



Following the recent discovery of mysterious anonymous manuscripts, missing for centuries or kept in the greatest secrecy, the Accademia Vinciana offers a unique glimpse of historic events in the Renaissance, events that the wildest imagination would have had difficulty in creating...

An insanely ambitious and violent family succeeds in arriving at the Papacy, and attempts to gain control of the whole of Italy as its private domain. The political balance of the whole of Europe vacillates.

Will the ingenious strategy of the richest banker and merchant of the time, at the service of one of the most powerful and unscrupulous Popes that the history of the Church has ever seen, succeed in avoiding the siege of his city and in calming the thirst for power, pursued through armed action, intrigue and trickery by an ambitious and bloodthirsty Duke?

An astute diplomat is called on to carry out a spying operation and weave a subtle political plot...

A man of huge artistic genius, who is both the ultimate student of all time and a great and expert architect, is called on to organise the entertainment, with a stimulating and astute programme of encounters, giving rise to the most strategic, far-reaching and secret chess match ever conceived....

A brilliant and absorbing masked ball, as an opportunity for subtle and noble diplomacy: games, spectacle, adventure, triumphs and allegories, jousting, duels and challenges....

These are just some of the elements giving rise to the most mysterious of academies, recalling an even older and more famous school....

Now you are invited to that historic masked ball:  
Everyone is called on to bring their own mask.

And you are asked to place your bet:  
Is it all a dream or concrete reality,  
imaginative fiction or real history?

We take on the most difficult challenge: documenting the fact that all this is reality, that it corresponds with the most authentic history that we have ever known.

The celebrations to which you are invited are inspired and reconstructed on the basis of the events taking place in the woods and valleys not far from Siena, one night early in summer 1502.

A journey begins, in which history and geography interweave: from the creation of the world to Jerusalem in the year 33, to Rome, to then look back towards Athens and even further to ancient Egypt.

We are guided symbolically by the Metamorphoses (the Golden Ass) by Apuleius: like Lucius (Lucignano), remaining an ass for a long time (Asinalonga) we are searching for the mountain of Isis in order to find new light (Lucignano d'Asso). (The names represent real places in the Tuscan countryside).

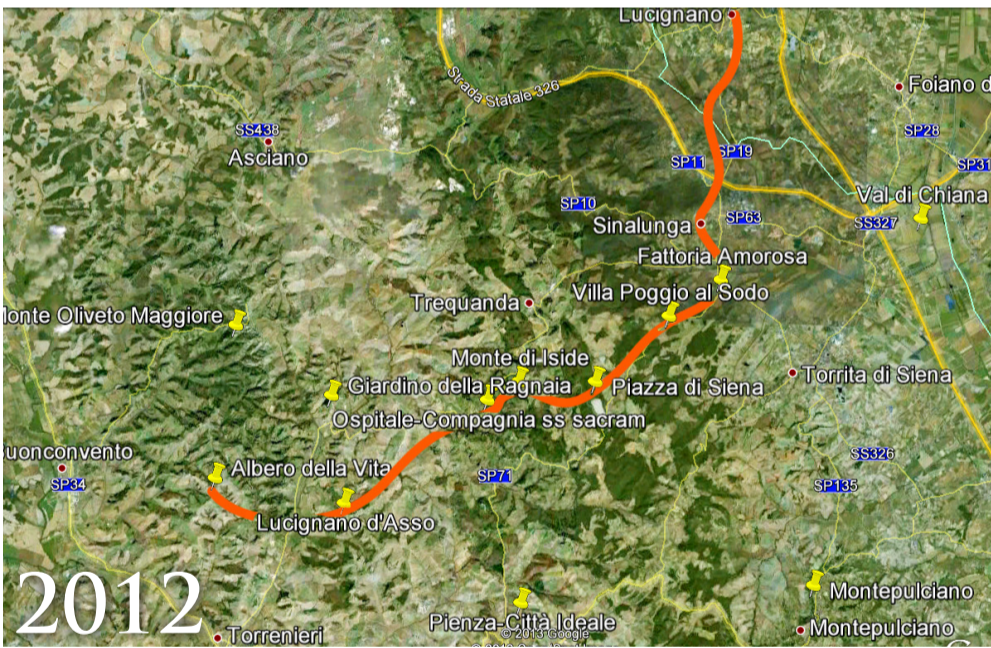
It is also an opportunity to celebrate the tenth anniversary of the discovery of other unknown lands beyond the ocean, and the imagination of another world, outside known history, allows us to dream of new faces, new animals and plants, new cities, temples and buildings, new languages, foreign coins, tools and objects and works. What will the ships of our intellect gather when travelling across this unknown ocean of ideas from the New World?

