

WOODSWORTH COLLEGE — UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO
Summer Abroad 2022 in Tours
Course runs from June 27 to July 22 (4 weeks)

FCS369Y0 The Culture of Touraine

Gardens of the Loire

Prof. Pascal Michelucci

The Loire river Valley is celebrated as the “cradle of the French language” and also as the “garden of France”, recognized by UNESCO as an “outstanding cultural landscape” valued for its variety and authenticity. From the times the kings and queens established their châteaux along the Loire in the 16th century, along with gardens and parks where the connection with nature became a part of a new genteel lifestyle, the reputation has endured. We will study the unique connection the Loire Valley has maintained with the natural environment and the sources for its Italian inspiration through lectures and field trips focused on the outstanding gardens of the region.

At Chaumont, we will visit the château and explore the International Garden Festival, where traditional and new interpretations of the garden as a space to be enjoyed have expanded the modern understanding of landscape architecture. We will also turn our attention to some private gardens — the famed rose garden in Ronsard's Priory of Saint Cosmas and Leonardo Da Vinci's park in the Clos-Lucé in Amboise, where some of his inventions have been recreated. Among the notable estates of the country, Chambord is probably the most extravagant building in the Loire region, and we will turn our attention to the recently renovated French formal gardens and its expansive park, the largest enclosed park in Europe with a 32km long wall to create a unique habitat for stags and wild boars. At Villandry, we will visit a sun garden and a glamorous symbolic garden directly inspired by the Renaissance. Finally, we will visit Chédigny, the only “village-garden” in France and the domain of Valmer, where one of the most authentic Renaissance gardens remains, which provide a useful comparison of the different paths toward the preservation of the garden tradition in modern days.

Classes Monday-Thursday 9am-12 noon

Field Trips

Field trips are integrated throughout the course, allowing students to experience first-hand a variety of important sites in the Loire region.

Program

This is a Humanities course.

FCS369Y is taught in English with readings and written assignments in English (no knowledge of French is required). However, students can count this course towards a program in a French Major or Specialist with prior approval if they submit all written work and tests in French. These students must, during the first week of class, inform the instructor of their intent to do so.

Prerequisite

At least 4.0 course credits in any subject
No placement test is required

Contact

pascal.michelucci@utoronto.ca

Course site: <https://q.utoronto.ca>

Office hours

Immediately after class, and by appointment

Arrange appointments by email: pascal.michelucci@utoronto.ca

Field trips

This course includes embedded visits to the region's famous gardens and châteaux, including

- ✿ Field trip to Chaumont-sur-Loire & International Garden Festival (June 29)



- ✿ Tour of the Clos Lucé, Leonardo da Vinci's home in Amboise (July 5)



- ✿ Visit of Saint Cosmas Priory in Tours (July 7)



- ✿ Visit of Chambord and grounds (July 12)



✿ Tour of Villandry castle and gardens (July 18)



✿ Visit of the Château de Valmer & Chédigny (July 20)



Assessment

Pre-course activity [10% (1500-1800 words)]

In-class test [10%]

Presentation PechaKucha [20%, 20x20]

Annotated photography portfolio [25% (1200-1500 words)]

Final Reflection Paper ¹ [20% (1800–2500 words)]

Ongoing contribution to activities & discussions [15%]

— M June 20 (6pm)

— R June 30

— M July 11 or W July 13

— F July 15

— F July 22

¹ See : < https://experientialmodules.utoronto.ca/wp-content/uploads/articulate_uploads/Reflection/story_html5.html >.

Tentative calendar

Date	Topic	Course work
M June 20 — 18h		Pre-course activity [10% (1500-1800 words)]
M June 27	Course presentation : Meaningful gardens	
T June 28	The other Valley of the Kings from Angers to Orléans	
W June 29	Château de Chaumont-sur-Loire & International Garden Festival	
R June 30		In-class Test [10%]
M July 4	François I and Leonardo	
T July 5	Clos Lucé	
W July 6	Petrarch meets Ronsard, Du Bellay sends his <i>Regrets</i>	
R July 7	Prieuré Saint-Cosme	
M July 11	The quest for refinement	Presentation PechaKucha [20%, 20x20] (I)
T July 12	Chambord	
W July 13		Presentation PechaKucha [20%, 20x20] (II)
R July 14	National Bastille Day	
		July 15 — Annotated photography portfolio [25% (1500 words)]
M July 18	Villandry castle and gardens	
T July 19	The Renaissance of Ligerian Women and Catherine de' Medici	
W July 20	Château de Valmer (Chançay) — Chédigny	
R July 21	Leaving the Loire, or the fall of the House of Valois	
		July 22 — Final Reflection Paper [20% (1800–2500 words)]