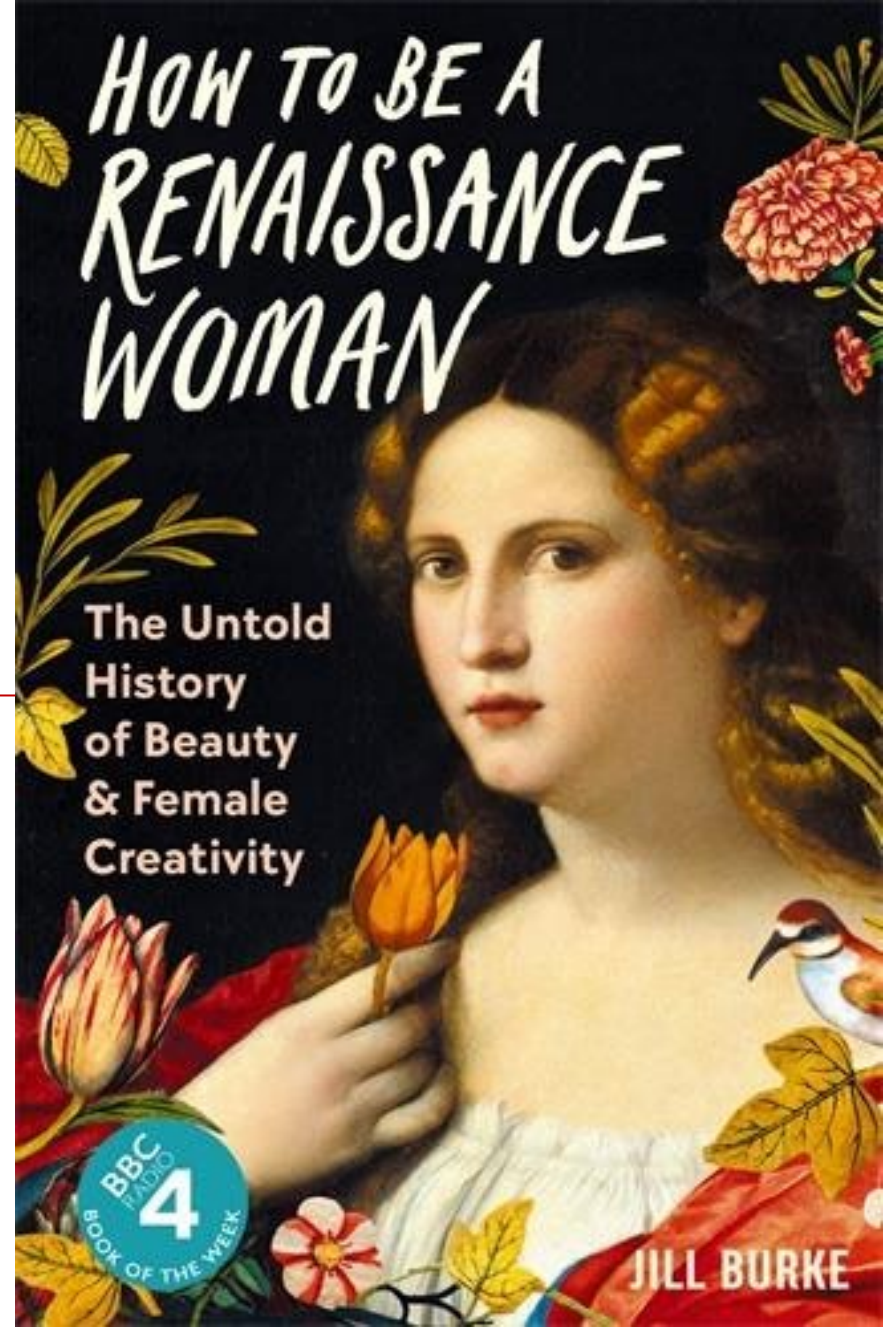




***FLORENCE THROUGH HER EYES***  
**A curated journey into the world of  
Renaissance women**

*With Professor Jill Burke  
& Art Historian Paola Vojnovic*

**June 26 - 28, 2026**



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Join us in Florence for an exclusive three-day cultural experience inspired by Jill Burke's book, *How to Be a Renaissance Woman: The Untold History of Beauty and Female Creativity*.

Enjoy visits to museums, archives, and one of Florence's most historic gardens while discovering the remarkable women who helped shape the Renaissance.

### *Highlights*

★ A private visit to the Biblioteca Nazionale to view Renaissance manuscripts, including Caterina Sforza's *Esperimenti*.

★ A bespoke hands-on workshop where you'll create your own beauty products using authentic Renaissance recipes devised by Caterina Sforza.

