Below I have outlined several recommended items for you to explore during your time in Siena. Overall, however, the best suggestion that I have for all students is to start checking off your to-do list as soon as possible. Do not wait until the last month to do that day trip or visit that restaurant. Time goes quickly while abroad so don’t let it get away from you. In addition, one of the largest advantages to Siena is that it is like living in a fantasy town: everything is beautiful. Spend as much time outside as possible--out in the campo, walking around and getting lost for an hour, etc. You never know what you will find, from a cool spot for an aperitivo (suggestions included below) to a beautiful park overlooking the Tuscan countryside.

**LUNCH**

**Il Pulcino:** This was one of my favorite locations for lunch. It has a more modern design with large glass windows and clean décor and great lunch deals. Most plates of pasta range from 4-6 Euros and are very healthy portions. Also in a great location right near Conad (the main grocery store of Siena). The waiters here are also really nice and willing to help with any menu confusion and it is a popular place for locals.
*Via Termini 91*

**Osteria da Trombicche:** Do NOT wait until the last month to visit Trombicche. This place is amazing and so the definition of an authentic Italian Osteria. My Italian professor recommended it during the first week and I should have listened to him sooner. It is usually busy, but definitely worth the wait. It is run by brothers (maybe cousins?) who are both really nice (and somewhat cute!) who will help you learn how to order under the Osteria system. Basically you chose your food from the window at the counter and they will bring it to your table along with a glass of wine. I highly recommend the ribollita- it was the best that I had in Siena.
*Via delle Terme 66*

**Caffe’ Alfieri:** This is a great spot to pick up a quick panino made to order. Order at the bar and once it is made (only costing a few euros!) wander to the back of the restaurant and down the stairs on the right to their backyard patio. Great place to go to eat and do homework while relaxing outdoors. Usually not that busy after classes so a great place to find some quite time.
*Via Pantaneto 59*

**Trattoria Fonte Giusta:** I almost did not include this one in the guide because it is a place you will come to know well with CET. This is the go to restaurant for all CET events but it was chosen for a reason: amazing food for great prices. Very laid back atmosphere and many times you will run into the local Siena soccer and basketball teams dining here. At lunch there is a buffet where you can chose a primi (pasta dish) and secondi (meat) for around 5 or 6 euros. Great deal for what will end up being your largest
meal of the day. I included this in the lunch section but it is also great for dinner! Even took my parents here when they came to visit.

*Via Camollia 102*

**Consorzio Agrario di Siena:** At first glance one would not think to walk into the Consorzio to find lunch. It is a specialty supermarket that sells great wines, food, pasta, etc. However, they do have a counter by their meat section where they will hand make delicious paninis with all the freshest and highest quality ingredients. It is a great place to stop by on the way back from class to grab a sandwich and some snacks to take home. One warning: once you step foot inside, you will want to buy everything you see.

*Via G. Pianigiani 9*

**The Kebab Place:** No, this is not the actual name of the restaurant. It probably does have the word Kebab in the name, however. By about week three, you will be craving some food that does not include pasta or red sauce. This is a great option for lunch, located right down the street from the CET center. Take a right out of the doors from the school and it is literally 100 feet down the road on the corner, you can’t miss it. The owners are super nice and love to talk to you about your Italian studies and help you practice the language. Super affordable: you get a kebab and a coke for 5 euros. Beware: these kebabs are addictive.

**DINNER**

**Il Pomodorino:** This was by far my favorite pizza place in all of Siena. It is seated up by San Dominico Church, providing you with a great nighttime view of lit up Siena from above. The selection of different pizzas is so diverse and the pizza always comes out perfect. One warning, however, is that the service is very hit or miss. It is very Italian in the way that they believe none of the customers could possibly be starving or in a hurry so only go to this restaurant if you are looking to have a relaxing and possibly very long meal. Also there can be a long wait especially on weekend nights so try to call ahead for a reservation!

*Via Camporegio 13*

**Osteria il Campaccio:** This is the one restaurant I would take all of my visitors to in Siena. For reasonable prices you can get great Italian food. There is a lovely small outdoor courtyard when you first walk in with just a few tables so if it is a nice night request one of these when you make a reservation. If they are full, the downstairs cellar area also provides a nice environment for dining. One of my most memorable meals in Siena was a steak in a balsamic reduction served with caramelized onions from il Campaccio. Highly recommended.

