

CHATEAUX PAINTING HOLIDAYS - Materials List

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1. INTRODUCTION

Going out to paint takes a bit of organization. The French have a wonderful expression for someone who has got themselves in a muddle - "*quelqu'un qui a melangé ses pinceaux*" - whose got their brushes all mixed up...

This materials list is intended as a rough guide to the basics, along with a few condensed explanations & tips. It is not obligatory. It's meant to help you get started. Please elaborate & adapt it. If you already have your own favourite kit, please bring it. I have no wish to encourage slavish imitation but rather your own creative solutions. The choice of mediums is entirely your own. Don't worry about not understanding it all, as we'll have plenty of time to have a really good look at it at Beduer. Start thinking about if there's anything in particular you'd like to try. Thinking about materials often focuses the mind & encourages the first seeds of paintings. A sketchbook is a great way of catching these first inklings.

What I strongly recommend is that you do some drawing the week before so as to 'limber up' (avoid those painful squeaks of rusty talent being teased into action on the first day...). Try doing some of the exercises in Betty Edwards' 'Drawing on the Right Handside of the Brain' (this is probably the best how-to-draw book for beginners). Use your sketch book on trains & airplanes to keep the hand in practice.

An A5 sketchbook, one 2H & one 3B graphite pencil & eraser are obligatory. (A5 = 148mm x 210mm or 5 7/8" x 8 1/4" ...but something close to this size will do)

DRAWING SET : I like mechanical self-propelling pencils with 7mm leads. Water-soluble graphite pencils are very useful, as are pocket brush pens. I also recommend that you think about buying a picture viewfinder with a red plastic window (that converts colour to black & white).

Art materials are expensive! So I reckon it's best to get to know a basic kit before spending yet more. Sometimes too many art materials distract more than helps. To paint with a basic, limited palette is a very important learning exercise. It's not how many colours you've got in your paint box that counts, it's how you use them.

PAINTING FURNITURE PROVIDED AT BEDUER

There is a basic camp-come-studio at your disposition. I will be providing easels, camping tables, chairs, stools, boards, rough paper, paper towels, solvents, tape, rags, jam-jars. If you do have your own favourite light-weight traveling easel etc, please bring it, if it's not too difficult.

Help & materials are given on the last day with packing delicate (& sometimes wet) paintings. It's also possible to have your paintings sent back home via the post. See section below 'traveling with oil paintings'.

2. HOW TO PACK YOUR BAG

Check with your airline company what the weight limit is for baggage. Remember: Ryan air has a baggage weight limit of 15 kg per bag.

TIP: do a dummy pack a few days beforehand to ensure that it all fits ... & that it's not too heavy to carry.
"He who would travel happily must travel light." (*Antoine de Saint-Exupéry*) ... i.e. bring the minimum.

Bathroom & swimming pool towels provided at Beduer. Sunhat, rain coat, fleece, good shoes (for the cave), sun cream & sun glasses.

Paints are not allowed as cabin luggage. Pack them as hull luggage. Small tubes, in transparent plastic bags (should customs need to examine), with lids screwed on tight (air pressure changes causes spillage). They are 'artists colours' & not paints.

A rucksack (even a plastic bag will do) to carry your kit in. A small suitcase with wheels is the best if you move a lot. Stanley Spencer used a gram.

Help & materials are given on the last day with packing delicate (& sometimes wet) paintings. It's also possible to have your paintings sent back home via the post. See section below 'traveling with oil paintings'.

PLEASE CHECK WITH YOUR AIRLINE FOR THEIR SPECIFIC RULES AND REGULATIONS REGARDING ARTIST'S MATERIALS.

3. WHICH MEDIUM TO BRING?

It's best to bring only one media so as to really focus & concentrate during the week. Simplicity often makes for better painting. And for traveling light.

Finding out the medium to suits you is a long journey of experimentation, trial & error, fun & surprises. Trying out & getting the feel for each medium is an essential stage of a beginner's learning. It also changes as your current area of painting interests changes. A medium isn't just the paint itself but the way in which you translate the world into paint. What paint? What technique? What vision? What feeling? A medium is whole unity. It is such a personal affair, so much so that I dread to advise. Having said that though, the advice of a practicing painter can save you time & money, & give you a few guiding clues. So I hope this list & the tips helps.

