

Archaeological Institute of America – Los Angeles Society



Founded in 1903 the AIA – LA society is one of the oldest AIA chapters in the USA.

Member Spotlight

This is part of an ongoing series of profiles presenting the many talented and diverse members of AIA-LA.

Patty Civalleri



Patty brings a breath of fresh air with her energetic support for conveying the benefits of archaeology to the general public. In her younger days, a geologist uncle got her interested in digging up the world around her. But that had to take a back seat to running the company she started in graphic design and website development. Then she married Roger, a businessman fascinated by anthropology who rekindled her interest in digging up history. Thanks to neighbor Charlie Steinmetz, they found themselves on the Director's Council at Cotsen Institute for 17 years. Patty traveled with archaeologists to Egypt, Italy, Peru, Türkiye, Chile, China and more places than she can remember. She helped with videos, digital content and photography to document their work.

All that travel made her realize the way most of us visit historic places makes no sense. We go during “prime” times along with surging crowds of tourists who flock to the most well-known places they have seen in movies. It tends to be stressful and keeps us moving so fast we really don't see the local people and surroundings which make those historic cities special. So she started traveling her own way, at a slower pace, a little off-season, and exploring places in cities which were just as fascinating as the famous spots but much less crowded. Patty loved the relaxing way it deepened her experiences, so she published the *Florence Italy Travel Guide*. When it took off, she added guides to Venice and Rome.



To Patty, the most memorable times of her life revolve around the people she has come to know. Some are prominent, such as Zahi Hawass in Egypt. Some are influential, such as Charles “Chip” Stanish at Cotsen. And many others are people with whom she has shared years, or even a single moment—like the veiled woman she met in Cairo who let Patty hold her baby. It's clear Patty cares deeply about people she meets as she travels around the world, or even to a local campus. And that is as it should be.

— Interview by Sanford Holst