



LIGHT & LAYERS

Capturing the Soul of the East Algarve

April 14-18, 2026



Algarve in watercolor **ART ESCAPE** series
with **Grażyna Ostrowska & Kelly Medford**

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Capturing the Soul of the East Algarve

Algarve in watercolor **ART ESCAPE** series

The journey explores the layers of light, history, and form that define the East Algarve coast - It is more than a painting trip. It's an immersion in light, place, and the poetic clarity of watercolor.

Join us for the Watercolor Journey, April 14-18, 2026!

We travel from town to town by train – this gentle movement across the landscape is the “Adventure” side of our journey through the East Algarve, from the old stones of **Faro** to the glowing salt flats of **Vila Real de Santo António**.

Each day builds on the previous one, focusing on a core visual and technical element. Through guided morning sessions (3h), you will develop skill and confidence in painting outdoors. In the afternoons, you are free to continue painting with us, explore on your own, or simply enjoy the landscape. We work using high quality watercolor paper (provided).

Open to all levels, but some experience with drawing or watercolor is helpful.



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Instructors:

Grażyna Ostrowska (Portugal/Germany) & Kelly Medford (Italy/USA)

Language: English

But we speak too: German (Grażyna), Italian (Kelly), Polish (Grażyna), some French (both of us), um pouco de Português (Grażyna)

Group size: 6–12 participants



Level: All welcome, some drawing/painting experience helpful

What's included:

Daily guided instruction (3h each morning), afternoon sessions (optional), local travel coordination & transport costs, HQ paper, artistic support

What's not included:

Accommodation, meals, materials – recommendations provided!

Costs: 980€ per person.

Local day-trippers (1-day option): a one-day drop-in rate: **€198/day**

Deadline booking: 30.03.2026

Very-early-bird-price: 800€ until 31.12.2025, regular-early: 900€ until 15.02.2026

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KELLY MEDFORD

Hi, I'm Kelly Medford, an American living and working as a plein air painter in Italy since 2005. I have been painting and sketching out on the streets of Italy daily as my way of getting to know the country, its people, history, culture, and sights as well as enjoy my love of painting and drawing.

Artists and non-artists alike have been keeping sketchbook journals of their travels through Italy and Europe for centuries, and I am honored and excited to continue this long-standing tradition.

That is why in 2012 I started Sketching Rome Tours
<https://www.sketchingrometours.com>
 as a way to offer this experience to everyone.

More about me on my artist website:
<http://www.kellymedford.com>



GRAŻYNA OSTROWSKA

I am the founder of Lighthouse Courses | Art & Adventure, a painter and visual artist born in Warsaw in 1972. After earning my master's degree from the Academy of Fine Arts in Warsaw, I worked for many years in Germany as an illustrator.

Since early 2025, I've been based in Faro, where the light, people, and poetic urban landscape inspire my work — Faces | Flowers | Faro in watercolor, acrylic and pastel.

I explore contrasts of light and shadow to create sensory, atmospheric scenes. A recent personal project, 30 Days of Faro, focused on painting on location throughout the winter months. Other portuguese adventures include artist residency "A Luz de Lisboa" and "Drawing for the Ocean".

More about me on my artist website:
<https://www.grazynaostrowska.com>

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Itinerary & Teaching Arc

Day 1

Faro – “Light & Composition”

Topic: Basic color palette, watercolor techniques, observing the setting, building the composition.

Focus: How to simplify cityscapes, find-/choose “your motif”, and frame key elements using compositional anchors.

Setting: Faro's historic Cidade Velha, golden limestone, and tree-framed plazas.



Day 2

Olhão – “Form & Contrast”

Topic: Architecture and perspective, guiding the viewer.

Focus: Cubic buildings, fishing gear, strong shadows. We explore line confidence and value study while working with simple perspectives.

Setting: Urban grit, labyrinth-like-streets, and sea views at the harbor plazas.

