

❖❖ Learning Tuscany, Summer 2025 ❖❖

Week of Monday, June 2

Wednesday, June 4: STUDENTS LEAVE US

- 6/5 (Th): **Arrive Rome:** Check in at Albergo Santa Chiara; orientation
6/6 (F): Rome: Ancient Day: Colosseum, Forum, Campidoglio, Pantheon
6/7 (Sa): Rome: Medieval Day: Roman Ghetto, Santa Cecilia in Trastevere, Santa Maria in Trastevere
6/8 (Su): Rome: Renaissance/Baroque Day, Part I: Gesù, S. Ivo, S. Agostino, S. Luigi dei Francesi, Borghese

Week of Monday, June 9

- 6/9 (M): Rome: Renaissance Baroque Day, Part II: Piazza Navona, Ponte Sant'Angelo, Vatican Museums, St. Peter's
6/10 (T): **Siena:** by coach bus: Get settled, brief walking tour, **welcome dinner**
6/11 (W): **Class:** introduction and orientation; ART pm
6/12 (Th): **Class:** Palazzo Pubblico am; ART pm
6/13 (F): **Florence (Firenze)** by rail. Walking tour of the city. Return by bus.

Week of Monday, June 16

- 6/16 (M): **Class:** Siena Duomo, crypt, and baptistery am; ART pm
6/17 (T): **Class:** Duomo museum am; ART pm
6/18 (W): **Class:** Ospedale di Santa Maria della Scala am; ART pm [**group dinner**]
6/19 (Th): **Class:** San Domenico, Fonte Branda am; ART pm
6/20 (F): **Florence (Firenze)** by rail. San Marco and the Duomo Museum. Return by bus after long weekend.

Week of Monday, June 23

- 6/23 (M): **Return from long weekend**
6/24 (T): **Return from long weekend**
6/25 (W): **Class:** SM dei Servi am, Porta Romana: ART pm
6/26 (Th): **Class:** Biccherne museum (Archivio) am; ART pm
6/27 (F): **Florence** by rail; Uffizi

Week of Monday, June 30

- 6/30 (M) **Class:** San Francesco am; ART pm
7/1 (T) **Class:** Pinacoteca am; ART pm
7/2 (W): **Palio Day**
7/3 (Th): **Class:** Work on Projects; ART pm
7/4 (F): **The Italian Countryside: Pienza, agricultural visit**

Week of Monday, July 7

- 7/7-8 (M-T): **Class:** Project Presentations; ART pm
7/9-10 (W-Th): **Class:** finish Projects; ART pm
7/11 (F): **Student Exhibition; farewell dinner**
7/12 (Sa): Check out of apartments a.m.; **departure from Siena**

Learning Tuscany: Course Descriptions, Summer 2025

Learning Tuscany, ART 319T / ART 352J / ART 379T

Photography and Tourism: Observing Travel and Culture in Italy

Instructor: Eli Durst, Associate Professor of Practice, Studio Art (eli.durst@gmail.com)

The concept of pilgrimage has been central to photography since the medium's invention. In the mid-nineteenth century, demand exploded for daguerreotypes (an early type of photograph) depicting the most important wonders of the world, from the pyramids of Egypt to the Pantheon in Rome. Suddenly, anyone could see treasures of antiquity that few people would ever be able to see in person. This marked the beginning of the photographic pilgrimage. With the advancement of technology and the democratization of travel, people all over the world were traveling to society's most cherished monuments not only see them for themselves, but to photograph them and share them—to use photographic representation to transform that place into a commodity. In this course, we will learn and use the fundamentals of digital photography to explore the modern pilgrimage in contemporary Italy. Instead of simply reproducing the same images that we've seen countless times, students will be encouraged to think critically about how today's global world thinks about and interacts with historical western spaces.

