



# CARAVAGGIO

## FATHER OF MODERNITY



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An itinerary on the footsteps of one of the most famous and fascinating Italian artists: Michelangelo Merisi from Caravaggio, surely the father of modernity. The journey begins in Milan, where an art historian will introduce us to the artist and to his world. We will then follow a double track, visiting the most celebrated capitals of Italian art —Milan, Florence, Rome— watching their cultural and artistic inheritance through the lens of the relationship that Caravaggio established with the place, during the many wanderings of his life. We will discover masterpieces in churches and art galleries and we'll understand the specific meaning of Caravaggio use (and manipulation) of light. Travelling through the most famous and beautiful palaces, collections and churches we'll be able to see a relevant number of Caravaggio's pieces, thus following from close the evolution of the master's style and inspiration, as if we were peering from behind the painter's shoulders. This very specially conceived route will lead our eyes and our steps towards the rise of Baroque art, and to the huge contribution that Caravaggio's creative experience gave to it.





# MILAN

- Milan has always been the industrial and financial centre of Italy, but its fast way of life and modern architecture hides many jewels of art. Romans founded Milan and it was ruled by Austrians, French, and Spanish, but most of its character was forged by Saint Charles Borromeo, no wonder the vibrant heart of Milan has always been the magnificent Duomo, the Cathedral. Throughout centuries Leonardo da Vinci, Bramante, Luini, Caravaggio, Beltrami, Giò Ponti, De Lucchi, Hadid transformed the small roman village into the metropolis that is today.
- A journey inspired by the history of Milan, focusing on one side the passage between the 16th and the 17th century, when Caravaggio was born and great figures — such as Cardinal Federigo Borromeo — animated the cultural and spiritual profile of the town.
- Climb up to the Duomo terraces, from where we'll be able to spot the Roman centre, Mediaeval roads, Spanish walls and Napoleonic enterprises.
- A private visit to a palace where you will be able to enter a noble family's way of life and understand that palaces where the real keepers of Italian art. In the living room two works of Tintoretto hang from the walls together with many minor authors, you will be guide by the specialist guide to the collection of ceramic, books, traditional objects as well as craft masterpieces.
- Enter the Ambrosiana Library to admire Caravaggio's Basket of fruits, part of the Ambrosiana's collection, a key painting for understanding the artist and the rise of modernity in art. Enjoy a private visit of the collection of the library, that numbers almost 40,000 manuscripts, including the Codex Atlanticus.

# MILAN

Enter the secrecy of private gardens of the Medieval centre, to centuries-old plants and with a fascinating 15th-century courtyard designed by the architect Donato Bramante. Once, the garden was a cloister of nuns, and later it passed into the hands of the family that still holds it.

- Explore the garden Castellini Portaluppi, in the Casa degli Atellani, where Leonardo da Vinci took care of his vineyard, located just in front of the church of Santa Maria delle Grazie.
- With our art expert, enjoy a private view of the Last Supper, a masterpiece that encouraged the naturalistic inclination of Lombard (and Caravaggio's) art, and its interest for the motions of human soul.
- Private tour of the wonderful Pinacoteca di Brera, the most extraordinary among the Milanese Art Galleries. We'll investigate the specific character of 16th-century Lombard art, that nourished Caravaggio's inspiration, through the Saint Dominic altarpiece by Giovanni Girolamo Savoldo. The older master's experience will cast light on Caravaggio's masterpiece at Brera, the Supper at Emmaus. Caravaggio's inheritance will be then investigated through Pieter Paul Rubens's Last Supper, a painting much indebted to Merisi's style.
- A private dinner in the Pinacoteca at closed doors and a workshop with cinematographer Ercole Visconti, exploring the use of light in Caravaggio's painting. Ercole Visconti is professor of Photography and Cinematography at the prestigious School of Television and New Media of Milan and has studied extensively the influence of use of light in movies and cinema.



# FLORENCE

Florence was the birth place of Renaissance, walking though the narrow city roads you can still enjoy the feeling of elegance where Petrarca, Brunelleschi, Donatello, Leonardo da Vinci, Michelangelo, Botticelli and many others worked. The extraordinary wealth under the Medici ruling allowed the city to enjoy the pleasures of life, and art became central to power and architects build magnificent churches, palaces and town houses where artists worked to celebrate the wealth of the noble families.

