

# Awaken the Artist Within - A Taste of Tuscany

September 29 - October 11, 2018

Venice | Florence | Siena | Spannocchia | Tuscan Hill Towns

With Erin Lee Gafill & Tom Birmingham

This is an exceptionally small tour group of kindred spirits who wish to experience Italy in a rich and personal way, as an artist would. There are only six spaces available for the Florence and Venice supplement, so you can count on an experience that rivals independent travel, but with the support of knowledgeable guidance and instruction.



The Tuscan Retreat at Spannocchia is limited to 18 people. You'll have the opportunity to participate in enriching group activities, yet have quiet time on your own. We strive to create a safe, inspirational, and comfortable environment where you will be able to explore new creative ideas and develop caring relationships.

Italy is known for its love of fine food, a commitment to hospitality, and a reverence for the visual arts. At Spannocchia, with its extraordinary 15th century castle and 1200 acres of forest lands, replete with hiking trails, 12th century abbey, and abandoned castle, you'll have ample time to experience "Il Dolce Far Niente" - the sweetness of doing nothing - as well as having lots of stimulating and inspiring experiences.



### Venice - Saturday, September 29 - Tuesday, October 2

One of the world's most beautiful cities, Venice has been a crossroads of the world for 1000 years. Just one morning observing the shimmer of light on the water against the Byzantine silhouettes of the old city and you'll understand why. We'll spend our mornings sketching along the Grand Canal, visiting the Historic Center, and touring the colorful buildings of Burano and Murano, famous for lace-making and glass blowing.

We'll also visit the Doge's Palace and St. Mark's Cathedral, and sample local cuisine focused on fresh seafood and grilled vegetables, enjoy evening "cichetti", tapas Venice-style.

### Florence - Tuesday, October 2 - Thursday, October 4

We'll make the most of our short stay in the birthplace of the Renaissance, lodging near the Historic Center just minutes from the Duomo, Santa Maria Novella, and Mercato Centrale.

Here, we'll sketch and photograph along the Arno, in the beautiful piazzas, and in the stunning medieval basilicas still standing strong after half a millennium.

We'll enjoy local cuisine at our favorite spots, and impromptu picnics in the parks. We'll visit the Medici Chapel, the Duomo, Ponte Vecchio, Piazza Signoria, and more. From piazzas and gardens and scenic vistas we'll sit and sketch the beautiful statuary and architecture that populates the city - along with its colorful denizens.



## Spannocchia - Thursday, October 4 - Thursday, October 11

*Here is a link to Spannocchia's website - <http://www.spannocchia.com>*

On to Spannocchia! Private coaches will transport us two hours south to this 15th Century Castle, our home away from home for the next seven days. Here, we'll begin the creative retreat portion of our journey. Days will include scheduled sessions of journal writing, sketch and watercolor, yoga, sampling local food and wines, and photography. Evenings will begin with a glass of wine on the terrace overlooking the gorgeous Tuscan countryside at sunset, followed by a freshly prepared four course dinner derived from the organic gardens of Spannocchia and local countryside. Quiet evenings include time to chat, play cards, or read.

We'll have two day trips, one to Siena, and another to a Tuscan Hill Town to be determined.



## Premium Tour registration includes -

- Five nights lodging in the heart of Venice and Florence.
- Most meals. Each day we'll visit an individually selected restaurant for one meal and share a picnic for the other. Breakfast is included with your lodging. (You're on your own for one dinner in Venice and one lunch in Florence)
- Ground transportation to Florence, a 3-day unlimited Vaporetto (water bus) pass in Venice.
- Entry fees for the Doge's Palace, the Duomo, and transportation around Venice as well as the Medici Chapel and other select locations in Florence.
- Workshop in making a hand-made sketchbook, inclusive of all materials.
- All instruction, guidance, and information about the cities we visit.

## Spannocchia Retreat includes -

- Ground Transportation to Spannocchia from the Santa Maria Novella Train Station in Florence and back from Spannocchia to the Train Station or the Florence Airport at the end of the retreat.
- All meals either at Spannocchia or on day excursions.
- Entry fees to the Duomo in Siena.
- Ground Transportation to and from Siena, and another Hill Town.
- All instruction, workshops, and support



## What is not included -

- Airfare
- Travel Insurance
- Two meals (one dinner Venice, one lunch Florence)
- Options - Cooking Class and Massages - at Spannocchia
- Incidental expenses & shopping
- Art Supplies

## Registration Fee -

Spannocchia Retreat - October 4 - 11, 2018

Single Occupancy - \$3200 - Double Occupancy - \$2750

Premium Venice & Florence Tour with Spannocchia Retreat  
September 29 - October 11, 2018

Single Occupancy - \$5300 - Double Occupancy - \$4450