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ALTRE VOCI

THE E-NEWSLETTER OF THE ITALIAN CULTURAL SOCIETY

OTHER VOICES • FALL EDITION

The Italian Cultural Society Presents

CULTURAL EVENT

COLUMBUS DAY FESTIVAL
A Celebration of Italian-American Heritage

Sunday, October 8 • 12 - 4 pm



Featuring:

AL FRESCO DINING

FOOD BUFFET

LIVE BAND & MUSIC

ITALIAN FOLK DANCERS

CANNOLI MAKING

CLASSIC ITALIAN CARS

PLAY BOCCE IN THE PARK

WINE and OLIVE OIL TASTINGS

RAFFLE PRIZES GALORE

SOUVENIR VENDORS

CHILDRENS CRAFTS

HISTORICAL EXHIBITS

FREE PARKING



Reservations Encouraged!

Seating is Limited

ADMISSION - \$40
CHILDREN 6 to 16 - \$20

- *Doors open at noon*
- *Luncheon will be served at 1:00 pm*
- *Live Music and activities from 12 – 4 pm*

CLICK HERE TO MAKE YOUR RESERVATION ONLINE NOW

Visit www.italiancenter.net for more information

or by email at: italy1@surewest.net or call 916-482-5900

***** All reservations will be held at the door *****

MARKETPLACE VENDORS

Be a festival vendor!

Space is limited - If you would like to market your product or information at the festival, contact Vincenzo Cerruti at: sacramento.italian.society@gmail.com

VOLUNTEERS

We need volunteers.

Volunteers receive free admission and food. If you would like to volunteer to help at the festival, contact Bill Cerruti at italy1@surewest.net.

SPONSORS

Give back to your Italian heritage - SHOW YOUR SUPPORT FOR THE ITALIAN COMMUNITY FESTIVAL! We would like to give you the opportunity to be a festival

sponsor. *List your name or business in the Festival Souvenir Program.*

For information: contact the Society at
Italy1@surewest.net or 916-482-5900

Special Discover Columbus Day RAFFLE!



Columbus Day Festival
A Tribute to the Italian American Heritage
Sunday, October 8 - 11 to 4:00 pm
At the Italian Center and Carmichael Park

THE DISCOVER COLUMBUS DAY RAFFLE!

PLAY TO WIN Special Prizes Galore, Italian gift baskets, Wine, Olive Oil and Made In Italy Products and Italian Souvenirs

RAFFLE GRAND PRIZE:

A regional color map of the Italian Peninsula etched in wood on a handmade frame - 36" x 24" (Donated by Vincenzo Cerruti)

GRAND PRIZE DRAWING WILL BE HELD AT 3:30pm

Raffle Ticket Prices: \$10 each • 3 for \$25 or 7 for \$50

Winner of Grand prize need not be present at the event.

Discover Columbus Raffle Tickets will be filled out and placed in the Raffle Drum by the Society

[CLICK HERE TO PURCHASE RAFFLE TICKETS](#)

[CLICK HERE TO MAKE A DONATION](#)





Cari Amici,

As we approach Italian American Heritage Month in October and the Columbus Day holiday, the Society will host its annual Columbus Day Celebration at the Italian Center in Carmichael. This year we will be using both the Italian Center and Carmichael Park for the event. The theme of the celebration is to honor our Italian American heritage - and Columbus Day is an important part of that heritage.

This year, as in the past, reservations are encouraged. We are expanding the celebration to include some of the features of our Italian festivals of the past. With live entertainment in the afternoon, Italian food, bocce playing, olive oil and wine tastings, cannoli making, folk dancers, Italian cars, Grand Prize and hourly raffle, children's crafts and seating in both the park and on the Italian Center terrace overlooking the Park.

Our luncheon, beginning with antipasti, will be served starting at 1:00pm. All of the activities we have planned will be available all day. The admission charge includes the food and entertainment. Wine and other beverages will be available for purchase at the event. Feel free to drop in at any time during the day.

Take the opportunity to be part of the Celebration. We are looking for sponsors, volunteers, and vendors.

This is the time of year when Italian Americans across the nation gather in every Italian community to show their pride in being Italian American and celebrate a holiday that is associated with Italians worldwide. It is a day we share our sense of community and our music, dance, food, classic car, and other Italian traditions.

On behalf of the Italian Cultural Society, I invite you to do something Italian with us on Columbus Day. The public is invited to share our celebration with us.

And remember, this is a fund-raising event for our cultural programs and the Italian Center.