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Day 3

Armona Island – “Texture & Transparency”

Topic: Wet-in-wet techniques, reflections, and softness.

Focus: Layering skies and waves, capturing the atmosphere of sand, sea, and seagrass. We loosen up and explore transparency.

Setting: Dunes, wooden beach houses, shimmering water — perfect for letting the watercolor breathe.



Day 4

Tavira – “Rhythm & Storytelling”

Topic: Creating narrative in a scene through contrast and detail.

Focus: Sketching bridges, street-scapes, and river views while selecting elements that convey a feeling or mood. Adding simplified human figures.

Setting: Roman bridge, tiled façades, and soft light over the Gilão River.

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Itinerary & Teaching Arc

Day 5

Cacela Velha – “Bringing It All Together”

Topic: Integrating previous techniques into own expressive painting.

Focus: Individual project time guided by tutors: develop a scene that synthesizes your learning — light, form, texture, and story.

Setting: Timeless village atop the cliffs, Moorish arches, views over the Ria Formosa, silence and wind. A soulful final painting day.



Evening in Vila Real de Santo António – “Celebrate & Reflect”

We gather for a final dinner and the grande sharing session.

Optional short closing session on Sunday morning (Day 6)





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Frequently Asked Questions

Watercolor Journey in East Algarve – April 14–18, 2026

What's included in the €980 price?

- 5-day guided watercolor program across five Algarve towns
- 3-hour morning teaching sessions daily with two experienced tutors
- Optional free-painting sessions and feedback in the afternoons
- All local train/ferry travel between towns (Faro - Olhão - Tavira - Cacelha Velha - Vila Real de Santo António + Armona ferry)
- Group coordination, tips, and support throughout the journey
- Watercolor paper: we provide high quality paper - watercolor paper pad OR sketchbook, 300g/m2, aprox. A4 size.

What's not included?

- Your travel to and from Faro before/after the course
- Accommodation (we provide recommendations!)
- Meals (we usually have lunch together; dinner is optional)
- Art materials beside paper (you will receive a materials list upon registration)

Can you help with accommodation?

Yes! We'll send a curated list of charming, centrally located guest-houses in each town – all under €100/night. You'll be responsible for booking your own room, but we're happy to coordinate shared bookings or help match you with a roommate if you prefer.

How does travel between towns work?

We'll use local trains and short ferry rides (e.g., to Armona). It's easy, eco-friendly, and part of the fun. All travel tickets during the 5 days are included in your course fee. We'll travel as a group and guide you through every step.

What should I bring?

Your watercolor painting materials, apart from paper - your brushes, paints & palette - just the essential painting gear.

Comfortable clothes and shoes for walking & standing outdoors

Please, travel “light”! Preferably with a small backpack only.

This workshop is a **journey**, we use local transport, and will change the location. The less stuff you carry, the more relaxed and fun your experience will be!

April in Algarve offers pleasant high temperatures around 20°C (68°F) and average lows of 12°C (54°F).

Is this suitable for beginners?

This workshop is ideal for those with **some experience** in water-color or drawing. Total beginners are welcome, but they should be prepared for an immersive week outdoors with daily painting practice.

Will we eat meals together?

Yes! We typically enjoy lunch together as a group after the morning class – it’s a great moment to connect and relax. Dinners are informal and optional; you’re welcome to join us or explore on your own. (Thursday’s lunch will be a special beach-side treat on Ilha da Armona & Saturday evening we dine in Vila Real de Santo Antonio together!)

Can I join just for one day?

YES! We offer a limited number of single-day spots for local participants (**€198/day**). Please contact us in advance if you’re interested.

Where does the course start and end?

We begin on **Tuesday**, April 14 at 9:30 AM in Faro (the meeting point will be sent in advance).

The journey concludes on **Saturday** evening, April 18, in Vila Real de Santo António.

We return by train to Faro on Sunday morning.