★ A cooking class with Emiko Davies, award-winning author of cookbooks and cuisine collaborator with *Corriere della Sera*

★ A visit to one of the oldest gardens of the Renaissance, the beautiful *Giardino dei Semplici*





## *Dates & Prices*

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Dates	June 26-28, 2026
Minimum Number of Participants	6
Price	€1,080 /\$1,280

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*To secure your place we request a 25% reservation deposit that is non-refundable. The balance on the tour is due a month before the tour commences. Please note that currency exchange rates may change but the price in Euros for the three days is €1,080.*

*Your Host*

# Paola Vojnovic

A Renaissance Art Historian with deeply-rooted experience in international arts projects and cultural fundraising in Italy, Paola Vojnovic is also a curator, published author, and research scholar as well as a sought-after accredited private tour guide for Florence. The recipient of a prestigious Renaissance Florence Fellowship from Syracuse University, New York, Paola has been active in the fields of arts and culture since 2000. She is also the creator and host of **Paola's Studiolo**, the virtual meeting room of the leading scholars, museum curators, and thinkers of our time.

Paola edited two books, *The Basilica of Santa Croce: American Reflections* and *Il Ponte delle Immagini*. She also co-authored *Santa Croce in Pink*, a guidebook focusing on women buried or celebrated in the Basilica of Santa Croce.

In 2008, after an intensive 800-hour training, Paola became an authorized tour guide for the City of Florence. She has had the privilege to share her passion and love for Florence with people from all walks of life, in addition to powerful influencers from the worlds of entertainment, media, and politics, including James Ivory, Beyoncé Reba, Anthony Bourdain, & many others.



*With special guest expert*  
**Jill Burke**

Jill Burke is Chair of Renaissance Visual and Material Culture at the University of Edinburgh and an internationally-recognized specialist in the art, objects, and lived experiences of Renaissance Italy. Her work brings this period to life through stories of patronage, beauty, bodies, and identity, drawing on cutting-edge research into art, materials, and everyday practices from painting and sculpture to cosmetics and clothing. An award-winning author, curator, and public historian, she is known for making complex ideas engaging and accessible, offering audiences a compelling way to see the Renaissance anew.

She received a BA in History from Oxford University, and her MA and PhD from the Courtauld Institute of Art in London, with a postdoctoral fellowship at the Harvard Center for Italian Renaissance Studies in Florence. She has been teaching at the University of Edinburgh since 2003.



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## *Important Information*

## What's Included

3 days' participation in an exclusively-designed, bespoke tour program.

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The services and knowledge of Jill Burke and Paola Vojnovic as your personal expert guides and hosts throughout the tour.

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One pre-trip Zoom meeting with Paola, to discuss the upcoming content and answer any practical questions.

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All visits and museum reservations and admissions, as per the itinerary.

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### **Included meals:**

- Meet and greet coffee at Caffe Giacosa
  - Welcome aperitivo at a special Florentine rooftop terrace
  - 2 lunches in very special trattorias
  - Cooking class and meal with Emiko Davies
  - 1 Farewell Dinner
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# Program Outline

Please note that this itinerary may be subject to modifications.

## Day 1 Friday, June 26<sup>th</sup>

2pm – meet and greet, **Caffe Giacosa**, via della Spada 15r, Florence

### Visit to the recently renovated **Palazzo Davanzati Museum**.

This is a rare example of a 14<sup>th</sup> century Florentine residence, showing the architectural transition between the Medieval tower house and the Renaissance palace. With a display including furnishings, maiolicas, lace, and embroidery, it is the perfect place to imagine a Renaissance women's world.

Afterwards, we will head to the **Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale di Firenze**, the extraordinary library on the banks of the Arno, to look at the portion of the manuscript *Experimenti* containing the beauty recipes of Caterina Sforza, one of the most powerful women of the Italian Renaissance, and grandmother of Cosimo I de' Medici.

6:30pm – An aperitivo with Jill Burke, Paola Vojnovic, fellow participants, and other special guests.

Dinner on your own.



## Day 2      Saturday, June 27<sup>th</sup>

We will begin our day at the magnificent **Giardino dei Semplici**, a botanical garden founded in 1545 by Cosimo I de' Medici. It is the second oldest botanical garden in the world that remains in its original location.

**Next, we visit the Museo degli Innocenti**, a Florentine Renaissance masterpiece building designed by Filippo Brunelleschi, that weaves together art, history, and a timeless mission for women and families: it was the first orphanage of Europe.

