

Archaeology Study Season in Italy
**Artifact Studies, Stratigraphic Analysis, Conservation, and Focused
Excavation at the Villa del Vergigno**

June 22 – July 31 2020

(Participants welcome for full session or partial period with *pro-rated* program fee)

Director: Dr. McKenzie Lewis

Details of the 2020 Study Season:

The 2020 Study Season will focus on studying and restoring artifacts discovered during the last seven years of excavation with the objective of producing a catalog of materials for museum exhibition and publication. We will also reopen two or three trenches for focused excavation in the Villa's bath complex and area of iron and ceramic production. The overall objective of this season is to study the Villa's phases of construction and production, to analyze and conserve the associated artifacts, and to complete our interim publication of the site: Excavations at the Villa del Vergigno 2013-2020.

We welcome participants interested in contributing toward our exhibition and publication by working in our artifact laboratory conducting material analysis, ceramic restoration and conservation, and preparing a museum exhibition. We also welcome a limited number of participants interested excavating and the stratigraphic analysis of several important areas of the Villa. Experience in laboratory or fieldwork preferred, but not mandatory.

Regardless of experience and background, participants will become acquainted with and learn how to catalog, conserve, and restore a range of different ancient artifacts, such as fine ware ceramics, coarseware ceramics, amphora and storage vessels, bronze objects (tools and jewelry), coins, as well as other domestic and decorative objects. Additionally, participants will have an opportunity to focus on and learn techniques of stratigraphic excavation, digital imaging and mapping, or museum exhibition and catalog preparation.

Project Description:

The Villa Romana del Vergigno is a large *villa rustica* inhabited from ca. 100 BCE to 500 CE, located on the outskirts of Montelupo Fiorentino in the mid-Arno Valley of northern Tuscany, approximately twenty kilometers west of Florence. The area of Montelupo has had continuous habitation since the prehistoric era due to its strategic importance at a docking point along the Arno River. This region was prosperous during the last few centuries BCE, resulting in its Etruscan population being subjected to repeated waves of Roman colonization between 82 and 30 BCE, a period that is roughly concurrent with the development of the Villa Vergigno. During the Roman Imperial period, the villa had a large domestic area with mosaic flooring, a hypocaust system, and a bath complex, as well as an agricultural sector for the production of wine, olive oil, glass, metals, pottery, and amphorae.

In the 2013 through 2019 field seasons we have been primarily excavating the agricultural sector of the villa to determine the scale of agricultural production and the site's contribution to the regional and Mediterranean economy. In the last three seasons we have also reopened excavations in the residential sector of the site to investigate the villa's phases of construction the site's status before and after Roman colonization and the chronology of occupation on the villa's plateau. In the 2015 – 2019 seasons, evidence was found for life at the villa continuing into late 5th and 6th

Centuries CE, despite that it is commonly assumed that after the 200s CE Italy was on the fast track toward full economic decline. The later phases at this villa are therefore bringing to light evidence that helps retell the story of Tuscany's transition from the Roman Imperial period into the Middle Ages.

In 2020 we will continue to excavate inside the villa's residential section at the location in and around the bath complex and the villa's Phase 1 foundation walls. In particular, this season will continue excavating an iron forge and adjacent work-space, which appears to have been repurposed during the villa's Imperial era modifications. Additionally, investigation will continue to excavate areas where the earliest foundation walls are coming to light along with amphorae and fine-ware pottery.

Objectives:

The Villa del Vergigno Archaeological Project is designed to provide hands-on experience to the principles of archaeological excavation, laboratory methods, data analysis, research design, and socio-political history of ancient Italy. Participants receive training in excavation techniques, survey methods, site mapping using Geographic Information Systems, digital imaging techniques, and take part in recording and conserving artifacts discovered during excavation. The project conducts excursions to nearby Etruscan, Roman, and medieval archaeological sites, and major sites and museums at Florence, Fiesole, Pisa, Arezzo, and the Chianti hills.

The primary goal is to provide participants with an active opportunity to understand how archaeology is practiced in the field, and to gain a better understanding of past cultures and their evolution over time. Upon completion of the field season or study season, engaged participants will be able to demonstrate a practical, working knowledge of archaeological field methods, including excavation, survey, mapping, and artifact analysis. Specifically, participants will learn to:

- Excavate while observing stratigraphic units
- Document data on formal excavation forms
- Measure, map, and draw archaeological features
- Preserve contextual data in a Harris matrix
- Obtain and process environmental data via a flotation system (if applicable)
- Analyze pottery and artifacts and catalogue them for publication
- Identify Etruscan, Roman, and Medieval artifacts and discern the differences between the typology and chronology of these artifacts
- Describe the Villa Vergigno and other archaeological sites in the context of the history of the region
- Engage with broader issues of archaeological research, such as research focus for a site and field season, data analysis and interpretation, and the development of hypotheses as they relate to the ongoing discovery of new data

Prerequisites:

None. As is typical of archaeological field schools, the primary learning is done in the field, hands-on under the instruction of the archaeological staff. There is a requirement that you approach the project, season, and each workday with enthusiasm, ready to work and investigate, and that you understand that this project involves actual, real work conducted Monday through Friday in the hot summer sun involving physical labor and a variety of tools.

