

FAQs for Backyard Art Camp 2024 with Suzi Banks Baum

What does the workshop fee cover?

A sumptuous banquet of art supplies, everything you need to make a Coptic Stitch Journal, hand crafted cool drinks and elixirs from miss polly, bug juice, and printed instructions to take home. Camp happens in a high-quality event tent with sidewalls that sits comfortably in my driveway. I have yoga balls, beach towels, and sturdy chairs for sitting in our sharing circle.

What about a place to stay?

After you make your deposit & email Suzi about which session you want to enroll in, please arrange your own travel and lodging. Great Barrington has many short-term rental spaces along with several hotels and motels just a short drive away from my house. The Quality Inn and The Barrington are three blocks away. I live on what is called "The Hill" in GB. Surrounding towns are nearby if you have a car-South Egremont, Sheffield, and Monterey. The Red Lion Inn in Stockbridge, MA is historic and about 20 minutes away. Briarcliff Manor on Route 7 is the sweetest of our many motels.

Where do I fly in to?

Albany Airport in New York state is a bit over an hour. Hartford Airport is the same, but in a different direction. Boston Logan airport is a solid 2.25 hours from here, but an easy drive if you don't mind a turnpike. All these airports have rental car services. The Peter Pan bus line drops you off three blocks from my house, in front of the Quality Inn, both from Boston and from New York City. Amtrak takes you to Hudson, NY, but you'd need a car to get you from there to GB.

What do I need to bring?

You bring your lunch and snacks every day. Many people bring stuff to leave in the camp refrigerator in the basement. Bring a thermos or water bottle to cut down on paper waste. There is always water available for refilling your bottle.

You need an apron because we get messy. A sun hat and comfortable shoes. I almost always go to the river to swim after a day of camp. This is not part of the program, but you can come with me if you like. This is a very swim-at-your-own-risk situation. But also sublime.

Bring a rain jacket in case we get a storm.

What if I am not an artist?

You are in the much longed for state of "Beginners Mind." I have an assistant who will help you as we move through our days. I demonstrate each process, plus you have printed instructions at your place. This process includes making paste paper which is deeply intuitive and much like finger painting. You will build some skills at Camp and have company to do that.

What if I am an artist/teacher/leader in need of break from being the expert?

Oh, please come to camp. I have a big place in my heart for people who are out on the front lines and need/require/will-expire without a respite. In the tent, you will not be asked to help others unless you offer it yourself, no one will borrow your tools, and you get to bop along with the circle of creatives who show up every day. We won't ask your opinion or advice. **At Backyard Art Camp, we believe in feeding the leaders.**

What if I have to miss a day?

I suggest you come to Camp another year. This is an immersive experience and one that delivers its full medicine when you are fully present and not worried about missing something important. Please come when you can relax into the days and not hurry through any of the succulence.

What about cancellations?

Your deposit is non-refundable.

Full payment is required by August 1. Up to that point, if you have to cancel, I will fully refund whatever you have paid, above the \$100 deposit.

After August 1, there are no refunds.

What if I get tired during the day?

There are quiet, shaded areas to rest, like the porch couch or on a beach towel under the oak or rocking chair on the front porch. A swimming lake is 3 blocks away.

Where do people eat at night?

The Berkshires restaurants and roadside markets will be open. There is sourdough pizza or sushi or deli-style restaurants all within walking distance. We have a great food coop and a Saturday Farmer's Market. Soco Ice Cream shop is just down the hill. Many people get groceries and picnic in the evenings.

What about coffee?

I cold brew coffee with beans from No. Six Depot in West Stockbridge. Plenty of ice and cream for your cup. There are jugs of chilled herbal iced tea plus my beloved pal Janet Reich Elsbach of Extra Helping fame, brews us custom kombucha. Hot tea and water are always available.

What about bugs and the heat?

It is good you ask because if you require air conditioning, I suggest you enroll in my workshop at Snow Farm Craft Program later in September. BYAC is outside, like Girl Scout Camp used to be. We are protected from heavy weather and work inside a well-ventilated event tent with many fans blowing that keep mosquitoes and flies at bay. I have not yet had a "bad bug" year, but it could happen. We have lots of bug repellent and this property is treated with tick repellent several times over the summer. I have a tick removal kit in the kitchen. I moved Camp to September because we have more light breezes in September, and the nights cool off, so it is a gorgeous time to be in the Berkshires.

What should my partner do while I am at Camp?

This is the cultural Berkshires, there are tons of things to do and see. We have a great public library for someone who needs internet to work from a laptop. We are just a few miles from the Appalachian Trail. Fishing? Kayaking? Sitting on the lawn at Tanglewood Music Festival or Jacob's Pillow Dance Festival. The Clark Museum, Norman Rockwell Museum, and the Berkshire Botanic Gardens are world class venues.

What about you Suzi? What is your life like during Camp?

BYAC is my most lush offering, the banquet I plan all year long. I am out in the tent at sunrise to make sure papers are drying flat and the book press is working well, that the paint didn't get licked up by racoons. I have several beloved assistants who help me run Camp. It fuels me just like I hope it will fuel you. My husband works from home and runs interference for me if we have an emergency. You are in my backyard. This is my home, and I am happy to have you as a guest.

Have you got a question I haven't answered here?

Email me. Let's set up a quick phone call and let's talk it over.
suzi@suzibanksbaum.com. Please make sure you title it BYAC question.

