

TOSCANA COLORI®

"The Drawing: instruments and supports"

Sunday: Welcome to San Galgano

For those arriving by plane, train or coach, we'll be waiting for you at the Florence airport or at the train or coach stations in Siena. When you get to *Toscana Colori®*, it will be our pleasure to accompany you to your apartments. Your first experience with typical Tuscan cuisine will be at lunch, scheduled for about 1 pm. We hope you will be pleasantly surprised by the welcome you receive.



Afterwards, you can relax at the poolside in your accommodations or visit the town, which is actually a small agricultural museum, where you will be able to see several ancient tools that were once used in our countryside.

The rest of the day will be dedicated to exploring *Toscana Colori®*, to enable you to 'harmonise' with the surrounding environment.

A visit to the Montesiepi Hermitage, where the famous "Sword in the Rock" is located, is a must. It is an authentic medieval relic, dating from about 1100 AD, which belonged to the Saint and commemorates the traditions and saga of King Arthur. The adjacent Abbey of San Galgano, the Romanesque-gothic church without a roof, is also important. It is the site of numerous events during the year and has been a location for many films and documentaries.

For those who wish to learn more about these environs, we can accompany you to visit the medieval village of Chiusdino, which is just a short distance away. Enthusiasts who want to explore the area can discover the secrets of this suggestive corner of paradise, with the assistance of our tour guides.

Dinner, which is always a convivial time for relaxation, will be served at about 8 pm and the various dishes will always respect Tuscan gastronomic tradition.

After dinner we can spend some time together in company to exchange our impressions and the emotions experienced during the day.

Toscana Colori®
Eremo di San Galgano
IT – 53012, Chiusdino SI – Italy
Tel. +39 030 2751320
<http://www.toscanacolori.it>

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Monday: Nutgall ink, the woods and charcoal piles

Your first experience of ancient pictorial techniques begins with “metallic ink”: a particular colour obtained by processing parts of plants that can be found in the woods we’ll be visiting.

We’ll learn to recognise the berries that provide colour, how to handle them and process them in a completely natural manner, to obtain their pigments; these are practices that go back to about 600 BC. We’ll then attempt to utilise the inks obtained, in the same manner they were used in ancient times, on special supports that we’ll gradually help you to discover.



After a morning of experimentation with these curious techniques, lunch awaits us at 1 pm. It will again be a new gastronomic experience, with typical local and traditional Tuscan products: “ribollita” soup, the legendary “panzanella” hams, savoury bread and wild boar stew; not to mention the sweets and wines, which always crown good Tuscan cuisine. These are just a few of the dishes you will be tasting during your stay at *Toscana Colori®*. After lunch you can relax until about 3:30 pm, when we strike out on our adventure: a trip back in time through ancient pictorial techniques.

During the first day we’ll go to the “Museum of the Woods” in Orgia, near Sovicille. We’ll learn how to recognise the natural environment where the berries that provide colour grow; we’ll be able to understand how “spindles”, or “natural charcoal” sticks – the instrument that ancient masters used widely in their drawings – were produced in ancient times and are still produced today. We’ll then visit a wood, in search of “nutgalls”. Those of you who find them will be able to take them home as souvenirs of this singular experience; and if we’re lucky, we’ll be able to visit a charcoal pile to see a demonstration of the procedure used to produce “spindles”.

Our return to *Toscana Colori®* for dinner is scheduled for about 8 pm.

We don’t want to ruin the surprises we have in store for you in the evenings you will be spending at *Toscana Colori®*. We hope they will be unforgettable for you and fully representative of the hospitality that only this land is capable of transmitting.

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Tuesday: Parchment, goose-feather pens and Siena

Our journey into the past through pictorial techniques continues with a morning dedicated to the processing and use of rawhide parchment and the preparation and use of goose-feather pens. Once you have learned how to prepare the support, stretched on animal bones, we can make a foray into the art of drawing with these ancient instruments. We'll show you how to prepare and cut a goose-feather pen to create a writing instrument.



In the afternoon we'll really take a trip back through time when we visit Siena and discover her secrets.

We'll visit the "Piccolomini" Book Shop, which has a rich collection of antique illuminated incunabulums, painted on the type of parchment you used during the morning. Thus, you will be able to "actually touch" the true Tuscan culture of writing, which has always inspired your enthusiasm.

