

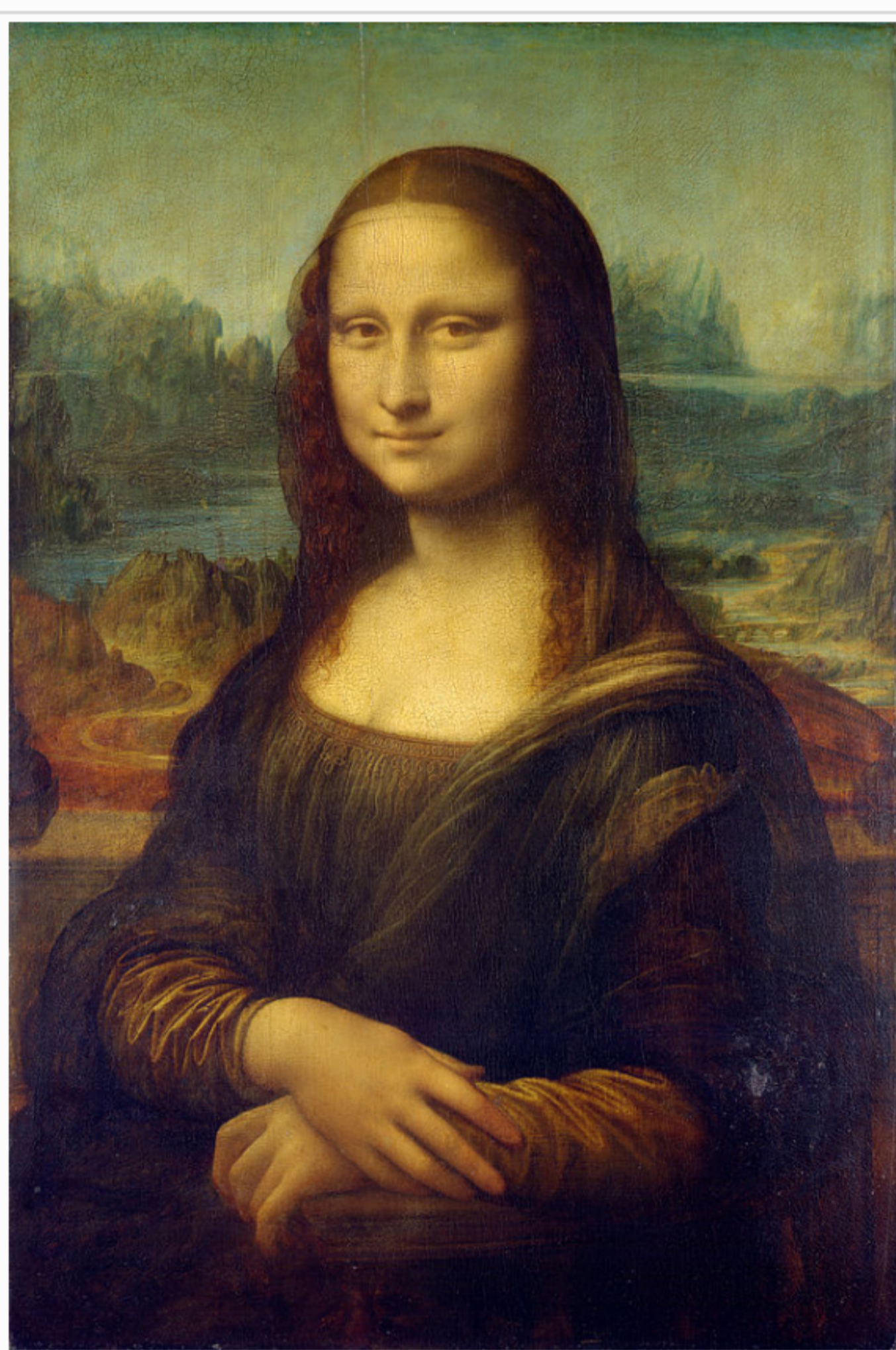
Mona Lisa

Painting by Leonardo da Vinci

The **Mona Lisa** (/ˌmoʊnə ˈliːsə/; Italian: Monna Lisa [ˈmɔnna ˈliːza] or La Gioconda [la dʒo ˈkɔnda], French: La Joconde [la ʒɔkɔ̃d]) is a half-length portrait of a woman by the Italian artist Leonardo da Vinci, which has been acclaimed as "the best known, the most visited, the most written about, the most sung about, the most parodied work of art in the world".^[1]

The painting, thought to be a portrait of Lisa Gherardini, the wife of Francesco del Giocondo, is in oil on a white Lombardy poplar panel, and is believed to have been painted between 1503 and 1506. Leonardo may have continued working on it as late as 1517. It was acquired by King Francis I of France and is now the property of the French Republic, on permanent display at the Louvre Museum in Paris since 1797.^[2]

Italian: *La Gioconda*, **French:** *La Joconde*



Artist	Leonardo da Vinci
Year	c. 1503–06, perhaps continuing until c. 1517
Type	Oil
Material	Populus
Subject	Possibly Lisa Gherardini
Dimensions	77 cm × 53 cm (30 in × 21 in)
Location	Musée du Louvre, Paris

Title and subject

The title of the painting, which is known in English as *Mona Lisa*, comes from a description by Renaissance art historian Giorgio Vasari, who wrote "Leonardo undertook to paint, for Francesco del Giocondo, the portrait of *Mona Lisa*, his wife." *Mona* in Italian is a polite form of address originating as *ma donna* – similar to *Ma'am*, *Madam*, or *my lady* in English. This became *madonna*, and its contraction *mona*. The title of the painting, though traditionally spelled "Mona" (as used by Vasari), is also commonly spelled in modern Italian as *Monna Lisa* ("*mona*" being a vulgarity in some Italian dialects) but this is rare in English.

Vasari's account of the *Mona Lisa* comes from his biography of Leonardo published in 1550, 31 years after the artist's death. It has long been the best-known source of information on the provenance of the work and identity of the sitter. Leonardo's assistant Salaì, at his death in 1525, owned a portrait which in his personal papers was named *la Gioconda*, a painting bequeathed to him by Leonardo.

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