With glass windows open like eyes under delicately arched brows, the buildings of Venice watch over the waters in utter calmness. Venetians have good reason to call their city ***La Serenissima***
- the most serene.

Venice awakes each morning with a refreshing absence of the speeding cars and roaring mopeds that i
Unfortunately, the serenity is now broken by swarms of tourists throughout the city, searching out
These visitors often overlook the real Venice, which lies hidden in the romantic back streets and reside



A short history..
Driven first by Attila's hordes, then by conquering Lombard's, Roman refugees joined fishermen on the low barrier islands of the swampy lagoon. An unsuccessful attack by Charlemagne in 810 led to the settlement of the inner islands that constitute the modern city.
In 828, two Venetian merchants stole **St. Mark's** remains from Alexandria and established the city's eminence under a new patron saint. By the 11th century, ties to Constantinople and

marine prowess had established Venice as the dominant middleman for trade with the Middle East.



In 1204, Venice sent the penniless armies of the Fourth Crusade to raid Constantinople; the spoils of th
After consolidating its oligarchic government in the 14th century, the Venetian Republic defeated its riv

Over the next three centuries, jealous European powers to the west and unstoppable Ottoman Turks to

By the time Napoleon conquered it in 1797, idle Venice was little more than a decadent playground. French and Austrian rule capped off the glory days as the development of industry at Mestre drew away the archipelago's working population.

Today Venice consists of two worlds, hosting tourists and cameras from around the globe in Piazza San Marco and housing locals in the sparsely populated back streets of Cannaregio and the Ghetto. Uniting them are the architectural gems of a glorious past and the intertwining canals, the true arteries of the city.