



Extra services

The Palio of Siena

The Siena Palio is one of the most exciting and spectacular festivals in Italy, a bareback horse race around the Piazza del Campo, preceded by months of preparation, pageantry and intrigue.

There are two annual Palios held on July 2 and August 16 each of which begins with a fascinating sequence of events.

It has been held since at least the thirteenth century, in honour of the Virgin, and it remains a living tradition, felt and performed with an intensity that comes as a vibrant surprise in these days of cosily preserved folklore.

The evening before the race a street banquet is held in each of the contrade (city district).

Contrada members and guests sit down at table for the traditional "dress rehearsal" dinner: this is the case in every contrada, even for those not racing, although in a non-participating contrada the "atmosphere" is quite different.

It has been calculated that in the evening prior to the Palio no less than 25.000 people are having dinner in Siena's streets and squares.

These convivial gatherings, organized by the contrada members themselves, have as their main events the speeches of the Prior, the Captain and sometimes even the jockey. It's a time of promises, of hopes either raised or dashed, of joy but also of worry.

We can provide tickets for the dress rehearsal dinner the night before the race. Please contact us for further details and rates.

We would like to remind you that the tickets for the dinner are not refundable for any reason.