

## SIENA

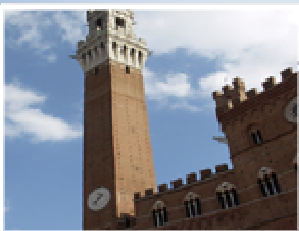
**Sienna** (also widely spelled Sienna in English) is a city in **Tuscany**. It is the capital of the province of Siena. The historic centre of Siena has been declared by UNESCO a World Heritage Site. The city is particularly known for "The Palio".

July 2 and August 16 are the dates when the **Palio di Siena** is held. The Palio is a traditional medieval horse race, is run around the **Piazza del Campo** each year. This event is attended by large crowds, and is widely televised. Seventeen Contrade (which are city neighbourhoods originally formed as battalions for the city's defence) vie for the trophy: a painted flag, or Palio bearing an image of the Blessed Virgin Mary.



**Piazza del Campo** is the principal public space of **Sienna, Tuscany** and is one of Europe's greatest medieval squares. Around the piazza are ranged the **Palazzo Pubblico**, with its **Torre del Mangia** and various palazzi signorili.

The open site was a marketplace established before the thirteenth century on a sloping site near the meeting point of the three hillside communities that coalesced to form Siena: the Castellare, the San Martino and the Camollia. It was paved in 1349 in fishbone-patterned red brick with ten lines of travertine, which divide the piazza into nine sections, radiating from the mouth of the gavinone (the central water drain) in front of the Palazzo Pubblico.



**The Torre del Mangia**, built in 1325-1348, is located in the **Piazza del Campo**. The name (meaning "Tower of the Eater") derives from its first guardian, Giovanni di Balduccio, nicknamed Mangiaguadagni for his tendency to spend all his money for food.

The upper part was realized by Agostino di Giovanni under design by one Mastro Lippo pittore, probably identifiable with Lippo Memmi. The marble loggia, known as **Cappella di Piazza**, was added in 1352. The pilaster were remade in the current form in 1378. The simple wooden ceiling once covering the loggia was replaced by the current Renaissance marble vault in 1461-1468. In 1537-1539, Il Sodoma painted a fresco over the altar, now housed in the Town museum in the **Palazzo Pubblico**. The clock was added in 1360. The tower is visible from all parts of **Sienna** and is adjacent to the Gothic Palazzo Pubblico.

**The Palazzo Pubblico** (town hall) is a palace of **Siena**. Construction began in 1297 and its original purpose was to house the republican government, consisting of the Podesta and Council of Nine. The outside of the structure is an example of Italian medieval architecture with Gothic influences. The lower story is stone; the upper crenelated stories are made of brick. The facade of the palace is curved slightly inwards (concave) to reflect the outwards curve (convex) of the **Piazza del Campo**.

**The Cathedral of Siena** (Italian: Duomo di Siena), dedicated from its earliest days as a Roman Catholic Marian church and now to Santa Maria Assunta (Most Holy Mary of Assumption), is a medieval church. The exterior and interior are constructed of white and greenish-black marble in alternating stripes, with addition of red marble on the façade. Black and white are the symbolic colors of Siena, etiologicaly linked to black and white horses of the legendary city's founders, Senius and Aschius.

### INFORMATION

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