

Vatican City has innumerable precious art treasures and has been registered in the World heritage list since 1984.



St. Peter's Basilica, the square, the huge colonnade, the Apostolic Palace give testimony to the genius of architects and artists such as Bramante, Raffaello, Michelangelo, Bernini.



The celebrated Vatican Museums house countless art treasures among which the Sistine Chapel, admirably frescoed by Michelangelo, which certainly represents one of the highest artistic expressions of the Renaissance.



The ancient Corps of the Pontifical Swiss Guards, founded by Pope Julius II in 1506, is still responsible for the safety of the Holy Father and controls access to the Vatican as well as security in the Apostolic Palace.



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VATICAN CITY

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The Vatican City State, a universally recognized sovereign country, came into existence on February 11th, 1929, when the Holy See and the Kingdom of Italy negotiated the Lateran Treaty.



Vatican City covers an area of 44 hectares, surrounded by the city of Rome, and has a population of approximately 400 residents. The state is ruled in the form of an elected monarchy with life tenure. The Head of State is the Supreme Pontiff, who has full legislative, judicial and executive powers.



The Vatican City State strikes its own money (coins) and issues its own postal instruments (stamps, postal cards and aerograms)



Vatican City has its public offices and services such as, for example, the Post and Telegraph Office and Vatican Radio, whose first broadcasting station was designed by Guglielmo Marconi and inaugurated by Pope Pius XI on February 12th, 1931. Today Vatican Radio is on the air in 34 languages, broadcasting Christ's message to every part of the world



"L'Osservatore Romano" founded in 1861, is the official daily of the Holy See. The paper also has weekly editions in six languages.



There are many cultural and scientific institutions in the Vatican. The Pontifical Academy of Science has eighty members, selected and appointed by the Pope from the most notable scientists of the entire world, and is housed in the "Casina of Pius IV" in the Vatican Gardens.



The Vatican Observatory, whose origins date back to the XVI century, has its headquarters in Castel Gandolfo, near Rome, and a research unit in Tucson, Arizona (USA).



The Vatican Apostolic Library, founded in 1475, and the Secret Vatican Archives house in their magnificent rooms documents concerning the history of the Church and of the whole world.

