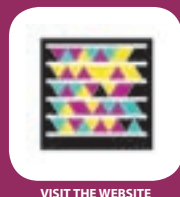


## THE MARKET

An event for which the local historiography has been studied greatly stems from a diploma that the Saxon emperor Otto III gave in Rome to the bishop of Pistoia granting him possessions, parishes and powers in the Pistoia area and assigning to him the "empty land where the town market is". The market was thus held on the cathedral parvise, but extended to the entire square that later was called "Piazza del Duomo"; while the ecclesiastical part (specifically, the parvise) is still easily distinguishable from the secular part of the commune. It can be said that the current market, held weekly on Wednesdays and Saturdays, is more than 1000 years old, and thus not has only a commercial value but also historical and tourist ones. In fact it was of primary importance for the expansion of the Comune as it promoted trade, through means of monetary economics, with the countryside, i.e., the town's suburban area. In short, it can be said today that Pistoia's market was the start of the historical and profitable relationship between the city and the countryside. Thus Pistoia's mercantile calling was born, later giving substance to the trade and credit enterprises and that today offers all kinds of modern service industries: from market stalls to boutiques, from traditional stores to supermarkets, from simple eateries to elegant restaurants. On the level of a tourist attraction, the market stalls draw attention to the original merriment and color of the square.



VISIT THE WEBSITE



PROVINCIA  
DI PISTOIA

### INFO POINT

Abetone + 39 0573 60231  
Cutigliano + 39 0573 68029  
Pistoia + 39 0573 21622

[info@pistoia.turismo.toscana.it](mailto:info@pistoia.turismo.toscana.it)

### TEXT

Lorenzo Cipriani

### PHOTOS

APT - Italia Turistica Marco  
Melodia - Katrin Fox

### TRANSLATION

Studio Blitz - Pistoia

### GRAPHIC DESIGN

Studio Phaedra

ITINERARIES OF ART AND HISTORY

# THE PIAZZA DEL DUOMO

[www.pistoia.turismo.toscana.it](http://www.pistoia.turismo.toscana.it)



**AGENZIA  
PER IL TURISMO**  
ABETONE PISTOIA  
MONTAGNA P.S.E.



Intervento realizzato all'interno delle azioni previste dal progetto interregionale (L.135/2001 art. 5) "Valorizzazione comprensorio sciistico tosco emiliano" cofinanziato da Presidenza del Consiglio dei Ministri - Dipartimento per lo sviluppo e la competitività del turismo - e dalla Regione Toscana





## THE PIAZZA DEL DUOMO

Since the beginning, this historic square – the center of the town – has represented distinctly the two powers that were in opposition during the Middle Ages, but which later found a fruitful arrangement: the cathedral, the religious fulcrum, and the communal palace, the political one. The two buildings do not face each other: one occupies the southern side of the square; the other is on the east. Set a bit forward, the bell tower seems to mark the boundary of the area ascribed to the sacred, yet the bell tower provided the best opportunity for understanding between the two spheres. Intended to mark the rhythms of the Church, it was later used – after an initial disagreement a compromise was reached – to define the city's com-

munal rhythms: the opening and closing of its gates, calling its citizens to public events, and for assemblies of the administrators.

The current town hall, formerly of the Elders, dates to the end of the XIII century when the Florentine podestà Giano della Bella was already in Pistoia. It was a much small-



er structure; it could have been as big as the modern courtyard where there was what documents describe as “the kitchen garden of the Magnificent Lords”. In short, if an administrator wanted a fresh onion, he had only to ask a page, who would dig one up as soon as he went down the stairs. We do know that this building



was preceded by an older one, thus coeval to the early days of the commune's self government, but nothing is known of its shape or location.

On the north side of the square was the Palazzo del Maggior Sindaco (replaced in the sixteenth century by the small, beautiful palace of the Opera di San Jacopo, where the salt



tax was administered) and by that of the Capitano del Popolo. Unfortunately, all these noble buildings have disappeared; in the eighteenth century far less beautiful ones were built for Monte dei Paschi and INPS, now the Palazzo del Governo, which are certainly not in harmony with the town's medieval structure. On their side of and partially overlooking the square stands the beautiful Palazzo Bracciolini delle Api, which once belonged to a powerful local family, supporters of the Medici power. What today is the court (with an additional floor

in respect to the original structure) was the *Palazzo del Podestà* or *Pretorio*, where justice was administered. Next to the cathedral – in whose crypt traces of the early Christian church can still be detected – is the old Bishops' Palace, where Urban II proclaimed the crusade at the end of the year 1000.

In front of the towering church is the octagonal Baptistery, formerly the chapel of Santa Maria in Corte, whose name refers to the fact that the court of the Lombard government was nearby, namely on La Sala.