The celebrations take place over three days, in different villages and villas. On Saturday evening the host is Agostino Chigi, an emerging banker and entrepreneur from Siena, illuminated lover of art and culture. He has invited a number of families from the city, the Petrucci, Saracini, Piccolomini and Contucci families, while the guest of the evening will be the new Duke Cesare Borgia il Valentino, accompanied by his personal guard, arriving on horseback from the marshes of the Chiana area, invited and accompanied by Niccolò Machiavelli, who brings the greetings of the Florentine Republic. Chigi has also charged certain illustrious friends with preparing special theatrical sets and performances: Luca Signorelli, Bernardino di Betto, known as Pinturicchio, and some of his pupils, including Rafael, a young painter from Urbino and Antonio Bazzi, known as Sodoma. Baldassarre Peruzzi, Francesco di Giorgio Martini and Bramante are also illustrious architects. These same architects and painters are the actors, wearing their own masks: it is a question of guessing who they are impersonating from the dialogue.

One should not forget Egidio da Viterbo, theologian and philosopher, Tommaso Inghirami, man of letters and humanist, Alberto Aringhieri, Rector of the Opera del Duomo in Siena, and many others. However, it will be above all a mysterious figure, a military engineer and mapmaker, whose face is unknown in Siena but whose name is recognised, who will entertain the guests with games and wonders. With his riddles, rebuses, aphorisms and questions he challenges everyone to participate in games and wagers: solving the enigma in order to lift the veil of Isis, becoming the first disciple of all-embracing Mother Nature, enveloping all imaginary and possible worlds. These figures begin to distribute the Word Cards. Each person is called on to solve the Enigma. After answering the initial question, we move on to chess matches, rebuses, riddles, stories, aphorisms, letters, drawings, maps, globes, both ancient and new, with constellations of words. To enter this dream the mysterious creator and wizard invites us to the desks of the Scholè that he has prepared.

Now this game reappears in our times, having reconstructed the path and identified the places, awaiting new courageous players who wish to participate in the celebrations of the illustrious protagonists of the Renaissance. The valleys, villages, woods and villas of Siena are still there, waiting to welcome those who intend to discover the path that points towards the West, going back in time to dream, devise and create the New World of the future.

It awaits courageous students who wish to win the keys to the historic room, commonly known as the Stanza della Segnatura, carefully guarded by the protagonists of this story themselves, who keep eternally open the Scholè known to history as the School of Athens, evoked by them and created in that night of dreams.



THE TRUE PATH OF ILLUMINATION

**PRESTIGIOUS RESIDENTIAL WORKSHOP WITH CULTURAL TOURISM**

The **Leonardo&friends** Association offers companies an original and prestigious residential workshop combined with cultural tourism, as a cultural training programme for managers, or as part of rewards and incentive packages for successful staff. The workshop takes place in a renaissance villa based on designs by Leonardo da Vinci, according to the 5-day programme presented below:

**WEDNESDAY**

Welcome brunch and start of the seminars, not conducted in a traditional classroom setting, but rather through dialogue and a dialectical approach, conversing and tasting typical local products. With the help of experts from the association, the dialogue will begin by recalling the **origins of the Italian Renaissance**, exploring the town-planning and development project of a Pope from Siena, **Enea Silvio Piccolomini**, Pope Pius II, along with **Cosimo de Medici** and the origins of the Florentine banking system and arts patronage, in addition to many key figures who made the Renaissance into one of the greatest cultural studios in history. Afternoon visit to the monastery of **Sant'Anna in Camprena**, with its fresco cycles by the artist known as Sodoma, and the model for the Ideal City, **Pienza**, accompanied by an expert on art history and architecture.

In the evening, **Prof. Roberto Barbessi**, Philosophy Phd and expert in philosophical business consultancy, will entertain guests with an initial introduction to philosophy, distributing a number of unpublished manuscripts proposing questions and enigmas, and initiating exploration of the historical and symbolic labyrinth of ancient Greece and its renewal in the Renaissance, with readings from classics such as Timaeus or the Nicomachean Ethics.

