

# SOLVING THE PUBLIC TOILET PROBLEM



Venice tourist board starts a unique online campaign. Travellers are now able to buy an online card in order to pre-pay for visits at the local public toilets.

It is unfortunately a very old and common problem for a range of visitors to the vast majority of European cities: where to use the toilets without having to either find a large enough tree or being embarrassed into buying something in a coffee shop or pub purely with the intention of using the WC.

The **Venice tourism board** has come up with a superb solution, which is likely to reduce the embarrassment for tourists and reduce the amount of suspicious puddles behind trees and around park benches. Tickets allowing people to use public toilets, for a certain amount of time, are now available online. This means that tourists may visit Venice with peace of mind about using the toilet.

Venice has an average of 20 million visitors per year, so one can imagine not only the scale of the problem yet also the profit such a scheme could make. 20 million times 1 Euro is a huge amount and people tend to use public facilities more than once a day. Not only that, but visitors become very frustrated by the 'no toilet' signs and the constant and annoying search for change when payment is necessary. This should be, in future, settled by cards, which are now available online and cost **7 Euro for 10 toilet visits**. This card is valid for 5 days over the high season, which should suffice for most visitors who do not encounter any health problems on their travels.

A further advantage of the scheme is that tourists are likely to add purchases such as restaurant bookings and sightseeing tours whilst online and in full view of the Venice tourism advertising material. The scheme, on the face of it, seems to be a winner for everybody. It only needs time for us to find out whether tourists are willing to carry cards for the most basic of services.

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