

Palermo Cathedral



Palermo Cathedral is the cathedral church of the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Palermo, located in Palermo, Sicily, southern Italy. It is dedicated to the Assumption of the Virgin Mary. As an architectural complex, it is characterized by the presence of different styles, due to a long history of additions, alterations and restorations, the last of which occurred in the 18th century.

The western entrance is on the current Via Matteo Bonello, and has the appearance set in the 14th and 15th centuries. It is flanked by two towers and has a Gothic portal surmounted by a niche with a precious 15th-century Madonna. Two lintelled ogival arcades, stepping over the street, connect the western façade to the bell tower, which is annexed to the Archbishops Palace (now Museo Diocesano).

This has a squared appearance adorned in the upper part by a fine crown of smaller belfries and small arcades.

The interior has a Latin cross plan, with a nave and two aisles divided by pilasters. In the first two chapels of the right aisle are the tomb of emperors and royal figures moved here in the 18th century from their original sites (mostly from the basilica itself). Here are the remains of Emperor Henry VI, his son Frederick II, as well as those of Peter II of Sicily. A Roman sarcophagus is the tomb of Constance of Aragon, Frederick's wife. Under the mosaic baldachins are the tombs of Roger II, the first King of Sicily, and his daughter Constance. The last two were once located in the transept of the Cathedral of Cefalù.

The Palazzo dei Normanni (Palace of the Normans)



The Palazzo dei Normanni (Palace of the Normans) or Royal Palace of Palermo is a palace in Palermo, Italy. It was the seat of the Kings of Sicily during the Norman domination and served afterwards as the main seat of power for the subsequent rulers of Sicily. Currently, it is the seat of the Sicilian Regional Assembly. The building is the oldest royal residence in Europe; and was the private residence of the rulers of the Kingdom of Sicily and the imperial seat of Frederick II and Conrad IV.

The palace stands in what is the highest point of the ancient centre of the city, just above the first Punic settlements, whose remains can still be found in the basement. The first building, the al-Qasr (in Arabic, castle or palace) is believed to have been started in the 9th century by the Emir of Palermo. Parts of this early building are still visible in the foundations and in the basements, where typical Arabian vaults are present. After the Normans conquered Sicily in 1072 (just 6 years after they conquered England) and established Palermo as the capital of the new Kingdom of Sicily, the palace was chosen as the main residence of the kings. The Norman kings transformed the former Arabian palace into a multifunctional complex with both administrative and residential aims. All the buildings were linked to each other via arcades and enclosed by gardens, designed by the best gardeners of the middle east. In 1132 King Roger II added the famous Cappella Palatina to the complex. During the reign of the Swabian emperors, the palace maintained its administrative functions, and was the centre of the Sicilian School of poetry, but was seldom used as permanent seat of power, especially during the reign of Frederick II. The Angevin and Aragonese kings preferred other seats. The palace returned to an important administrative role in the second half of the sixteenth century, when the Spanish governors chose it as their official residence, carrying out important reconstructions, aimed at their representative needs and their military ones, with the creation of a system of bastions. The Spanish Bourbons built additional reception rooms (la Sala Rossa, la Sala Gialla e la Sala Verde) and reconstructed the Sala d'Ercole, named for its frescos depicted the mythological hero, Hercules. From 1946, the palace was the seat of the Sicilian Regional Assembly. The west wing (with the Porta Nuova) was assigned to the Italian Army and is the seat of the Southern Military Region. During the sixties, it received comprehensive restorations under the direction of Rosario La Duca. The palace is also the seat of the Astronomical Observatory of Palermo. The palace contains the Cappella Palatina, by far the best example of the so-called Arab-Norman-Byzantine style that prevailed in the 12th-century Sicily. The wonderful mosaics, the wooden roof, elaborately fretted and painted, and the marble incrustation of the lower part of the walls and the floor are very fine.

The Palatine Chapel



The Palatine Chapel (Italian: Cappella Palatina), is the royal chapel of the Norman kings of Sicily situated on the first floor at the center of the Palazzo Reale in Palermo, Sicily.

Also referred to as a Palace church or Palace chapel, it was commissioned by Roger II of Sicily in 1132 to be built upon an older chapel (now the crypt) constructed around 1080. It took eight years to build, receiving a royal charter the same year, with the mosaics being only partially finished by 1143. The sanctuary, dedicated to Saint Peter, is reminiscent of a domed basilica. It has three apses, as is usual in Byzantine architecture, with six pointed arches (three on each side of the central nave) resting on recycled classical columns.

The Teatro Massimo Vittorio Emanuele







The Teatro Massimo Vittorio Emanuele is an opera house and opera company located on the Piazza Verdi in Palermo, Sicily. It was dedicated to King Victor Emanuel II. It is the biggest in Italy, and one of the largest of Europe (the third after the Opéra National de Paris and the K. K. Hof-Opernhaus in Vienna), renowned for its perfect acoustics.

The opera house was designed and overseen by the Italian architect Giovan Battista Filippo Basile, who was well known in Sicily for his previous cathedral restoration design in the city of Acireale, as well as garden and villa designs in the city of Palermo and Caltagirone. Following G. B. F. Basile's death in 1891, construction was then overseen by his son, Architect Ernesto Basile. The Rutelli and Machì Company, represented by Giovanni Rutelli and Alberto Machì (both founding members of the company) was contracted for the main construction of the theatre which, under Architect Giovanni Rutelli's technical and building direction, went from the foundations all the way up to the theatre's attic structures. He was also responsible for all the external decorations of the building. Rutelli initially designed a steam tower crane machine which was then successfully able to lift large stone blocks and Greek/Roman styled columns during construction of the very large theatre. Construction started on 12 January 1874, but was stopped for eight years from 1882 until 1890. Finally, on 16 May 1897, twenty-two years after the laying of the foundation stone, the third largest opera house in Europe—after the Palais Garnier in Paris and the K. K. Hof-Opernhaus in Vienna—was inaugurated with a performance of Verdi's *Falstaff* conducted by Leopoldo Mugnone.

The Teatro Massimo is the largest theatre in Italy. Basile was inspired by ancient and classical Sicilian architecture and, thus, the exterior was designed in the high neoclassical style incorporating elements of the Greek temples at Selinunte and Agrigento. Realized in the late-Renaissance style, the auditorium was planned for 3,000 people, but, in its current format, it seats 1,381, with 7 tiers of boxes rising up around an inclined stage, and shaped in the typical horseshoe style.

Quattro Canti

direction	south	west	north	east
photo				
district	Albergheria	Seralcadio/Capo	La Loggia	Kalsa
season	spring	summer	autumn	winter
king	Charles V	Philip II	Philip IV	Philip III
patron	Christina of Bolsena	Santa Ninfa	Oliva di Palermo	Sant'Agata

Quattro Canti, officially known as Piazza Vigliena, is a Baroque square in Palermo, Sicily, Southern Italy.

It was laid out on the orders of the Viceroys between 1608-1620[1] by Giulio Lasso at the crossing of the two principal streets in Palermo, the Via Maqueda and the Corso Vittorio Emanuele.

The piazza is octagonal, four sides being the streets; the remaining four sides are Baroque buildings, the near-identical facades of which contain fountains with statues of the four seasons, the four Spanish kings of Sicily, and of the patronesses of Palermo, (Christina, Ninfa, Olivia and Agata). The facades onto the interchange are curved, and rise to four floors; the fountains rise to the height of the second floor, the third and fourth floors contain the statues in niches. At the time the piazza was built, it was one of the first major examples of town planning in Europe.