

Craftsmen of the Oltrarno

A historic district,
the charme
of the ancient
workshops
and the artistic
craftsmanship
of Florence



List of workshops for independent visits

Antonio Ciulli e figlio
Furnishing accessories and lighting in metal,
marble and crystal
Via Bibbiena, 24 - Ph. +39 055 7322301

Arte Decorativa
Hand-decorated inlaid marble
Via de' Barbadori, 41r - Ph. +39 055 215766

Duccio Banchi
Bronze casting
Via dei Serragli, 10r - Ph. +39 055 294694

Simone Beneforti
Restoration of art works
Via Maffia, 46r - Ph. +39 055 2381934

Riccardo Bianchi
Paintings in the antique style
Via Cecioni 54/56 - Ph. +39 055 714421

Delfino Arredamenti
Florentine damasks
Lungarno Torrigiani, 9r - Ph. +39 055 2342579

Fratelli Traversari
Artistic mosaics
Via Senese, 68b - Ph. +39 055 221685

Nicola Fontana
Restoration of antique furniture
Via San Giovanni, 9r - Ph. +39 338 5406259

Vincenzo Giacomini
Book restoration
Via Buca di Certosa, 2 - Ph. +39 055 2047729

Franco Lapini
Articles in silver and silver plate
Via Grosseto, 7 - Ph. +39 055 7322362

Moleria Locchi
Glass cutting and artistic engraving
Via D. Burchiello, 10 - Ph. +39 055 2298371

Claudio Migliorini
Restoration of antique furniture
Via Pisana, 36r - Ph. +39 055 2335255

Renato Olivastrì
Restoration of inlaid furniture
Via de' Velluti, 21r - Ph. +39 055 2396934

Pabelle
Made-to-measure household linen
Via dell'Olivuzzo, 9a - Ph. +39 055 7398487

Mauro Pini
Hand-chased silverwork
Via Zanella, 10/12/14r - Ph. +39 055 229243

Valerio Romanelli
Florentine-style wood decoration
Via del Leone, 43r - Ph. +39 055 288191

In cooperation with:



Fabio Pagliuzzi - 4/2007 - Top Grafiche

Cover photo P. Koch

Master craftsmen of tradition

There are a thousand ways of visiting and exploring the "other Florence" of the city centre, the working class neighbourhood of Oltrarno area with its ancient craft workshops. But without a doubt it is best to move around on foot, wandering through the maze of narrow streets and alleys in search of the expert craftspeople who are preserving traditional working methods and handing them down to future generations.

With its historic workshops, its pool of manual skills and the original artistic craft items that are made there, the Oltrarno is the essence of artisan Florence. Everything is still patiently and meticulously carried out by hand. In the maze of workshops occupied by craftspeople and small businesses, imagination and creativity reign supreme, and a mix of manual ability, intuitive flair and good taste yield some truly unique results. The Oltrarno is an open-air museum and an extraordinary legacy of traditions. The Chamber of Commerce and the Florence Tourist Office, in conjunction with the Province of Florence and Florence City Council, organize a number of guided itineraries for anyone interested in learning more about the area's arts and crafts.

These itineraries provide an opportunity to visit studios and workshops in one of the most authentic neighbourhoods in Florence. Accompanied by a professional guide, tourists can visit three of the workshops in any given itinerary, or alternatively strike out on their own, choosing from an extensive list of possibilities.

The visits cost **10,00 euros per person**, last about **three hours** and take place on **Monday and Thursday** afternoons. The assembly point is in **Piazza Pitti at 3pm** (or elsewhere, as established by the booking office). The initiative runs throughout the year, except for the summer months (from the last week in July to the second week of September, inclusive) and the Christmas and New Year holidays.

The programme for any given afternoon comprises just **three studios** per itinerary (chosen according to the availability of the craftspeople). This is so visitors can fully appreciate the skills and workmanship involved.

