

Pr.T.-2 M-6e) It's Venice.... but not as you know it!

It's the perfect picture postcard: the sun shimmers on the blue-green water of a canal as gondoliers steer their boats along the water. Along both sides are elegant townhouses. There are no cars to disturb the charm of the scene. If you think this describes the Grand Canal, Venice, you'd be right, but this isn't Venice, Italy, it's Venice, Las Vegas!

Las Vegas is full of extraordinary places. There's a hotel built like an ancient Egyptian Pyramid, a casino complete with an Eiffel Tower, and the Grand Canal Shoppes – an enormous 46,000 m² shopping mall. It was opened in 1999 and its inspiration is taken from Venice, the city built on water. It's one of the most popular indoor malls in the world, with 20 million visitors arriving every year for an authentic Venetian shopping experience!

As you enter the mall, look up and you'll see some amazing ceiling art inspired by Michelangelo, only remember to watch where you're going! Once inside, you'll be amazed at the attention to detail. Everything in the mall mirrors the floating city, even the streetlights and bridges crossing over the canals. Then of course, there's the fantastic atmosphere: as you stroll past the shops, or stop for a cappuccino, you'll be serenaded by the sweet violins of street musicians. There's also a juggler, an opera trio and a collection of marble statues: but, look twice and you'll see they're actually human!

The living statues line the sides of the canal and pose by the doors of exclusive fashion boutiques selling the finest clothes, including some of the best Italian designers. Keep walking alongside any of the canals and you'll find they all lead to the mall's star attraction: a replica of St Mark's Square at twilight under a painted Italian sky! Here there are more performances of singers, actors and musicians and a marketplace selling souvenirs of Venice including carnival masks and costumes and pretty Venetian glass from Murano.

Before you leave the square, there's one thing you really must do to complete your day: experience a true tradition of Venice and take a ride on a gondola! The gondolas glide from St Mark's Square for half a mile along the canals, giving you a tour of the mall by water. All of this should inspire you to take a trip to the real Venice one day ... I know it's definitely inspired me!

Review by Sarah Myers. My shopping mall rating: **** (Excellent!)

Check these words

shimmer, canal, gondolier, steer, elegant, disturb, charm, inspiration, authentic, inspire, attention to detail, stroll past, serenade, juggler, living statue, line, pose, exclusive, fashion boutique, replica, twilight, carnival mask, glide

Read the text and choose the best answer A, B, C or D. ...

Check these words ...

1 In the text, Sarah Myers is describing ...

- A her trip to Italy.
- B an authentic Italian city.
- C the elegance of Venice.
- D an amazing shopping experience.

2 What does the writer say about Las Vegas? ...

- A It is full of foreigners.
- B It has strange houses.
- C It is a weird and wonderful city.
- D It is an ancient city.

3 What does the reader learn about the mall? ...

- A The architect took great care to match the actual city in every way.
- B The architect loves the city of Venice.
- C The people who built it were Italian.
- D The architect's only interest was creating a pleasant place to shop.

4 How has the experience at the mall ...

influenced Sarah?

- A She now appreciates the Venetian traditions.
- B She can't wait to go again.
- C She wants to learn more about Venice.
- D It has made her want to visit its inspiration.

5 What is the overall message of the text? ...

A The people who built the mall have gone to great lengths to recreate the city and it is better than the original.

B This amazing shopping extravaganza gives you a real taste of Italy with an atmosphere not to be missed.

C The mall is so authentic that you don't have to travel all the way to Italy to experience the real thing.

D The city of Venice has beautiful examples of Italian architecture with the atmosphere to match.

a) Match the highlighted words to their meanings: **CHECK** ...

interrupt

= ...

influence

= ...

attractiveness

= ...

shines

= ...

remaining on the surface of water

= ...

not widely available

= ...

copy

= ...

move gracefully

= ...

played music to

= ...

try

= ...

b) Choose the correct word. ...

- 1 Venice is full of **charm/elegance**, the ideal place for those who love quietness and beauty. ...
- 2 The gondoliers were **driving/steering** their boats down the canal. ...
- 3 The mall allows you to experience a **true/real** tradition of Venice. ...
- 4 The shopping mall is **authentic/enormous**. You get lost easily in there. ...
- 5 The mall resembles Venice, they have **paid/given** great attention to detail. ...
- 6 Trees **border/line** the sides of the road. ...
- 7 You must **experience/taste** a ride on a gondola. ...
- 8 The film will **inspire/influence** you to travel to Italy. ...

Speaking & Writing

a) Read the text and make notes under the headings. ...

Name ...

Place ...

What to see ...

What to do ...