



July 2nd
August 16th

Palio

the four days of the Palio

make a note of. It's important to know that only ten of the seventeen contrade run, each time and that their participation is decided by a draw, which takes place at least twenty days prior to each Palio. The seven contrade which didn't run in the Palio of the same day of the year before are entitled to run; the other three are drawn from the ten which, instead, participated.



In order to know the main phases of the Palio there are four days of celebration that one should



the Draft

This is the procedure through which the horses are assigned to the ten contrade which participate in the Palio. On the morning of the third day before the race the horses are presented by their owners in the Entrone (the courtyard



in the Municipality Town Hall), and are grouped together for being selected and tested with three rounds around the square to check their adaptability to the track. At the end of the test runs, the captains gather together in the presence of the Mayor to decide on the most adapt horses. After this, the draw takes place on a platform prepared outside the Municipality Town Hall: each horse is, in this way,



assigned to a contrada. Upon each assignment the Barbaresco (groom) takes the drawn horse and leads it to the stables, accompanied by the people of the contrada.



the Trials

There are six trials, which take place every morning (at around 9:00 am) and every evening (at around 7:30 pm) and are important in deciding the conditions both of the horse and of the jockey. For each trial, the horse is accompanied to the Municipality courtyard from the contrada's stables by a dense crowd of the people of that contrada, who start to sing traditional songs. The fifth trial is called the "general trial", at the end of which, the people of the ten contrade and their guests gather together in the heart of each contrada, where they have a large dinner to favour the outcome of the race.



the day of the Palio

At around 8:00 am, in the chapel beside the municipality Town Hall, the “Jockey’s Mass” is celebrated by the Archbishop. Immediately after, the last trial is run, called the “provaccia” (the bad trial) for the lack of enthusiasm shown by the jockeys who spare the horses for the demanding evening race. At 10:30 am in the Municipality hall, the enlisting of the jockeys takes place in the presence of the Mayor: from this moment on there are not allowed to be any substitutions, for any reason. At around 3:00 pm, in the contrade church, the horse is blessed. Afterwards, the costumed representatives of the contrade and the municipality figures cross the historic town centre, stopping



at the Monte dei Paschi bank headquarters, at the “Casino dei Nobili”, in front of the Palazzo Chigi Saracini and at Piazza del Duomo to perform the flag games. They then all gather together in Piazza del Duomo (in the courtyard of Palazzo del Governo) and from there they move on, in order, to Piazza del Campo. The Historic Parade arrives in the Piazza at around 5:00 pm.

the Race

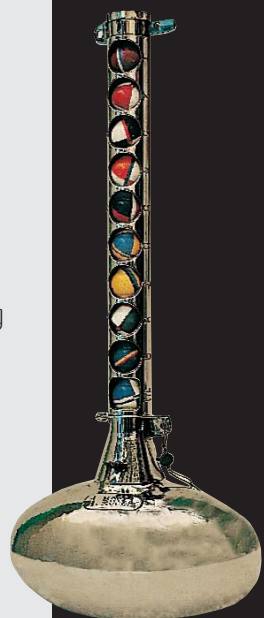
At the end of the Parade, a burst of cannon fire announces the jockeys' exit from the Entrone.

Each jockey is given a whip made of ox tendon with which he may incite the horse and block his opponents during the race.

They then draw close to the starting point, where two hemp ropes have been stretched across to allow the jockeys to line up between them. The entrance order is decided by luck: in fact, there is a special bottle-type mechanism, with a neck-piece grafted into an oval container, inside which ten "barberi" (small balls painted with the colours of the contrade, like those used by children to play) are inserted; once the bottle is turned over, the balls randomly line up along the neck-piece, in this way deciding on the order of the start. This procedure is carried out three times so that the starter is able to use the two reserve starts if the first one is not possible. Nine contrade are called to line up between the ropes according to the order of the draw, while the tenth takes a run-up (only when it decides on the right moment) in this way deciding the moment of the start. At that point, the starter lowers the front rope and



opens the race. If the start is invalid, a cracker is let off to stop the horses which will then have to return to the starting point. The horses have to circle the track three times, for around 1000 metres and the first one to finish is the glorious victor, approved by the three winning's judges. Even a horse, without its jockey, can carry its contrada to victory.



