ITALY IL PALIO DI SIENA

A PASSION FOR HORSE RACE

better
moments

ITALY IL PALIO DI SIENA

Photo: Marco Di Lauro

A PASSION FOR HORSE RACE

Il Palio in Siena is the world's most spectacular horse race dating back to 1283. Siena's grand, famous medieval square Piazza del Campo is covered with soil, transforming it into a breathtaking racecourse.

Il Palio is the culmination of ongoing rivalry and competition between the contrade (districts). Ten of the 17 contrade compete, riding bareback in colorful outfits, but only one gains the honor of being Palio champion. Siena's entire year revolves around these races. Young drummers prepare and practice their rhythms, flag bearers rehearse all around the city, the leaders of each contrada barter throughout the year to get the best jockeys and the best horses.

It is an experience unlike any other with passion, rivalry and history, giving you a unique chance to make a photographic story about an authentic moment in time.

TRAVEL WITH THE BEST
MARCO DI LAURO

HIGHLIGHTS

- Explore the spectacular horse race Il Palio together with award-winning photographer Marco Di Lauro.

- Learn about travel and reportage photography and how to capture people and scenes in a natural environment. How to approach people and situations - and get a feeling of photographing the right moment.

- Shoot amazing photos in reportage and documentary style.

- A journey into magnificent ancient traditions in Italian culture.

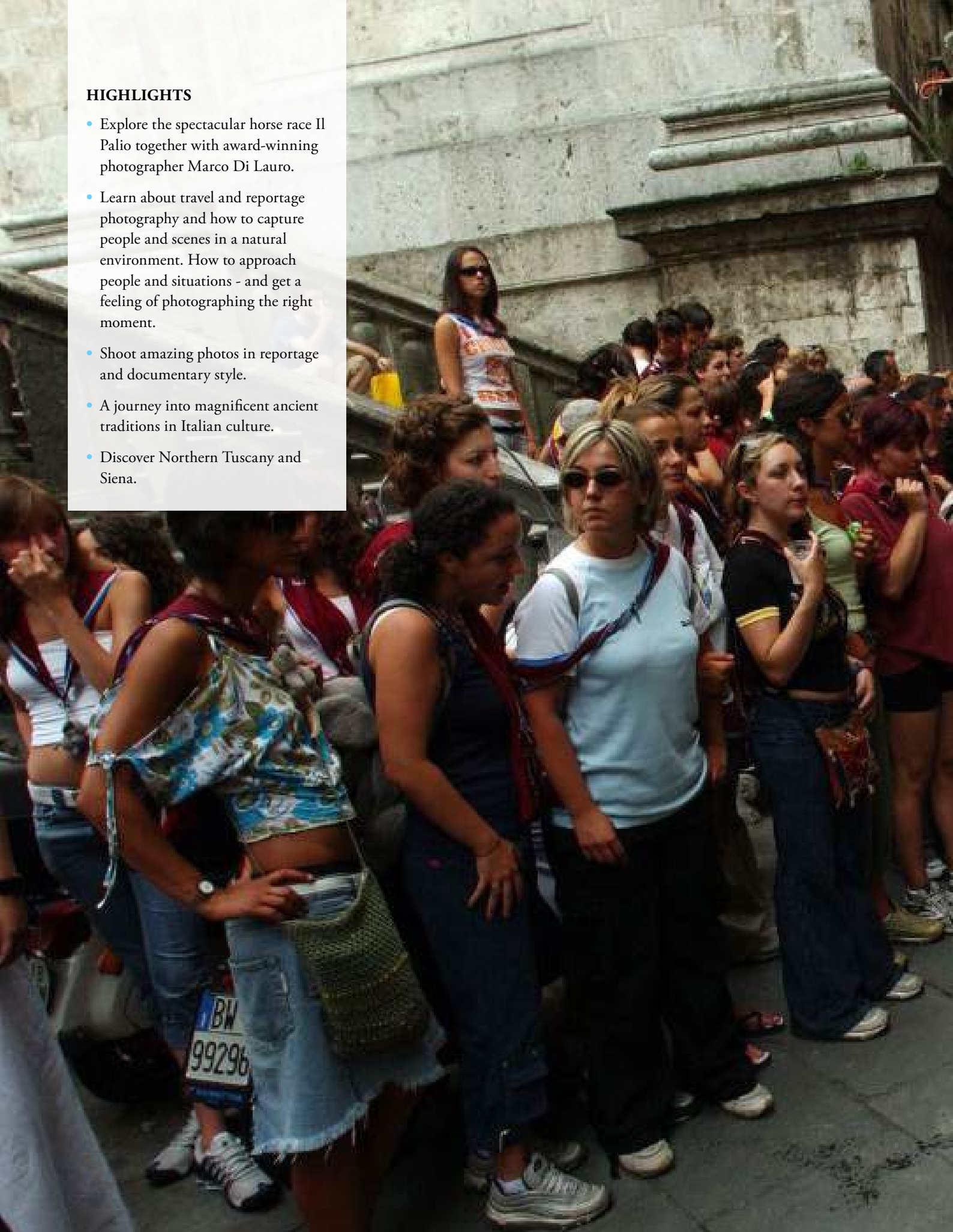- Discover Northern Tuscany and Siena.

