

Acquario di Genova

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# DREAM OF ITALY

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## Genoa Emerges From the Shadows

Walk down the narrow, cobblestone streets where a young Christopher Columbus once roamed and you can't help but feel change in the air. Look around, and you will see the medieval mixed with the modern. *Genoa* is in transition.

Nestled on the Ligurian coast, 90 minutes from France, Genoa has always been a place of contrasts. During the Renaissance, the city's wealthy officials filled Genoa with stunning *palazzi*. Yet through the centuries, much of the rest of the city was covered with the grime and dust of international sailors and merchants stopping by only for a short time before moving on to more exotic destinations.

Despite its importance as a port city, immigration hub and industrial capi-

tal, Genoa has been long overlooked as a vacation destination by Italians and international tourists alike. With its selection as *European City of Culture for 2004*, Genoa hopes to showcase the city's growth as both a cultural destination replete with world-class museums, as well as a hip, happening town, full of unique nightclubs and high-tech hotels.



Before experiencing the "new" Genoa, it's worth exploring the old one. The Apennine Mountains give hilly Genoa a half-moon, amphitheater shape. And it's fitting considering the dramatic history of this city. During The Middle Ages, this great sea power rivaled the Republic of Venice in maritime might. Genoa was a starting point for the Crusades, when Genovese sailors would accompany European armies on their missions.

*continued on page 2*



## Masks and Glass: A Venice Shopping Guide

*The following is an excerpt from Laura Morelli's Made in Italy (Rizzoli/Universe):*

Perhaps in no other Italian town are the local handicraft traditions — carnival masks, blown glass and gondolas, for example — virtually synonymous with the city as in Venice. Venetian wares are fancy: homemade wooden furniture with delicate scrolls, painted flowers and curved legs; *Murano* glass with delicate gilding and rich color; lace collars with intertwined vegetal motifs and animals; mosaic work on vases, tables, lamps, buildings, or anything else imaginable. The city's famous annual carnival (February 7 – 24, 2004) gives birth to outlandish, fantastic masks and costumes.

Carnival in Venice harkens back to the Middle Ages; the city held its first in the eleventh century. In early times, carnival was the one time of year when social divisions were blurred; behind the mask it was impossible to tell aristocracy from the lower classes.

The fancy carnival masks are outdone only by the stunning costumes, complete with feathers, velvet, scarves, ruffles, pearls, jewels, gold, and other adornments. Traditionally, this free-for-all celebration preceding Lent includes parades, balls, practical jokes and general revelry. Outlawed at the end of the 18th century and revived again in 1979, carnival draws ever increasing crowds to Venice each February.

*continued on page 4*

"Genoa grows on you each day." —Charles Dickens



Via Garibaldi

Today, you can still see the flag of St. George flying throughout the city as well as marble Madonnas carved into city corners.

Genoa's *Caruggi District*, the largest continuously occupied historic center in Europe, presents a maze of narrow, snaking alleyways (*vicoli*). In *The Innocents Abroad*, Mark Twain described the streets of Genoa as "crooked as a corkscrew." Henry James referred to Genoa as "the most intricate topographic entanglement in the world." The streets can barely fit two people walking side-by-side.

Genoa has spent five years and over 225 million € preparing for 2004, when the city will host hundreds of events and exhibits emphasizing the themes: *Genoa City of Art*; *Genoa Capital of the Sea* and *Genoa Contemporary City*.

Genoa will show off its artistic and cultural wealth with the refurbishment of the city's 22 museums, the transformation of historical Genovese palaces into avant-garde university centers and the creation of a new central university library. The city introduces a museum network along *Via Garibaldi* where the three most prestigious palaces — *Palazzo Rosso*, *Palazzo Bianco* and *Palazzo Tursi* — will be linked together with several others to become one coherent exhibition space. From March to July, Genoa will celebrate the history of these palaces with an exhibit at the *Palazzo Ducale* entitled *The Age of Rubens: Genovese Homes, Patrons and Collectors*.