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Silverware
Borgo San Jacopo 41/r
- 2 MINNA COCCHI**
Tricot
Via dello Sprone 17/r
- 3 CHILLERI FACTORY**
Goldsmiths
Borgo San Jacopo, 5



4 MAURO NERDI
Repair of period-piece metal objects
Via San Niccolò, 58

5 BETTINA SCHINDLER
Restoration of antiques
Via San Niccolò, 99r

6 VALTERIO CERTINI
Hand-decorated metals
Via San Niccolò, 2

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Hat blocks
Piazza Santo Spirito, 5/r

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Florentine-style metalworking
Piazza Santo Spirito, 12

11 FRATELLI CECCHERELLI
Decoration on wood with pastiglia
and Florentine trecentesco
Piazza Tasso, 5

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Florentine-style artistic bookbinding
Piazza Pitti, 36/37r

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Silversmith
Sdrucchiolo de' Pitti, 12r

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Via Santo Spirito 62/r

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Lost-wax casting
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English

Itineraris for discovering artistic crafts

PAOLO PAGLIAI *'Silverware'*

Borgo San Jacopo 41/r – Ph. +39 0552 82840

In Paolo Pagliai's workshop, listed in the register of Florentine Historic Businesses and located in an atmospheric medieval tower-house, new objects are wrought from silver by highly skilled master craftsmen. Antique items are also restored.

MINNA COCCHI *'Tricot'*

Via dello Sprone 17/r – Ph. +39 055 225311

Signora Giuseppina produces highly original accessories using traditional weaving-loom, crochet and needlework techniques, combining wool and cotton with string, rope, straw, ribbon and braid.

CHILLERI FACTORY *'Goldsmiths'*

Borgo San Jacopo, 5 - Ph. +39 055 2398645

Working with consummate skill and ability, the Chilleri brothers use gold, coral and precious stones to produce fascinating jewellery and sculptures from exclusive original designs. They also employ the 'lost wax' method once used by Cellini.

MAURO NERDI *'Repair of period-piece metal objects'*

Via San Niccolò, 58 – Ph. +39 055 2638970

This workshop is tucked away, almost hidden, in a very atmospheric location. Damaged and worn metal items come to life once again in the able hands of a skilled silversmith, who also works with bronze, brass, pewter and Sheffield steel.

BETTINA SCHINDLER *'Restoration of antiques'*

Via San Niccolò, 99r - Ph. +39 055 2340693

In Bettina Schindler's workshop, tradition and innovation come together in the top-quality restoration of antique objects in ivory, tortoiseshell, amber, coral and other organic materials. She uses both traditional techniques and more modern procedures.

VALTERIO CERTINI *'Hand-decorated metals'*

Via San Niccolò, 2 - Ph. +39 055 2342694

Hidden behind the walls of a former oratory (founded in 1442) is a fascinating workshop where the deconsecrated altar and splendid stained-glass windows stand alongside machines dating back to the 1600s. Working with imagination and skill, capable artisans produce objects in iron, sheet metal and aluminium.



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Information and bookings:

📍 **Q.N.HOLIDAYS**

Via del Moro, 95/R (Corner via dei Banchi)

50123 Firenze

e-mail: info@qnholidays.it

Ph. +39 055 2654587 o 348 2200634

Booking hours:

Monday-Friday: 9am-19pm

Saturday: 10am - 16pm

Sunday: 10am-14pm only by telephone.

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Itinerary 2

ARTE DELLE CARTE *'Florentine marble paper'*

Lungarno Torrigiani, 31 – Ph. +39 055 2001526

Marble paper is produced with a process that yields very sharp, bright colours. The paper-covered objects turned out by this workshop, which range from bookmarks and slipcases to frames and boxes, bear witness to a Florentine craft that is at once traditional and innovative.

L'IPPOGRIFO STAMPE D'ARTE *'Etching'*

Via Santo Spirito, 5/r – Ph. +39 055 213255

In this atmospheric studio two enthusiastic and dedicated artists-craftspeople produce and sell etchings depicting views of Florence and the Tuscan countryside. Visitors can watch the process of etching by hand onto sheets of copper, and the running off of individual prints on an etching press. The works are then painted with watercolours.

ALFONSO BINI *'Hat blocks'*

Piazza Santo Spirito, 5/r – Ph. +39 055 282292

This craft workshop turns out weird and wonderful items of great originality, including hat blocks, glove forms and an imaginative range of wooden decorative items. They are lathed and lovingly hand-finished by a group of affable, hard-working craftspeople.