Accommodations:

Participants are housed in a large, multi-suite historic villa located in the center of Montelupo Fiorentino, approximately ten minutes by car from the excavation site, twenty minutes by train from Florence, and walking distance to train station, grocery stores, cafes, shops, and restaurants. There will be 2-4 people per room/sharing amenities. The cost of the program covers room and board: breakfast, lunch, and dinner are provided six days a week. A washing machine, kitchen, and wireless Internet are provided.

Travel and Meeting Point:

Participants should make their own travel arrangements to and from Italy (we will not travel overseas as a group). The four best airports for arrival, in order of convenience of travel to the meeting point, are Florence, Pisa, Rome, and Milan. Upon arrival in Italy, participants should plan to meet at 5pm on Monday, June 22nd outside Santa Maria Novella train station in Florence, from which transportation will be provided to Montelupo Fiorentino.

Participants are encouraged to travel independently on weekends, as well as prior to or after the project. Upon conclusion of the project, participants will be dropped off at Santa Maria Novella train station in Florence at 10:30am on Saturday, July 31st.

Cost of Field School

\$5,400 USD

Price includes:

Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner 6 days a week	Site and Museum Visits
Room and Board from June 22- July 31	Optional Group Excursions
Professional on-site instruction in archaeological and laboratory methods	

Not Included in Price:

Travel to and from Florence, Italy	Independent weekend travel
International Health Insurance (ca. \$50)	Personal apparel
Personal snacks and beverages (water is always provided and juice/coffee/tea is provided at breakfast)	
University course tuition	

Personal Gear:

The summer days in Tuscany, Italy can be rather hot - sometimes in the mid-high 30s C (90s F) during the day; low 20s C (70s F) at night. Keep this in mind when packing clothing for daily work, but also for non-excavation activities.

All necessary tools and equipment are provided for excavation, though you are welcome to bring your own favorite items and personal digging gear.

Health Information

Do you have any allergies or chronic medical conditions? [] No [] Yes
If “yes” please provide additional information with this application.

Do you have any mental health conditions that might require attention while abroad? [] No [] Yes
If “yes” please provide additional information with this application.

Do you have any dietary restrictions? [] No [] Yes
If “yes” please provide additional information with this application.

Please list any prescription medications that you are currently taking (this is important; some medications that are common in Canada and the US are unavailable in Italy): _____

Please list any physical limitations that might prevent you from working on an archaeological site, outside, in the sun, in summer temperatures [Note that limitations in this regard would not preclude your acceptance, since work in the laboratory is also part of the program.]: _____

Other Information

Previous travel experience: _____

Do you plan to enroll in formal university course credit (1 - 6 credits)? _____

In one or two sentences, explain your interest in participating on an archaeological project and/or what goals to do hope to obtain:

I certify that the information given above is accurate and complete. I agree to release any and all records and transcripts held by my college or university, and other institutions, to International Programs as necessary for my participation on a study abroad program. I understand that as a participant on a study abroad program I shall be subject to certain rules and requirements of the University and cooperating institutions in U.S., Canada, and overseas, which I agree to fulfill in all respects, subject to immediate dismissal if I do not do so. I agree to assume financial responsibility for the program fees as determined by the University International Programs Office and for my own welfare while overseas.

Signature of Student

Date

The Villa del Vergigno Archaeological Project is an affirmative action /equal opportunity employer and institution and does not discriminate on the basis of race, sex, status in any aspect of employment or services. Academic educational programs, activities and services offered to students and/or employees are administered on a non-discriminating basis subject to the provisions of all civil rights laws and statistics.

Please Submit a Digital Copy of this Application to:

McKenzie Lewis (mcklewis@gmail.com) or (mac.lewis@uwaterloo.ca)

The Deposit is non-refundable, but will be returned if applicant is not accepted to the program.
Payment Details will be provided upon acceptance to the program.

Application and Program-Fee Due Dates:

Total Program Fee:	\$5,400 USD
March 1, 2020:	Application and \$500 Deposit Due
March 31, 2020:	\$2,000 of Total Program Fee Due (plus Deposit if not yet submitted)
April 20, 2020:	Remaining Balance of Program Fee Due