*Germano Celant*, a Genoa native and senior curator for the Guggenheim in New York, has been charged with creating an arts and architecture exhibit to run from September to December of 2004 with the theme "Genoa Contemporary City." It is billed as



"an excursion through the relationship between architecture and the visual arts, cinema, theater, music and literature."

Not to be overshadowed by the arts, Genoa embraces its rich seafaring traditions with the construction of the new

*Museum of the Sea and Navigation* in the *Porto Antico* area, to be inaugurated in



## Did You Know?

- **PESTO** — that concoction of basil, olive oil, garlic, pine nuts and Romano and Pecorino cheeses — was born in Genoa. Small-leafed basil grows on the hills outside the city.
- **BLUE JEANS** got their name from the material used for sails by Genovese sailors. Levi Strauss saw and liked the material and ordered some from Genoa. "Blu Genova" was written on the box which Strauss interpreted as "blue jeans."
- Genoa has 22 **MUSEUMS**, one opera house, eight theater companies, two outdoor summer theaters, 57 cinemas and 113 hotels.
- Genoa is the home to the priceless **PAGANINI VIOLIN**. The instrument was crafted by Guarneri, considered one of Italy's greatest violinmakers and given to violin virtuoso Nicolo Paganini, whose family eventually willed it to the city of Genoa.
- 100 of Genoa's stores are over 200 years old.

## Highlights for Genova 2004 Include:

- exhibits on Rubens, Transatlantic Ocean Liners, and jazz featuring performances by Wynton Marsalis;
- Paganini opera, poetry, science and film festivals;
- a Live Aid concert featuring international music stars;
- the opening of the Jewish Museum of Genoa;
- a theater production on Ibsen's women that will bring Isabelle Huppert, Vanessa Redgrave and Mariangela Melato together on the same stage for the first time;
- a 42 kilometer marathon through the heart of the city; and
- a world basketball championship tournament where the 2004 NBA champions will compete against European and Italian league title holders.



"There's no looking at a building here



June of 2004. It will host *Transatlantic Ocean Liners* from May 29 to November 1, 2004. The exhibit highlights the grandeur of these vessels with replicas of ships as well as other maritime objects.

The new museum will join the city's famed aquarium (*Acquario di Genova*), right next door on the water. Europe's largest aquarium will host *Nature's Ocean Liners*, an exploration of whales and deep-sea fish. Other events planned for the aquarium include the Children of the Mediterranean conference and the Universal Exhibition of Jazz.

While not on the official program, Genoa's culinary traditions will surely attract a new group of fans among next

year's visitors. The birthplace of *pesto* and *focaccia* is famous for its food stands (*friggiorie*) selling sumptuous snacks such as *farinata*, a pancake made with chickpeas, water, olive oil and salt. Genoa also has a strong confectionery history, courtesy of those returning from the Middle East during the Crusades. *Romanengo* (on *Via Soziglia* and *Via Roma*) has been churning out candied fruit and chocolate since 1780.

And no trip to Genoa would be complete without a visit to *Zeffirino* (*Via XX Settembre*). Frank Sinatra was so obsessed with the homemade pasta at this restaurant that he helicoptered in from Monaco one night just for dinner. He raved that Zeffirino's pesto sauce reminded him of his Genovese

mother's cooking. The *Belloni* brothers, who run the restaurant, recently opened a branch at The Venetian Hotel in Las Vegas.

