

Top Five Ways To Experience The Palio In Style With VillaRental.com

[VillaRental.com](#) reveals how visitors to the Palio, the hottest event and horse race in Siena, Tuscany, can take their experience to the next level

Wilmington, Mass. (July 20, 2016) – VillaRental.com, a full-service luxury villa rental and destination experience company as part of World Travel Holdings, is sharing the top five ways visitors to the [Palio di Siena](#) can create a luxury getaway and become immersed in Siena’s local culture while enjoying the horse races.

The Palio, a bareback horse race and Italy’s most famous annual cultural event, takes place twice a year, on July 2 and August 16. Ten of the city’s 17 contrade, or districts, are represented by a horse and jockey in each race. The seven districts that didn’t race in the previous year compete against three randomly selected ‘repeat’ contrade.

“The Palio is one of the most exciting times in Italy,” said Margherita Bilenchi, managing director for VillaRental.com’s Italy division, and born and raised in Siena. “My fellow managing director, Saffo Martelli, and I are always looking for new outlets to share our knowledge and expertise about the country we love, and about the Palio. We want people to understand all of the options available to them when visiting during this premier event so that they can have the most memorable and unique experiences.”

Martelli added, “For many visitors, attending the Palio is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity, and we want to help guests make the most of their vacation by customizing their experience and allowing them to get a real feel for the city’s history and culture.”

1. **Stay In a Luxury Villa.** Here are two recommendations that are within close proximity to Piazza del Campo, the square where the Palio race is held.

The five-bedroom [Villa Alfieri](#) in the heart of Tuscany is located just five miles away from the medieval-walled city of Siena. This unique, restored country house is majestically positioned on a hill overlooking a stunning panorama of the Tuscan hills. After lounging by the outdoor swimming pool with waterfall and enjoying the Tuscan breeze, guests can enjoy a typical Tuscan cuisine prepared by a local chef.

Surrounded by the hills and vineyards of Tuscany, near the quaint village of Sovicille and only 15 minutes away by car from the historic center of Siena and its Piazza del Campo, [Villa Allegra](#) can host up to eight guests. This villa is described as an intimate haven with breathtaking views of Tuscan vineyards and hills. Its interior décor features antiques coupled with a very stylish and sophisticated atmosphere, while the exterior reflects the best of Tuscan design and uses local stone.

The Day Before The Race

2. **Relish in the City's History.** Visitors won't want to miss the opportunity to stroll along Siena's cobble-stoned, narrow streets on a guided tour with a local art historian learning the medieval history and the anecdotes behind the Palio during the centuries.
3. **Enjoy the Early Evening Rehearsal and Dinner.** With the actual race being only 75 seconds long, visitors who want to see even more of the horses can attend the early evening rehearsal from their reserved seat. The rehearsal is followed by dinner in one of several contrada locations. Fans gather to share the anticipation of the next day and cheer for their favorite jockey. The Captain of the contrada hosts the festive dinner and everybody participates in the event with chanting and applause.

The Day Of The Race

4. **Attend the Benediction of the Horse.** An art historian will meet guests in the early afternoon on race day to attend the benediction of the horses in a church of one of the several participating contradas. Guests can then go to the Piazza of the Cathedral to watch the preparations of the Historical Parade that takes place prior to the horse race. All the contradas are represented in medieval costumes, drums are played and flag-shows performed.
5. **Get The Best Seat.** VillaRental.com has exclusive access to some of the best seats in Piazza del Campo or in one of the prestigious residences overlooking the square with a magnificent view of the Historical Parade and horse race. There is also an opportunity for visitors to have dinner in the square in an exciting atmosphere, surrounded by candlelight on the palazzos, where the winning contrada celebrates the victory.

On July 2, 2016, the Contrada of Lupa won the Palio after 27 years. It was an incredible and breathtaking race that saw Lupa starting with a third position and heading to first position only at the last turn. The people from Lupa are still celebrating in the streets of Siena with their flags and in their medieval costumes. When a contrada has not won for the most years it gets the title of "Nonna" (grandmother). Lupa has been a "nonna" for many years as its last victory was in 1989, it has passed now the torch to Aquila which has not won since 1992.

For more information about attending the 2017 Palio or a villa vacation in Italy, visit our destination experts at www.VillaRental.com or call 800-281-6879.

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