Bill Cerruti, Executive Director

OTHER UPCOMING CULTURAL EVENTS

ALL EVENTS HELD AT THE ITALIAN CENTER

Located At:

6821 FAIR OAKS BLVD, CARMICHAEL CA 95608

(Between Stanley and Landis Avenues)

SAVE THE DATES FOR THESE UPCOMING FALL EVENTS AT A GLANCE:

"THE HEART OF THE FAMILY"

Italian Immigrant Women in Mining Communities

(Sunday, September 17 @ 2:00 pm)

"ROMAN HOLIDAY"

Friday Night Italian Film Series

(Friday, September 24 @ 8:00 pm)

"YOGI BERRA - IT AIN'T OVER"

(Sunday, October 1 @ 2:00 pm)

COLUMBUS DAY FESTIVAL

A Tribute to Italian American Heritage

(Sunday, October 8 @ 12:00 - 4:00 pm)

FILM: "LITTLE ITALY"

(Sunday, October 20 @ 2:00 pm)

"I'M STAYING WITH MY BOYS"

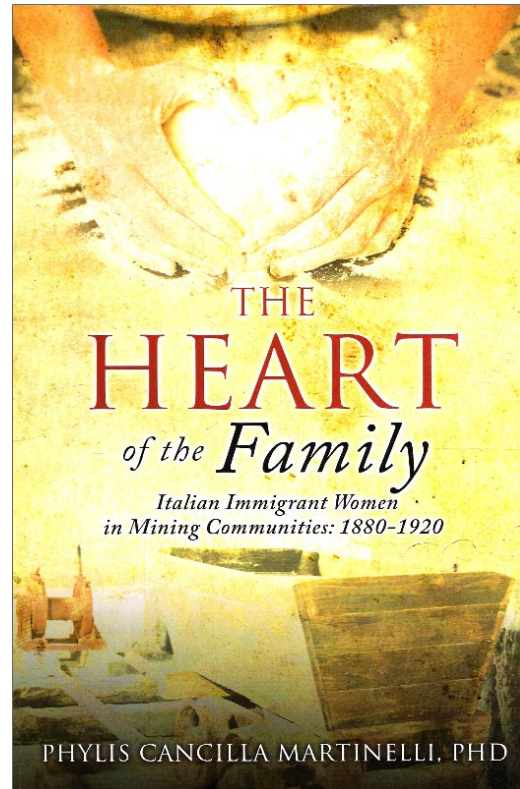
The Heroic Life of Sargeant John Basilone

(Sunday, November 5 @ 2:00 pm)

MEET THE AUTHOR - ITALIAN AMERICAN EXPERIENCE

**THE HEART OF THE FAMILY;
Italian Immigrant Women in Mining Communities
Sunday, September 17 at 2:00 pm**

Admission \$15



In this presentation, Author Phyllis Cancilla Martinelli examines the lives of immigrant women from Northern Italy in mining communities spanning the years from 1870-1930. In the old mining towns of the American West, mining companies sometimes provided the housing, but the women provided “the home.” These women became the heart of the families in the mining camps.

While the first wave of immigration to the United States was from northern Europe, the second wave was from southern and eastern Europe. Italian Americans were the largest group to go into mining during the second wave of European immigration. Italians did the heavy labor in the coal towns of Iowa, Ohio, and Texas and the copper towns of Michigan and Arizona.

An earlier wave of Italians came to California from Northern Italy during the California Gold Rush of the 1840s and 1850s and into the 20th century, heavily from the region of Liguria, and became one of the largest groups of miners in the hills of the

California Mother lode where their descendants still reside.

The story of the Italian miners is an important one as they changed the face of the mining communities they settled in. This is part of their story.

Phyllis Martinelli is Professor Emerita St. Mary's College in Moraga California and the granddaughter of Italian immigrants. She is a third generation native of San Francisco, California.

Take this opportunity to share your own family stories.

Admission \$15 • Refreshments Included • Doors open at 1:30 pm

FRIDAY NIGHT ITALIAN FILM SERIES

"ROMAN HOLIDAY"

Friday, September 24 at 8:00 pm

Admission \$15



Italian cinema is as much a part of Italian culture as the food, music and people.

Staring Gregory Peck and Audrey Hepburn. Audrey Hepburn's Oscar winning performance in her first starring role. Roman holiday was nominated for ten academy awards in 1953 and Hepburn captured an Oscar for her portrayal of a rebellious modern-day princess who explores Rome on her own. She meets Gregory Peck, an American newspaperman seeking a story, who pretends he does not know her identity. The scenes of Rome are wonderful. This romantic comedy ranks as one of the most enjoyable of all times. (1953) B&W

Roman Holiday turned 70 in August 2023. At the Oscars, *From here To Eternity*, starring Frank Sinatra, won the Oscar for Best Film over Roman Holiday.