**THURSDAY**

Presentation of the **Accademia vinciana**: namely Leonardo da Vinci's secret proto-Masonic school, depicted in the Vatican and known as the **"School of Athens"**. General introduction to the Renaissance philosophical context, illustration of iconographic details, reading and display of anonymous and unpublished manuscripts regarding a highly secret esoteric and symbolic itinerary inspired by **Apuleius' Golden Ass**, identification of inedited mirror images and enigmas, and presentation of the individual historic figures from Siena depicted in the extraordinary philosophical and pictorial summary of the Italian renaissance in the rooms of the Vatican: **Agostino Chigi**, the magnificent banker, entrepreneur and patron from Siena, who joined the Accademia in the shoes of Alexander the Great: his life, works and illustration of his definitive Greek temple, Villa Farnesina in Rome, now home to the Accademia dei Lincei. Buffet lunch. Leonardo, Machiavelli and Cesare Borgia, contemporaries in the Val di Chiana. Raffaello, Sodoma, Baldassarre Peruzzi and Fra Giovanni da Verona, as artistic and architectural pupils. Dinner at the Villa.

**FRIDAY**

Guided tour to the environment of leading figures in the *School of Athens* by coach, retracing the route of the *Metamorphoses*, with lunch off-site. We follow in the footsteps of **Leonardo and his friends** during his stay in the Val di Chiana:

**Lucignano**: the frescoes inspired by *De viribus illustribus* in the council chamber, as a pictorial anticipation of the *School of Athens*, and visit to the famous **Golden Tree**, the unique, original and historic Italian tree of life.

**Marciano**: the elopement of **Pico della Mirandola**, the philosophical genius who conceived the ambitious and utopian Platonic-Aristotelian philosophical project, protected by Lorenzo de' Medici. Lunch and free time in Arezzo.

Afternoon: guided tour of the Leonardo da Vinci Museum dedicated to the genius and his relationship with the Val di Chiana at **Ponte Buriano**, the well-known bridge behind the Mona Lisa.

Dinner with **Renaissance feast**, including games, enigmas and riddles devised by Leonardo and recovery of Girolamo Bargagli's Siennese parties.

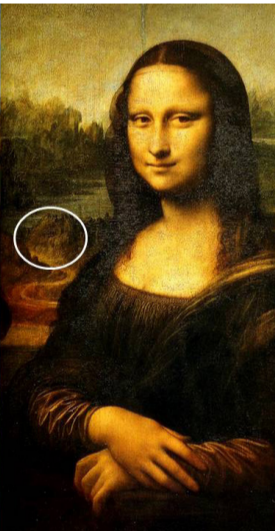
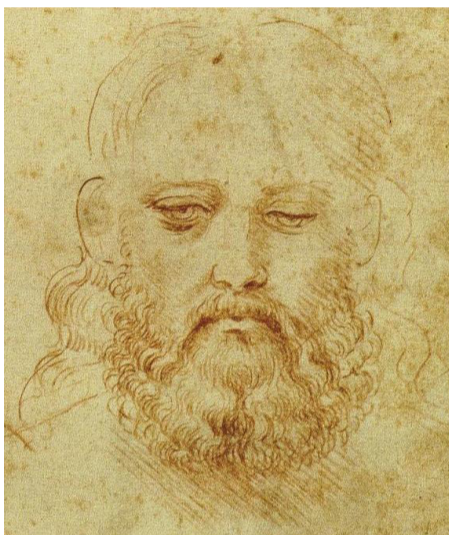
**SATURDAY**

Sports activities at the villa: tennis, volleyball, football or archery, or choice of group activities subject to booking.

Relaxation at spa facilities, excursions on horseback, by mountain bike or quad, airsoft games in the neighbouring woods. Wine tours, shopping at the Valdichiana outlet; Guided artistic tours to Montepulciano or Cortona. In the evening, dinner with grilled Tuscan T-bone steaks, prestigious wines and music on request.

**SUNDAY**

In the morning, visit to the metaphysical garden of **Bosco della Ragnaia**, an exceptional land art project created by an American artist. To conclude the itinerary, visit to a recently discovered fresco by **Raffaello** in Asciano, guided tour to the prestigious **Abbey of Monte Oliveto Maggiore**, with the cycle of frescoes of St Benedict by **Signorelli** and **Sodoma** and the wooden inlay work of **Fra Giovanni da Verona**, with polyhedra inspired by the drawings of Leonardo for Luca Pacioli. Final lunch at the villa. Leave-taking and farewells.



An overall package for company groups with at least 15 participants is provided for: 500 euro per person for accommodation in the villa, including breakfast, lunch and dinner (on request menus can be provided), excluding off-site lunches; 500 euro per person for association membership, course programme, training activities and visits with coach and tourist guide (on request the academic curricula and publications of teachers can be provided).

It is possible to arrange alternative programmes and proposals for historical and training content, with expert speakers and academics, including interdisciplinary activities going from team-building and cooking courses to photography and painting workshops or various other activities and subjects on request.

Extra recreational activities will be charged to individual participants.

For booking confirmation the villa accommodation quota is required.

