied to Venice even as he travelled across Europe, leaving us with an extraordinary and faithful account of his time. I invite everyone to come to the Venice Carnival, not just to see it but to live it and interpret it through his eyes."

The operations director of Vela S.p.A., Fabrizio D'Oria, recalled that "The Venice Carnival is an extraordinary event, known and loved around the world, which, like all traditional events, represents an important opportunity to promote the city of Venice as well as a key moment to engage the city's associative and cultural fabric, enhancing the role of local organisations that preserve its identity."

Piero Rosa Salva, Sole Administrator of Vela S.p.A., highlighted that "The Carnival is a dynamic event that has shown over time the ability to adapt and meet changing needs, both at a regulatory and creative-cultural level. This edition also features a widespread format and requires a major organisational effort to ensure that the events on the calendar can be safely enjoyed by as many people as possible who will come to the city. At the same time, the widespread Carnival helps to minimise the impact on the city."

The entire Municipality of Venice, from February 14 to March 4, will retrace the splendour of the 18th century and the key moments of Giacomo's life, from his adventures to his daring escape to freedom, bringing to life a widespread Carnival across the city, from the islands to the mainland. In four Venetian squares - San Maurizio, San Polo, Santa Maria Formosa, and Santa Margherita - Carnival markets will

showcase publications, local crafts, and traditional sweets; these events are organised by Confcommercio (the General Italian Confederation of Enterprises, Professions, and Self-Employment). Theatrical and musical performances will enliven the alleys, squares, and streets of the city, engaging the public in scenes from Casanova's life, featuring stories, forbidden loves, and the irresistible charm of his personality.

The "Commedia dell'Arte" (an early form of comedic theatre), the regattas, the official Dinner Show at the Ca' Vendramin Calergi palace, the unmissable Venetian Feast with the large papier-mâché rat, called the "Pantegana," the floats, music for all ages, the splendid reenactment of the "12 Marie," other cultural events, the captivating water show at the Arsenale, and the projections on the façades of the same palace and the former newspaper archive of Mestre: this is what the Venice Carnival will offer and much more. All in honour of a legendary figure who left an indelible mark on history and our collective imagination.

If you wish to experience the Carnival, it is important to note that the entire duration of the event does not require the payment of the Access Fee, which will instead come into effect from April 18 2025.