

# “Sketchbook Italia” - 7 day Art Retreat

Sunday 1<sup>st</sup> - Sunday 8<sup>th</sup> June 2025

Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> - Sunday 21<sup>st</sup> September 2025

## Course Introduction

Calling all artists and would-be artists! Relax amidst the beautiful rolling hills and mountains of Marche in Italy and unleash your inner artist.

Tuition and demonstrations will focus on capturing your holiday in watercolour within a sketchbook/journal but this is *your* holiday and you can paint as little or as much as you want, in whatever way you want.

This holiday is for everyone with a passion for art, where you can unleash your artistic talents in whichever way you chose. Whether you're an expert oil painter or you've never picked up a pencil before and want to explore the beautiful medium of watercolours with our experienced tutor - this art retreat is for you!

## Will there be any tuition?

Resident artist, Sue Cooper, a professional watercolourist who has been teaching and painting in Marche for 8 years will be sharing her love of watercolours and sketchbooking through daily tuition and demonstrations. You will learn how to sketch and paint a range of subjects to capture any scene. After your week away, you will have a solid foundation in sketching, watercolour and composition to continue your artistic journey. You will be returning home with memories recorded in your own sketchbook journal as a unique souvenir of your stay here in Italy.

## Why sketchbooks?

Drawing and painting in sketchbooks is the perfect way of not just recording your travels, but trying out new techniques and ideas without the pressure of producing a “masterpiece”. They are a brilliant way of capturing memories, enabling you to truly immerse yourself in your environment in a way that taking photos rarely does. There's no need to carry around bulky, heavy equipment. Watercolour is not just a beautiful and expressive medium in its own right but it's the ultimate in portability as the kits are usually compact and can easily fit in a handbag or satchel.

Once you start sketchbooking, you will see life and beauty in things you never gave a second glance to in the past.



## Where will we be painting?

You'll be immersed in nature during your stay at Il Picchio Verde, nestled in beautiful countryside outside of the quaint hilltop town of Sant'Angelo in Pontano. Il Picchio Verde has spectacular views to inspire any budding artist. You'll also have plenty of inspiration for your sketchbook as you'll benefit from daily excursions to some of the most picturesque areas that Marche has to offer including medieval hill-top towns, mountains, lakes and waterfalls.

### **What if I just want to do my own art?**

Perhaps you've already established your style and medium and simply want to benefit from the gorgeous Italian setting surrounded by budding artists - that's fine too. You can take advantage of as many or as little of the lessons and excursions as you'd like!

### **Flights**

Flights to be confirmed as soon as they are released and go from London Stansted to Ancona in Le Marche. Flights are approx 2 hours 20. The transfer to the accommodation will be available free of charge on selected flights to Ancona (tbc once the airline has confirmed timings). The transfer will take approx. 1 hour and 30 minutes.

### **Price**

**Flights are not included.** If booked early can often be as cheap as £50 return from London Stansted to Ancona airport.

The price for this retreat varies depending upon the accommodation you choose at Il Picchio Verde (see Accommodation section at the end for more details):

- "Jasmine" Apartment (1 double bed) £1455.
- "Biancospino" Apartment (1 double bed) £1455.
- "Marie-Curie" Double bedroom private bathroom £1350.
- "Iris" Double bedroom adjacent bathroom £1210.
- "Althaea" One single in twin room, shared bathroom £1175
- "Althaea" One single in twin room, shared bathroom £1175
- "Althaea" One single in semi-private area, shared bathroom £1175

Maximum group size is 8. Non painters are very welcome and will find many things to do, especially if you are a nature lover. If you would like to bring a partner or share a room then please contact us for pricing.

### **What's included?**

- Airport pick up from Ancona on selected flights. Timings tbc once the airline have confirmed flights.
- All but two of the meals are provided by our personal chef, Rita who prepares delicious and healthy home-cooked fresh plant-based food for breakfast, lunch and dinner each day. We'll be exploring a local restaurant for two of the meals throughout the week to give you the opportunity to taste local cuisine in our favourite restaurants. To help budget, these are likely to be approx 15- 25 euros each including wine.
- 3+ hours of tuition and demonstrations per day with access to the tutor all day!
- Daily excursions to local villages and beauty spots for plein-air sketching sessions
- Cantina Tour and Wine tasting
- Truffle and Wine tasting
- Use of camp stools for plein-air sketching sessions

### **What do I need to bring?**

To benefit from the lessons you will need:

- HB / 2b pencil
- Kneadable rubber
- Watercolour paints (e.g. Winsor and Newton Cotman Sketchers Pocket Kit or equivalent)
- Brushes: Size 10 round brush, 1/4 inch sword brush, Size 6 pointed wash (Daler Rowney) or equivalents
- Sketchbook minimum 200gsm. I recommend Seawhites Watercolour Travel Journal - A5 Landscape - 200 GSM - 60 Pages - Acid - NOT (Approx £11 on Amazon)
- As we will primarily be sketchbooking, easels will not be required unless you particularly want to bring one!

**Materials can be ordered through the tutor on request.**

**Example Schedule (modifications might be made on the basis of weather etc.)**

**Day 1 - Saturday 15<sup>th</sup> June**

*Morning/afternoon:* Arrival at accommodation at approx 3pm. You will have access to your room, the grounds and the swimming pool on arrival.

