

Dish Omaha – July 30th, 2025

Diane: Buongiorno Dish Omaha. It's Diane and I have been in Venice. I thought I would give you a taste of some of the amazing food I had while in Europe.

I'm sure you know that Venice is in the Northern part of Italy. It's comprised of 118 islands, yet the main city center island is only two square miles. So, it is incredibly walkable.

Yet there are over a thousand restaurants to try. So how to choose? I knew exactly how to choose. As soon as I got into town, I went to the hotel bar of the hotel I stayed at last time I was there.

I was staying at an Airbnb this time, but I like to see familiar people and there's just a handful of those in Venice for me. Luckily, the bar restaurant manager was working at the bar and made me the most incredible dry martini using freeze-dried local black olives. The saltiness and the brininess of that olive with the smoothness of the vodka made for one of the tastiest martinis I've ever had.

Vincenzo, was his name, was also able to recommend a restaurant where the locals go, not far from where I was staying. And I did just that. I ordered a salad of simple arugula with shaved Parmigiano-Reggiano and olive oil. Three simple ingredients, but the pepperiness of the arugula, the saltiness of the Parmigiano and the olive oil made it divine.

And I followed that with wild boar bolognese. Never had wild boar before. It was a lot like the typical meat bolognese we have in the States, but much, much meatier and much, much heartier. So, I was too full for tiramisu.

I had my fair share of spritzes made with Aperol and Campari together with Prosecco and club soda. I had a few of those over the course of the week. Tramezzini, which is a snack sandwich. They cut the crust off, usually made with tuna salad or a mozzarella and a prosciutto.

Lots of pasta and lots of seafood. Venice is definitely known for its seafood. In fact, I had a seven course seafood dinner on a cruise, dinner cruise ship that was the night of Festa di Rentatore, which is Festival of the Redeemer. Really the main reason I went to Venice in July. This festival has been going on since 1576 and celebrates the year that Venice overcame a plague. So, for hundreds of years, they've been holding this festival.

It culminates on Saturday night with a one hour firework show over the Grand Canal. And as I mentioned, I was on a dinner cruise having just completed a seven course fish dinner. Every kind of fish you can imagine, every kind of shellfish you can imagine was present and served, fried, stewed, steamed, raw. It was a festival of fish along with the Festival of the Redeemer.

I was sitting with folks from Hungary, Poland, China, and France, and one couple from Maryland. So, I did have a couple of people to speak English with, but the fireworks did not disappoint. One hour with hundreds and hundreds of boats moored just like ours over the Grand Canal.

One of the things that happened toward the end of my stay made the stay even more incredible, even though it came out of something unfortunate. I was leaving a Vivaldi concert. Vivaldi is a Venetian, was a Venetian, of course. And my phone was pickpocketed.

Now I had everything on this phone like we all do. My directions, my nav, my address of my Airbnb, and I realized I was absolutely blind without it. So, I made my way back to the Hotel Barn restaurant. My friends were working, and they immediately took over and made sure I was taken care of. Helped me figure out where I was staying by using Google Maps and descriptions of my neighborhood. Got me in touch with my family and friends on the hotel Instagram account and made sure I knew how to get to the airport.

So it was a real lovely lesson, not only in doing things a little bit better next time I travel alone, like have some paper, have a map, write your address down, but just in the goodness of people and making sure that over our love of food, which is how we came together, I was absolutely taken care of.

It was a wonderful time, a lot of great food. Thanks for sharing and going on this journey with me. See you next time on Dish Omaha.

Ciao.