

**SPRINGTIME IN FLORENCE AND ASSISI TOUR**  
**VILLA LE BALZE, FIESOLE, ITALY**  
**May 5 - 18, 2009**

The transition in Western Europe from the medieval to the Renaissance world both contributed to and was shaped by new modes of expression in art, literature, philosophy, and spirituality. Through a close examination of some of these intellectual and artistic expressions (particularly those of Dante, Michelangelo, and Shakespeare), this study tour will seek first to define the medieval view of the world and then to trace its transformation to that of the Renaissance.

We shall reside at Georgetown's Villa Le Balze in Fiesole, a lovely hill town overlooking the city of Florence, and visit the relevant historic, artistic, and architectural treasures of Florence and its environs. We shall ordinarily visit the city in the morning, return to the Villa for dinner, and have the late afternoon free for individual activities. Discussions will continue on some evenings after supper. The first weekend of the tour will be spent in Assisi where we shall encounter the legacy of St. Francis in the town where he is buried. Some time has been provided during the second weekend for individual activities and travel.

The **tour leaders** will be Professors Penn Szitty and Michael Collins, both from the English Department at Georgetown University.

The **total cost** of the tour is **\$ 4,990.00 per person**. It includes accommodations at the Villa and at the hotel in Assisi; land travel by air conditioned motor coach in Italy; all meals at the Villa and breakfast and dinner in Assisi; all admissions fees; and tours as indicated in the itinerary and course description and subject to the specified conditions. Lunch in Assisi and in Siena is at the expense of the participants. The cost of the tour is based on double occupancy at the hotel and the Villa, except for one triple room at the Villa which may be requested, or which may be used if required to accommodate as many requests for space on the tour as possible (in some cases single rooms might be available at the hotel for a supplemental charge, but not at the Villa). For those participants taking the tour for academic credit, tuition is also included in the price of the tour.

## ITINERARY

### Tuesday May 5

Travelers arrive at the Villa Le Balze in Fiesole (Florence). Welcome reception, dinner, and orientation to the Villa.

### Wednesday May 6

Our program begins this morning with an introductory lecture on the medieval and Renaissance worldview. In the afternoon, we make our first trip into Florence to visit one of the city's great medieval cathedrals -- **Santa Maria Novella**, the site of Masaccio's revolutionary fresco, **The Holy Trinity**. In the evening, in preparation for our walking tour tomorrow of Dante's Florence, Professor Bruno Wanrooij, the Director of the Villa Le Balze, will discuss some contemporary social, political, and economic issues of the city of Florence.

### Thursday May 7

In the morning, we return to the city for a walking tour of Dante's Florence. In the afternoon, we turn our attention to St. Francis of Assisi, who was, with Dante, one of the two great precursors of the Renaissance and whose spirit seems still so strongly present in the lovely hill town we shall visit this weekend. In the evening, in preparation for our visit tomorrow to the **Uffizi Gallery**, we look at developments in art and literature that marked the transition from the medieval world to the Renaissance.

### Friday May 8

We shall begin the day with visits first to the **Convento San Marco** to see the marvelous frescoes of Fra Angelico, and then to the **Palazzo Medici** with its famous depiction of **The Journey of the Magi**. In the afternoon, we shall visit the renowned **Uffizi Gallery** where we shall examine at first hand many of the paintings we have been discussing over the past two days. During our visit, we shall encounter some of the greatest works of late medieval and Renaissance art. In the evening, we discuss the life of St. Francis as it was represented by Giotto and his school in the upper level of the **Basilica of St. Francis**.

### Saturday-Sunday May 9-10

This morning we leave the Villa and travel by motor coach to the medieval Umbrian hill town of Assisi. In the later morning, we visit the Basilica built over the tomb of St. Francis where countless people, some religious pilgrims, other believers in the spirit of peace and compassion in the life of St. Francis, have shared in the living legacy of **Il Poverello**. In the **Basilica** we see the extraordinary frescoes of Cimabue, the Lorenzetti brothers, and Giotto. Later we explore the rambling charm of Assisi's streets, unspoiled despite the town's many visitors. We spend Saturday night in Assisi where dinner and hotel have been arranged for us. On Sunday, we visit **Mount Subasio**, the retreat of St. Francis and his first followers; **Church of San Damiano**, one of the churches St. Francis restored; and the **Basilica of Santa Maria degli Angeli**, that now encloses the ground where St. Francis died. We return to the Villa in late afternoon. Before supper at the Villa, our discussion turns to **King Lear**, perhaps the richest expression in English of the multifaceted vision of the Renaissance.

### **Monday May 11**

We begin the day with a visit to **San Miniato**, a splendid medieval basilica on a hill high above Florence. We then proceed to **Santa Maria del Carmine**, the church which houses Masaccio's recently restored frescoes, including his famous **Expulsion**. Finally, we shall visit **Santa Croce**, one of Florence's great medieval cathedrals whose grounds enclose the **Pazzi Chapel** and Cimabue's famous crucifix, severely damaged in the flood of 1966. In the evening we shall begin our discussion of **The Divine Comedy**.

### **Tuesday May 12**

This morning we visit the **Palazzo del Bargello** and the **Museo dell'Opera del Duomo**, where we encounter a Pieta of Michelangelo and Donatello's statue of **Mary Magdalen**. In the evening, we shall continue our discussion of **The Divine Comedy**.

### **Wednesday May 13**

Today we travel by motor coach to the lovely medieval hill towns of **Siena** and **San Gimignano**, where part of E.M. Forster's novel, **Where Angels Fear to Tread**, takes place. We return to the Villa for dinner.

### **Thursday May 14**

This morning we conclude our discussion of **The Divine Comedy**. We then return to the Oltr'arno to visit the museum of the **Pitti Palace**. The remainder of the day is free. After dinner, we shall focus our attention on the achievements of the greatest Renaissance artist, Michelangelo Buonarroti.

### **Friday May 15**

This morning we visit the most well-known sites associated with Michelangelo in the city of Florence: the **Galleria dell'Accademia** to see the **David** and the **Bound Slaves**; the **Church of San Lorenzo**; and the **Medici Chapel** with its extraordinarily powerful tombal sculptures. The remainder of the day is free for individual visits to the many sites that our itinerary cannot include.

### **Saturday and Sunday May 16-17**

This weekend is free for informal visits by public transportation to Florence (e.g., the Medici Palace, Casa Buonarroti, or Santo Spirito) or for individual travel: a day's excursion to such nearby Tuscan towns as Lucca or Pistoia or, with a departure on Friday afternoon, an overnight trip by train or bus to such magnificent cities as Ravenna, Venice, or Urbino. Arrangements can easily be made in Florence. (Such travel is at the expense of the participants.) On Sunday evening, we gather for a farewell dinner at the Villa.

### **Monday May 18**

Departures from the Villa Le Balze.

*All details of the itinerary subject to change based on availability of accommodations, changes in opening\closing schedules, acts of God and other conditions beyond the control of the tour directors.*