Photo: Marco Di Lauro

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WHAT YOU WILL LEARN

You will learn how to approach the unique challenges of travel photography and how to capture candid moments, dynamic energy, motion and human interaction.

TRAVEL WITH THE BEST
MARCO DI LAURO

ON LOCATION

- Teaching and training in the best techniques with personal hints and advice.

- Composition and focus on lines, golden section, perspective, foreground, middleground and background.

- Work in different lighting and with short/long exposure times and aperture.

- How to handle equipment with care on location.

- Private hands-on lessons that can help to take your photography skills to the next level.

- How to approach local people in a natural way.

- The secret behind travel and reportage photography.

IN THE CLASS ROOM

- Expert review and constructive criticism of the images taken during the day. Workflow in Photoshop and/or Lightroom.

- How to create a concept for an exhibition and how to approach magazines for freelance jobs.

- Portfolio Review.

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ITINERARY

DAY 1: ARRIVAL IN SIENA

We meet at the hotel in Siena. At the hotel we will have a briefing on the upcoming workshop.

There will be time to explore Siena, which is a UNESCO World Heritage site with architectural treasures such as the Siena Cathedral and the Piazza del Campo.

DAY 2: PRE TRIALS

We are going to photograph the trials (tratta). It is a process by which the horses are matched to the ten Contrade that will participate in the Il Palio. The horses, after having been examined by veterinarians and considered to be in ideal condition, are divided into groups of 5-7 horses for "batterie" or trials and then allowed to run around the dirt (tufo) track three times to determine if they are suitable to run on this type of track. At the end of the trials, the Captains of the Contrade, in the presence of the Mayor, get together to choose the 10 most suitable horses.

DAY 3: THE TRIALS

We spend the day experiencing and photographing the second and third trial run: The Jockeys ride their horses during one of the six trials. The city's 17 separate Contrade or neighborhoods compete in the prestigious Il Palio race.

There is also time to explore how the festival revolves around Siena

DAY 4: GENERAL TRIAL

This day offers a lot of adventure and great scenes. We will explore the the final rehearsal and final rehearsal dinner with our camera. The grand dinner depending on the size of the contrada, have seats anywhere from 900 to 3500 people, who all eat, sing and drink lots of wine, with the favourite topic of conversation being the chances of the contradas in the race the following day.

Photo: Marco Di Lauro

DAY 5: IL PALIO

We will get early up in the morning on the day of the main event to photograph the exciting moments and the spectacular horse race Il Palio.

7.45 am – In the Chapel adjacent to the City Hall, the Archbishop celebrates the "Jockey Mass."

3 pm – Blessing of the horse and the jockey in each Contrada's parish church. The priest ends the mystical rite with a wish that sounds like an order: "Go and come back victorious!"

Around 3 p.m. each Contrada performs a benediction ceremony of its horse and afterwards joins in the large parade in historical costume, with over 600 participants, that winds through the city.

The parade arrives around 5 p.m. at the Piazza del Campo, and ends by around

6.30-7 p.m. The Piazza del Campo is completely packed with local spectators and tourists. The event is scheduled to begin around 7 p.m., but the actual start can be delayed by the preparations. The race takes only 75 seconds - it is fast and dangerous for the jockeys and the horses. At the end, the winning Contrada is presented with the Palio banner which represents a great honor. The winning Contrada then marches through town with the banner.

DAY 6: DEPARTURE

Photo: Marco Di Lauro

FACTS

GETTING THERE

Most travellers arriving by plane will land at airports in Florence or Pisa. Buses of the Siena line, connecting Siena with the Bologna Marconi airport (twice daily, 2.5 hours), is a favorite with the discount carriers. There is also a bus link to Pisa airport.

VISA

All foreigners intending to enter Italy must provide the documentation required to justify the reasons and duration of their stay as well as, in some prescribed cases, the availability of adequate economic means and lodging. Depending on your citizenship, the stability of that country and the duration and reasons for your stay you may need to obtain a visa before coming to Italy.

See more information:
http://vistoperitalia.esteri.it

CURRENCY

The lira (plural lire) was the currency of Italy between 1861 and 2002. Between 1999 and 2002, the Italian lira was officially a national subunit of the euro (EUR), which is today the current visa.

WEATHER

Siena weather is characterised by an excellent temperate climate, with weather that is mild through most of the year and generally avoids the worst extremes of hot or cold that can be found elsewhere in Italy. Siena has four seasons: spring (March to May), summer (June to September), autumn (October to November) and winter (December to February). Summertime in Siena rarely gets as hot and sticky as other parts of the country, peaking around 31°C. Winters usually avoid the harshest cold, with temperatures around 10°C.