Learning Tuscany 2025, ARH 331J (VAPA, GC)

Holy Ground: Art and Pilgrimage in Medieval and Renaissance Italy

Instructor: Dr. Ann Johns, Distinguished Senior Lecturer, Art History (acjohns@austin.utexas.edu)

Why did people travel in the Middle Ages and Renaissance Italy? How were these journeys reflected in art and architecture, whether as portable objects (small altarpieces), illustrated books and manuscripts, narratives of journeys, pilgrimage churches (such as San Domenico and the Ospedale of Santa Maria della Scala in Siena), or large-scale paintings of experienced or spiritual travel, such as Ambrogio Lorenzetti's *Good Government* frescoes in Siena? And how different was the medieval pilgrim, collecting her religious tokens along a pilgrimage route, from today's cultural "pilgrim", who might collect T-shirts, post-cards, or even countries themselves? Italy has long been a destination for travelers of every ilk: foreign merchants, religious pilgrims, travelers in seek of adventure, and cultural enthusiasts. In the Middle Ages and Renaissance, the economies of Siena, Florence, and Rome were greatly enriched by both religious pilgrims and lay travelers, resulting in the spectacular development of art and architecture that we know today. In this course, we will explore the notion of pilgrimage in the art and architecture of central Italy, through reading, discussion, site visits, presentations, and post-field trip analyses. While we will study and visit the great, canonical works of central Italy, we will also explore smaller and more personal elements of material culture, including relics, small paintings, and modest churches and hospitals. Throughout, we will use the issue of travel and pilgrimage as a prism with which we can focus our explorations.

"Typical" Days on the Learning Tuscany program

1. A Field Trip Day (not Rome)

We leave for Florence (3 times) or the Italian Countryside (once) by train or coach bus early (around 7:00 or 7:30); give yourselves plenty of time to get to the train or bus station, and remember that it gets light around 5:00, so it's not as hard to get up. You'll also want to make sure your knees, stomachs, and shoulders can be covered for church visits. Try to grab some coffee and breakfast for the train/bus ride; more bars are selling coffee in "to go" cups, which are fine for the train but less so for a bus. We'll arrive in our city/town and have time for coffee/bathroom/more food. We'll look at art/have time to make art as a group until lunch, and usually have some free time. We'll meet in the afternoon for more looking at art/ART. For the 3 Florence trips, you'll have a return bus ticket so that you can take one of the many express buses back to Siena. So you can go back to Siena to eat dinner, stay in Florence, or go somewhere for the weekend. You will have taken a preparatory quiz prior to each field trip, so you'll be prepared. We go to Florence at the ends of 3 weeks, so that you can catch another train if you want to travel over the weekend. We'll give you time in the morning to check your overnight bags in the Florence train station.

2. A Field Trip Day, Rome

The breakfast buffet at our hotel opens at 7:00. There is a large selection of food (cereal, rolls, juices and coffee, yogurt, cheese and meats, and sometimes eggs), but be sure to eat in the breakfast room; they get freaked out if you try to take food out of the breakfast area. We will usually be ready to hit the streets of Rome by 8:30, and they are LONG and FABULOUS days, with all of our classes on site. You will have breaks for lunch. There should be a mini-fridge in your room; you could go to an *alimentari* (grocery store) and get some lunch supplies to keep in your fridge. This is a great way to save some money. You will need to be rested, fed, and hydrated for these days, because we do a lot of walking (at a brisk pace) and looking (you'll need to develop your museum stamina if you don't have it already)!

3. Days in Siena

Your weekdays in Siena will typically be very full. Even at the end, you'll have projects and you'll be getting ready for your Siena (and later VAC) exhibition, so you need to keep up with your work. Don't get frustrated! Remember that this is not a vacation; you are getting 6 hours of credit for this, and surely you want to learn a lot! But if you're feeling overwhelmed, please come talk to Ann, Eli, and/or your TA, because our intent is to teach you as much as possible while still giving you time to explore Siena.

Typically, we will meet somewhere around 9:00 for the art history class. This might be in the classroom or onsite at the Duomo, a museum, the Ospedale, or even a café for discussion of the readings; my goal, however, is to spend as little time as possible in the classroom, so rather than looking at slides, we'll go look at some art! Expect to stay focused for much of the morning. We will then give you time for lunch, and some days we might eat lunch (or breakfast, or dinner) together. After lunch, you'll have Eli's photo class, usually from 2-5. Some days you'll be in the classroom, but much of the time you'll be in the city, making your work. These are full days!

For the art history component of the program, you will begin working in groups on your group project at the end of the program. So, at the end, I'll meet with individual groups on a rotating basis, which means I won't meet with each person every day. You'll still have Eli's class in the afternoon, but again, you'll be working toward your final exhibitions.