We will have lunch at the **Caffè del Verone**, located in the historic loggia on the top floor of the Innocenti – one of Florence's most picturesque panoramic terraces.

Afterwards, we will **visit a spice shop** founded in 1842 that still preserves its magical, truly Renaissance “feeling.”



✳️ After a break, we will convene for an evening cooking class with renowned chef and cookbook author, **Emiko Davies**. Get ready to make (and enjoy) a true Renaissance meal!



## *Cook with Emiko Davies!*

*“Whether she is focusing on the food of Italy (where she has long lived) or Japan (where her mother’s family is from) her writing is always thoughtful, and her recipes life-enhancingly do-able and delicious.” — Nigella Lawson*

Emiko is an Australian-Japanese food writer and cookbook author, based in Tuscany for the past 20 years, where she teaches cooking classes and culinary workshops with her husband, sommelier Marco Lami. In the spring of 2023, they opened **Enoteca Marilu**, a natural wine bar and space for hosting **cooking classes** and food and wine **workshops** in San Miniato, between Florence and Pisa. See what the Sydney Morning Herald wrote about them **here**. Harpers Bazaar wrote about them **here**.

Emiko has written seven **cookbooks**, **Florentine: The True Cuisine of Florence** (March 2016 and a new edition in November 2020), **Acquacotta** (March 2017 and a new edition in February 2023), **Tortellini at Midnight** (March 2019), **Torta della Nonna** (March 2021), **Cinnamon & Salt** (April 2022), published by Hardie Grant. In September 2023, **Gohan: Everyday Japanese Cooking**, was published by Smith Street Books and it won **Fortnum & Mason’s Cookery Book of the Year** and the **Andre Simon Special Commendation awards**. Her seventh book, **The Japanese Pantry** came out in November 2025.

## Day 3 Sunday, June 28<sup>th</sup>

### *Workshop morning!*

10am-12 pm We will work together to learn about and prepare some **wonderful Renaissance skincare recipes** that you can take home, based on the potions that were created and described by the **extraordinary Caterina Sforza**.

Step into an atmosphere of timeless elegance as our workshop unfolds within the studio of contemporary artist Vittoria Colonna, set inside a stunning Renaissance palazzo. Named in honor of her illustrious ancestor—the celebrated muse and confidante of Michelangelo—the space carries a quiet legacy of artistry and inspiration. Encircled by Colonna’s vivid creations and embraced by centuries-old walls, we will gently echo the rituals of Renaissance women, gathering in an intimate, creative setting to craft and explore their cherished beauty potions. It is an experience that blends history, artistry, and sensory delight—an invitation to immerse yourself in a refined moment suspended between past and present.



## Day 3, PM


*Lunch*

3-5pm Visit to the **Uffizi Gallery** to see the paintings of women that shaped Florentine history.



*“In the prime of her youth, **Caterina Sforza** was described as above average in height, curvaceous yet well-proportioned, and endowed with a generous bosom. She had a pale complexion, large eyes, high arched eyebrows that gave her a penetrating gaze, and a broad forehead. From her father, she inherited the distinctive Sforza features: a prominent, slightly hooked nose and a strong, protruding chin. Her hair was wavy and usually tied back. While many sources describe her as blonde and fair-skinned, it remains uncertain whether this appearance was natural or enhanced through cosmetic mixtures. However, naturally blonde hair was not uncommon in the Sforza lineage, where several members were known for their fair Northern Italian features. Caterina's appearance closely aligned with the beauty ideals of the time, which favored fair skin, light hair, and contrasting dark eyebrows in women.”* (London Times)



The image shows the interior of the Cantinetta Antinori restaurant. On the right, there is a wine cellar with a wooden structure containing many wine bottles and several white ceramic jugs. Below the wine cellar is a green tufted leather booth with wooden tables and chairs. On the left, a hallway with a herringbone tile floor leads to a large arched doorway with an ornate iron gate. The hallway is lit by black lanterns mounted on the wall. There are potted plants with orange fruit in the foreground on both sides of the hallway. The ceiling is vaulted and the walls are light-colored.

For our final event together, at 7.30pm we will gather for a **gala Farewell Dinner at the Cantinetta Antinori**, home to the famous winemaking Antinori family since the late 1400s!

*Arrivederci, till next time!*

# *Join us!*

We hope that you will be part of this unique and bespoke Florentine adventure! Please don't hesitate to reach out if you have any questions.

To reserve your place, email Paola at [paola50122@gmail.com](mailto:paola50122@gmail.com)

## **Where to stay:**

We love the [soprarnosuites.com](https://www.soprarnosuites.com), a charming boutique hotel in Oltrarno - one of Paola's favorites in Florence!

