

Zigzag Plein Air Sketchbook with Tara Sweeney



Combine watercolor and ink sketching on location from direct observation. Delight it where curiosity can lead you. Gain confidence through expert demonstrations, individualized feedback and focused sketching time. Creative prompts help you explore wherever you are—inside and out. Get started on this versatile and portable sketching habit. All levels of experience welcome.



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Materials List for Zigzag Sketchbook:

- hard-cover, postcard-size, accordion-style watercolor sketchbook that folds down from 40 inches fully extended to 4x6 inches (Pentalic Dreamcatcher, Senelier Urban, Hahnemuhle Zigzag are examples) Or, bind your own before the workshop.
- a couple of watercolor postcards, 4x6 inches (Strathmore makes a pack of 15, or cut your own from your favorite watercolor paper)
- travel set of professional quality, hard pan watercolors: 6-12 colors with a couple of good size mixing areas in the palette lids.
- white permanent ink pen such as Uniball Signo broad gel pen
- Pentel Aquash Large round water brush and a traditional travel watercolor round, #6-8
- permanent black ink pen, 0.3-0.5 width (Staedtler permanent fine liner, or a traditional fountain pen with carbon ink are good choices.) Check that your pen will make a wash when clear water is added right after making a mark. Then check that it is permanent when completely dry. We'll use it both ways.
- 2B drawing pencil with sharpener or a mechanical pencil with 2B leads (no H leads please.)
- kneaded eraser (make sure it's kneaded, and not just any eraser)
- small bottle with fine sprayer and an 8-16 oz water bottle to refill
- paper towels or reusable absorbent sponge, chamois or rag
- rubber band to secure sketchbook in closed position
- 4 binder clips to secure sketchbook in open position
- waterproof pouches or ziploc bags to keep sketchbook and wet palette separate
- small backpack or bag to carry gear
- portable stool--be sure you can easily carry it in addition to other gear.
- optional: portable easel--be sure you can carry it in addition to your other gear.
- Plan to walk and work with a variety of weather in mind: comfortable shoes; sun, rain, wind protection; temperature comfort.

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Teaching Philosophy

I have been painting for nearly forty years and I am not yet bored with watercolor. I like to think of our partnership like a dance--when I remember to follow its strong lead, the result is fluid, elegant, effortless. When I don't, we still dance, but it's awkward. Learning to follow watercolor's lead takes time, good coaching, and a willingness to try and try again. That's where I can help.

What kind of watercolor are you longing to paint? The "right" way to paint is the way that best supports your ideas and goals (not mine). With more than thirty years of teaching experience I can help you explore *what* to paint and *how*, but just as importantly, *why* you want to paint. We'll identify creative goals and explore solid techniques and design to support your progress. When you get stuck—every painter struggles with this—I'll help you find ways to get going again. We'll look at your painting in progress to see where you are succeeding. When you want direction, I'll be there to suggest what might come next. My daily step-by-step workshop demonstrations and warmup exercises are carefully designed to support your progress. I provide a written summary and visual aids so you can see, hear and review content. For each workshop, I check my previous content for fit, and revise as needed. This insures content is fresh for me as well as repeat participants.

We'll start wherever you are in your creative journey. Together we will make art *and* messes, intentional choices *and* happy accidents. We will find problems to solve, courage to try, and resilience to continue. You'll learn how you want to paint, but more importantly, *why*.

I look forward to learning what you long to create, what might be holding you back, and how I can help you acquire the skills and confidence to bring your best paintings to life. At the end of our time together, I'll know I've succeeded when your work is distinctively yours, (not at all like mine), and you can't wait to do more.

Tara

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