Personally I don't think that flying abroad to a painting holiday is the best way to experiment with art materials. They are heavy to transport & I think that this something better done at home. The art course at Beduer does focus on mostly watercolour & drawing, with a sizeable minority of students painting in oils, acrylics & alkyds. This means that you will have the opportunity to see how another student painted the same thing but in another medium. This is a very fertilizing exchange for your learning and hopefully will lead you to understand the essential in what you paint & how this is beyond the technique & the medium but rather lies in the picture-making elements such as colour, composition & expression.

I paint in both transparent watercolor & opaque oils (but drawing is my favourite). There will be demonstrations in all mediums during the week. So here's some advice to help you choose:

Watercolour pros = Sublime. Delicate. Luminous. Watery. Lovingly paper. Beautiful colour. *trés zen*, allows for great spontaneity. Light weight. Clean. Travels well. good for small formats, calligraphic & ties in well with drawing. Also allows for incredible detail & precision (hence it's use amongst architects & botanists).

Watercolour cons = Probably the most difficult medium there is! Strange as it is also the choice of most beginners...doesn't really allow for corrections. Unforgiving. A real 'think & do' medium. Still regarded as 'the amateur medium' & doesn't command the same respect & prices as oils. Expensive to frame.

Oils pros = Colour rich, saturated. Oily, lush, good for touchy feely stuff. Push the paint about & work towards a result. Opaque, you can cover up & over & thus correct mistakes. Forgiving as it allows you go back & paint over it later.

Oils cons = More clobber to carry. Heavier. Smelly turpentine. inflammable, solvents not allowed on airplanes but provided at Beduer. Pack tubes with lids on in bag in middle of luggage, be aware that this could be a problem. Help & materials for packing wet oil paintings.

Acrylics pros = Probably the best learning medium. Opaque, you can cover up & over & thus correct mistakes. Forgiving as it allows you go back & paint over it later. Quick drying, easy to transport dry paintings home. Colour rich, saturated. Versatile. Water based and so marries well with watercolor.

Acrylics cons = Quick drying.

Alkyds pros = dries well within 24 hours, stays wet enough to work for 4 to 8 hours in the hot sun of south of France

Alkyds cons = slightly thinner than oil paint. Another set of paints to buy.

4. SUPPORTS - the surface that you actually paint onto.

Watercolour : Paper is fragile & easily damaged in transport. Think about a portfolio that will pack into your suitcase, that can be filled up with paper, your finished paper, as well as doubling up as a board for support. Foam-Core or Foam-Board is lightest.

How many sheets? Depends your speed of execution...for rapid painters, say two per day at six days? Plus some for experimenting. Bring a pad of between 15 to 20 sheets? I use scrap wc paper as a secondary palette, so if you have any old 'failure's, cut them up & use the back of them as a your secondary palette, mixing & colour testing swatches.

Size of watercolor paper? Depends on the 'handwriting' of your style i.e. weather you have broad stroke or a fine zoom-in on detail with a small brush. For a three hour paint, I mostly work quarter sheet, about 30 x 40 cm (12" x 16" approx.) though I find increasing find this a lot of energy & hard work, so a 24 x 30 cm or a 21 x 30 cm (8" x 12") allows for more speed & spontaneity. One of the principal problems beginners have is getting the size right. Too often they bite-off more than they can chew, hence many many half-finished paintings & unnecessary headaches. We will looking at this issue closely.

Remember: standard size support = standard size frame = big money savings.

Oils, Acrylics & Alkyds : Rigid 'academy' boards (canvas boards) are cheap and light weight, & unlike canvases, there is no worry about piercing them in transit. The choice of texture is important.

Canvas paper for oil paints is even lighter than academy boards, thus avoiding that slipped disk & excess baggage fee. When it comes to framing, you can either glue them onto board or frame them behind glass. Canvas paper can also be easily cut to size & shape as you desire.

I hesitate to recommend a canvas or paper size as this is such a personal choice. But... as a rule of thumb, a 30 x 40 cm (12" x 16" approx.) size is between two to four hours painting time for most experienced plein-air painters but beginners tend to need double or triple this amount of time. 30 x 40 cm is also an easy size to transport. Over & above this size, then you're getting big, which is ok - inspiring event! But working large does have it's own set of logistical problems, which is why most plein-air is small size.

