The Italian Renaissance was one of the most culturally and politically transformative periods of history. As the revival of classical humanism and neo-platonic philosophy swept over the peninsula, old assumptions about the nature of man and his place in the universe were reconsidered. The rediscovery of the classical world presented new cultural models not only for art and architecture but for leading and governing. When Federico da Montefeltro, the Duke of Urbino, was asked what the most important characteristic of a leader was he answered “To be human“ thus synthesizing the questions of what it means to be human, what is man’s highest virtue and what are the moral and ethical obligations of those in power.

Travelers have been coming to this region ever since the Middle Ages for the beauty of the region's landscape and for the works of artistic genius fomented by the Italian Renaissance. This exclusive itinerary leaves the tourist routes behind to seek out the treasures and the pleasures that few are aware of. Each day promises memories of a lifetime and beauty that never fails to reawaken the soul.

Program Overview

The tour will begin in the city of Florence. During our brief stay here, we will use our time to become acquainted through our lectures and discussion of the places we will visit, their special attractions, and the rich patterns of historical and cultural interconnection among them during the Renaissance.

Departing from Florence, we will spend several days traveling through western and southern Tuscany and Umbria, a region of unique and unsurpassed natural beauty as well as home to a richly-layered heritage of living culture from the medieval period to the present day. Along the way we will visit towns like Siena, San Gimignano, Volterra, Pienza, Montalcino, Arezzo, Montepulciano, Sansepolcro, Gubbio, Assisi, Orvieto and venturing into the Marches, the magnificent city of Urbino. A unique attraction of this itinerary is that it allows us to follow the "Piero della Francesca Trail," a pilgrimage for art lovers made famous by Aldous Huxley and John Pope Hennessey. The Trail will ultimately lead us over the mountains from Umbria into the Marches and to the beautiful ducal city of Urbino and the ideal Renaissance Court. "The Piero Trail" allows us to take a day trip through the breathtaking Casentino province of Tuscany to visit Mount La Verna where St. Francis of Assisi is believed to have received the stigmata. Throughout the tour, we will experience the masterpieces of not only Piero della Francesca but of Giotto (Assisi), Fra Angelico (Cortona), Signorelli (Cortona & Orvieto), Andrea della Robbia (La Verna), Sangallo, Francesco Laurana, Rossellino and many others as well as experiencing first-hand the resonance of the places in which their genius flourished.
The tour leaders are Francis J. Ambrosio, Director, Doctor of Liberal Studies Program, Georgetown University, and Ms. Deborah Warin, Director, Renaissance Tours Company, LLC, former Director of Continuing Education and currently lecturer at Georgetown University, and author of the forthcoming book Battista Sforza and the Court of Urbino. Together they have led more than 25 previous tours to Italy.

The cost for students registered for credit is $4275. The cost of the tour for non-credit participants traveling with credit students is $4800. All prices are exclusive of airfare; tuition for credit students is billed separately and is not included. Breakfast is included each day in the hotels; the welcome reception on the first evening, the wine tasting luncheon in Montalcino and the Farewell dinner on the final evening are also included. All other meals are at the expense of participants. The cost of the tour includes ground transportation and admission fees for all activities included in the itinerary. Please be sure to read the Terms and Conditions (see below) carefully for other important information including the Payment schedule and the Cancellation Policy.

Itinerary

Sunday, May 24
Travelers arrive at the hotel in Florence. In the evening, we gather for a Welcome Reception and a brief orientation before dinner.

Monday, May 25
In the morning, we gather for a preparatory lecture and slide program to introduce some of the major artists, cultures and monuments that we shall encounter in the days ahead. Later, we visit the historic center of the city including experiencing the art of Giotto, Masaccio, Donatello, Lippi and Michelangelo. The evening is at leisure.

