



10 DAYS IN UMBRIA

A Sample Itinerary for Plein Air workshops at La Romita School

This is a Sample only. In practice, we will tailor the itinerary to the specific goals of the teacher and the particular opportunities of the season. We know this part of Italy like the back of our hand, and we also understand plein air. If you're looking for something in particular to support the themes of your instruction, let us know. The more unusual your need, the better a fit you'll find us.

DAY 1 - ARRIVAL Pickup and Orientation

The group arrives at Leonardo Da Vinci airport in Rome and is greeted by Antonio, La Romita's bus driver. A 90 minute drive and you're at La Romita in time for a delicious hot lunch, followed by an orientation. There's time to rest and unpack before a 5PM trip down to Terni to pick up art supplies and personal items. The day ends at 7:30 with dinner.



DAY 2 - SAN GEMINI AM excursion PM Studio

After breakfast (usually 7 - 8:30) the group boards the bus for a quick 20 minute ride to their first real taste of plein air in Umbria.

San Gemini features beautiful architecture and great panoramic views, and is full of people who appreciate artists visiting the town. It is a great introduction for the trip: large enough for real exploration with plenty of great subject matter for painting, but not so big that it overwhelms you with choices. It is very good for plein air and sketchbook work, with few cars and plenty of places that are restricted to foot traffic.

At 12:30, the bus takes the group back to La Romita for lunch, followed by personal time (many choose to catch a quick nap). The normal afternoon schedule at La Romita is demo/instruction in the chapel/studio from 3:30 until 6 or so, with dinner served at 7:30. After a leisurely meal, the group might disperse, or move to the Gazebo for a

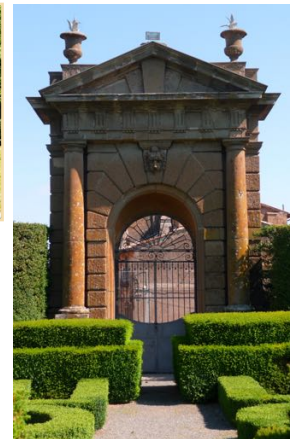


DAY 3 - VILLA LANTE AND LAKE BOLSENA

AM excursion PM Studio

Less than an hour away from La Romita is the gorgeous classic mannerist garden of Villa Lante. Attributed to Vignola, the gardens are a fantastic painter's destination with terraces, sculptures, grottoes, and cascading waterways that tie the various levels together. Subject matter abounds from the grand views up or down the terraces, to the individual sculptures and features.

From there, it's 20 minutes to *Lago di Bolsena* - Lake Bolsena - for a picnic lunch and painting. The lunch typically includes sandwiches, salad, fruit, desert, but always wine! Though Lake Trasimeno to the north frequently gets more attention, Lago di Bolsena is classified by the EU in the top rank of clean water and is locally known as the prettier of the two. Between the open water, the sandy beaches with umbrella-like pine trees, the classic boats, and the mix of medieval and renaissance architectures, something will capture your artist's eye - though you could always forgo painting in favor of a dip!



DAY 4 - TODI

AM Excursion, PM Studio

Todi - about 40 minutes from La Romita – has one of the most beautiful piazzas in Italy and is recognizable from the exterior shots in “the Agony and the Ecstasy”. A fantastic park on the way into town has a dramatic view of the town itself but also great panoramas of the valley stretching of towards Perugia. Todi is a favorite stop as it has a little of everything: great external architecture, intimate alleyways, fountains, and scenic views. There are some shopping opportunities and good food options, and though usually Todi is only a half-day trip, the group sometimes stays through lunch to sample restaurant fare.



DAY 5 - ASSISI & DERUTA

Full Day Excursion

Assisi, the birthplace of Saint Francis, is the most famous city in Umbria. For painters, there are a wealth of beautiful sights and many places to work in comfort. The majestic double basilica of Saint Francis anchors the bottom of the city while a great fortress, the Rocca Maggiore, commands the view from above. Of particular note in the Basilica are the number and beauty of frescos by the artists who gave birth to Renaissance painting...Giotto, Cimabue, Martini, Lorenzetti, and dozens of others. There are several great site-lines to the Basilica and other noteworthy scenes around the town, as well as great views down the hill and across the plains from the fortress above.