- Explore the city, focusing on the most meaningful monuments of Early and High Renaissance, which reveal the political and cultural evolution of the town: Filippo Brunelleschi's dome at Santa Maria del Fiore, the Palazzo Medici-Riccardi, the church of San Lorenzo with the tomb of Cosimo, the founder of the Medici's Signoria, the Palazzo and Piazza della Signoria.
- Moving towards the Museo del Bargello, step across the beautiful Piazza Santa Croce: here, on the façade of Palazzo Dell'Antella, we'll be able to spot the fresco copy of Caravaggio's Sleeping Cupid (now at the Galleria Palatina in Florence), once the jewel of the Dell'Antella collection, that was in this way proudly exhibited by the owners to the public view.

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# FLORENCE

- Visit the Museo del Bargello for a view of the most amazing and famous sculptures by Michaelangelo, such as the Pitti tondo, the Brutus and especially the Bacchus, possibly a source of inspiration for Caravaggio.
- The visit to the Uffizi will investigate the relationship between naturalism and idealization in Florentine art, through a selection of masterpieces such as Sandro Botticelli's Spring, Michaelangelo's Doni tondo, and Leonardo's recently restored Adoration of the Magi. The final part of the visit will be dedicated to Caravaggio's Bacchus, the Sacrifice of Isaac and the Head of Medusa, and to the specific balance between nature and art that the painter elaborated. The newly refurbished Caravaggio wing at the Uffizi will allow us to get in touch with the immediate success of Caravaggio's art, and with the many imitators of the painter.
- Enjoy a private view of the Giardino dei Torrigiani, the largest privately-owned garden in Europe situated within city boundaries. Renowned in the 16th century as a botanical garden, it had a revival in the early 19th century when the marquis Pietro Torrigiani inherited the property and started acquiring the surrounding land.

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# ROME

In Rome, our art expert will guide you through Caravaggio's works following the chronology of their creation, in an exciting crescendo of intensity and closeness to the genius of the painter.

- Visit to the Borghese Gallery, holding an impressive nucleus of Caravaggio's pieces, originally acquired by Cardinal Scipione Borghese, the nephew of Pope Paul V (reign 1605-1621): The Sick Bacchus, the Boy with a fruit basket, the Saint Jerome, the Young Saint John, David with the head of Goliath and the Virgin and Child with Saint Anne. The immense collection of the Borghese Gallery will allow us to compare Caravaggio's art with the previous experience of Venetian painters like Titian, to the paintings of his contemporaries like the Cavalier d'Arpino, and to the artistic output of the great Baroque sculptor Gian Lorenzo Bernini.
- At closed doors get access to the Galleria Doria Pamphilj, to admire Caravaggio's Rest during the flight into Egypt and the Penitent Magdalene and a selection of the Baroque masterpieces of the gallery.
- Private view of Caravaggio's Stories of Saint Matthew in the church of San Luigi de' Francesi. The placing of the canvasses on the chapel's walls shocked the artistic establishment and part of the audience because of the dramatic and unprecedented representation of a sacred story.

# ROME

- Visit to the Cerasi Chapel in the Church of Santa Maria del Popolo, with Caravaggio's Crucifixion of Saint Peter and Conversion of Saul. At the moment he took up the commission for these paintings, the artist was defined in documents as “the very best painter in Rome”.
- Immerse in the dining style of Caravaggio in a dinner that will explore his habits and the dishes loved by the master.
- Exclusive visit of the Palazzo Colonna, to admire one of the oldest and largest palaces in the City.
- Exclusive visit of Odescalchi Balbi Collection, for a view of the Caravaggio masterpiece the Conversion of Saint Paul. The magnificent palace still belongs to the family.
- Enter privately to the Vatican Laboratory of Mosaics. This is one of the oldest places for restoration of mosaics and micro-mosaics of the Vatican Museum. Admire pieces of art on the floors and on the walls.

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