Tuesday, May 26.
Leaving Florence, we travel across western Tuscany, enjoying splendid panoramas as we approach the ancient Etruscan City of Volterra. There we will find one of the finest museums of Etruscan culture in Italy, together with the important Romanesque cathedral and the architectural predecessor of the Florentine Palazzo Vecchio. The land around Volterra is rich with minerals, especially the highly prized alabaster from which craftsmanship have produced objects of rare beauty for centuries. In a short stop before leaving the town, we take in the panorama from the rapidly eroding edge of the cliffs on which Volterra has stood for century, where in clear weather one can catch a glimpse of the Tyrrhenian Sea.

Later in the afternoon, we visit San Gimignano, the medieval city of skyscrapers and the outstanding fresco cycle in its main church and end the day at our hotel in the countryside near Siena.
Wednesday, May 27
This morning, we travel to the home of the Palio, the majestic city of Siena. In the course of the day, we will visit the dramatic black and white cathedral which, even when viewed from miles away, seems to watch over the city and its passionate contrade; the famous Piazza del Campo and the Palazzo Publico with its soaring tower and the extraordinary frescoes by Simone Martini. Time for shopping or an aperitif before returning to our hotel.

Thursday, May 28
Departing our hotel, this morning we travel into the heart of the gorgeous Val d’Orcia, making our way to the beautiful, luminescent 9th century church of Sant’Antimo. Originally part of a Benedictine monastery, the alabaster and travertine church, one of the most beautiful in Italy, was according to legend founded by Charlemagne. After our visit we will have lunch, paired with the famous wines of the region at one of the loveliest and most noble wineries in Tuscany. Later, we visit the beautiful walled city of Montalcino, home of the famous Brunello di Montalcino wine. We conclude the day with a short trip to our hotel in Pienza.

Friday, May 29
Today is devoted to Pienza, the tiny jewel of Renaissance urban planning, perched atop the most breathtaking landscapes in Italy. Here we will visit its splendid Gothic cathedral, as well as the Piccolomini Palace all built with the support of Pope Pius II (1405-1464) one of the great proponents of humanism who undertook the project of creating an ideal city to embody the vision of Renaissance humanistic principles. Beyond its historic importance, Pienza is a delightful town to enjoy at leisure - the gorgeous views, the wine, the wonderful food (since the time of the Etruscans, Pienza has been the capital of Pecorino cheese), pici, the thick, round Tuscan pasta, beautiful locally produced linens, and the charm that makes Pienza one of the best loved cities in Italy.

Saturday, May 30
This morning we travel to Arezzo, our first stop on the Piero della Francesca Trail to view that artist’s magnificent fresco cycle The Legend of the True Cross perhaps the most important fresco cycle of the 15th Century. In the afternoon we will visit the bustling Etruscan hill town of Cortona. Long before it became popularly known for the setting of Under the Tuscan, Cortona was an important medieval and renaissance cultural center. Fra Angelico traveled here to do two important altarpieces including his famous The Annunciation of Cortona now in the Museo Diocesano. The artist Luca Signorelli (1441-1523) was born in Cortona and several of his paintings remain here. Another native painter, Pietro Berrettini (1596-1669) known as Pietro da Cortona was born here. We will visit the museum and other historical sites while still having time to experience the town’s charms, before returning to Pienza for the night.

Sunday, May 31
This morning, we depart Pienza and travel through the ruggedly beautiful Casentino to Mount La Verna, the wooded retreat of St. Francis and his followers. It was at La Verna that Saint Francis prayed to receive the Stigmata. In the chapel of the Stigmata we view some of the most
magnificent and beautiful of Andrea della Robbia’s works. Then, we travel a few miles down the road to the charming and historic town of Sansepolcro, Piero della Francesca’s birthplace, where we spend the night.

Monday, June 1
In Sansepolcro, we will visit the small museum housing perhaps Piero’s most famous work, *The Resurrection*, as well as his stately altarpiece the *Madonna della Misericordia*. After lunch, we travel a very short distance to Monterchi to see Piero della Francesca’s haunting fresco the *Madonna del Parto*, portraying the rare image of a heavily pregnant Virgin Mary.