Genoa's year in the spotlight kicks off with a huge New Year's Eve celebration, transforming the city's port. A cast of 150, including musicians, actors, tightrope walkers and sailors, will perform a show on board a ship anchored in the Mediterranean. The celebration continues throughout the year. With so many sides to Genoa, visitors are sure to find something they like. So, the next time you head over to Italy, pay a visit to Genoa. You might be surprised at what you find. *For more information, visit [www.genova-2004.it](http://www.genova-2004.it)* ♦

—Marielena Martone  
and Kathy McCabe

## Where to Stay

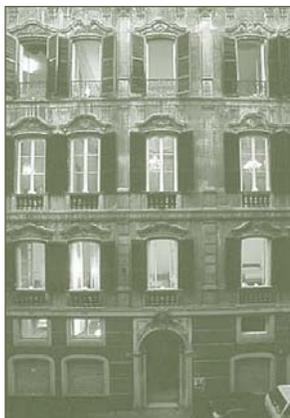
### Locanda di Palazzo Cicala

Don't let the seemingly plain 17th-century stucco façade deceive you. This hidden gem of a hotel, which opened in 1999, houses a chic interior. The minimalist furniture in the lounge, typical of stylish Italian designers, coupled with the spacious old rooms, offer every aspect of modern conveniences while being true to the rich history and traditions that Genoa has long enjoyed.

Piazza San Lorenzo, 16  
(39) 010 2518824

<http://palazzocicala.hotel-genova.com/>

Rates: Double rooms run 130 to 180€ per night



### Jolly Maritime Hotel

Built in 2000, this grand hotel sits in one corner of one of the oldest and most historic ports in the world, in the *Ponte Calvi Wharf*. The 140-room hotel sits just steps away from *Acquario di Genova*, the largest aquarium in Europe.

Molo Ponte Calvi, 5  
(39) 010 25391

[www.jollyhotels.it](http://www.jollyhotels.it)

Rates: Rooms start at 200€ per night.

## DREAM OF ITALY

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after seeing Italy.” —Fanny Burney

Venetian mask craftsmen first model their masks from clay, so that they have a form that can be used again and again. Papier-mâché paste is pressed over the clay form, then left to dry. Once dry, the craftsman buffs the mask by hand.

Carnival masks abound all over Venice, from craft stores to street vendors. There are a few traditional mask types, including the plague doctor and the joker, though after hours of strolling Venice's streets, you may find they all begin to look the same. A few shops offer unique creations, so keep your eye out for one-of-a-kind masks.

Carnival revelers and visitors year round can't seem to leave Venice without a visit to *Murano*. This charming island has all of the allure of Venice but boasts friendlier people and fewer crowds. And that's even before we start talking about glass. Lower prices and a more pleasant shopping experience mean that I always board the boat at the end of the day with an armful of shopping bags.

Venice has been a glass-making hub at least since the ninth century. The great number of glass-firing ovens — that

reached as much as 2,700 degrees Fahrenheit — caused so many fires in the mostly wooden city, that in the 1290s, city officials transferred all glass workshops from the center of Venice to the outlying cluster of islands called Murano. The glass blowers became renowned throughout Europe for their stunning creations, and Murano glass-makers held a virtual monopoly on

European glass making until the 16th century.

In addition to the glass museum, a tour of one or more glass factories is the main attraction on Murano. Even if you don't buy, it's worth the trip just to see the impressive glass-blowing demonstrations. Molten glass on the end of a rod miraculously transforms



## Carnival Masks

(Maschere di Carnevale)

**Il Forziere**  
Calle del Saoneri  
San Polo 2720  
(39) 041 5210042

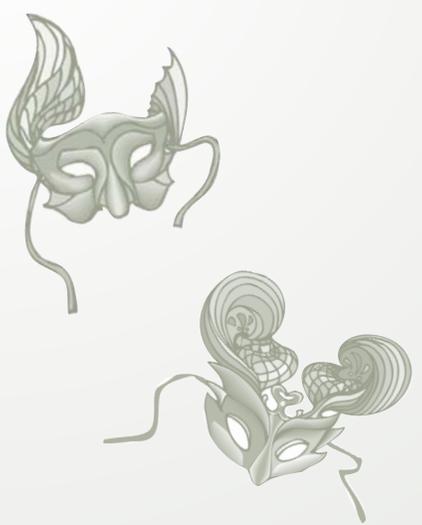
**Mondo novo**  
Rio Terra Canal  
Dorsoduro 3063  
(39) 041 5287344

This is one of Venice's most magical shops. Gorgeous carnival costumes, all handmade by the proprietors, decorate the walls of this boutique shop. The shop itself is a jewel of Venetian decoration, with mosaic floors and fancy woodwork behind a beautifully appointed shop window full of goodies.

