AMICA

LOVES VENICE

ART GUIDE 2026

AMICA LOVES VENICE ART GUIDE 2026 – RCS MEDIAGROUP S.P.A. - SPECIAL EDITION 1 MAY 2026 – FREE COPY

The gallerist Michela Rizzo.

ADRIANO TODESCO

My VENICE by Michela RIZZO

A leading figure on the contemporary ART scene, gallerist Michela Rizzo shares her vision of an authentic Venice: off the beaten path, moving between historic haunts, original jewelry, lagoon islands, and hotels for true connoisseurs

By Virginia Ricci

Venetian for generations, Michela Rizzo runs her namesake gallery dedicated to both major masters and emerging voices in contemporary art. Descended from a historic family in the food industry, equipped with strong managerial training and an innate passion for art, she opened her gallery in 2004. Today it occupies the fascinating first floor of the 16th century Palazzo Palumbo Fossati. Her career took off in 2007 with Damien Hirst's *New Religion* exhibition, and today, in her gallery, Michela represents artists such as Brian Eno, Fabio Mauri, David Tremlett, and Roman Opalka. Like any true local, she insists that the most beautiful places are friends' homes - but for us, she unveils some of the most intriguing spots in Venice.

A restaurant you go back to often?

Ae Botti Ostaria, on Giudecca. With its good, simple food, it's a place where Venetians themselves go. And with lovely tables right on the waterfront, it offers one of the most striking views of Venice - in summer, the light is truly special.

A walk you recommend?

The island of Giudecca is a revelation. Once a very popular, almost working class area, it now has a vibrant art district that is still relatively untouched by mass tourism - I even had my gallery there for a while. And then there is the Venetia Hortus Redemptoris, recently reopened after a restoration by the Venice Gardens Foundation, which also oversaw the restoration of Venice's magnificent Royal Gardens a few years ago.

A wine bar for meeting friends?

Cantine del Vino già Schiavi, not far from the Ponte de le Maravegie. It's one of the most historic in Venice, with excellent cicchetti - for as long as I can remember, it has always been there.

Above. Restaurant La Caravella, Calle larga XXII Marzo 2399 (restaurantlacaravella.com).

I also love the Tarnowska's American Bar at Hotel Ala Venezia, named after Russian countess Maria Tarnowska, who in 1907 orchestrated the murder of one of her many lovers inside the Palazzo.

And for a coffee or a light lunch?

A true classic: Ombra del Leone, in the former Hall of Mirrors inside the Biennale headquarters. It has a welcoming terrace overlooking the Grand Canal, with a beautiful panoramic view.

A hotel to keep in mind?

I have recently rediscovered Hotel Violino d'Oro, which has just been renovated. Its atmosphere is very intimate, with small old world sitting rooms and an excellent chef, making it perfect for lunch or dinner. And then there's Hotel Saturnia & International, a decidedly traditional choice, whose restaurant La Caravella is a longtime favorite among Venetians.

Above. Ar-tea, a tea boutique, Dorsoduro 2799 (ar-tea.com).

Where do you find interesting objects for the home?

At Ar-tea, an original spot offering excellent selections of teas and herbal infusions, along with tea related objects and classes dedicated to this ritual. Perfect for tea lovers.

A place you would recommend for original jewelry and accessories?

Definitely Attombri, known for its architectural jewelry - many women collectors I've met at the gallery wear their pieces. And a true Venetian must is Micromega for eyewear: the owner is a real artist, and the shop itself is beautiful, worth visiting to admire the almost one of a kind models.

Left. Ausonia Hungaria hotel, Gran Viale Santa Maria Elisabetta 28, Venice Lido (ausonia hungaria.com).

Your favorite place for relaxation?

The Spa at Ausonia Hungaria hotel, on the Lido, which is easy to reach. The hotel's Liberty style architecture is quite unique, and the Thai treatments are excellent. All around, you can feel the typical early 20th century Liberty atmosphere.

A place only a true Venetian could suggest, far from the usual routes?

The islands. I think of Le Vignole, where Venetians have always gone with their small boats - a simple, authentic place. In front of it lies Lazzaretto Nuovo, a fascinating island rich in history, which you can reach also by vaporetto. And then Poveglia, which in recent years has almost become a symbol. Thanks to the efforts of a local association, it wasn't abandoned but entrusted to a stewardship aimed at keeping it public, and now it's undergoing a slow process of restoration. You can only reach it by boat — and that's precisely what preserves its charm.

Below. A cicchetto at Cantine del Vino già Schiavi, Fondamenta Nani 992 (cantinaschiavi.com).

Right. Jewels of Attombri Venezia, San Polo 65 (attombri.com).

MARCO COMPIANO

COURTESY THE MERCHANT OF VENICE

Above. Studium, International and Olfactory Bookshop in Piazza San Marco, opened by The Merchant of Venice. Left. One of the parfums of the brand, Rosa Moceniga. Right. A kit for the Olfactory Composition Laboratory (themerchantofvenice.com).

The OLFACTORY LEGACY of Venice

Inspired by the history of La Serenissima, The Merchant of Venice is a line of fragrances that retraces the Mude, the trade routes that brought precious essences and spices to Europe. In Venice, these perfumes can be discovered in truly special places, such as the historic pharmacy in Campo San Fantin or the Spezieria all'Ercole d'Oro. A must visit destination is Studium, the International and Olfactory Bookstore in San Marco, which features more than 10,000 titles, as well as a "perfume library" with monographic texts on the topic, and an olfactory archive showcasing the main essences used in perfumery. The space also hosts perfume courses and olfactory workshops where visitors learn about key raw materials and different scent families, and how to build the pyramid of a fragrance. *V.R.*