Later that afternoon, we travel to the austere beautiful medieval town of Gubbio, where we will spend three nights in a lovely former Cappuccian convent that has been restored and turned into a modern, comfortably appointed hotel. The evening is at leisure to explore the haunting, evocative character of Gubbio, a small city nearly wholly intact from the medieval period.

Tuesday, June 2.
While still residing in Gubbio, today we will venture into the Marches region to what was once one of the great cultural centers of Europe, the small fairytale like city of Urbino. Urbino was the birthplace of Raphael and Bramante, but it is most famous for the creation of the ideal, humanistic court under the rule of Federico da Montefeltro and his wife Battista Sforza, the Duke and Duchess of Urbino - a court which inspired Castiglione's influential *Book of the Courtier*. The Palazzo Ducale, a careful articulation of Neo-Platonism and one of the most beautiful palaces in Europe, is still considered an architectural wonder. The palazzo also holds our final stop on the Piero della Francesca Trail: The “world’s greatest small painting” – *The Flagellation* by Piero della Francesca as well as his Madonna della Senigallia. After lunch and a stroll through the city, we return to again to Gubbio.

Wednesday, June 3
A short trip takes us to Assisi, birthplace of St. Francis and itself one of the loveliest of hill towns. Here we shall visit the famed Basilica of San Francesco, built in the mid-13th century and decorated by many of the most renowned painters of the Gothic period, Giotto and Cimabue. St. Francis’ beliefs, his humility, his love of his “brothers and sisters” as well as his celebration of nature, while having a tremendous influence on religion, gave rise to a wholly new humanistic vision in art and literature. As Francis transformed traditional notions of religious and spiritual values, Giotto was the master who transformed the rigidity of Byzantine painting to the very human yet spiritually inspiring image that are seen in to the upper basilica depicting the life of the saint. After lunch we will enjoy the opportunity to visit first the “Carceri,” the retreat high up on Mount Subasio used by St. Francis and his companions for contemplation and then the little church of San Damiano where St. Francis received his mission from God to rebuild His Church. Later it was here that St Francis composed the Canticle of the Creatures and where St Clare founded the Sisters of the Poor Clares and where she died in 1253. We return to Gubbio for an evening at leisure.
Thursday, June 4
In the morning, we travel to Orvieto, home of Orvieto Classico wine, and certainly one of the most striking of the hill towns for its dramatic setting atop a plateau of volcanic rock. It is easy to see why Clement VII fled to Orvieto when Rome was sacked by the French King Charles VII in 1527. We will visit the famed cathedral with its golden facade of mosaics and carvings, and within it the dramatic frescoes, among the first of the modern age (1499-1503) of Luca Signorelli’s apocalyptic Last Judgment. The city was also an important Etruscan center and there are still 1000 caves in “underground Orvieto” which can be visited in the afternoon.

This evening we will gather for our Cena Addio, our farewell dinner bidding “Arrivederci” to Bell’Italia and to one another.

Friday, June 5
After breakfast, our motor coach will transport the group to Leonardo da Vinci Airport where our tour will officially end.

**N.B. to allow participants greater flexibility in planning their travels, the tour does not include hotel accommodations in Rome for Friday night, June 5. Participants wishing to spend the night in Rome should make hotel reservations independently in advance.**

Cost of the Tour and Program Notes

Cost of the Tour:

Cost of the Tour: The cost of the tour is $4,275 per person for students taking the course credit, not including airfare or tuition. The cost of the tour for non-credit participants traveling with credit students is $4,800. Participants are responsible for arranging their own transportation to the hotel in Florence, arriving at the hotel on Sunday, May 24 for the opening reception beginning at 6:30 pm. The welcome reception is included in the price of the tour, as is the wine tasting luncheon in Montalcino and the farewell dinner on the last night of the tour. Breakfast is included each day in the hotels. All other meals are at the expense of participants. The tour officially concludes with the group’s arrival at the Leonardo da Vinci airport in Rome. All arrangements for subsequent travel and accommodation are solely the responsibility of the participant. In addition to the accommodations specified below, the cost of the tour includes ground transportation and admission fees for all activities included in the itinerary. Participants are themselves responsible for all charges (including personal, discretionary hotel room charges) incurred in connection with any activity not explicitly specified in the itinerary.

