

It was nice to have a more leisurely start today. This is our last stop with breakfast included, so we made the most of it. The breakfast was very Italian – this is the first place we have had four types of cake to choose from at breakfast.

We had no particular plans for today, except to soak up the atmosphere of this unique city. We started with a visit to San Marco Basilica. Unlike St Peters, this church had no queue at all. The inside was so ornate, with amazing mosaics on the floor and beautifully patterned walls and domes. This was the first place we have visited where photos were banned.



After our morning dose of culture, the kids went off on their own adventures. We took the leisurely route to the Rialto Bridge, with lots of photo stops along the way. There were a number of canal-side restaurants on the other side of the Rialto bridge. We found one with lots of patio heaters and settled in for lunch. The food was delicious and the setting amazing. The added bonus was no service or cover charges, free bottled water and sweet treats. We were so impressed we booked to bring the kids back for dinner tonight.





## Lunch and Dinner Spot

After lunch we bought a 24 hour transport ticket and set about exploring on the Vaporetti. Our original plan was to visit Burano, a little fishing island famous for its brightly coloured houses. The Vaporetti are slow though and we really didn't have enough time. So we jumped off at a Murano instead. Murano is famous for its glass blowing and much more touristy. We weren't as excited about Murano as Burano, but it actually turned out to be really lovely. There was hardly anyone there and it was lovely walking along the canals and nosing in the glass shops.



Murano Canal

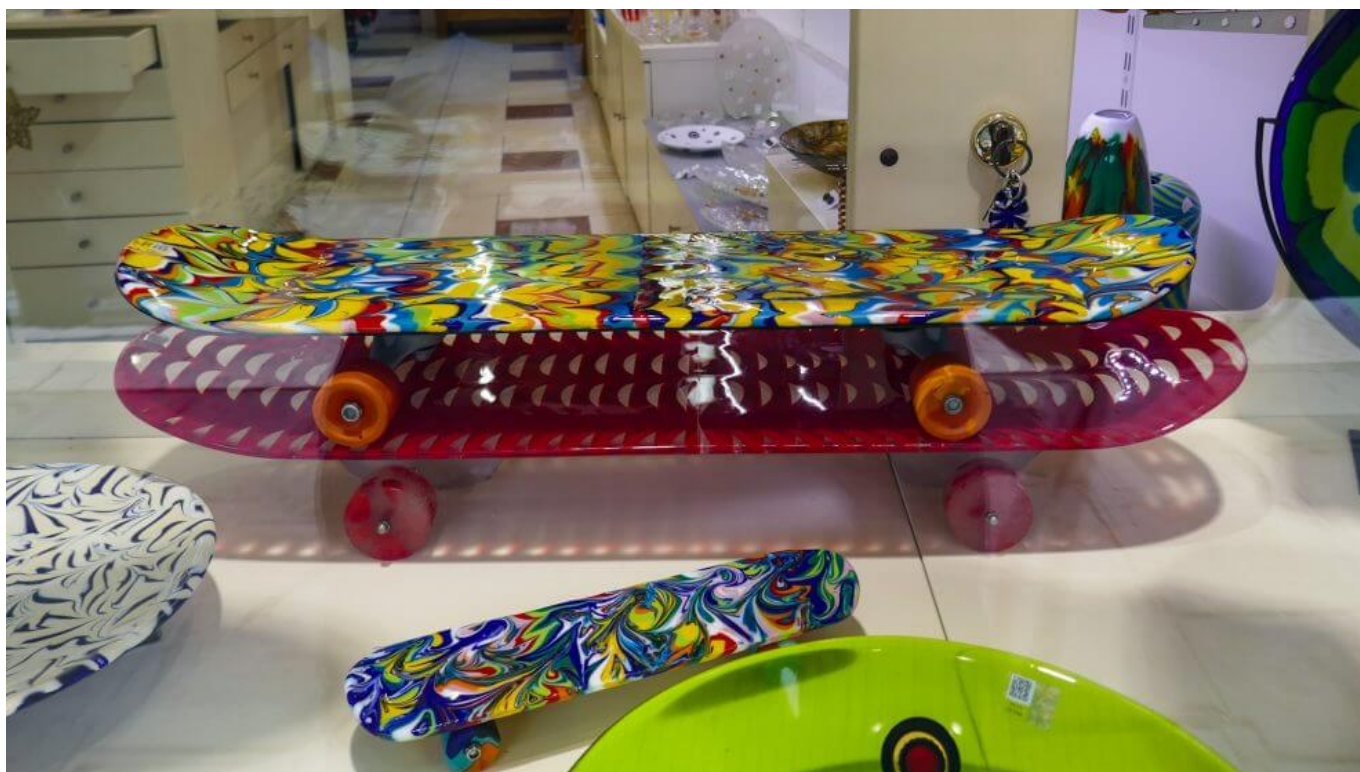


Glass Factories





Not sure where you would put some of this stuff



We found a snack bar with divine hot chocolate and a free toilet. Public toilets in mainland Europe are not normally free, and it's become a bit of a game to get through the day without paying for the loo. The boys have a small advantage as sometimes the females pay but the males get a free hole in the ground. So far Matt is winning and hasn't paid once. The rest of us are all on one payment. I'm the current loser with the most expensive visit being \$2.62 in Oslo!

We bumped into the kids on the way back to the hotel. They had made it to Burano and also visited the Lido (the Venice beach). They loved Burano but said Lido was deserted. I guess Italians aren't as keen as Scots to visit the beach in icy temperatures.





Burano



Our dinner at “Restaurant Florida” was a great success. Our table was right by the water and the food was lovely. Surprisingly for such a stunning setting, it was close to half the cost



of last night's dinner. It was the perfect end to a wonderful five nights in Italy, probably our overall favourite country in the world.