

You are going to read a magazine article about the best way to see certain artistic masterpieces in various buildings. For questions 16–30, choose from the buildings (A–F). The buildings may be chosen more than once.

3.

Mark your answers on the separate answer sheet.

Of which building are the following stated?

Different categories of visitor are anxious to view the masterpiece.

Some people have the wrong idea about when the building is open.

You may have some difficulty making your arrangements for your visit.

There are plenty of excellent works of art in the building that do not attract many viewers.

On your return journey through the building, you can look at works of art you missed earlier.

People who work there make a big claim about the masterpiece.

You will be able to get to the masterpiece before other visitors, because they will stop to view other works of art.

Holidaymakers do not normally visit the building but it is an excellent place.

There is another work of art in the building apart from the masterpiece that is equally worth seeing.

A rule prevents people from viewing the masterpiece for too long.

The masterpiece has not always received the praise it currently receives.

It is possible that visitor numbers to the museum will increase.

Make sure you remain in front of the crowds of people as you go through the building.

There is a period when most visitors have left the building.

One suggestion for visiting the building is not as unrealistic as it may appear.

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## Smart Art

The queue-buster's guide to the world's greatest masterpieces

**Early openings, private viewings – here's everything you need for a magic moment with the world's most famous masterpieces**

### A The Birth of Venus

*Uffizi, Florence, Italy*

The Florentine master Sandro Botticelli created one of the most graceful and joyful images of the modern age, and the single most popular painting in the Uffizi. To see it at its best, you need to pre-book a ticket for timed entry at 8.15 a.m., courtesy of the Firenze Musei booking service; don't be put off if you can't get through on the phone first time. Once inside, head straight for the suite of rooms 10–14, where the Botticellis are displayed. Then take in the other highlights of the collection – the Da Vincis in room 15, the Raphaels in room 26, and the Caravaggios in room 43 – staying ahead of the hordes as you go. If there are any gaps you want to fill in, work backwards towards the entrance: by now, the crowds will be unavoidable, but you'll have already had the masters to yourself.

### B The Death Mask of Tutankhamun

*Egyptian Museum, Cairo, Egypt*

It is, of course, impossible for one object to embody the vigour and sophistication of ancient Egypt's culture. But the funerary mask of the boy-king Tutankhamun comes close. Eleven kilos of solid gold, inlaid with lapis lazuli, glass paste and semi-precious stones, it's the undisputed star of the Egyptian Museum – which, given the array of mummies, colossi, thrones and jewellery on show here, gives you an idea of its charisma. Whatever the season, there are people clamouring to see it: hefty groups from the cruise liners and Red Sea resorts in the summer and a steady stream of culture-vultures on Nile tours in the cooler months. At least the museum's policy of not allowing guides to talk in front of its display case, in room 3 up on the first floor, means that the flow of visitors doesn't get too



congested. But if you want some proper quiet, you need to come at lunchtime. There are fewer independent travellers about, and it's changeover time for the tour parties too. The quietest time is between 11.30 a.m. and 2 p.m. on midweek days in July and August, when the bus tours take all the tourists away for their lunches.

### C The Sistine Ceiling

*Vatican Museums, Rome, Italy*

The really smart way to see Michelangelo's masterwork is on a private tour. At first sight, this looks prohibitively expensive. But form a group of like-minded friends, and suddenly you have the experience of an art-loving lifetime for the price of dinner for two in a posh restaurant. If that's not an option, then you've got to be first in, which means arriving at the vast Vatican Museums complex at least an hour before the doors open, armed with a good map (most Rome guidebooks have them) and a pair of binoculars. Once you're inside, hurry to the chapel – it's at the far end of the complex, and most people will be distracted by some of the other world-class exhibits. The binoculars, by the way, are essential.

Michelangelo's forms hover some 20m overhead.

### D Girl With A Pearl Earring

*Mauritshuis, The Hague, The Netherlands*

Vermeer's delicate, deeply ambiguous portrait is one of the most finely observed in all western art. Its home, the Mauritshuis, is some way off the tourist map – even though it's one of the best small museums in Europe – but Dutch school kids make the pilgrimage in droves. A Monday in summer is your best bet for a private view – it's closed that day in winter, and locals assume it's a year-round day off.

### E The Kiss

*Belvedere, Vienna, Austria*

Vienna may now be second only to Paris as art-history capital of Europe, but city-breakers have yet to realize this fact, and many of its wonderful exhibits are mercifully uncrowded. Klimt's ravishing *Kiss*, beloved of student bedrooms, does draw a devoted following, though. Go in the early morning, or on Thursday evening, to be sure of the best viewing conditions. While you're there, don't miss Klimt's other great painting, his 1907 portrait of Adele Bloch-Bauer. It's as dazzling and sensual in effect as *The Kiss*.

### F Les Femmes d'Alger

*Museum of Modern Art, New York, US*

Picasso's confrontational and revolutionary painting was by no means considered a masterpiece when he showed it to his friends in 1907. Matisse laughed out loud when he first saw it. Others were stunned into embarrassed silence. There's no doubting its value now: the Museum of Modern Art's curators call it 'perhaps the single most influential work in the history of modern art'. Few would argue. Your best strategy for a crowd-free view is to join a private group before the doors open. If you don't want to do that, book a timed-entry ticket for 10.30 a.m. Gallery 2, on the fourth floor, is your goal.