LANGUAGE

Linguistically speaking, the Italian language is a member of the Romance group of the Italic subfamily of the Indo-European family of languages. It is spoken principally in the Italian peninsula, southern Switzerland, San Marino, Sicily, Corsica, northern Sardinia, and on the northeastern shore of the Adriatic Sea, as well as in North and South America.

QUICK GUIDE

- Tuscany is known for its landscapes, traditions, history, artistic legacy and its influence on high culture. It is regarded as the birthplace of the Renaissance and has been home to many figures influential in the history of art and science.

- Siena is capital of the province Siena in Tuscany, Italy.

- The historic centre of Siena has been declared by a World Heritage Site by UNESCO. It is one of the nation's most visited tourist attractions, with over 163,000 international arrivals in 2008.

- Siena is famous for its cuisine, art, museums, medieval and the Palio, a horse race held twice a year.

- The Palio di Siena is more than a simple horse race. It is the culmination of ongoing rivalry and competition between the contrade. The lead-up and the day of the race are invested with passion and pride.

CAMERA EQUIPMENT

- Camera bodies
- Lenses for portrait and action photography
- Bag for all camera gear
- Bag for light location travelling with camera bodies and accessories
- Dust cleaning kits Lens cleaning cloths
- Rain/dust covers for cameras and lenses
- Sturdy "lightweight" tripod
- Charger for batteries
- Spare batteries
- European Standard power converters
- Raw processing software (Lightroom and/or Photoshop)
- Cards and card wallets
- Card reader
- USB key to exchange images

- Lens extenders
- Camera straps for ease of changing from one camera to another
- Graduated filter set
- Filter holder
- High quality polarizing filter
- Lens belt

COMPUTER

- Bring you own laptop computer and storage medium.

PRICE & BOOKING

MORE INSPIRATION

Collect
great moments,

not things.

MARCO DI LAURO
ONE CAMERA ONE MAN

He has worked under an exclusive contract for Getty Images Reportage since 2002 covering the Middle Eastern conflict in the Gaza Strip and spent almost all of 2003 and 2004 in Iraq, documenting the American invasion and the drama of the Iraqi people.

PHOTOGRAPHY FOR LÉVING

Along with his coverage of war zones, conflict and natural disasters, Di Lauro also cover events such as the horse race Il Palio Di Siena, the battle of the oranges that breaks out every year in the city of Ivrea, in Italy at Carnival time, Easter processions in Sicily, Easter procession in Seville, and the religious life in Italy and the Vatican City. In all the stories he photograph, whether large or small, in Italy or abroad, he always attempts to capture the sacred side of life and its deeper meaning.

EMOTIONAL NARRATION

As a photojournalist, Marco Di Lauro follows narration as the simple unfolding of events.

> *"As I follow a story, I don't have its narration in my mind from the start."*

he says. But there's always an idea, a concept and story to be told. "The narration itself evolves through single images which have nothing to do with a chronological order - rather, they deal with my emotions." At the same time, he says, it's like reading a book with prologue, plot and ending. But not too long editing either. Marco prefers brevity. Stay on target and don't let your viewer get bored!

When he works, Marco is always focused upon the people who need it. Those who need to see it but mostly those who need to have their voice heard. He says that, had he been a photographer or writer, a journalist, a sculptor or a painter, his attention would still have been channelled towards the need of telling about social problems, or themes that need to be told.

GETTING INVOLVED IN THE PHOTOGRAPH

To Marco, strong emotions are the core of conveying sensibility and nearness through images. His aim is to get close with the subjects he photographs, to feel what they feel. "The massive difference is that I can get away from that condition, whereas they will be left with it anyway." Shooting in the most disturbed and dangerous situations, Marco has learned to maintain a filter that allows him to stay close and have strong empathy with the subjects, but without losing his focus and crumbling emotionally in the field. Thus, the strongest emotions are released during the editing after returning home

> *"I'll say that the most painful times of my life have been at my returning home…"*

Throughout the editing process you have to live with the sorrow you've absorbed during the job, the ghosts it generates and the nightmares they set free… These kinds of sorrow, you take with you your whole life… They may "calcify" over time, but you'll always endure a certain degree of pain - in your eyes or in your soul, one way or another. It goes without saying that to see people die for twenty consecutive years doesn't do you good. Nobody is immune… Now that I've cut back on facing this sort of event , I suffer less… Now that I alternate different kinds of job, I'm leading a more serene life".

Photo: Marco Di Lauro

Marco was born in Milan in 1970 and started practicing photography at a very early age. After studying History of Art and Journalism, he graduated in Photography at IED, Milan. Thereafter his career took off. Today Marco Di Lauro is a World Press award-winning photographer working amongst others for Newsweek, Time Magazine, New York Times Magazine and Der Spiegel.

Photo: Marco Di Lauro

Travel with passion

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