

SAN MARTINO and the LOGGE DEL PAPA

A church and an arcade near the Piazza del Campo; there is a good painting by Beccafumi inside.

They lie between the Banchi di Sotto and the Campo, about 50-100 yards down from the top of the Banchi di Sotto. The church is often closed, but worth a peek inside if the door is open.

San Martino



It was one of Siena's first churches, originally founded in the 8th century. The present building is much later - the sober classical facade dates from 1613, and the interior is typically over-ornamented Italian baroque, heavy and not particularly attractive. But some bits of the interior are nevertheless worth a glance. Look for instance at the handsome and beautifully carved ensemble of statuary which makes up the main altar (the sculptor is the little known 17th century Giuseppe Mazzuoli). Look also at the two statues above the two side altars on either side of the main altar. That on the left, of the Virgin and Child, is also by Giuseppe Mazzuoli, whereas that on the right (of St Thomas of Villanueva) is by another and considerably less talented member of the Mazzuoli family. The two statues are illustrative of the good and bad sides of mannerism: the Virgin is alive and full of wonderful movement, whereas St Thomas is stiff and artificial, his attitudinising merely ridiculous.

Siena's most famous mannerist painter, **Beccafumi**, is represented by a beautifully coloured Nativity above the third altar on the left, typical of this painter with its interesting light effects but somewhat marred by the overly sentimental circling angels in the sky. Above the second altar on the right is a stiff and rather unpleasant Circumcision of Jesus by **Guido Reni**. The other paintings are undistinguished - although that above the third altar on the right is said to be by Guercino, it is in such an appalling state as not to be worth looking at.

The church has a 16th century cloister, rather damaged, which can be entered through a dark passage in the Via Porrione, just beyond the church.

Logge del Papa

This pretty loggia to the left of the church is another contribution to the city by Siena's great Renaissance patron, Pope Pius II Piccolomini (Papa is the Italian for Pope). It was built in the 1460s.

