

Studio One – Big Sur

Fine Art | Photography | Workshops

Awaken the Artist Within – Sketching Italy

Saturday, September 29 through Thursday, October 11, 2018

With Erin Lee Gafill & Tom Birmingham

Information & Registration

Program Description

Three Nights in Venice

Duomo & Doges Palace | Murano
Sketch Crawl | Canareggio Food Tour

Two Nights in Florence

Duomo | Medici Chapel | Oltrarno | Artisan Studios
Tuscan Food Market | Piazza di Signoria | Ponte Vecchio

Seven Nights at Spannocchia

15th Century castle | Introduction to Tuscan food and wines
Sketch, Photography, Yoga & Creativity Workshops
Organic Farm | Tuscan Delicacies | Miles of Hiking Trails

Two Day Trips in Tuscany

Siena - Duomo, Piazza del Campo, Historic Center
Montalcino – Winery Tour, Architectural Sketching, and Photographing the Tuscan Hill Country

Registration Fee	Single Occupancy	Double Occupancy
12 nights, Venice, Florence, Spannocchia	\$5300	\$4450
7 nights, Spannocchia only	\$3200	\$2750

Join us for an unforgettable exploration of the culture and countryside of Italy. Experience some of Italy's most special treasures with a small group of kindred spirits. Enrich your experiences by using sketch, watercolor, writing, and photography to hone your attention and heighten your enjoyment.

We start with three nights in Venice, where the light reflects off the water, and bathes the byzantine architecture in a warm glow. We'll walk the narrow streets and visit the piazzas that have drawn travelers for a thousand years. We'll sketch the Grand Canal, the Ghetto, and the outer islands. We'll see the local art, and enjoy a food tour of the bacari of Canareggio.

We'll visit the Doge's Palace and the Duomo, and have an island tour including Murano. You'll have a Vaporetto ticket for all three days, so, it's easy to do some exploring on your own, if you are feeling adventurous.

We'll have breakfasts at our hotel, lunches out and about (sometimes at a local trattoria, sometimes as a picnic) and dinners at select restaurants. On Sunday night you'll be on your own for dinner before an evening walking tour.

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On Tuesday morning, we'll take a high-speed train to Santa Maria Novella station in Florence. Our hotel is just a couple of blocks from the station. We'll spend the afternoon visiting the various neighborhoods of Florence, and experiencing the art and architecture in the birthplace of the Renaissance. We'll have time to sketch along the Arno, to sip wine at a favorite enoteca, and to learn why Florence is considered by so many, the world's most beautiful city.

We'll have a food lover's tour of the local Mercato Centrale, where vendors offer fresh vegetables, cured Tuscan meats and delicious cheeses. We'll shop for our specialty food tastings at Spannocchia, in this bustling marketplace.

On Thursday morning, a private coach will come to our hotel for the trip to Spannocchia. It's just a couple of hours to Spannocchia in the hills outside of Siena, so, along the way, we'll stop for a picnic lunch and sketch opportunities at a Chianti Hill Town.

Once we arrive at Spannocchia, we begin the retreat section of our tour. Most days we'll follow a regular schedule that includes morning walks, yoga, writing, sketch and water color, a Taste of Tuscany specialty food and wine pairings, and early evening photo sessions. Each evening we'll have a wine reception before dinner, family style dinner, We'll finish each evening with cards and camaraderie in the living room.

During our week at Spannocchia, we'll have two day trips. We'll spend a day in the city of Siena, enjoying the unique architecture and lifestyle. We'll also visit Montalcino, with a winery tour on the way home.

The cost of the trip includes all breakfasts and all but one lunch and one dinner. It also includes ground transportation and lodging for 12 nights. Sketchbook making supplies and all creative instruction are included. We'll include entry fees to museums and historic sites in the cities we visit as well as a 3-day public transit pass (Vaporetto) in Venice.

This trip includes a significant amount of walking on cobblestone streets and uneven surfaces. We are visiting hill towns, which means, hills. Our stay at Spannocchia will be in a beautiful, rustic, and secluded 15th century castle. All bedrooms are on the second floor. While we will do our best to accommodate all our guests' needs, this is a rigorous and adventurous trip.

Unforeseen circumstances or unanticipated opportunities may change parts of our itinerary. We reserve the right to change any part of this tour as needed. We will do everything in our power to make changes that only enhance your experience.

Any questions – contact Tom Birmingham – tom@bigsurarts.com | 831.646.9000.

To Register - Fill out the following two pages, and mail them to -

Tom Birmingham
48519 Highway 1
Big Sur, CA 93920

Also enclose -

The Deposit

Studio One – Big Sur

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A photocopy of the photo pages of your
passport

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Please Read & Initial

Initial
Please

Cancellation Policy – The \$500 trip deposit is non-refundable. All registration fees must be paid in full by July 1, 2016. If you are unable to participate in this trip for any reason, the following refund schedule applies:

Cancellation before -

March 1, 2018 – all registration fees, less deposit returned

May 1, 2018 – 75% of all registration fees, less deposit returned

July 1, 2018 – 50% of all registration fees, less deposit returned

After July 1, 2018, no refund is available.

We reserve the right to cancel this trip for any reason, in which case we will refund 100% of registration fees paid, including deposit.

If you must cancel, we will do what we can to fill your spot on the trip. If we are able to travel with a full complement of 16 persons, we will refund all registration fees, less deposit.

Fitness – This tour will include a significant amount of walking. It will include standing and sitting for periods of time. It will also include climbing stairs and walking up cobblestone hills. Our lodging at Spannocchia is on the second floor of the Castello, climbing up 600 year old, uneven marble stairs. By signing up for this trip you are acknowledging that you feel ready to participate in these activities.

Throughout the trip you will need to carry your luggage between lodging spots. You'll bring your own luggage from the airport to our hotel in Venice, as well as port it when we travel from Venice to Florence, and from Florence to Spannocchia, and when returning to Florence at the end of the trip. We encourage you to bring no more luggage than you can comfortably carry.

Loss or Injury – Travel is an inherently risky undertaking. We do not accept liability for any loss or injury that you may sustain during this trip.

Travel Insurance – we highly recommend that you purchase travel insurance to cover any losses of air fare or tour costs in case you are unable to participate in the tour. If you would like a recommendation of a local agent who sells travel insurance, please let me know.

Ground Transportation – In Venice, we will travel by Vaporetto (public water bus). We'll travel from Venice to Florence by high-speed rail and between Florence and Spannocchia by private vans. Our day trips will be by private van and motor coach.

What is Included – registration fees include all lodging, all breakfasts all but one lunch and all but one dinner, entry fees to all museums, churches, and points of interest described in the tour. Your registration fee also includes all instruction and guidance offered during the tour, as well as ground transportation.

What is not Included – registration fee does not include one dinner in Venice, and one lunch in Florence, airfare to or from our meeting points in Venice and Florence, travel insurance, incidental or extra hotel charges, art supplies, photography supplies.