

Level: A2 Pre Intermediate

Skill: Reading

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Venice Carnival

The Carnevale di Venezia is one of the most famous carnivals around the world, and it's famous for its intricate Venetian Masks.

The origin

The tradition of the mask started in the 13th century when Venetians would hold celebrations and parties from December 26th until the start of Lent and wear elaborate masks to conceal their identity. These parties were the only time when the lower and upper classes mingled together. Aristocrats and peasants, disguised by their masks, played out their fantasies together.

The First Carnival

In Venice, the first document that officially called the carnival a “public holiday” was an order of the Senate of Serenissima in 1296, but since 1271, we have news about workshops for the production of masks and related construction. However, It's in the eighteenth century that the Carnival of Venice reaches its greatest splendor, acquiring international resonance throughout Europe.

Venice Carnival was banned for more than 200 years!

After long years of excess and extravagance, with the fall of the Serenissima, the Carnival suffered a period of decline. The Austrians took control of the city on January 18, 1798, and it fell into a decline where only private parties were permitted.

The Masks and costumes

There are about 10 different types of Venetian masks. The most traditional mask is the Bauta style. Bauta appears in white and is a mask that was used throughout the whole year by people who wished to continue to hide their identity.

Among the symbolic masks of Carnival is the Bauta, a disguise used exclusively in Venice, consisting of a black cloak or tabard, a black tricorne on a white face.

The Carnival remains popular in Italy, with masks inspired by historical characters and literary comedies of the 1700s. These characters are still seen today during Carnival celebrations across the country.



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- 🍷 Write TRUE or FALSE

- The Carnevale di Venezia started in the 18th century and gained international fame.
- The tradition of wearing masks in Venice began in the 13th century during celebrations from December 26th to the start of Lent.
- In 1798, the Austrians took control of Venice and allowed the Carnival to flourish.
- There are about 20 different types of Venetian masks.
- The most traditional Venetian mask is the Bauta style, worn year-round for identity concealment.
- The Venice Carnival remained popular during the ban in the 1930s and continued with large public events.
- The Senate of Serenissima officially declared the Venice Carnival a public holiday in 1296.
- The Carnevale di Venezia is not known for its intricate Venetian Masks.
- The Bauta style is a recent addition to the Venetian mask tradition.
- Characters inspired by literary comedies of the 1700s are still part of modern Carnival celebrations.