*Vicolo del Campaccio 19*

**Antica Trattoria Papei:** Located in the Piazza del Mercato, Trattoria Papei is a great go-to restaurant. They have very reasonable prices and a great range of pasta dishes. The
waiters can sometimes get a little sketchy, but they are well-intentioned overall. There is a nice outdoor seating area that is covered in case of bad weather. On weekend nights be sure to make a reservation, however, because it can get busy. It is also a good place for large groups.
*Piazza del Mercato 6*

**La Taverna di San Giuseppe:** This is hands down the best restaurant in Siena, but along with incredible mouthwatering food comes a fairly hefty price. Save this restaurant for a special occasion or for when parents come to visit. It is one of those restaurants, however, where you never walk out feeling guilty for the expensive bill. Everything is PERFECT. Everything. They also have a really neat naturally chilly wine cellar in the back that the waiters are always excited to give you a tour of. Do not leave Siena without eating here. You will not regret it.
*Via Giovanni Dupre’ 132*

**Taverna di Cecco:** This is another one a little more on the expensive side, but will not break the bank. Had the best polenta with porcini mushrooms and some really good house wine.
*Via Cecco Angliolieri 19*

**GELATO**

**Kopa Kabana:** There is NO question. This is hands down the best gelateria in Siena. I frequented Kopa at least once a day and the nice ladies who work there knew my name by the end. They were so nice and when they get to know you and see you out around town they want to hang out and help you with your Italian! The flavors are interesting and switch around every day. My favorite was lovers, which only showed up ever so often, but I was also a big fan of their fondente- the perfect amount of bitter for dark chocolate. Do not skimp out on how often you stop by- the more often, the better the experience.
*Via dei Rossi 54*

**Grom:** I was not a huge fan of grom. For one thing, it is a chain that started in Florence and now has locations in New York along with other places. It seems a little too new and fancy for Siena and the atmosphere just doesn’t seem right. There are many people, however, who would always criticize me for my strange dislike of this gelateria. Some people swear by this (expensive) gelato and say it’s the best you can get. I will leave that up to you.
*Via Banchi di Sopra 11*
APERITIVO
Aperitivo is one of the best traditions of Italy. It is usually held around American dinner time (6-8 PM) and you can go to a bar and order a drink. By ordering this drink, you also gain access to a large buffet of food: think pasta salads, sandwiches, rice dishes, etc. If you do it right, you can easily eat enough food to count as a dinner and only be paying for the drink!

**Barche’**: Barche’ is the most popular spot for CET students to go for Aperitivo. They have a nice outdoor/glassed in area to sit when the weather is nice. The food selection is also ample and the service is generally very nice. It is located right next to the Conad grocery store- highly recommended.

**Cacio e Pere**: This is an aperitivo spot more popular with the locals. Located on Via Termini, the crowd will often spill over from inside the restaurant to the street. This place usually has large crowds on Friday nights and it is a good place to go before heading out for the night. Usually gets a later start on the aperitivo.
*Via dei Termini 70*

OTHER GREAT LOCATIONS

**The Tea Room**: Located back behind the Piazza del Mercato this is a wonderful place to go and spend a relaxing evening. You enter into a dimly lit brick room filled with eclectic couches and tables to find a wonderful world of tea, desserts, and jazz music. The desserts are definitely a highlight as are the wide selections of tea served in funky pots and cups. One of my favorite locations in Siena and it is even open late on weekends. Took my parents and several other visitors here and everyone absolutely loved it. One of the highlights of Siena. Warning: Closed during some of the colder months of the year-check before you get too excited to go.

**The Enoteca**: Located up in the Fortezza (also a must visit- provides great views of the city), this is one of the hidden gems of Siena. It is a large wine shop, featuring a cellar where you can view the different wines from all regions of Italy. The best secret of the Enoteca, however, is the wine bar. My suggestion is to go on a beautiful afternoon and order a glass of wine and a cheese and prosciutto plate to share with friends. There is an outdoor patio directly in the sun that is just perfect for a lazy afternoon.

**Sic**: A great café and bookstore that is located really close to the University for Foreigners. It is a great place to go after class to do homework while enjoying a nice pastry and Italian coffee.
*Via Pantenetto*
NIGHTLIFE
While Siena might not be known for its crazy European nightlife, there are still plenty of options to keep you entertained once the sun goes down. The go-to place, especially when the weather is nice, is the campo. A great way to start the night is to sit with a bottle of wine in the open square and just enjoy the view. The campo is also surrounded by several fun bars, which I will highlight a few below.

