

# Piero Della Francesca

## An Itinerary Into The Past To Discover a Modern Artist

Few periods in Western history produced a similar burst of creative energy as did central Italy in the 15th and 16th century. Tuscany and Umbria produced a veritable constellation of great artists. One of these was Piero della Francesca, whose singular and memorable style combines rationality, stark realism, and a deep spirituality. In the *Resurrection* and *The Madonna del Parto* the artist gives the human figure a worldly potency, while maintaining both its austerity and spirituality.

### Day 1 - Arezzo

Arrival at Fiumicino airport. Transfer to Arezzo via bus and hotel check-in, followed by a meeting with your tour leader who will explain the itinerary. Afternoon tour of one of Piero's most representative works: the cycle of the *Legend of the Cross* in the church of S. Francesco, painted in the middle of the 15th century for a local merchant family, the Bacci. Long ignored, this cycle on the life of S. Francesco reaches the zenith of Western artistic tradition and is a consistent point of reference for art of the period. The revolutionary concept of perspective and the continuity of the narration make it one of the most important works of the Renaissance. A short walk through medieval Arezzo to the duomo, where one can admire another Piero masterpiece, *Maddalena*. Dinner and overnight.

### Day 2 - Florence

Driving through the Tuscan countryside, we arrive in Florence, the city in which Piero received his artistic formation. Here we visit the Uffizi Galleries, admiring not only his work, but those of Masaccio, Ucello, Veneziano, with whom Piero collaborated, as well as others. One can easily imagine the impact Florence must have had on the young Piero.

Lunch in a typical restaurant. Afternoon stroll in the historical center of the city: Ponte Vecchio, Piazza della Signoria, Boboli Gardens, to finish at the Church of Santa Maria del Carmine to view Masaccio's beautiful frescoes. Evening return to Arezzo, dinner and overnight in hotel.

### Day 3 - Monterchi and San Sepolcro

On the way to our first stop at Monterchi, we pass through the mountains east of Arezzo, an area which also gave birth to Michelangelo. The *Madonna del Parto* (The Madonna of the Birth) in Monterchi treats a theme which is never again repeated in the history of art. San Sepolcro, Piero's birthplace, offers us the *Resurrezione*, which depicts the Christian mystery, and the more serene *Madonna della Misericordia*. Lunch in a local restaurant after which, we will tour Piero's House, the Palazzo Laudi and the cathedral. Proceed to Urbino for dinner & overnight.

### Day 4 - Urbino

Today we follow Piero's foot-steps to Urbino, seeing the mysterious work, *Flagellazione di Cristo*, a painting which combines art and mathematical approach to perspective and *La Madonna di Senigallia*, in which the Flemish influence is evident, and *Città Ideale*, an exercise applying Piero's theories of perspective. For Urbino, this magnificent cultural crucible battered by winds, Piero painted *Federico di Montefeltro* (Duke of Urbino) and the enormous *Pala di Brera*.

### **Day 5 - Perugia**

Return to Rome by way of Perugia. The National Gallery contains an exquisite work by Piero, the Polyptych of *Sant'Antonio*, which by itself is worth the trip to Perugia, in part because of the beautiful way it is displayed. The National Gallery contains the best collection of Umbrian art of the Middle Ages and Renaissance. Lunch in Perugia. Arrival in Rome and check in at hotel. Dinner and overnight.

### **Day 6 - Departure**

Transfer to Fiumicino airport for return home.