This shop opened its doors in the late 1970s, when carnival in Venice began its rebirth, and it's become one of Venice's leading mask art shops. Today, you'll find hundreds of masks of every type, from classic Greco-Roman theater masks to the traditional *Commedia dell'Arte* characters. Make an appointment to see the masks made according to ancient traditions.

**Max Art Shop/Il Sole e La Luna**  
Frezzeria S. Marco, 1232  
(39) 041 5233851

This cluster of shops under the same ownership is tucked in a narrow alley just west of *Piazza San Marco*. Though only in business since 1984, founder Antonia Sautter and her colleagues have distinguished themselves as one of the city's premier mask and costume outfitters, especially for the chic carnival party *Il Ballo del Doge*. They also offer a dizzying array of dolls, marionettes, lamps, pillows, paintings, and other decorative items in the rich fabrics and fantastical style only Venice could engender.



“Venice is like eating an entire box of choc

into gorgeous vases, glasses, and candlesticks before your eyes. The range of quality is staggering. You'll see everything from silly figurines of Donald Duck to drop-dead gorgeous tableware with so many zeros on the price tag it will make your head spin.

You can catch a factory tour just by showing up during hours of operation

(most remain open during the traditional Italian lunch break), by taking an organized excursion from Venice, or by accepting the offer of one of the many persistent hawkers hanging around *San Marco*. Be ready for high-pressure sales tactics, but don't feel obliged to buy.



Photo by Dawn Smith

The more reputable houses are set up to pack and ship your treasures home, and can usually ship anywhere in the world. Still, my advice for getting your glass home is to carry it with you. This may seem impractical, but shipping these delicate pieces home is both costly and hazardous. One of my friends

shipped a carton of goblets home to Connecticut. Finally, after six weeks, they arrived shattered. Luckily, she had insured the package, but so much for her one-of-a-kind souvenir of Venice! If you decide to ship anyway, use one of the top three express carriers, and insure, insure, insure.

Today, the island of Murano is synonymous with glass. Everything imaginable is made from Murano glass, including jaw-dropping goblets, vases, candlestick holders, miniature animals, paperweights, chandeliers, lampshades, dinner services, tiny pieces of glass candy, beads, and every kind of jewelry you can dream of. There is tremendous variety in quality, price, and style. When it's cheap and tacky, it's hideous; when it's well done, it takes your breath away. ♦

—Laura Morelli

For more information on buying Venetian handicrafts, read Laura Morelli's new book, *Made in Italy: A Shopper's Guide To Italy's Best Artisanal Traditions from Murano Glass to Cermanics, Jewelry, Leather Goods and More* (Rizzoli/Universe, \$24.95).





# Glass

(Vetro)

**Glass Museum** (Museo Vetrario)  
**Palazzo Giustinian**  
 (39) 041 739586

Before heading off to the glass factories, visit the museum to train your eye. I always thought that the miniature mice and horses crafted of Murano glass were a product of modern kitsch taste, but I was wrong. Artisans made them even in the 17th century, and you can see them in the museum's collection. Don't miss the incredible glass centerpiece made for what must have been an enormous dining table in the *Palazzo Morosini* in the 1700s. This intricate contraption resembles a garden, complete with glass shrubs, vases and a fountain! After viewing this impressive collection of glass from the Roman era to the present, it's hard to imagine that today's glass artists could come up with anything new. Still, styles change continually, and rest assured that you'll emerge from the museum with plenty to see.