**Key Largo:** Key Largo is one of the small bars in the corner of the campo. It sells cheap drinks and beers that you can take away or you can climb up the stairs to a small patio that overlooks the campo. It is also a great place to go sit during the day and watch all the people relaxing in the square.

**Fonte Gaia:** This is also a bar that is usually packed on the campo. Lots of tables outside and even a dance floor inside draw big crowds on certain nights. The mojitos are really good along with all of the other drinks. The crowd is usually a mixture of Italians, Europeans, and sometimes a few Americans.

**Cambio:** If you are looking for a slightly sketchy and somewhat sweaty dance scene (don’t we all want that from time to time?) this is the place for you. Just a few minutes walk for the campo, Cambio is always playing great music and has a small dance floor that usually fills up later into the night. Once the weather gets warm, however, the heat gets slightly unbearable so this location is better during the cooler months of the year.

Via Pantenetto 48

**Caffe’ del Corso:** This location was more affectionately referred to by my friends as the 3-4-5 bar, given their three shots for five euro deal. It is usually packed on busy nights and they always provide delicious potato chips to bar goers. Situated on Banchi di Sopra, the bar usually overflows into the street where you can still hear the music. When you get bored of the bar scene, it is also very close to the next item on the list, Barone Rosso, which offers more dancing.

Via dei Termini 9

**Barone Rosso:** If there is one bar that is most popular with the Americans in Siena it would have to be Barone Rosso. It offers good music, good dancing, and when it is full it can be a really fun place to go. Some nights it can be kinda dead, but luckily it is really close to the campo so if this is the case you are not stuck forever.

Via dei Termini 9

**Bella Vista:** This location is a little taste of Jamaica in Siena. They serve the best mojitos in town in a very cool setting with walls covered in newspaper articles and red paint. Closed during some of the colder months of the year but a great place during the spring and summer. If you go often enough the bartender will also start giving you good deals on their very strong drinks.

Via Pantenetto

**Irish Pub:** This place might actually be called Dublin Post but it is known by all as the Irish Pub. It is pretty much what you would expect of an Irish Pub transplanted into a
small Italian town. It draws a very international crowd, especially any Americans that might not know where else to go. They hold a great St. Patrick’s Party and are located right near Piazza Gramsci (the main bus station).

Piazza Gramsci

TRAVEL AND OTHER RANDOM TIPS
Being in Europe is absolutely incredible. The train systems and flights are so easy and affordable that you want to see anything any everything during your time abroad. My one greatest piece of advice, however, is to make sure you save some weekends for Siena. You don’t want to leave at the end of the semester feeling like you saw more of Europe than of your own town. Also, there is so much to see in Italy alone that I encourage you to only use longer breaks for out of the country visits. Spring break and Easter break are great options for these longer trips.

Recommended Italian Trips and how many days are needed (in order of favorites):

Night Trips
1) Cinque Terre (2 days, 1 night)
2) Almalfi Coast (3 days, 2 nights but if you have more time it would be worth it!)
3) Rome (4 days, 3 nights)
5) Milan (2 days, 1 night) – a lot of people skip this one but there is so much art and such a young vibe to the city I think it is definitely worth the trip. Make sure to do an aperitivo in Navigli (but wear bugspray!).
4) Venice (2 days, 1 night)

Day Trips
1) Florence (so easy to get into there is not much need to stay overnight. Just go as many times as you would like!)
2) Lucca (ride the bikes around the town walls- really fun!)
3) Montepulciano
4) The Terme- the natural thermal waters. Montecatini Terme is a great option. Take the train and spend the day relaxing in the natural spa. One of my favorite days was spent here overlooking the Tuscan countryside.
5) Arezzo (has a great antique market on some weekends- look up the schedule before you go!)

Expert Tip
Seeing the Tower of Pisa really is fantastic, but truthfully the town of Pisa itself does not offer much more. Instead of dedicating an entire trip for this one, jump off your train on the way home from Cinque Terre for a couple of hours to see the tower. You usually have to connect through Pisa anyways so it is a very economical and convenient way to get your famous picture holding up the falling masterpiece.