Level of Physical Activity:

The nature of the tour program and the type of sites which the group will visit make for a moderately strenuous routine; those who need to limit their physical activity or who cannot easily walk longer distances are strongly encouraged to consult with the tour leaders prior to
reserving space. The Directors reserve the right to limit individual participation in group activities at their sole discretion in cases where the group’s interests might be adversely affected.

Accommodations:

Cost is based on double occupancy in hotels

In some cases single rooms might be available at the hotels for a supplemental charge. All hotels are three or four star and have been carefully chosen for their location, comfort and quality of service. A list of hotels will be provided separately to registered participants. Room assignments are made by the hotel management. Breakfast is included each day at the hotel.

Reservations:

The tour is strictly limited to a maximum of 20 participants to ensure the comfort and focused attention of the group experience. Reservations on the tour are held in the order in which deposits are received. Places may be reserved by completing the application form below, and returning it with a deposit of one thousand dollars per person to the office of the Dean of your program. Deposits are refundable according to the terms specified on the Reservation Form. Payments may be made by check. The balance must be paid in full by April 1, 2015. Refunds in the event of cancellation are subject to the restrictions outlined in the Terms and Conditions. Please be sure to read these carefully before submitting a deposit. Travelers are strongly urged to purchase separate travel insurance including coverage for cancellation loss to protect themselves in the event that they are unable to travel for any reason.

All details of the itinerary subject to change based on availability of accommodations, changes in opening\closing schedules, acts of God and any other cause beyond the immediate and direct control of the Tour Directors.

Syllabus

In this study tour course, we will first focus on the humanist movement in Florence, the Medici dynasty and its position of power in tension with the Florentine Republic. Next, we will look at humanism and the papacy through the life of Pope Pius II, including a visit to his home town of Pienza, and his efforts to transform it an “ideal city” reflecting the ideals of Vitruvian architecture. Then we turn to a unique institution of peninsular politics, the Italian Renaissance princely court. The court, “a work of art and organization” (Jakob Burckhardt), the corporate center of state, became the visual articulation of the virtues and the “magnificencia” of its
leader. We will visit perhaps the most splendid example of humanist Renaissance Courts in our visit to the Ducal Palace of Urbino.

Through our a close reading of contemporary texts, Machiavelli’s The Prince and Castiglione’s The Book of the Courtier, as well as other assigned reading, students will be prepared to have a rich contextual (richly informed) experience of the cultural monuments, art, and architecture that articulated the values and aspirations of this remarkable age.

Reading Assignments:

J. H. Plumb, The Italian Renaissance

Niccolò Machiavelli, The Prince

Baldesar Castiglione, The Book of the Courtier.

Angelo Massocco, Interpretations of Renaissance Humanism

Ernst Cassirer The Individual and the Cosmos in Renaissance Philosophy

Course Requirements:

This tour offers a unique and exciting opportunity for serious students to explore the ideas, art and architecture of the Italian Renaissance first hand. This is a content rich tour which requires full, focused attention. Students are expected to have read the course material prior to their arrival in Florence and be prepared for the lectures and site visits as you would for a conventional class session. The course, which can be taken for graduate or undergraduate credit ** in the Georgetown Liberal Studies Program, includes the following additional elements:

- Two on-campus classroom sessions prior to departure, April 10 & May 8, 6:30 – 8:30.
- A five page paper due by the second class session, May 8, on a topic to be discussed at the April 10 class.
- Full participation in the Study Tour Program
- Required readings as described in the “Reading List” below.
A research paper of approximate 7500 words (graduate) or 5000 words (undergraduate)

Credit students should J. H. Plumb, *The Italian Renaissance* for the first class. For the second meeting, students should have read The Prince and Book of the Courtier.