**Barovier & Toso**  
 Fondamenta Vetrai, 28  
 (39) 041 739049  
 www.barovier.com

This is one of Murano's big names, with

gorgeous vases signed by known masters, starting at \$400. They also run a crystal shop in the Czech Republic that creates stunning stemware.

**Venini**  
 Fondamenta Vetrai, 50  
 (39) 041 2737211

**San Marco**  
 Piazzetta Leoncini, 314  
 (39) 041 5224045  
 www.venini.com

This is my favorite Murano glass institution. From vases to candlesticks, jewelry to tableware and even Venetian masks. Venini has no peer. Venini has been a Murano tradition only since 1921, when Milan lawyer Paolo Venini traded the bench for a career in glassblowing. With him, he brought a Milanese taste for streamlined elegance and refined simplicity. Be sure to check out the cool vases designed for them by *Gianni Versace*. If you can't get to Murano, be sure to check out their Venice showroom.

Note: All of the above addresses, with the exception of the San Marco location of Venini, are on the island of Murano.

1 € = \$1.22 at press time

olate liqueurs at one go.” —Truman Capote

# News, Tips, Deals



## I Saldi at Serravalle



**A**mecca of Italian designer stores offering reasonable prices and not overrun by tourists? Almost unbelievable, but it does in fact exist. Perhaps it's the newness of the outlet stores or the slightly out-of-the-way location, but the *McArthurGlen Designer Outlet at Serravalle* located in *Arquata*, about an hour between *Genoa* and *Milan*, offers plentiful choices and competitive prices in a relaxed shopping environment.



This is the largest outlet center in Europe, boasting over 140 shops and boutiques, including such renowned Italian designers as *Dolce & Gabbana*, *Diesel*, *Trussardi*, *Prada* and *Versace*, as well as lesser-known gems like *Fratelli Rossetti*, *Furla*, *Gas* and *Conte of Florence*. American favorites like *Tommy Hilfiger*, *Calvin Klein* and *Reebok* also have outlets here.

Deals abound, with prices reduced up to 75%. One can unearth hidden treasures like leather jackets originally priced over 150€ for 65€, designer women's shoes reduced from 250€ to 100€ and espresso coffeemakers for 13€ instead of the normal 30€. That being said, don't expect these deals to overrun *all* of the stores. The famous designer shops still have fairly high prices, although greatly reduced from their

regular stores in Europe and the United States.

Serravalle is designed to resemble an 18th century Ligurian town center, with small squares joined by meandering streets. Walking around, one feels a sense of community. All of the shoppers, mostly Italian, with the very occasional

American, German or Asian group of tourists, long for the fabulous bargains that lie within the comfortable and accessible layout of shops and restaurants.

The closest thing to an American mall in Italy, Serravalle is particularly inviting during *i saldi* (the sales), which run twice a year from January to March and then from July to August. Prices are slashed even further. That leather jacket at 65€ can now be had for an astounding 35€.

The first of four Italian outlet malls built by British developer *McArthurGlen*, Serravalle keeps hours that will please any shopper. Stores are open seven days a week, Monday through Friday from 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. and Saturday and Sunday from 10 a.m. to 8 p.m. (Closed Christmas Day and New Year's Day.) Try to visit *Arquata* by car. It is easily accessible from Milan

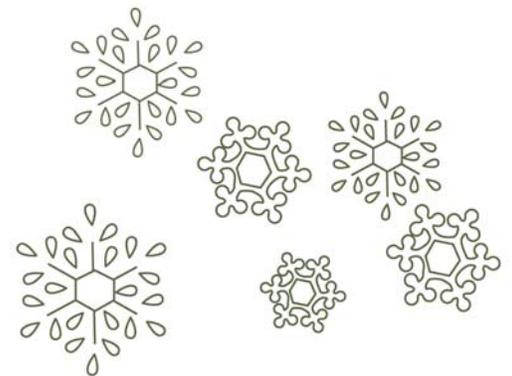
on the A7 Genoa-Milan highway. By train, depart from *Milano Centrale* and get off at the *Arquata Scrivia* station. Outside of the station, be prepared to wait for a cab to take you to the mall, or better yet, have a taxi number handy. The ride costs about 15€.