*Evening:* 6pm - Welcome and introduction from your host Riccardo and resident artist Sue Cooper followed by a welcome dinner at Il Picchio Verde.

**Day 2 - Sunday 16<sup>th</sup> June**

*Morning:* Instruction and demonstrations - Starting your sketchbook, different types of journals and sketchbooks and what materials you'll need. You will learn basic sketching and watercolour techniques to get you started.

*Afternoon:* Painting / sketching excursion to Lago di Fiastra. Instruction and Demonstration. Bring your swimming costume!

**Day 3 - Monday 17<sup>th</sup> June**

*Morning:* Instruction and Demonstration - Urban sketching and painting techniques.

*Afternoon:* Painting/sketching excursion to Sant'Angelo in Pontano.

**Day 4 - Tuesday 18<sup>th</sup> June**

*Morning:* Instruction and Demonstration - Painting flowers and plants.

*Afternoon:* Cantina tour and sketching at the vineyard.

**Day 5 - Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup> June**

*Morning:* Instruction on painting and drawing people and animals.

*Afternoon:* Excursion to Abbadia di Fiastra, a beautiful monastery set amidst beautiful countryside where you can paint fields, woods, the river, horses and/or the monastery building itself.

**Day 6 - Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> June**

*Morning:* Excursion to the local town of Sarnano to visit the market and paint the waterfalls and surrounding countryside.

*Afternoon:* Urban sketching in the beautiful medieval town of Sarnano and truffle tasting.

**Day 7 - Friday 21<sup>st</sup> June**

Free day! There is plenty to paint and draw around Il Picchio Verde so spend your time painting or have an art free day relaxing by the pool with a good book. Sue will be on hand to provide any advice for painting or drawing.

**Day 8 - Home!**

*Morning:* Breakfast and then leaving approx 10am to get to Ancona airport.

## The Accommodation

Il Picchio Verde is nestled in the foothills of the Sibillini mountains, just outside of the quaint village of Sant'angelo in Pontano. The property offers spectacular views overlooking the village of San Ginesio and surrounding countryside all the way to the coast.

Il Picchio Verde has a large swimming pool where you can relax on the hottest days or sip a cocktail at sunset. The house and apartments are surrounded by a beautiful well-maintained garden for guests to enjoy. Il Picchio Verde consists of accommodation both in the main house and in two separate apartments.



## Jasmine and Biancospino Apartments

The apartments recently furnished are composed of kitchen with cooker, fridge, crockery, kettle and toaster, large living room with a sofa and satellite TV, and finally bathroom with shower.

The mezzanine in both apartments is reached through an iron staircase.

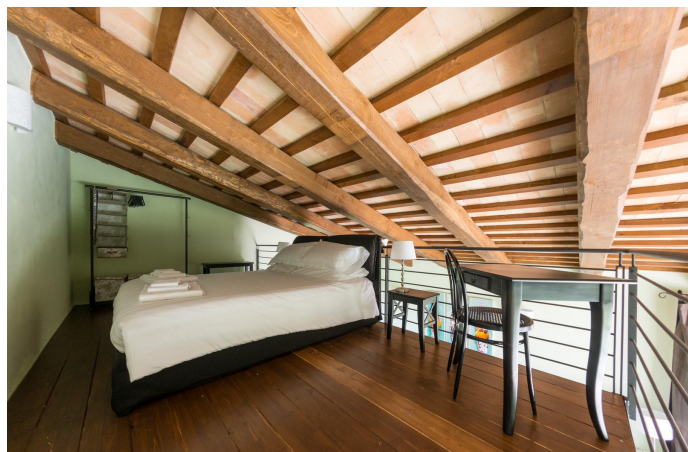
On the outside include a portico with iron table ideal for outdoor lunch for the apartment "Biancospino" and garden space with table and deckchairs for the apartment "Jasmine".

- Sleeps a maximum of 2 each: 1 couple or 2 singles
- One double bed
- One sofa in the living space
- Private bath
- Fully equipped kitchen
- Patio

**Jasmine Apartment**



**Biancospino Apartment**



**Althaea**

The cozy attic bedroom “Althaea” occupies the entire second floor of the building and offers a bedroom with either a double bed / twin beds, a separate single bed in a semi-private area and includes a bathroom with shower, a small study and living room



**Marie-Curie**

The lovely suite “Marie Curie”, whose name comes from a rose in our garden, is a large bright room with wooden beamed ceiling furnished with antique and paintings. The bathroom, adjacent to the room, includes a large bath where you can spend highly relaxing moments



**Iris**

The smallest of the rooms, Iris, softened by pastel colors and panoramic views of the hills beyond the pool, is located on the first floor. The bathroom is adjacent to the room and includes a bath where you can relax in peace after a long day of sketching!



**Food**

This stay will be all-inclusive of food and wine to give you as much time as possible to concentrate on your artwork. Our chef, Rita, will provide a delicious array of delicious healthy plant-based food for breakfast, lunch and dinner.



**Are you interested?**

If you have any questions or would like to sign up, please register your interest with Sue Cooper who will coordinate the booking:

[Suecooperartist@yahoo.com](mailto:Suecooperartist@yahoo.com) (please check your junk mail for a response!), 07726 466628

An initial 30% deposit will be required to confirm your booking, followed by 70% two months before your retreat.