



GRAND HOTEL CONTINENTAL
SIENA

GRAND HOTEL CONTINENTAL SIENA – STARHOTELS COLLEZIONE

The only 5-star luxury hotel in the heart of Siena



History

A magnificent 16th century building waits to be explored in Siena's historic center: it's the **Grand Hotel Continental Siena – Starhotels Collezione**, formerly Palazzo Gori Pannilini. A Renaissance architectural gem, the hotel is a landmark of prestige right in the medieval heart of the city, overlooking Piazza Salimbeni, just a few steps from Piazza del Campo. Its magnificence has earned it a notable spot in the artistic and cultural patronage of Siena: history and art are at home in this beautiful building. Its meticulously restored frescoes, fine furnishings, marble sculptures and elegant atmosphere have won over an elite clientele through the centuries – from 19th century young aristocrats to Queen Margherita of Savoy; from German politician Hoerst Koehler to world-class entertainers, such as Dee Dee Bridgewater, Dario Fo, Mario Botta, Andrea Bocelli and Daniel Craig.

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Built in 1501, the building originally belonged to the Montanini family and then passed to the Aringhieri. In 1522, it was considerably expanded at the behest of Paul Salvetti, but was not renovated until 1677 by architect Carlo Fontana, according to Pope Alexander VII Chigi's wishes on the occasion of his niece Olimpia's wedding to nobleman Giulio de' Gori. From that period onward, the building was known as Palazzo Gori Pannilini.



At the beginning of the 20th century, it was transformed into one of the most important hotels of Siena. Under the ownership of Cavalier Zazzera, the Hotel Continentale quickly became the most elegant and popular hotel in the city; even Queen Margherita of Savoy frequently chose it for her stays in the area. The Queen's final visit was in 1925, just before her death. To this date, visitors can see a plaque in the palazzo commemorating her first stay at the hotel.

Starting with the 1920s, the Continentale became known as Continental, vaunting all the modern amenities. Unfortunately, it saw a rapid decline upon the completion of the new Excelsior complex and with a decrease in wealthy visitors to the city.

In 1936, Zazzera believed that shutting down the hotel was the best option, but thanks to assistance from the Monte dei Paschi Bank and the Azienda Autonoma di Soggiorno e Turismo tourism department, it managed to survive until World War II.



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After the war it changed owners multiple times and it faced a relentless and constant decline, which continued until the early 2000s.

The Grand Hotel Continental reopened its doors on February, 14th 2002, as the first and only 5-star luxury hotel in Siena, under the property of Royal Demeure. Starhotels acquired it in 2016.

THE GRAND HOTEL CONTINENTAL TODAY

A winning combination of tradition and contemporaneity



Favored for its very central position, closeness to the “Passeggiata della Lizza” and the “Stradone di San Domenico”, the hotel stands in the heart of the historic center, but within easy reach of the countryside surrounding the city. The main views over the city streets and the sides facing some of Siena’s most important monuments, like the Duomo and the church of San Domenico, combine to create a priceless scenery.

A short walk on the polished stone of medieval streets separates the hotel from the main architectural and artistic landmarks of the city, as well as a vibrant array of specialty shops, restaurants and bars.



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The palazzo's main facade stands on the opposite side of Palazzo Spannocchi, along the street once known as Via Cavour, today called Banchi di Sopra, just 200 meters from Piazza del Campo and 400 from the Cathedral. The ground floor is marked by a massive portal surmounted by the Gori family crest, an eight-point star.

The same symmetry is also found on the first floor, where an equal number of openings flanks both sides of the balcony hanging over the main door. The symmetry is broken on the second floor, however, where the entire level is windowed.

Inside, the hotel lives up to its original splendor: it boasts 51 rooms and suites, equipped with 18th century furniture and precious textiles, with no detail overlooked. The palazzo's historic ambience fuses perfectly with today's comforts for flawless atmosphere and service.

Rooms & Suites

The Grand Hotel Continental welcomes its guests with its **majestic architecture**, its nods to Renaissance art and its **priceless collection of antiques**. Its original Tuscan terracotta floors reverberate with 500 years of history beneath the original **frescoes** that adorn the vaulted ceilings of many of the rooms. Throughout its construction, the palazzo has seen a host of artists, artisans and designers, all committed to making each of the 51 rooms a masterpiece. Today it serves as a sophisticated base for those who want to visit Siena in style.

With modern elements for the comfort of its guests, the Grand Hotel Continental rooms feature a range of colors and sumptuous furnishings, such as canopy beds, antique armchairs and refined chandeliers made of crystal or Murano glass. Guests will also find age-old frescoes and decorations, from the wall painting depicting Saint Christopher to decorative elements dating from the 19th century.