CARLO CECCHI DI GIULIANO RICCHI

'Florentine-style metalworking'

Piazza Santo Spirito, 12 - Ph. +39 055 214942

Situated on the ground floor of a beautiful Renaissance palace, this workshop specializes in the production of tasteful Florentine-style metal objects, including tablet boxes, picture frames and original containers. Everything, from the pressing and soldering through to the final decoration, is carried out by hand to designs produced by the firm itself.

FRATELLI CECCHERELLI

'Decoration on wood with pastiglia and Florentine trecentesco'

Piazza Tasso, 5 – Ph. +39 055 2337170

This workshop uses ancient Florentine techniques to produce some very particular objects, decorated with prints and gold leaf in the case of trecentesco, or alternatively with bas-relief applications of a paste called pastiglia, which is made to a secret formula. The studio works in both a classical and a more contemporary style.



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GIULIO GIANNINI & FIGLIO

'Florentine-style artistic bookbinding'

Piazza Pitti, 36/37r - Ph. +39 055 212621

Founded in 1856, this artistic workshop continues a tradition dating back six generations. The firm works with both paper and leather, producing handmade marble paper, paper printed with traditional designs, writing paper, greeting cards and bookmarks, as well as deluxe leather volumes and desk accessories.

DONATO ZACCARO *'Silversmith'*

Sdruciollo de' Pitti, 12r - Ph. +39 055 280828

Visitors to Donato Zaccaro's workshop can see the entire silverworking process, starting from the sheets of metal and ending with the finely wrought article itself. Skilled craftspeople can be admired as they work at the lathe, coat objects with pitch and then chase them with a sure and expert hand, producing items such as trays, fruit bowls, cutlery and frames.

FRANCESCO DA FIRENZE *'Handmade shoes'*

Via Santo Spirito 62/r – Ph. +39 055 212428

In this small but very active workshop, a handful of skilled shoemakers shape leather into simple yet original footwear, using traditional techniques and materials. The shoes, which can also be made to measure, are on sale in the adjoining shop.

ALIANI E PERINI *'Lost-wax casting'*

Via de' Ramaglianti, 8 - Ph. +39 055 2382287

This goldsmith's workshop combines innovative design with ancient goldworking methods, and the lost-wax casting method devised by Benvenuto Cellini in the 16th century is still in use here. The procedure is complex and involves a number of stages: the creating of a wax model, then of a mould, and finally the casting of single-piece jewels.

LO STUDIOLO DI MAURIZIO PONZIANI *'Painted and lacquered furniture'*

Via Santo Spirito, 27 - Ph. +39 055 287958

All the phases of workmanship are carried out by hand using natural products and techniques that date back centuries. Located on the ground floor of a Renaissance palace, the workshop is a constant hive of activity, as craftspeople restore a 17th-century herbal cabinet, for instance, or make faithful reproductions of antique lacquered furniture from Venice, Genoa and Sicily, or alternatively in the English, French or Dutch styles.

BIANCO BIANCHI *'Scagliola decoration'*

Via Maggio, 4r – Ph. +39 055 2658257

In the premises on Via Maggio, visitors can admire a range of original items in marble and scagliola, which is selenite, a flaky form of gypsum also known as moonstone. The objects are the product of a traditional method which involves making inlays from pulverized selenite mixed with pigments of colour and natural glues.

ARGENTERIA IL NUOVO LEONE *'Florentine silver chasing'*

Via San Giovanni, 13/15r - Ph. +39 055 2337848

In this silversmith's workshop, every piece is unique and made strictly by hand. Visitors move from one room to the next to observe the various phases of workmanship: the turning of the silver on the lathe, the coating with pitch, the decorative chasing and the final polishing and gilding.

FRATELLI CIULLI *'The art of lighting'*

Via della Fonderia, 51 - Ph. +39 055 221156

The Ciulli brothers are masters in the art of lighting and in the creation of furnishing accessories. Working in brass and iron, they forge candelabra, lamps and wall fittings, but also tables and chairs. The work in a disparate variety of styles ranging from the classic through to the very latest in modern design.

A. Pagliuzzi



Itinerary 1