the Te Deum

The festivities begin straight away: the people of the contrada receive the Palio banner and with it they go to Provenzano (for the July Palio) or to the Duomo (in August) to sing the Te Deum in thanksgiving. From this moment on and until the autumn, every occasion is a good one to remind the city of the victory won in the Campo. Then, between the end of September and the beginning of October, the victory dinner takes place in the winning contrada with thousands of people from the contrada and, in the place of honour, the winning horse.



when a bronze sound rings through the piazza

From the origins of the Sieneese festivities, the historic procession has always preceded the Palio race, like a solemn, historic, triumphant, civic pageant of choreography. In its modern form, it is a commemorative representation of the customs, the institutions, and the greatness of the ancient Sieneese Republic, with special attention given to the contrade, which have a fundamental role in it, with their groups in costume which are called “comparse”. The present-day costumes have been inaugurated for the extraordinary Palio dedicated to the millennium, and have been designed by artists of international fame. The carrying out of the project was made possible by a substantial financial contribution by the Monte dei Paschi Foundation, it was taken care of by the Municipality and all contrade which keep their own costumes in their respective places of historic and monumental interest. The Historic Pageant, which today takes place in Piazza del Campo, is made up of 14 groups and totals almost 700 figures.



In the afternoon on the day of the Palio, the figureheads of the contrade and some of the figures of the Municipality gather together in the courtyard of the Palazzo del Governo and, when ordered to do so by the Campo Master, line up



in Piazza del Duomo next to the cathedral and then parade through two thick groups of people, through via del Capitano, Piazza Postierla, via San Pietro, Casato di Sopra

and Casato di Sotto where they join other Municipality figures. The Historic Procession enters into Piazza del Campo at the first sounding of the "Sunto" (the bell on the Mangia Tower dedicated, in 1665, to Our Lady of the Assumption, patron and queen of the city. It is the most recent example of a series of "the people's bells", the oldest of which was put on the Tower in 1344. For the whole duration of the Procession, "a bronze sound rings through the Piazza" as written by Eugenio Montale in his poem "Palio". Seventeen couples of "Alfieri" – standard bearers and flag throwers – stop in predetermined points of the Piazza and following the drum-roll, carry out the "flag-waving" performance. The flag-waving consists of individual movements and the foils are grouped into figures of various lengths and combined according to the seventeen contrade schools, which hand them down from generation to generation. The flag-waving ends with a spectacular final "throw". Between stops, the figureheads march to the "Pace of the Diana" drum roll; the Palace musicians





play maestro Pietro Formichi's Palio march, and the Municipality trumpeters sound out the festivities on long silver trumpets. The highlight of the procession is the passing of the Carroccio wagon, which is the modern version of the Republic's triumphal wagon on which there is the palio; a large, painted, silk banner which is the prize for winning the race. After having circled the Piazza, the contrade figures take their places on the stand with all the other costumed representatives of the contrade, the Palio is hoisted up onto the judges stand and the seventeen Alfieri carry out the victory flag-throwing ceremony to the sounds of their own drum. This was introduced at the end of WWI. Then there is a burst of cannon fire, the jockeys leave the entrance of the Municipality building, and the race begins.



the Procession

1st GROUP

6 Municipality mace-bearers, the Municipality flag-bearer on horseback accompanied by a groom, between 4 commandants - 12 Palace drummers - 18 Municipality trumpeters with long silver "chiarine" trumpets - 30 Palace musicians with their instruments - 67 City flag-bearers, representing the lands and castles of the old Sienese state - a drummer, a flag-bearer and 3 crossbowmen from the city of Massa Marittima (the suburbs, the new city and the old city) a drummer, a flag-bearer and 4 archers from the city of Montalcino.



