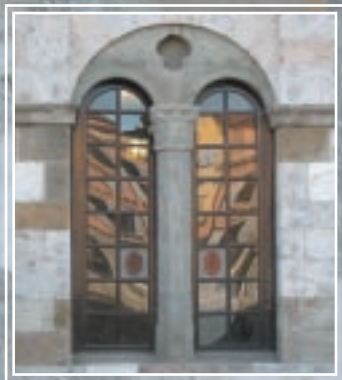




COMUNE DI PISA

PALAZZO GAMBACORTI

Visite Guidate



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UFFICIO RELAZIONI CON IL PUBBLICO

History of Palazzo Gambacorti



The Palazzo was built between the 1370s and 1380s as the residence of the powerful Gambacorti family, which was the owner of another marvelous palace on what is currently Corso Italia. Pietro Gambacorti, who was the Lord of Pisa, used this new residence near the Ponte di Mezzo to control and dominate the city until October 21 1392, when he was killed for political reasons a few steps away from the door of the Palazzo. After the disastrous war between Pisa and Florence, the building was occupied by two powerful Florentine families, the Salviati and Del Tignoso. Later, Palazzo Gambacorti became the seat of the Department of Maritime Affairs and Customs, and was reachable directly from Arno River. For a short time the Palazzo's first floor became the Public Theatre of the Academy of the Lunatici (at the beginning of the 17th century). In 1689 Grand Duke Cosimo III assigned it to the city's governors, and the Palazzo from then on is the seat of the City Hall.

The Sala delle Baleari (Balears' Hall)

This hall, the City Council chamber, takes its name from one of the frescoes with the Pisan victories that decorate its walls: "The conquest of the Balearic Islands", a work by Giacomo Fardelli dating back to the mid-1600s. The episode depicted is the final one in the fall of Majorca, which took place between 1113 and 1115: the deposed king is forced to deliver his wife and son to the conquerors, who send them to Pisa as prisoners. Fardelli also painted the "Liberation of Sardinia" from the Saracens (1015-1016).

In this fresco, Sardinia and Pisa are allegorically portrayed as two women surrounded by maids. Pisa is on the throne waiting to receive the island's crown while the defeated Mores lie at her feet.

The two frescoes were not well admired at the time, so the third wall of the room was assigned by commission to Cesare Dandini (1595-1685), who painted the "Capture of Jerusalem" (1099): here the victorious Pisans are portrayed as they raise their coat of arms on the walls of the city they had just conquered.

The fourth wall is occupied by a large window over which are painted Pisa's coat of arms and flag.





The Sala dei Matrimoni (Hall of Weddings)

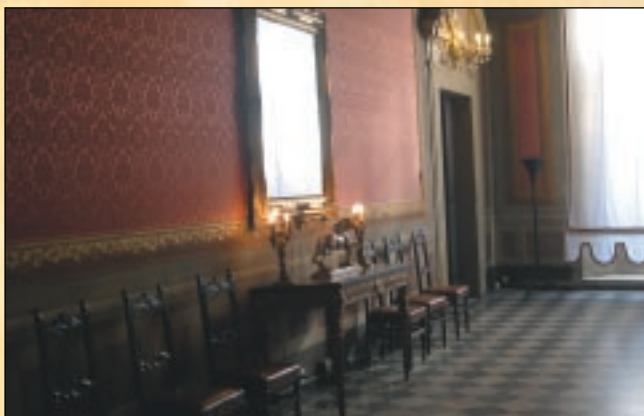
This hall takes its name by the civil weddings celebrated here, although a more accurate designation would be Sala degli Stemmi (Hall of the coat of arms). On a strip running below the ceiling are painted the coat of arms of the Mayors and Podesta of Pisa since the unification of Italy to 1961. On the lunettes are instead the heraldic symbols used by the city over many centuries: the Madonna and Child, the Eagle, the Pisan Cross and the so-called "Gramigna". The latter two ones are also carved on the base of the long table where the weddings are celebrated.

The room also contains a wooden copy of the bronze lamp that lies in the Duomo. Tradition erroneously reports that the original one was used by Galileo to study and demonstrate the isochronism of the pendulum. The wooden copy was given to the City of Pisa by a local artisan in the first half of the 20th century. The hall's ceiling is decorated with a coffered *trompe l'oeuil* and part of the fresco with the Madonna and angels painted by Aurelio Lomi (1556-1622), which was still intact in the mid-18th century.

In the middle of the vault is possible to see few angels connected by a velvet rope over a blue background. In the hall is also viewable the chair occupied by Antonio Pacinotti when he was a City Councilman (1906-1912).

The Sala Rossa (Red Hall)

The name Sala Rossa comes from the red tapestry that covers its walls. It's the ante-chamber to the Sala delle Baleari and in the past it was used as the Mayor's office. The ceiling is decorated with a fresco by the brothers Giuseppe and Francesco Melani, depicting "Pisa paying homage to Saint Ranieri". The work was painted between 1723 and 1726; the city is portrayed as a woman reclining on the banks of a river looking up at Saint Ranieri, who makes a gesture of blessing. The saint is surrounded by angels and putti, while in the background dark and menacing clouds have been chased away by his miraculous intervention. At the bottom of the fresco's oval, two ornamental scrolls present a long inscription in Latin: *"Post dulces pluvias toto fugat aethere nubes ut sol Arne tuos facundet messibus agros"* (After the sweet rains when the sun chases the clouds away from the sky, may the Arno bring great harvests) and *"Auditequae preces exauditequae rogantis pax et fertilitas regnant fugit improba pestis"* (Hear and fulfill the supplicants' prayers, may peace and fertility reign, and the wicked pestilence be defeated). Inside the elegant frame of the oval the Medici coat of arms, you can see the Pisa cross and the shield on red background with the so-called "Gramigna". There are two current interpretations of the latter symbol: many people believe that it actually depicts *gramigna*, or couch grass, alluding to the strength and tenacity of the people of Pisa. Others, instead, think it portrays the folds of the damask silk in Pisa's more ancient symbol: the red standard carried in triumph during the city-state's conquest of the Balearic Islands.





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GRAFFITI - PISA



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In collaboration with the department of
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Guided tours to
the Sala Rossa, Sala delle Baleari, Sala dei Matrimoni.

Tour groups of max. 20 people.

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