If your travels take you closer to Rome, consider *McArthurGlen's* most recent outlet center which opened at *Castel Romano* (20 minutes south of the city) in October. The 95 stores in the village's first phase include designers such as *Dolce & Gabbana*, *Sergio Tacchini*, *Versace*, *La Perla* and *Etro*.

*McArthurGlen* plans two more Italian outlet villages, at *Barberino di Mugello*, just north of Florence, and *Padova Conselve*, south of Venice.

For more information, call (39) 0143 609000 (Serravalle information line) or visit [www.mcarthurglen.it](http://www.mcarthurglen.it) (information on all *McArthurGlen* Italian outlets). ♦

— Marielena Martone



# Half of William Shakespeare's pla

# and Events



## No Plates Necessary...



The latest trend at Italy's cutting edge restaurants is to serve meals without plates. You read it right — no plates! It started with *Fulvio*

*Pierangelini* who owns the celebrated *Gambero Rosso* (which has two Michelin stars) near Livorno, Tuscany. The chef presents his culinary creations in flower pots, jam jars and vases. "You can substitute plates with all sorts of containers, as long as you do it with a touch of irony and always with due respect for the client,"

*Pierangelini* told British news agency Ananova. *Moreno Cedroni* of *Aniko* in *Senigallia* also believes in the no-plates-necessary rule. "When the design of the container is interesting, it enhances the pleasure of eating the food," he said. "I've also started serving certain fish dishes by simply placing the open tin they came in on the table."



Aniko

## Industry to Artistry at Former Fiat Factory

Once home to a Fiat car factory, Turin's *Le Meridien Lingotto Hotel* continues its transformation with the introduction of 142 new "Art + Tech" rooms. They boast wall-mounted plasma televisions, with digital pay TV and high-speed Internet access. The bathrooms offer power showers. Famed architect *Rienzo Piano* designed the hotel which has a total of 382 rooms featuring floor-to-ceiling windows, cherry wood paneling and modern furniture. Last year, *Giovanni Agnelli*, the late head of *Fiat*, tapped *Piano* to design



*Pinacoteca Agnelli*, a rooftop art gallery at the *Lingotto Hotel* continues displaying his private collection of paintings by *Matisse*, *Renoir* and *Canaletto*. In addition to an arts education, hotel guests can also hit the roof for a jog along the old Fiat test track (which was featured in the movie *The Italian Job*). The factory complex also houses several restaurants, a multi-screen movie theater and a 90-store shopping gallery. Doubles start at 125€, if booked online. For more information, call (39) 011 664-2000 or visit [www.lemeridien.com](http://www.lemeridien.com)



## Ryanair to Open Rome Hub

Low cost European airline *Ryanair* has announced that it will open a new hub at Rome Ciampino Airport on January 28, 2004. The airline will offer daily flights from Rome to London Stansted, Barcelona, Stockholm, Brussels Charleroi, Paris Beauvais, Frankfurt Hahn, Karlsruhe Baden (Germany) and Klagenfurt (Austria). *Ryanair* holds frequent ticket sales, with prices as low as five€ for one-way flights.

