

Benvenuti  
al mondo di  
S. Caterina da Siena  
1347-1380

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Welcome to the world of St.  
Catherine of Siena

2007

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Siena is about 150 miles (245 kilometers) northwest of Rome in the part of Italy known as Tuscany.

Siena is about 50 miles (77 kilometers) from Florence (Firenze).

# Tuscan countryside



# The Dominican church of San Domenico in Siena

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The long, three-storey building to the lower right of the church is the sanctuary built around the original house of Catherine of Siena.





**Another view of San Domenico showing the ancient priory in the foreground and the duomo (cathedral) on the hill in the background**



The modern “casa-santuario” built around the original 14<sup>th</sup> century home of Catherine of Siena.

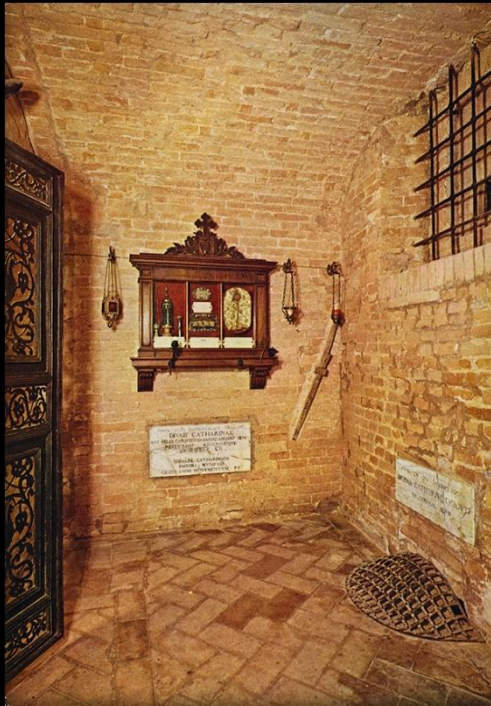
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Inside the sanctuary, the floor of the original kitchen in the family home is demarcated in the center of the room. The original hearth is under the altar. Not picture d: A chapel has been built where the family garden once was; the large crucifix before which Catherine received the invisible stigmata is above the altar.





St. Catherine's "cell"  
(the word connotes  
a monastic cell)  
under the staircase  
in her family home.  
She spent three  
years here.



San Domenico is the first church to be named after St. Dominic de Guzman, founder of the Dominican order (Order of Preachers). It is plain and unadorned, typical of the early mendicant churches.



# The caterinian basilica of San Domenico in Siena



The interior of the basilica. At the rear of the church (not seen) is the chapel of the *Mantellate* where Catherine and the other Dominican penitent women would pray. In another side chapel is “la sacra testa”—the relic of the saint’s head. (Go back to home and click on “La sacra testa” under “True likenesses of Catherine of Siena”).

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The ancient castle of Belcaro, located about a mile from Siena. Catherine established a monastery of Dominican nuns here. The community went out of existence a few years after her death.





Ancient baths of Bagno Vignoni, about 26 miles (42 kms) southeast of Siena, where Catherine's mother brought her as a teenager in a failed attempt to make her more attentive to her appearance.

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The tomb of Catherine of Siena is under the high altar in the basilica of Santa Maria sopra Minerva, Rome.





The interior of Santa  
Maria sopra Minerva.

The church was built over  
an ancient temple to the  
goddess Minerva circa  
1280 by the  
Dominicans.





SANCTA CAT  
VIRGO DE S  
ORDINIS SA  
DOMINIC

- Off the sacristy is a small chapel the walls of which were taken from the room in which Catherine died in 1380 in a building, still standing, just a stone's throw from the Minerva.





And here is where  
Catherine actually died  
in 1380, now converted  
into a chapel (*La  
Cappella del Transito*) at  
Piazza di Santa Chiara  
14, very near the  
Minerva. It is open to  
the public on April 29,  
feast of St. Catherine  
of Siena



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- For a detailed guide to the catherinian sites in Italy, see Suzanne Noffke's *Catherine of Siena: Vision through a distant eye* (1996).