With plenty to paint and to explore, a trip to Assisi is an all-day event and an opportunity for participants to have a lunch at one of the many restaurants or caffes.

On the way back to La Romita, we frequently detour through Deruta to give participants an opportunity to shop for Umbrian Maiolica pottery. The unique, ancient designs make excellent gifts or souvenirs.



DAY 6 - STUDIO / MARMORE FALLS

AM & PM Studio

Studio day – time for review and critique, lessons, and a rest. We'll take a quick trip over the hill to Cascata Delle Marmore, Europe's second largest waterfall. The Cascata was originally created by Roman hydro-engineers in the third century BCE and modified over the centuries to give it its current majestic form.

Students are free to explore the network of paths that wind around (and behind) the falls and capture sights with sketchbook or camera. It is a dramatic sight with many excellent views, white of the violent water against the lush green of the ravine, close enough to feel the spray.

A brief trip, but memorable.



DAY 7 - CARSULAE

AM Excursion, PM Studio

Ancient Rome is in evidence throughout Italy, but Carsulae offers the artist a more intimate and poignant experience of that civilization. 20 minutes from La Romita lie the remains of a Roman town, abandoned in the 4th century and now an active archeological site. Carsulae offers an unusual space for the plein air painter, secluded yet open, the outlines of the ancient town discernable by the walls and few structures that stand. It's central axis is the ancient path of the Via Flaminia, one of the great Roman roads that ran from Rome to Rimini on the Adriatic coast. To one side is a forum and amphitheater, to the other are the remains of public buildings, and at the furthest end of the site, an archway marks the edge of the town.



DAY 8 - MONTEFALCO

AM Excursion, PM Studio

Montefalco is the classic example of an Umbrian hill town. It sprawls across the top of a hill overlooking Val D'Umbria, a site continuously inhabited since ancient times. Because of the gorgeous panoramas, it is known as the "La ringhiera dell'Umbria", (Balcony of Umbria). Its unique circular central piazza and quiet streets are a plein-air painter's dream. This town is the center of the "Sagrantino di Montefalco" wine district and also known for its intricate linens.

In addition to exteriors of particular beauty, Montefalco also hosts one of the most beautiful church/museum in Italy, featuring a famous cycle of the life of St. Francis by Florentine renaissance painter Benozzo Gozzoli.

A popular choice for painters is to visit the Arnaldo Caprai vinyard and to paint from their shaded terrace. Depending on the time of the visit, they offer wine-tasting and vineyard tours.



DAY 9 - ORVIETO

Full Day Excursion

Dramatic Orvieto, perched on a butte of volcanic tufa, is known for its white wine and the architectural marvel of its cathedral. The location was a major center of the Etruscan civilization, and the source of a richness of artifacts from the time. The jewel of Orvieto is without question the Cathedral, designed by Arnolfo di Cambio (who is also credited as the architect of the Florence cathedral), with its alternating stripes of travertine and basalt and fronted by a façade of amazing golden mosaics and pilasters covered in relief sculptures. That, and many other beautiful buildings and views make Orvieto a rich destination for artists, and worth a whole day's exploration.



DAY 10 - BEVAGNA

AM Excursion, PM Studio

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DAY 11 - DEPARTURE

With clothes, gear, souvenirs, and many new works carefully packed, the group boards the bus back to Leonardo Da Vinci.

With such a wealth of possibilities to choose from, the challenge is to find a good balance between excursions and studio time. While there is a natural inclination to want to see *everything*, we have found a good balance by following an AM-Excursion, PM-Studio schedule, with a few all-day trips to "major" towns to anchor the experience. This allows instructors many diverse opportunities for teaching from in-the-field demos to in-the-studio critique - but also gives participants a rich experience and many chances to apply what they're learning.

Every single item on the itinerary can be changed to suit the instructor, the group, or the specific opportunities at hand. Do you want to see something again? We'll go there again. Not getting enough studio time, and want an extra day back at La Romita? No problem. Is there a festival or an evening concert that sounds like fun? We'll make it happen. Our goal is for everyone to have the most amazing experience possible. All we ask is that the group stay together.