During our stay in Siena we'll visit one of the Sienese contradas, where the costumes, arms and ancient equipment are displayed, before being used on occasion of the famous Palio. We couldn't neglect a visit to "Piazza del Campo" to complete this magnificent day: the natural stage where, twice a year, the most suggestive horserace in Tuscany takes place. We can imagine the horses and jockeys of the various contradas vying for victory, to win the "cencio" cloth

We'll be returning to *Toscana Colori®* with our eyes full of the harmony of these suggestive environs and after dinner, if you want, we can entertain you with the narration of anecdotes and interesting details about the places we have visited, or we can spend the evening in the area of San Galgano and the Abbey without a roof, which will be knowingly illuminated and capable of providing us with new sensations.

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Wednesday: “Bambagina” cotton wool paper, silver tips and...

Paper is undoubtedly the most widely used support in drawing, so we couldn't fail to have an important reference to it in our experiences on ancient pictorial techniques. On Wednesday we'll describe the phases of processing the so-called “Bambagina” pure cotton paper by hand. You will be able to do this yourselves, producing and then drawing on this type of support, with the instruments used in ancient times and the silver tips and styluses that were used during the Renaissance.

Lunch will be served and afterwards, around 3:30 pm, there will be a surprise for you instead of the usual in-depth study.



As you know and, as you have been able to see up to now, Tuscany is a land that is rich in oenological and gastronomic traditions.

We therefore feel it is important to transmit this type of culture as well, with a day dedicated to traditional foods and the area of origin – in a word: Montalcino.

This particular afternoon will be spent in the hills where Italy's most famous wine, perhaps, Brunello, is grown. We'll visit the medieval village of Montalcino, with its suggestive *tableau vivants*, as well as a local wine cellar, where the various phases of processing and conservation of this excellent “nectar of Bacchus” will be illustrated.

We'll wind up the evening in these environs and return to *Toscana Colori*® to spend the night.

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Thursday: Papyrus, calamus quills and San Gimignano

The meetings on ancient drawing and writing instruments continue with the description of processing of different types of papyrus, which is still produced in Italy today. You will learn how to use “calamus” bamboo quills and “metallic ink” to draw on these types of paper. We’ll show you how to create your own writing tools and concretely experience this forgotten way of working. You will be thrilled to hold these instruments of art in your hands and use them today, just as they were used in ancient times.

After lunch and a short siesta, we’ll be ready to discover the beauty of San Gimignano. With the assistance of our guides, we’ll take you on a tour of the enchanted city of a hundred towers, where time seems to stand still, and discover together the suggestive corners of this stupendous medieval town: its unforgettable environs, suggestive historical centre, Romanesque Cathedral and the City Hall, in addition to the “Santa Fina” apothecary, where we’ll be able to admire the ancient ceramic containers of Renaissance spices.

Time and willingness permitting, we can visit another beautiful historical centre on the return trip: Colle Val d’Elsa, which is famous for its hand made glassware.

We’re due back at *Toscana Colori®* at about 8 pm.



After dinner is always a stimulating time that we want you to discover at the appropriate time. One thing is certain, however: it will be a time loaded with the culture and history that make *Toscana Colori®* a singular and unforgettable experience.

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Friday: Glued cardboard, red haematite and Massa Marittima

This last day of culture on ancient pictorial techniques will be dedicated to the preparation of different types of supports: cardboards with glue priming and kaolin, or china clay. These supports were prepared by ancient masters as bases for drawings with charcoal or red haematite. After learning how to prepare these supports, we'll practice our manual abilities by doing actual drawings with these instruments. In the afternoon we have scheduled a visit to Massa Marittima, the city renowned for crossbow archery and its surrounding Tuscan metalliferous hills. On this outing, again supported by our tireless guides, we'll admire the enchanting medieval historical centre, in addition to the "Contemporary Art Exposition Centre"; in fact, the "Martini Collection", which includes several works by Pietro Annigoni, is on display here. This famous Italian artist, better known as "The Painter of Queens", made extensive use of the techniques of charcoal and red haematite, which we have dealt with.

But beyond the cultural and artistic motivations, we would also like to dedicate this outing to the territorial characteristics of Massa Marittima. This town, in fact, is an important centre for collectors and merchants of minerals, precisely because of the nature of the surrounding territory. We'll be able to visit the "Small Mine", which is located in the historical centre of town and which commemorates the type of work that was carried out in the area in the past. We're due back at *Toscana Colori®* at about 8 pm.

This evening will be dedicated to farewells and acknowledgements. This is our evening, with moments of joy and friendship. You will receive your certificates of participation: the whole evening will be dedicated to you, who have welcomed the challenge and measured yourselves against a culture that has now been forgotten, which has faded into the mist of time.



Our best wishes for a wonderful stay in our company.

Toscana Colori® reserves the right to make any curriculum or itinerary changes.

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