

The Palio in Siena (June 30 – July 3, 2023)

**4 Days All Inclusive “Once in a lifetime Experience” : euro 3950,- Per Person
(on a basis of sharing a double room)**

It is absolutely unique.

For more information: Pick up the phone NOW and call me on +31.6.3766.1203

OR send me an email at gijs@scottbilsentravel.com

Because of our excellent contacts with Marchesi di Biondi Santi – originating from the wine trade – Francesca Tagliabue will again (for the 12th consecutive year) offer us the hospitality of her Palazzo (apartment) at the Piazza del Campo in Siena on Sunday July 2, 2023. On that day the world famous PALIO – a tradition since 1287! - will take place.

We (**max 20 persons**) will not stand among the thousands of people in the square. From the apartment and its balcony we will have the best places with a wonderful view of the whole Piazza, incl. start/finish.



The Piazza del Campo, before the starting shot of Il Palio. Picture taken from Francesca Tagliabue's Palazzo (© G. van Bilsen).

Preceding this highlight of our trip we will visit one of the best producers of Brunello wines – Castelo di Argiano, owned by Filippa and Elisa SESTI – and one of Siena's *contradas*. On the final day we will get a VIP reception by Marchesi Antinori, who may well have one of the finest wine cellars in the world.

Four days, a series of impressions you will remember for a long time. The race itself on July 2 and the whole run-up to it will be the absolute highlight. The PALIO, since 1287. We were there!

Scott Bilsen
SCOTT BILSEN TRAVEL

PROGRAMME – Four-day trip to Siena, from Friday June 30 to Monday July 3, 2023.
All-inclusive: you will want for nothing.

On Friday June 30, 2023 we will fly from Schiphol-Amsterdam to Florence. After our arrival at the end of the morning we will drive to the city centre for a walk and enjoy a lovely lunch at Trattoria La Ménagère.



Scott Bilsen

SCOTT BILSEN TRAVEL

After the lunch we will drive to our hotel where we will stay three nights.



*LA BAGNAIA GOLF & SPA RESORT ***** , south of Siena.*

At 7.30 pm we will serve an aperitif. The day will finish with a characteristic Italian dinner. I will choose the fine wines to go with it; after all, that is my background.

Scott Bilsen

SCOTT BILSEN TRAVEL

Saturday July 1, 2023

Today you will get acquainted with perhaps the most beautiful Italian region: Montalcino. And when you say Montalcino, you say BRUNELLO. We will be the guests of Elisa SESTI, from the renowned Castello di Argiano, on top of the hill near Argiano. A complete domain. Such wealth.

BRUNELLO already makes you think of the best and Argiano's wines will not disappoint at all.



We will lunch at Trattoria Il Leccio in the neighbouring village of Sant'Angelo in Colle. This is where the wine grower himself eats lunch, with a glass of perfect wine as a treat.

Scott Bilsen

SCOTT BILSEN TRAVEL



With a firm handshake Elisa confirmed that I was allowed to buy some during our previous visit.

Roundabout 4.30 pm we will be back in our hotel. A little time for yourself, before we drive to Siena at 6 pm. We will taste the atmosphere that will let us partake of a unique experience, IL PALIO. During the approach to Siena we will taste the mounting tension in this city in the days preceding the Palio. The neighbourhoods/guilds – called *contradas* – are out for one another's life in a manner of speaking. Who will win this year? Which rider and which horse will earn eternal glory by crossing the finish line first, tomorrow afternoon?



The Piazza del Camp, on the day preceding the Palio. Tomorrow afternoon the square will be filled with thousands of spectators.

Scott Bilsen

SCOTT BILSEN TRAVEL



Tonight we will taste more of the atmosphere in Siena, have a look at the general rehearsal and eat with one of the *contradas* that will actually take part in tomorrow's race. The lots are always drawn at the end of May. In 2022 we dined with the *contrada* of The Panther and visited its museum and chapel. An ordinary mortal will never obtain entrance here and will definitely not get a private tour through these 'sanctuaries'. This is where we will find the Palios of the races this *contrada* won recently and in the past and this is where all important relics are kept.



Reception by and visit of the Contrada della Tartuca, its chapel, its museum and its art treasures.

Scott Bilsen

SCOTT BILSEN TRAVEL

After that we will join dinner in this *contrada* on the night before the Palio. There will be speeches, songs, good food and drinks, all in expectation of a good result at the race. All this will give you the feeling that you are part of a unique event.



Scott Bilzen

SCOTT BILSEN TRAVEL

From daybreak on **Sunday July 2** the tension will be palpable and it will rise to an unprecedented level when the starting shot sounds across the Piazza del Campo at 7.30 pm. We will start our day with a visit to Siena itself, including the Duomo of course.

We will lunch at the well-known Osteria Le Logge near the central square. After that we will go to Francesca di Biondi Santi's Palazzo at the Piazza del Campo. From there we will see how ecstatic and colourful Italians, dressed in original attire, will fill the square. Standard bearers of all *contradas* will border the streets of Siena. In the course of the afternoon every horse will have been blessed in the chapel of its own *contrada*.



Folklore, tradition: blessing the horse. Il Palio, since 1287!

Scott Bilsen

SCOTT BILSEN TRAVEL

From Francesca di Biondi Santi's apartment (Palazzo) with balcony we will have the best view of the standard bearers, processions and presentations of all participating *contradas*. In the run-up to the start we will enjoy a glass of good wine and delicious finger foods and petits fours. Francesca will take good care of us.



Then the starting shot sounds. A mere three laps in a dramatic atmosphere. Jockeys fall off their horses, miss the bend at the far side of the square because of a dangerous sharp turn, try to head off or even to unhorse one another, but most of all spur their horses on to almost dangerous speeds. Italian scenes will unfold before our eyes after the finish: men, women and children who will ecstatically let their tears flow freely to celebrate victory.

Scott Bilsen

SCOTT BILSEN TRAVEL

The ensuing party will rock the city all night. This is where they have prepared for all year. You will not experience anything like this again. Francesca will serve another fine finger-food dinner while we enjoy watching the partying people in the square. Roundabout 10 pm we will walk to the bus. There will be an almost mystical atmosphere in the city, of which the slowly dissipating realisation that we have witnessed an epic event forms part. The Palio, since 1287.



The Piazza del Campo, half an hour after the race. We will also dine in the square, among partying Italians.

On the morning of **Monday July 3** we will have a delicious and copious breakfast and reminisce about yesterday's scene of battle. After the morning mist has disappeared there will be a wonderful apotheosis of our trip: at the end of the morning we are expected by Marchesi Antinori, one of Tuscany's most renowned wine producers.



The morning mist is fading in Siena on the day after the Palio on July 3, 2017 (© Eddie Mol Fotografie, Geldrop)

Scott Bilsen

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We will be received in Antinori's very impressive cellars. This will be followed by a delicious lunch, at which their famous wines such as Tignanello and Guado al Tasso will be served. This unforgettable trip could not have a better ending.



At the end of the afternoon we will fly back to Amsterdam.

The all-inclusive price per person is € 3,950, on the basis of a double room. The surcharge for a single room will be € 450. This excludes the flight to Florence vice versa, because we know that many people like to drive to Italy and fit this unique event into a longer stay there. Of course we can offer a flight; the cost will be roundabout € 350 per person.

The PALIO, since 1287, a unique experience you will never forget!