2nd GROUP

The Captain of the People's flag-bearer - 3 Captain of the People's pages carrying the plaque, the helmet and the spade of the Captain - The Captain of the People on horseback accompanied by a groom on foot - 3 Centurions of the Thirds on horseback each with a groom - 3 Captains of the Masses of the Thirds on horseback each with a groom.

3rd GROUP

The delegation of Siense University:

2 drummers, a flag-bearer, the University Rector, 4 members of the academic staff, 4 students.





4th GROUP

The Arts Association

2 drummers of the trades, flag-bearer of the trades - 3 trade officials -
 6 Representatives of the People of each contrada preceded by a flag-bearer
 who hoists the insignia of the art which characterizes each contrada:
 The Aquila (Notaries) - The Bruco (Silk-Workers) - The Chiocciola (Tanners)
 The Civetta (Cobblers) - The Drago (Bankers) - The Giraffa (Painters)
 The Istrice (Blacksmiths) - The Leocorno (Goldsmiths) - The Lupa (Bakers)
 The Nicchio (Potters) - The Oca (Dyers) - The Onda (Carpenters)
 The Pantera (Spice Sellers) - The Selva (Weavers) - The Tartuca (Stonemasons)
 The Torre (Wool Beaters) - The Valdimontone (Silk-Dealers).



5th GROUP

P age carrying the Masgalano (the prize for the best comparsa) - 2 escort pages.

6th GROUP

The Comparsa of the 10 participating districts, each made up of:
a drummer - 2 standard-bearers - a commander with 2 pages carrying arms - the leading page carrying the insignia and 2 flag-bearer pages - the jockey on a soprallasso (parade horse) with a groom - the barb (race-horse) and the barbaresco (the barb groom).



7th GROUP

The 12 Municipality pages bearing a festoon of laurels.



8th GROUP

The Comparsa of the 7 districts which are not participating in the race:

made up of:
a drummer - 2 standard-bearers - the commander with 2 Men of Arms - the leading page carrying the insignia with 2 flag-bearer pages.



9th GROUP

6 horsemen representing the contrade which no longer exist (The Rooster, The Lion, The Bear, The Oak, The Strong Sword, The Viper) each with a groom.



10th GROUP

The flag-bearer of the Crossbowmen - The Captain of the Crossbowmen - 2 drummers - 4 flag escorts - 4 Crossbowmen with large crossbows - 16 Crossbowmen with small crossbows.

11th GROUP

The Captain of the Justice on horseback with a groom 4 escort foot soldiers each armed with a "roncone" (lance).



12th GROUP

The Carroccio victory wagon pulled by 4 oxen and 4 cowherds, carrying the Palio banner, the 4 Balìa authorities, 6 trumpeters, a servant Palio carrier and a young page who sounds the “martinella” bell. The victory wagon is escorted by 8 foot soldiers each armed with a “roncone” (lance).



13th GROUP

6 horsemen with grooms who represent some of the old, noble Sienese families (the Pannocchieschi d'Elci, the Piccolomini, the Salimbeni, the Salvani, the Tolomei, the Ugurgieri).

14th GROUP

The pages of the Municipality with festoons of laurels close the procession.



THE CONTRADE



USEFUL NUMBERS

Emergency number

112

Medical emergencies

Carabinieri

Police

Fire Brigade

Municipal Police

0577 2922

Questura/Prefettura

0577 201111

Taxi

0577 49222

Info Parkings - Sigerico

0577 228711

Museo Civico

and Santa Maria della Scala

reservations

0577 292615-614

ticket@comune.siena.it

Tourist Information Office

Piazza il Campo 7/8

0577 292222

www.comune.siena.it

www.sienacomunica.it



COMUNE DI SIENA

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Layout: GraficDesign

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Cover: Silvano Campeggi.

Inside: *Vincenzo Rustici, Piazza del Campo in Siena with the Parade of the Contrade, XVth century,*
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Publication by Roberta Ferri, Palio Press Office of the Municipality of Siena



Magistrato
delle
Contrade

free distribution



CONSORZIO PER LA TUTELA DEL PALIO DI SIENA