Terms and Conditions

The cost for students registered for credit is $4275. The cost of the tour for non-credit participants traveling with credit students is $4800. All prices are exclusive of airfare; tuition for credit students is billed separately and is not included. Prices include hotel accommodations (double occupancy) with breakfast each day. A Welcome Reception, a Wine Tasting Lunch, and a Farewell dinner are included in the price; however, all other meals (other than breakfast) are not included. All entrance fees and guided tours by the faculty as indicated in the itinerary and subject to the specified conditions are included. Airfare and ground transportation are not included.

Participants are urged to make reservations using the Reservation Form below at their earliest convenience in order to guarantee a place on the tour.

- Reservation forms for students and their traveling companions, together with deposit checks made payable to Georgetown University, should be sent to Dean Anne Ridder for students in DLS or MALS, or to the Dean’s office for BALS students.

- Enrollment is determined by date of receipt of a deposit of $1,000, per traveler, which shall be refundable according to the conditions of the stated cancellation policy. Payment in full is due April 30, 2013.

Cancellation Policy

* After receipt of the deposit, cancellation by the participant will be subject to a minimum $250 per person cancellation fee.

* Cancellation after 60 days prior to the commencement of the tour will result in forfeiture of the full amount of the full deposit ($1000.).

* Cancellation after April 30, 2015, or “no show” at the commencement of the tour will result in forfeiture full cost of the trip per person.

All tours are offered on condition of sufficient enrollment. If the offer of a tour must be withdrawn at any time due to insufficient enrollment, all deposits and additional payments will
be refunded and this will constitute full satisfaction of all claims by participants on the University. In view of the statutory or contractual limitations which may apply to personal injury or property damage losses, the purchase of accident and baggage insurance, is strongly recommended, as well as trip cancellation insurance, is strongly recommended.

Responsibility: The University and its representatives act only as agents in making arrangements for hotels, transportation, sightseeing, restaurants or any other services in connection with the itinerary, and they will exercise reasonable care in making such arrangements. However, they do not assume any liability whatsoever for any injury, damage, loss, accident or delay to person and property due to any act of default of any hotel, carrier, restaurant, company or person rendering any of the services included in the tour. The tickets, coupons, tariffs, rules or contracts currently in use by any carrier, hotel, restaurant or other rendering service shall constitute the sole contract between such contractor and the tour member. Baggage and personal effects are the sole responsibility of the owners at all times. Further, the University and its representative agents accept no responsibility for any damage or delay due to sickness, pilferage, labor disputes, machinery breakdown, quarantine, government restraints, weather or any other cause beyond their personal control. The right is reserved to cancel or change itineraries or substitute services without notice, and to decline to accept any tour member at any time, when such action is determined to be in the best interests of the health, safety or general welfare of the tour group or individual. No carrier shall be responsible for any act, omission or event during the time passengers are not on board its own conveyance.

Finally, Georgetown University bears no responsibility whatsoever for any travel arrangements made by individual travelers that do not form part of the published itinerary. Extensions of stay, hotel accommodations beyond those indicated in the program, early arrivals or departures, hotel charges not included in the basic room rate including but not limited to telephone, beverages and meals, and hotel services, and all other arrangements undertaken at the initiative of individual participants are their sole responsibility. No change can be made in group plans or schedules to accommodate such arrangements.

Registration Form

Hilltowns Tour Program, May 24 – June 5, 2015

Name of Participant(s):

#1______________________________________

#2____________________________________________________________________________
(If more than two participants please use a separate page.)

Contact Information

If this information is different for each participant, please give complete info for each using a separate page if necessary:

Street
______________________________________________________________________________
____
______________________________________________________________________________
____
City ___________ State__________________
Zip_____________

Email__________________________________________________________
____
Telephone____________________________________________________
____

N.B. Be sure you have read and understood the Terms and Conditions before mailing your deposit.

Be sure to include the correct deposit amount, $1000. for each participant.

For LSP Graduate students (DLS and MALS) and their traveling companions, please return Registration form and Deposit via check payable to Georgetown University, to Dean Anne Ridder in the GLSP office.

For BALS students) and their traveling companions, please return Registration form and Deposit via check payable to Georgetown University, to the office of Dean Kiernan.