



TRAVELLERS' TALES and SICILIAN JOURNEYS

TRAVEL WRITING WORKSHOP in SICILY

With Ros Belford

Dates Saturday 8th April - Saturday 15 April 2017

Number of participants - min 6 - max 12

Course fee - 1450 euros TBC (variation will depend on type of accommodation requested. This covers B&B in a 3-star centrally located hotel in shared rooms with en-suite bathroom)

The tiny island of Ortigia — with its thousands of years of history — is the ideal place to learn the craft of travel writing, and travel writing is the perfect way of getting to know the town in depth.

On this course students will be encouraged to observe and take notes, to participate in town life and to interact with local people. Participants will be helped to hone their writing skills to tell a story, capture a conversation (or a moment), evoke a city, describe people, review a restaurant, and write with confidence and intelligence about food and wine.

Original writing of any kind — fiction or non-fiction — has to have its source in the insights, impressions and fantasies of the individual. For this reason participants are encouraged to become assiduous travel journal keepers. These rough, private writings, scrawlings and sketches will give vigour and originality to their journalism, while regular writing exercises and prompts will help students find new ways of thinking and writing. These travel journals will provide the raw material with which — both on the course, and back home— participants should be able to craft a credible, compelling blog, travel article or work of creative fiction or non-fiction.

Daily practical sessions will help students develop the kind of writing skills they will need to compete in an increasingly competitive market. Based on the assumption that original writing can only be produced if writers are free to imagine and experiment — writing exercises, prompts and riffs, held in and out of the classroom, will get participants observing, writing, creating and thinking freely as part of their everyday life in Sicily.

Essential writing techniques will be further honed 'live' through field visits to local people – as students take a slow, tasting tour of Ortigia's market, and learn to gather wild herbs, make ricotta and prepare a wood-oven for baking pizza they will be helped to write about the experience in the most compelling way possible – developing techniques of characterization, dialogue, plot and structure. A nature-writing workshop, held on the coastal reserve of Plemmirio, will give an opportunity for a more reflective kind of writing. A trip to Mount Etna with a volcanologist, followed by wine-tasting at a vineyard on the slopes of the volcano will equip participants to write about food and wine in an original, informed way, linking gastronomy to the island's culture and geography. Last but not least, the wonderful historical context of baroque Ortigia and the archaeological area of Siracusa are the ideal settings for workshops on how to bring history to life -- an essential skill not only for travel writers, but for anyone planning a historical novel!

Ros Belford is an expert on Mediterranean travel and culture and writes for Conde Nast Traveller and the Telegraph. She is the author of several internationally best-selling guidebooks, including the Rough Guide to Italy, the Rough Guide to Sicily, DK Eyewitness Rome, DK Family Guide Rome and DK Backroads Italy. The Woman's Guide to Rome, which she wrote as part of a project which she created and directed for the British feminist publisher, Virago, was shortlisted for a Thomas Cook award, and her two most recent guidebooks gained ENIT prizes as the best guidebooks to Italy. She has written also written articles for Vogue, National Geographic Traveler, the Guardian, the Sunday Times, and the Independent, and has made radio programmes for



the BBC – most of them about food, a lifetime passion. In her most recent TV appearance she was seen climbing an active volcano on Lion TV's The Rough Guide to Mediterranean Islands.

Ros is also a very experienced editor, specializing in guiding and encouraging new writers to produce original, vibrant copy using their own observations and experiences that meets the demands of an increasingly competitive market. After living in Sicily for 11 years, she has just relocated to Cornwall, caving in to her daughters' demands for an English education.

Proposed Program

(SCIE reserves the right to change/substitute activities with similar ones and change dates and times)

Dates	
Saturday 8th April	Arrival in Catania. Transfer to accommodation Welcome dinner
Sunday 9th April	Introduction to course Ortigia tour "Making history come alive I" Free afternoon (optional Italian lesson 90 mins)
Monday 10th April	"Travel blog and the art of story-telling" Am Visit Ortigia market Writing session 15 - 18 (optional Italian lesson 90 mins) Pasta making
Tuesday 11th April	Morning writing sessions 10 - 13 Etna and Wine-tasting "Nature and Food"
Wednesday 12th April	Am Neapolis Archaeological Park "Making history come alive II" Pm workshop (optional Italian lesson 90 mins)
Thursday 13th April	Am Plemmirio marine nature reserve "The world in a grain of sand" Pm workshop (optional Italian lesson 90 mins)
Friday 14th April	Am Workshop Visit to Claudio Romano's farm, Florida Farewell dinner
Saturday 15th April	Departure from Siracusa

The course fee includes

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- ❖ Tuition
- ❖ Activities and excursions listed in program
- ❖ Shared accommodation in B&B with breakfast. A/C, wifi, en-suite bathroom, shared cooking facilities, within walking distance of school. (Single accommodation available on payment of a supplement; also available through SCIE, option of a 5 star hotel)
- ❖ Transfers to/from Catania airport
- ❖ Insurance and 24 emergency contact
- ❖ Welcome and farewell dinner
- ❖ Pasta-making workshop
- ❖ Etna wine-tasting

Activities and excursions included

- ❖ Ortigia tour with visit to Cathedral
- ❖ Ortigia market
- ❖ Neapolis Archaeological Park, Siracusa
- ❖ Plemmirio Nature Reserve
- ❖ Claudio Romano's farm, Floridia
- ❖ Mount Etna with volcanologist

The course fee does not include

- ❖ Travel to /from Sicily
- ❖ Meals with the exception of those listed
- ❖ Personal expenses

Optional Italian lessons

SCIE offers optional Italian lessons to participants. Lessons are strongly focused on communication, conversation and the practical language found in day-to-day situations .

For complete beginners, even just a few words of Italian help to break down the barriers between locals and visitors and can give insights into the local culture.

For those with some previous knowledge of Italian, this is the ideal context in which to refresh and perfect any previous experience of the language.

Cost of 4 lessons (90 mins each lesson) 120 euros - minimum 3 participants

For further information and application form, please contact;

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