For more information, visit [www.ryanair.com](http://www.ryanair.com)

## Find Bargains Online This Winter

The cheapest time to visit Italy is during the coming winter months. You can purchase an air/hotel package for half what you might pay for a summer airline ticket alone. Visit the following Web sites to take advantage of some astounding deals on trips to Italy:

- [www.europeexpress.com](http://www.europeexpress.com)
- [www.gate1travel.com](http://www.gate1travel.com)
- [www.go-today.com](http://www.go-today.com)
- [www.octopustravel-us.com](http://www.octopustravel-us.com)
- [www.ski-europe.com](http://www.ski-europe.com)
- [www.tourcrafters.com](http://www.tourcrafters.com)



# ys are set in Italy.

## Romeo, Romeo, Pèrche Stai Qua?

Next time you're in Rome's *Villa Borghese*, don't be surprised to see a little bit of England. A replica of Britain's 16th-century *Globe Theatre*, where Shakespeare's plays were performed, now resides in the park. The theater (officially named the *Silvano Toti – Globe Theater*) opened in October with a performance of "Romeo and Juliet." *Silvano Toti*, an Italian construction magnate, donated the funds to build the round, wooden theater housing 1,300 spectators. London's original *Globe* is believed to have opened in 1599 with a performance of "Julius Caesar;" set in ancient Rome. It burned down in 1613, was rebuilt and then closed and destroyed sometime after 1642. A modern replica of the playhouse opened near the Thames in 1996. For more information on performances, call (39) 06 82077304 or visit [www.villaborghese.it](http://www.villaborghese.it)



# Pompeii Unearths the Human Dimension



Although I grew up during the heyday of *Masterpiece Theater*; and Derek Jacobi in *I, Claudius*, I couldn't shake the sensation that the characters (though historically accurate) were little dolls with quaint speech patterns and odd eating habits (all that Roman fish sauce, or garum). The shows and books were often educational, and occasionally entertaining, but never wholly satisfying.

Now I am satisfied. *Pompeii* (Random House, \$24.95) by Robert Harris is a thrilling account of that city's last days—and also succeeds as fully realized story with fully realized characters. Harris, who also wrote *Fatherland*, *Enigma* and *Archangel* didn't set out to write a novel about Ancient Rome: "If anyone had told me five years ago that my next novel would be set in the time of the Roman Empire, I would have laughed in their face," he says. "What I thought I would write next was a novel set in America, perhaps in the near future...a thriller about a utopia going horribly wrong, a novel about hubris and nemesis."

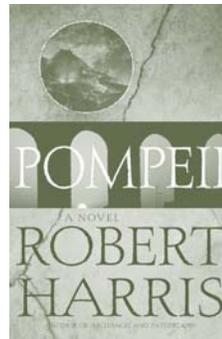
Harris, however, found that for whatever reason, he couldn't write the novel he planned. But in the summer of 2000, when he read a newspaper report about new research into the destruction of Pompeii, he thought it might make a good book. When he visited that city in August of the same year, he had an epiphany. "Late one afternoon, climbing the steep road that slices through the center of the town towards Vesuvius, I caught that familiar smell of water drying on a hot stone," he says. "And it suddenly struck me that what I was smelling, and seeing, and feeling would have been exactly the same for a character in Roman times."

With the scent of water, Harris had found his novel, and his main character, waterworks engineer Marcus Attilius. ("There's no way to avoid those names, I'm afraid.") Attilius, chief of the Aqua Augusta, the sixty-mile Roman aqueduct for the region of Campania, has just taken up his new position as "aquarius," the previous chief, Exomnius, having departed under mysterious circumstances.

As if that weren't pressure enough, the Augusta is blocked and the city of Misenum has no water. After Corelia Ampliata, daughter of a ruthless local businessman, implores him to help save a slave about to be fed to a tank of eels, Attilius discovers high amounts of sulfur in the tank's water. He knows he will have to launch an expedition further east, towards Pompeii and Mount Vesuvius to find the source of the block and get the water flowing again.

Attilius, although the son and grandson of watermen and a skilled engineer, is also a man of his time, and cannot know that the presence of sulfur in this particular water is a portent of volcanic activity. However, Harris lets readers in on the secret through chapter epigraphs that demonstrate how well the author did his homework before beginning to write. For example, he gives passages from modern reference works on volcanology that explain how so many were killed after the first eruption by "pyroclastic surges" (don't ask, just read).