Inside these rooms, history, art and contemporaneity combine to create an elegant environment complete with every little luxury attention for guests. From the beautiful Classic rooms to the opulent Panoramic Suite, every room is equipped with the most modern services. At guests' disposal, the **Handy Smartphone** service which offers them the possibility to have a free and unlimited Internet connection and international calls, as well as useful information on means of transport, events not to be missed during their stay, and to be always in contact with the hotel.



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Panoramic Suite

Perched at the very top of the palazzo in the two-story tower, the 65 square meter Panoramic Suite is a veritable kingdom of luxury, with four majestic windows offering an unrivalled 360° view over Siena and the surrounding hills and valleys. A parlor with a wood-beamed ceiling, a quiet study with panoramic views and a luxurious bedroom: all the areas in this spectacular suite form a refined, harmonic space for a truly unique experience. In addition to all of its modern comforts, the suite is decorated with numerous antique elements and precious silk-lined walls, while the bathrooms' fine marbles reflect the colors of the Contrada del Drago (the Grand Hotel Continental's historic neighborhood).

A Classic room can be adjoined to the Panoramic Suite, with a separate entrance to ensure maximum privacy.



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Duplex Suites

Located on the first floor, in the hotel's piano nobile, and laid out over two connected levels, the Duplex Suites highlight the magic of Siena. 60 square meters of elegance, furnished with antiques and supplied with all the modern comforts. The splendor of art will accompany guests from the moment they wake up under the original vaulted ceiling frescoes, glancing at the incomparable views over Siena. The Duplex Suites have a living room separate from the bedroom area, terracotta floors, marble and travertine bathrooms and a double bed or two single beds.



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Junior Executive Suites

The 50 square meter Junior Executive Suites allow guests to dive right into Siena's artistic heritage. Filled with cultural references, these suites make the perfect choice for an art-focused adventure in Tuscany. The suites on the "piano nobile" (the first floor, originally inhabited by the owners of the Palazzo) include a comfortable sitting room and original terracotta floors. Under high ceilings adorned with magnificent tromp l'oeil 15th-century frescoes, are damask tapestries and Murano glass chandeliers. The bathrooms are in marble and travertine.



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Junior Suites

The furnishings take their inspiration from the local culture and style, making the space both elegant and unique. The Junior Suites, located on the top floor, measure 50m² and come complete with a sitting room, a double bed or two separate beds, and a travertine and marble bathroom with dual sinks. All of the Junior Suites feature a capacious wardrobe and an intimate cut-away roof terrace overlooking the rooftops of Siena. As welcoming as a home but also as sumptuous as an ancient residence, they are the ideal choice for a stay in Siena.



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Double Deluxe

With their sumptuous furnishings and elegant marble and travertine bathrooms (equipped with a bathtub), the Double Deluxe rooms make the perfect setting for a romantic stay in the medieval city. Guests can choose between a classic Italian-style room or the contemporary feel of the Double Deluxe rooms located on the top floor.

Sapordivino: the Grand Hotel Continental restaurant

With its extreme simplicity, Sieneese cuisine sums up all of Tuscany's best flavors and ingredients. Its style – simple but carefully crafted – is deeply influenced by the region's history and geography. This is why the fundamentals of Sieneese cuisine rely on local agricultural products, including meats from native breeds and exceptional olive oil. This strong connection with local farmers is one of the defining characteristics of this cuisine. And, of course, no Sieneese dish is complete without a glass of wine: local wineries are among Italy's best and it's always exciting to explore their varied styles.



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The art of Sienese cuisine is on full display at the Grand Hotel Continental's Sapordivino restaurant: here Chef **Luca Ciaffarafà** surprises diners with his carefully crafted, exciting menus. Only the finest, most authentic ingredients available come together in his dishes, to underscore the excellence of both the local territory and cuisine, with a personal contemporary touch.

Sapordivino restaurant is attached to the indoor courtyard of the 17th century palazzo on the ground floor, where the warm furnishings and excellent service create a refined atmosphere – all the while showcasing the simplicity of Tuscan cuisine, with a menu consistently developed around seasonal products. The elegant Sala Gori and the indoor courtyard with its trademark glass dome create the perfect setting for a romantic dinner, a private event or a business meeting, all in the center of Siena.

Sapordivino Restaurant is open from 12.30 to 2.30pm for lunch and from 7.30 to 10.30pm for dinner.

The Chef

Tradition and innovation at the Grand Hotel Continental

At the Grand Hotel Continental's Sapordivino restaurant since 2008, Chef Luca Ciaffarafà is a true artist of contemporary cuisine. His cooking highlights the quality of Tuscan food and wines, paying tribute to tradition but through a modern lens.



