

We will be based at Villa Nobile near Cortona, now well-known from the film 'Under the Tuscan Sun' and the book of the same name; perched high on the hillside of Mount Egidio, surrounded by olive groves and age old cypresses, this beautiful walled town dates back to Etruscan times.

Getting to know this timeless city is a close encounter with art, with history and with spirituality. As well as its amazing historic gems, Cortona offers enchanting views out across the Valdichiana to Lake Trasimeno and the Appenine mountains. Cortona is not just about the past, life here is vibrant – there always seems to be something going on, and there are plenty of outdoor bars and cafes, as well as some great restaurants and shops to enjoy along the way.

The workshops will include a variety of breathtaking locations chosen to inspire your creative work. Subjects will include architecture, perspective, landscape, and most particularly texture, tone, and colour, working with the clarity of light that is so much a part of Tuscany's natural beauty.

We will provide the bulk of your equipment, i.e. boards, chairs, and easels, but you will need to bring some materials e.g. sketchbooks, pencils and brushes. A selection of materials and stretched canvases are available at cost price, and at the end of your holiday we can arrange framing and shipping of your finished paintings should you wish.

On a typical day we will paint for most of the morning, either in the grounds or out on location. At various times during the workshops there will be demonstrations by the tutor. The afternoon will provide more opportunities to continue our morning's work, working on into the early evening to take full advantage of the wonderful clarity and warmth of the Tuscan light. There will also be a free day during the week to do as you please - transport into Cortona will be on offer for those who would like to explore or shop , Anyone wishing to go to Arezzo or Florence for the day we will drop you off at our local train station.

Meals are provided, (**except lunch**) either making use of the best local produce and specialities at the villa, or out and about at good quality restaurants. Each morning we will offer a healthy breakfast including fresh croissants, cereals, yoghurts and a selection of seasonal fruits. Evening meals will be a mix of barbecues or dinners at the villa, and there will be some evening meals at quality restaurants in Cortona. There will be a variety of excursions on offer in our Tuscany in the Frame minibus to medieval hilltop towns. We will often be travelling through the fabulous countryside of the ValdiChiana, with its classic Tuscan views, so always have your sketchbook and camera handy as there will be lots of opportunity to collect information and material to work on back at the studio.

Our trips will include two beautiful hill towns – Monticchiello, possibly Pienza with its famed local Pecorino cheeses; and also Montepulciano known for its wonderful wines. Here we will have the opportunity to visit La Cantina Ercolani for wine tasting in one of the oldest wineries in Tuscany, where you may sample the famous Vino Nobile – sadly no relation!

Itinerary.

Although we have an itinerary we always make a point of saying that "the itinerary is subject to change" This will obviously be something that we will communicate to the group in advance or on arrival. It is very rare when we have had to change part of the itinerary.

General itinerary for Tuscany 10 days (when doing a 7 day workshop we will choose a selection of the itinerary below)

Day 1 - Arrival .

Pick up point Rome Fiumicino Airport no later than 2pm if possible. Arrive at Villa Nobile (2.5 hr journey) Settle into your accommodation , then meet for pre evening dinner, meet the Tutor & have a lovely dinner with wine & talk about the week ahead & our expectations.

Day 2 - Easy start to our first day painting around the grounds of Villa Nobile for the Tutor to evaluate your level & what you would like to achieve from this workshop. Lunch & continue into the evening. Dinner out in Cortona.

Day 3 - Travel to Monticchiello for our painting location. Break for lunch. Continue painting till Approx 16.30. Visit Montepulciano Cantina Ercolani winery for wine tasting. Return to Villa Nobile for dinner.

Day 4 - Local Countryside Gaggiole

Day 5 - Trip to SantAntimo.

A beautiful 11thC Abbey immersed in a valley surrounded by olive groves & hillsides. Still run by the Benedictine monks that perform daily masses with Gregorian Chanting. SantAntimo is near Montalcino .

Day 6 - Trequanda, small quiet town with small church & quaint streets

Day 7 - Depending on your arrival day...(Thursday is market day in the town of Camucia) something that most people enjoy....only 5 minute from the Villa. Around 11am We then make our way up the hill to our town of Cortona known for the film "Under the Tuscan Sun " for our painting location. We may stay in Cortona & paint in the olive groves below Cortona view of the Valdichiana. so that we can work on our painting well into the evening. Dinner out

Day 8 - Free day.....suggest Florence, Arezzo or Cortona

Day 9 - San Feliciano at Lake Trasimeno. Lunch at the lake then return to Villa in the afternoon

Day 10 - Orvieto Painting until 3pm. Early finish for appraisal of the 10 days paintings.

Day 11 - Departure to Rome Fiumicino.

Although the itinerary looks very busy, I do stress that anyone wanting to take time out to relax, use the pool, or even stay at the Villa & paint rather than coming on the location of that day....please feel free to do so. We will have time to paint back at the Villa some evenings & the Tutor will give demonstrations from during the week.

Please ask if there is anything at all that is not clear & I will do my best to answer all your questions. Pick up Point is Rome Fiumicino Airport. If possible no later than 2pm arrivals. Usually for most flights.