

## An historical landmark:

### Il Fondaco dei Tedeschi



The **Fondaco dei Tedeschi** has been a part of the history of Venice for as many as eight centuries, first built in 1228 and then rebuilt after a devastating fire in 1508.

As its name suggests – its translation literally meaning “warehouse of the Germans” – since medieval times the building was used as a trading post by German merchants who stocked here their goods arriving from Nuremberg and Augsburg.

The German community continued to use the building until the Napoleonic invasion of 1797.

Located at the foot of the famous Rialto Bridge, the Fondaco dei Tedeschi is one of Venice’s largest and most recognizable buildings due, among other things, to its architecture, which sets it apart from most other buildings overlooking the Grand Canal.

On the ground floor, five large arches enclose a portico where goods were once unloaded from the Grand Canal, while the façade shows the Renaissance design.

After Napoleon time, The Fondaco became a custom and then a post office, until the recent refurbishment.



The building has four storeys facing onto a central courtyard (now covered by a steel and glass structure) housing a medieval well.

Since medieval times, a fondaco in Venice acted as a restricted living and storage area for communities of foreign merchants. There were living quarters on the upper floors and storage facilities for their wares below. There was a curfew imposed by the Republic. While this might seem restrictive, it negated any trouble that might have arisen between ethnic groups.

About 100 merchants were hosted in the building, and each one had a room and place for their goods. Still now it is possible to see symbols painted or engraved in the surface of the white stone columns supporting the arches on the different levels of the Fondaco.



The Fondaco reopened in 2016 as a luxury shopping mall and hotel, after a long and delicate refurbishment that included a 60 minutes fire resistance requirement of all the original timber floors.

The solution chosen by architects was **AITHON PV33 system**, that granted fire resistance upgrade while preserving the beauty of the ancient timber floors.