Luca Ciaffarafà is 100 percent Tuscan, hailing from Castel del Piano (in the Grosseto province) and born in 1965. In his childhood, he developed an interest in cooking as his parents owned a hotel-restaurant. As he grew up, he continued his wine and gastronomic studies, and his passion helped him carve out a highly respectable professional path. In the early 1990s, he served as chef in the best kitchens of Siena's finest hotels, arriving at Grand Hotel Continental in 2008. During that same period, he traveled around the world, from Vienna to Bangkok to the United States. This international influence is why his cooking – albeit strongly connected to Tuscan land and committed to showcasing local tastes – still embraces creativity, curiosity and experimentation with other traditions.

In addition to serving as head chef at Grand Hotel Continental, Luca Ciaffarafà is a gelato and *semifreddo* artist and a true master of ice sculpture. He can easily handle blown, strained sugars, with a talent for creating magnificent monumental cakes.



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Beyond this, the chef is a connoisseur of olive oil and an expert sommelier.

Thanks to his studies – but mostly to the love that he puts into his cooking – Luca Ciaffarafà’s cuisine always feels inspiring and new while remaining deeply connected to classic tastes. The chef strongly believes in Tuscan products – these ingredients are fundamental to his execution of each and every dish. One of Luca Ciaffarafà’s fundamental goals is to make the excellence of Tuscan products like the *cinta senese* meat, Chianti wine and extra-virgin olive oil known, while pairing them with elements of modern cuisine.

Lounge Bar by Sapordivino

The hotel’s **Lounge Bar by Sapordivino**, located in the enchanting inner courtyard, invites its guests to try an aperitif – like the original “Vin Santo Swing” with Chianti wine, Peter Florence gin and Prato vermouth served with goat cheese mousse and flavoured with spices and aromatics herbs- a cocktail or a refined after-dinner refreshment, all served by experienced staff in a calm, relaxing environment. In this refined but informal setting, it is possible to serve the specialties of the Sapordivino restaurant.





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Wine Cellar By Sapordivino

Grand Hotel Continental is also home to the **Wine Cellar by Sapordivino**, located under the eponymous restaurant. The cellar has its own special, unique charm, and is located within one of the most interesting areas of the palazzo: the base of the hotel's medieval tower, excavated in the ancient Pietra di Torre, a Sienese cavernous limestone, only recently discovered. Its thick stone walls, dating back to the 13th century, combined with modern elements such as glass and steel on the design of the famous wine connoisseur Luca Maroni, house a vast collection of fine Italian labels and a selection of excellent Tuscan wines, all served by experienced sommeliers and bartenders. The Wine cellar, with its intimate and sophisticated atmosphere, can host group tastings and business meetings.





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EVENT SPACES

Elegance and functionality for all types of events

Grand Hotel Continental is the ideal location for bringing any event to life. The careful, flawless service, provided by a highly trained staff, will satisfy the needs of even the most demanding clients. Excellent service and high-quality gastronomy create a winning combination of charm and function. The hotel offers its guests basic technical equipment, WiFi and audio-visual tools.

The Grand Hotel Continental boasts four of Siena's most awe-inspiring rooms: the Salone delle Feste, Sala Olimpia, Sala Gori and the library. Fitting for a major convention of 100 people or for a more intimate gathering, the spaces are available for any kind of meeting or private event. With their high ceilings decorated with 17th century frescoes and Murano glass chandeliers, these rooms make perfect settings for meetings, presentations or dinners.

Salone delle feste

The Salone delle Feste at the Grand Hotel Continental is an elegant and luxurious location. With a maximum capacity of 100 people, it is designed for big events. From high-profile noble weddings to high-level meetings, the Salone delle Feste has hosted – and continues to host – numerous important events. Any occasion organized in this magnificent 100 square meter room, decorated with refined 16th century *trompe-l'œil* frescos, beautiful Murano glass chandeliers, marble floors, aquamarine velvets and golden damasks, is guaranteed to be unique.

Sala Gori

The Sala Gori can be used for luxurious events as well as business meetings and private parties. This refined room has a warm, welcoming color scheme, high and elegant ceilings and beautiful chandeliers. Around 70 square meters, it can host a cocktail party with up to 60 guests.

Sala Olimpia

Exclusive yet inviting, the 30 square meters Sala Olimpia is the ideal spot for an intimate event, a business meeting or a private cocktail party with up to 20 guests. Although thoroughly luxurious, it is also very cozy. The high ceilings are frescoed; the fine furnishings are carefully chosen antique pieces; and the whole atmosphere is very refined.



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The library

Since the Palazzo was first built, the library has been a special corner for reading and for calm reflection: the elegant, comfortable furniture and inviting intellectual atmosphere makes it ideal for small, private meetings. In its 30 square meters, the library can hold up to 35 people for a standing cocktail party.

The **Grand Hotel Continental Siena – Starhotels Collezione** is part of *The Leading Hotels of the World*

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Starhotels

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