His fictional rendering of the signs Roman citizens noticed (drought, underground rumblings) is made accurately, but with a light touch.



Gathering the threads of modern research together with the strands of ancient unease heightens the sense of impending doom. Combine this with a fast-paced plot that includes lust, greed, murder and romance, and you've got a real page-turner as they say.

But what sets *Pompeii* apart from other thrillers and other historical novels is its author's grasp of character. Marcus Attilius is not a toga-clad caricature, but a well-drawn man of principle who finds himself surrounded by things he loathes, things he doesn't understand, and things he wishes he could prevent. A few times I found myself groaning as Harris allowed yet another scene in which someone or something saves Attilius from injury or death at the hands of another character, but this small complaint has nothing to do with the very sympathetic protagonist himself.

Thirty years ago, the Western media was captivated by *I, Claudius* and its ilk. In a piece for *The Sunday Times of London*, Harris observes that "When I started out, setting a novel in the Roman world seemed a bizarre thing to do. But now it turns out that my book was merely a small part of a big trend. The Romans are coming to Britain this Autumn..." referencing BBC documentaries on the Colosseum and Pompeii, as well as Hollywood's upcoming movie about Hannibal. And now, the Empire marches on, to the United States. *Pompeii* is that rare read, both edifying and entertaining.

— Bethanne Kelly Patrick

Bethanne Kelly Patrick is the editor-at-large for Pages magazine.

Vesuvius is the most monitored volcano in the world.



# Italy...My Dream Italian Villas with Pools!

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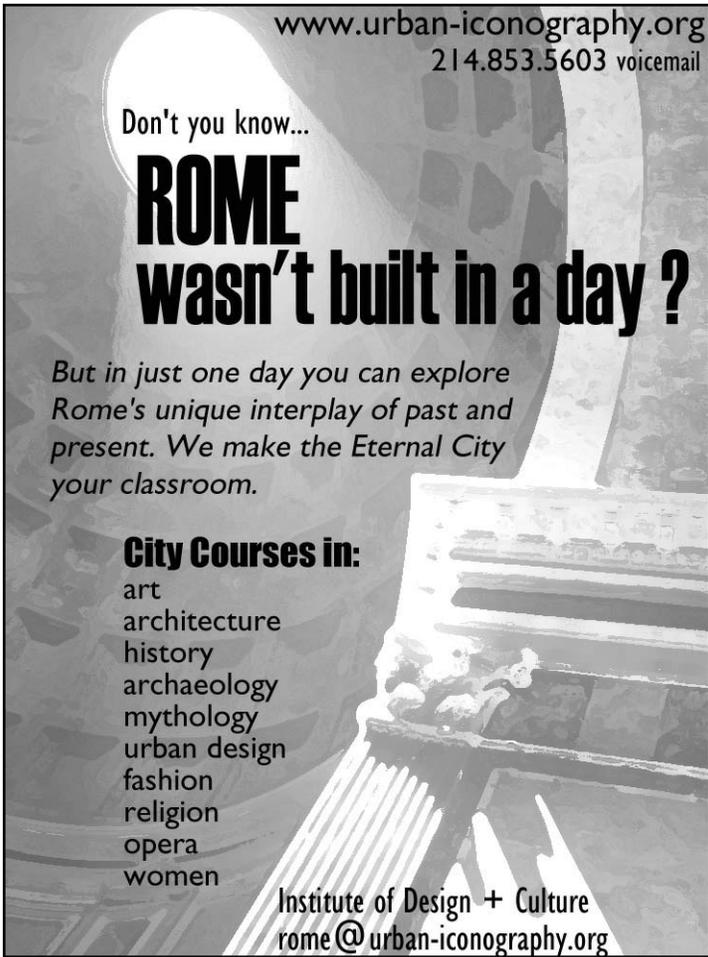
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