How many? Say one a day at six days = six plus a few for experimentation.

Some canvas paper & acrylic paper might be available to buy, sizes : 20 x 40 cm; 30 x 40 (12" x 16" approx.); 40 x 50 cm

Plus a few canvas boards to help out in emergencies. sizes : 18 x 24 cm (8" x 12"), 30 x 40 cm (12" x 16" approx.)
There's also paper & gesso if anyone wants to paint large 'but size'... why not, if that's where the learning is leading you (roll up & transport home in a tube).

5. WATERCOLOUR

WINDSOR & NEWTON 'COTMAN' RANGE (student quality) are OK to start off with.

Box Set or Adam's Selection of Colours?

You can buy a set which should have a good box to pack the tubes, sometimes with a small palette included (which isn't large enough for all your needs. You will need another palette). Please check the colours below, as some of them are specific to the south west of France.

Box sets tend to be cakes, not tubes.

I prefer tubes, not pans. Tubes are moist & cakes/pans are hard & dry thus take time to moisten & make workable. This hinders their ability to easily make up half a teaspoon of paint, for example. Thus tubes are easier to use.

Tubes give cleaner mixes for washes i.e. wetter & looser & 'freer'. If you do use tubes, **please please** go and buy a daisy wheel palette (a round one with well in it that will hold up to half a tea-spoon of water).

Sets of cakes are more transportable.

The cheapest box set of cakes/pans, which are student quality, are the WHITE KNIGHTS. A russian brand which is good value for money. The cakes are better than the tubes, which are too runny.

W & N Artists quality field-box set (12 colours in half pans, including one each of Burnt Sienna, Burnt Umber, Cerulean Blue, French Ultramarine, Ivory Black, Permanent Alizarin Crimson, Raw Umber, Scarlet Lake, Winsor Green (Blue Shade), Winsor Lemon, Winsor Yellow, and Yellow Ochre) - which has a pretty old fashioned selection of colours. Then in which case **for Beduer, make sure you also bring the dioxazin violet (brand name = winsor violet) & raw sienna & Naples Yellow.**

[COTMAN DELUXE SKETCHER'S POCKET BOX student quality](#)

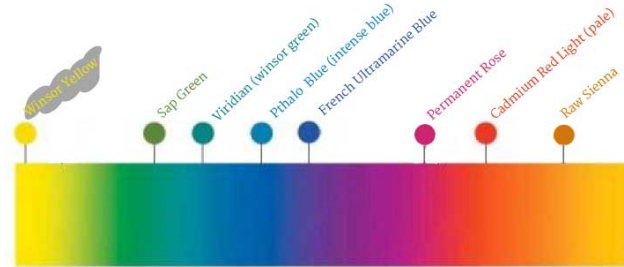
Adam's Selection of Colours (sunny, colourist South of France)

Because you are traveling outside of your studio, you will have to down-size your palette of colours. Here are some suggestions to get right down to essential basics:

MINIMUM SELECTION : the 'split -primaries' restricted palette (a warm & a cool of each primary colour) . Painting with a restricted palette is the best way to learn how to mix & use colour.

WINSOR YELLOW (transparent)
 CADMIUM RED PALE (opaque)
 FRENCH ULTRAMARINE BLUE (granulating)

RAW SIENNA (transparent)
 PERMANENT ROSE (transparent blue red, colour fast & performs better than alizarin crimson)
 INTENSE BLUE (WINSOR BLUE GREEN SHADE transparent PHTHALO)



Mapping Pigments to the spectrum. To understand the cool & warm varieties of each colour, it is helpful to see where each pigment falls along the colour spectrum. The magenta-like Permanent Rose, for example, lies closer to the violet end of the spectrum, while red light is relatively warmer and lies towards the yellow end of the spectrum.

