

**m**ore than a year ago, I read a snippet in the *New York Times* travel section about a landscape-painting course in Tuscany. A passionate traveler and a one-time dabbler in painting, I signed up with a like-minded friend. The two of us figured we'd spend a little time painting and a lot of time touring, shopping, and eating. I pictured the teacher as a bespectacled academic with her hair drawn back in a bun.

Instead, Maddine Insalaco showed up in shorts, a T-shirt, and a baseball cap. And I became so engrossed—no, addicted—to the process that I painted from 9 A.M. to sundown for seven days straight! Not only had I discovered a wonderful vacation, I had stumbled upon a perfect subject for our "Follow Your Bliss" series: Maddine, I learned, had recently left a career in international finance to become a painter.

I've just returned from my second painting workshop with Maddine, and once again found her energy infectious. She teaches her students not only to paint but also

to celebrate the beauty of nature. She read us a passage from Charles Hawthorne I'll not forget: "Painting is a matter of getting out to nature and having some



joy in registering it. If you are not going to get a thrill, how can you give someone else one?"

I've had many conversations with Maddine about feeling this passion for one's work. She once remarked that artists tend to live long lives. My guess is that this is generally true for anyone who loves what she does, whether it's painting, computer programming, farming, or raising a family. At *Healthy Living*, we view this passion for work and for life as the elixir of robust health. Some people don't find their bliss in their early years, but even if it takes decades, it's a journey well worth the making, as Maddine's story illustrates (page 100).

Another—surely more surprising—source of good health, it turns out, is a little harmless gossip. My friends and I used to say that we couldn't trust anyone who didn't enjoy sharing a juicy tidbit from time to time. But, I confess, we said this only under the protective cover of close friendship. Now, it seems, we needn't have felt so guilty. In this issue, psychoanalyst Herbert S. Streen, Ph.D., gives us the green light to enjoy this delicious indulgence (page 88).

Finally, we're delighted to announce that our newly designed Web site is up and running—and getting rave reviews. As a special treat, log on to hear our own Judith Asphar, in her lilting Scottish accent, lead you in a 60-second meditation. Join us at [www.healthylivingmag.com](http://www.healthylivingmag.com)—and have a happy new century!



Under the Tuscan sun, Rachel Newman paints a vineyard scene.

*Rachel Newman*  
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