



VENICE

ARMCHAIR TOURIST

OUR VIRTUAL DESIGN ODYSSEY TAKES US TO THE CITY OF OPULENT PALAZZI AND SPARKLING WATERWAYS FOR A TOUCH OF GILDED SPLENDOUR

Words: CLARE GOGERTY



The incredible thing about Venice is that it was ever built at all. Its towering marble palaces were built centuries ago on platforms anchored into the lagoon with wooden piles. Canals and bridges were constructed to connect its 118 islands, resulting in a city where streets are replaced with waterways, and where everything shimmers and glitters in the summer, or is shrouded in mist in the winter. It is a city that feels like it's imagined or conjured in a dream.

A peek inside the handsome buildings that line the canals reveals a world equally as romantic. Tall rooms with elegant proportions and opulent

furnishings reflect the city's mix of Gothic, Byzantine and Ottoman influences. Long windows let in light reflected from the water and are draped with damask curtains. Elaborate glass mirrors from the island of Murano bounce light around, and chandeliers twinkle above.

You don't need a palazzo to bring a little Venetian splendour into your home. A few gilded things – a picture frame, a wall light, perhaps – plus a handsome mirror and some sumptuous fabric or wallpaper should do it. Then, all you have to do is make yourself a bellini and imagine you're sipping it on your loggia as a gondola drifts past. Venice is all about dreams, after all. **S**

- 1 Céline armchair, £499, atkinandthyme.co.uk 2 Coronet chandelier, £475, sweetpeaandwillow.com
 3 Mirrored drinks trolley, £450, coxandcox.co.uk 4 Retro metal cocktail shaker, £39, cultfurniture.com
 5 Sloane wall light, £30 each, johnlewis.com 6 Diana bust, £125, frenchbedroomcompany.co.uk
 7 Belvoir console table, £299, made.com 8 Venetian damask blue wallpaper, £16 per roll, grahambrown.com
 9 Venetian orchid mirror, £255, frenchbedroomcompany.co.uk 10 Blush velvet cushion, from £35, abodeliving.co.uk
 11 Otto marbled pasta bowl, £10, habitat.co.uk