EXTRA COLOURS : add these colours for a more balanced palette for landscape painting

WINSOR & NEWTON NEUTRAL TINT (brand name of a truly beautiful transparent 'chromatic' black... no need for Paine's Grey which is a mix of lamp black, ultramarine blue & yellow ochre)
 DIOXAZIN VIOLET (brand name = WINSOR VIOLET). (my dark point, my 'black'), ULTRAMARINE VIOLET is a softer subtle alternative.
 BURNT SIENNA (browned off, grisaille)
 YELLOW OCHRE (dull soft yellow)
 ENGLISH RED, VENETIAN RED or LIGHT RED (rust, opaque, very useful mixing complement as well as for painting roof tiles).
 CERULEAN BLUE (king of the granulating colours. Daniel Smith & Rowney artists quality Cerulean granulate the most)
 SAP GREEN (south of France sunny green, transparent flat washes) or HOOKERS GREEN (english dark green)
 RAW SIENNA or NAPLES YELLOW is more or less the local colour of the chateau. Violet is its mixing complement.

I use a lot of raw sienna, ultramarine blue (red shade), winsor yellow & sap green...

for some (optional) excitement **WINDSOR & NEWTON ARTIST'S RANGE...**Put your money on good yellows. It is in the yellow that one really notices the difference between artist & student range.

CADMIUM YELLOW PALE - this colour is the least satisfactory quality in the Cotman student quality range & it is here where you get the most power of colour for the extra money. Put your money on good yellows. If you're going to buy but one good quality paint, buy this colour.

WINSOR GREEN BLUE SHADE is a great convenience green (that screaming sating powerful green that everyone hates but learns to love when properly harnessed)
 COBALT BLUE - you can't really paint the South of France summer sky without it.
 PERMANENT MAGENTA - (transparent bluey red that gives great greasy with certain greens)
 ULTRAMARINE VIOLET - granulating, much softer & weaker than dioxazin violet

RAW SIENNA or Naples Yellow is more or less the local colour of the chateau. Violet is its mixing complement.

"I haven't yet managed to capture the colour of this landscape; there are moments when I'm appalled at the colours I'm having to use, I'm afraid what I'm doing is just dreadful and yet I really am understating it; the light is simply terrifying." - painting in Bordighera, Italy... (Claude Monet)

SINGLE PIGMENT VS MIXED COLOURS?

Artists are always discussing palettes & everyone evolves their own. Getting to know new colours is great fun. Plus, in watercolour, as it is so much more sensitive than oils, there is also a debate between those who prefer to mix their colours by using a limited palette & those who prefer to use 'single pigment' (as each pigment behaves differently & are frequently brighter than their mixed equivalents). We'll be looking at this but suffice to say here that 'single pigment' is the expensive option. Do please try to make sure that you have the minimum eleven colours above.

Watercolour Brushes

Size	10/0	3/0	2/0	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	12	14	16
	0.8	1	1.4	1.5	1.7	2	2.3	3.4	3.6	3.9	4.4	5.2	5.7	6.4	7.9	9.5	10.7
	6.4	7.8	8.6	9.8	11.8	14.1	15.1	15.7	17.5	20	21.5	24.2	26	27.7	31.5	40.9	41.5

All measurements shown in mm. **UK brush sizes -- nb not the same as French**

The size that you choose depends on your personal style. Not too small! Please bring any of your old favorites. Think of your brushes like a good pair of dancing shoes ... comfortable & responsive, that encourage you to take good steps! A painting is made with brush stroke, so try & choose beautiful brushes! Better to have a few good, expensive brushes than loads of cheap & useless. Examine the hairs with care as many shops sell damaged brushes which are all beaten up, split & curled back. Avoid those with obvious scissor cuts. The transport of fragile brushes is a delicate affair. The points of the hairs can get deformed & all bent out of place. I roll mine up in a bamboo table place mat.

- ROUND. For fine work & details. UK size no.5 or 6. Not too small! This type of brush must have a perfect point, just like a pencil. Ideally these must be sable but there are some wonderful nylon brushes on the market today. They have more 'snap' than a sable, thus bounce back into shape, giving a more nervous drive. A cheap round worn out nylon is god for mixing your colours, as you don't what to be wearing down your sharp point in the mixing stage!

- MOP. For laying down more liquid, so use when blocking in masses. A mop with a point is very useful as you can also cut in around fine fiddly detail.

- ONE STROKE FLAT. Square, flat edge. This type of brush takes up less liquid than a mop. For use when tinting & superimposing a second layer of paint over a dry undercoat. Nylon is a drier hair than animal hairs, so get a nice prolene or taklon.

- WASH BRUSH. Like a one stroke flat but wider. Useful for laying down large surfaces of uniform colour.

- Chinese 'HAKE' are an interesting option for a wash brush. My goat hair hake is still my number two brush after fifteen years. Ron Ranson makes a good one, as does Rosemary's brushes.

- Small natural sponge

There's some good short one minute videos of different brushes & the marks that they make here <http://www.youtube.com/user/JacksonsArtSupplies?feature=watch>

Palettes

The most frequent error is to vastly underestimate just how much palette space one needs. Don't under estimate how much palette space you'll need. You will need at least two or three. You will need at least two or three, so as not to muddy your colours. Use adjacent colours only on each palette. Clean palette = sparkling colours in finished painting. If you want to paint wet in wet in a hot climate, I find a deep well palette indispensable. I use four of these [round plastic palettes with deep wells](#). If you can't get one, then simply use the bottom of a plastic water bottle. Cut out the bottom of a Perrier bottle & hey-presto! The [ultimate watercolour palette, made by John Pike](#). Made in America, difficult to find in Europe :-)

Other Necessary Equipment

- A SUN HAT !! Suncream. Anti-mosquito spray?(rarely necessary - we have a full first-aid kit including bite relief but this is very rarely used but it is there should you need it).
- One 2 H & one 2 B GRAPHITE PENCILS
- A RUBBER & retractable blade for sharpening.
- A scraper. A little pen knife is kinder than a square razor.
- An organic sponge. This is your equivalent of a rubber (& much more).
- A pipette or a syringe
- 4 Clips to pin your paper to the board. The wind can be a real nuisance in plein-air painting.
- A plastic bag to carry your kit in. Keep the weight down.... "angels can fly because they take themselves lightly"

Advanced Materials

- PEN & INK, why not try mixing your mediums?
- RESIST. Made of liquid rubber. Wax crayons and candles give a similar effect.
- GLYCERINE SOLUTION or GUM ARABIC - for thickening the paint making paint more transparent.
- Winsor & Newton BLENDING MEDIUM - retards somewhat the speed of drying in the sun. Cost you tho'.
- BODYCOLOUR such as gouache or acrylic, which is opaque enough to cover over fine watercolour underpainting. Correct your mistakes & give yourself flexibility (even Sargent did this). Often used to add highlights at the end. Chalk pastels can be used in a similar manner. Can blast away the delicate nature of watercolour & so is considered by purists as "the death of watercolour" (Turner). Can also be used on its own. Why not paint on coloured paper to achieve striking effects?

FURNITURE - Provided at Beduer - but bring do bring your own favoured kit if you want.

- PLASTIC BOTTLE FOR WATER
- TWO OR MORE JAM JARS. Finns & mix water.
- SOME PLASTIC PALETTES, such as an ice cube tray or the top of an ice cream tub or the bottle of a Perrier bottle. I prefer plastic or enamel palettes to ceramic, as they are unbreakable. Don't under estimate how much palette space you'll need.
- KITCHEN PAPER, FOR SOAKING UP & CORRECTING.
- DRAWING BOARD, VARNISHED SO AS TO STOP PAPER STICKING TO IT.
- DRY BROWN 'PARCEL' TAPE (WATER SOLUBLE). FOR STRETCHING THE PAPER TO A BOARD.
- FINE GRILL & STIFF BRUSH, FOR FINE SPLATTING.
- A SKETCHING STOOL.
- AN EASEL, which may not be the model of your choice.
- tables

'The Complete Guide to Watercolour' - Dewy

Watercolour - Advanced

'Making Colour Sing' - Jean Dobie
Jean-Louis Morelle
Trevor Chamberlain

Oil - Advanced

'Landscape Painting in & out' - Macpherson (plein-air)
'Alia Prima' - Richard Schmid

Landscape

Carlson's Guide to Landscape Painting

Some free 'how to paint' lessons on internet

<http://www.artgraphica.net>

<http://www.youtube.com/user/JacksonsArtSupplies?feature=watch> great short videos of different materials, brushes & techniques.

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Historic art materials shops in Paris

<http://www.dubois-paris.com/presentation/histoire-de-la-societe>

<http://www.magasinsenneller.com/historique/historique.html>