[CLICK TO WATCH THE FILM TRAILER](#)

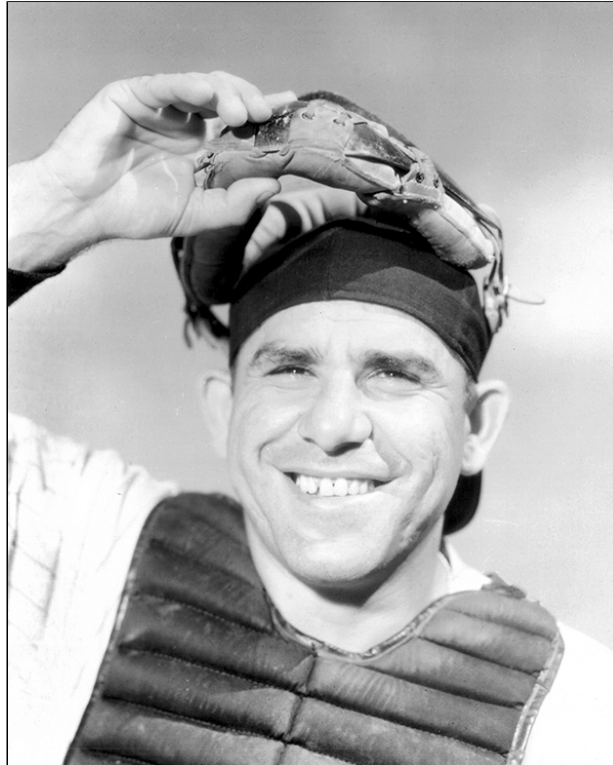
Admission \$15 • Refreshments Included • Doors open at 7:30 pm

ITALIAN AMERICAN EXPERIENCE FILM

YOGI BERRA, "IT AIN'T OVER"

Sunday, October 1 at 2:00 pm

Admission \$15



When it comes to Yogi, "You don't know nothing."

This film documentary is an intimate portrait of an American icon. This emotional and uplifting film about Yogi Berra takes us beyond the caricatures and "Yogisms," and into the heart of a sports legend whose accomplishments on the baseball diamond often competed with his off the field persona.

Catcher Yogi Berra was one of the most beloved baseball players in major League history. Spanning the Lazzari through Berra years, the Italian American Yankees won 19 world series in 37 years. Along the way, Berra and other Italian American Yankee players, Tony Lazzeri, Frankie Croscetti, Joe DiMaggio, and Phil Rizzuto changed the way Italian Americans were perceived and accepted in American

culture.

Makes you want to stand up and cheer!

Admission \$15 / Refreshments Included / Doors open at 1:30 pm

[CLICK TO READ "How The Yankees Became Italian"](#)

Columbus Day Festival

A Tribute to the Italian American Heritage

Sunday, October 8 - 11 to 4:00 pm

At the Italian Center and Carmichael Park



[CLICK HERE TO MAKE YOUR RESERVATION NOW](#)

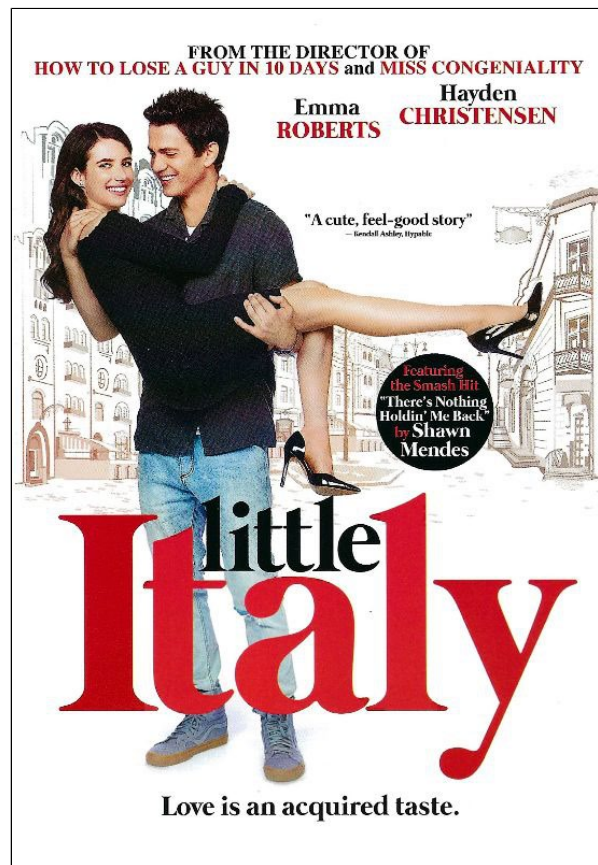
[CLICK HERE TO PURCHASE RAFFLE TICKETS](#)

ITALIAN AMERICAN EXPERIENCE FILM

"LITTLE ITALY"

Sunday, October 20 at 2:00 pm

Admission \$15



This recent comedy film is topped with passion, playfulness, and pepperoni!

Former childhood pals Leo and Nikki are attracted to each other as adults – but will their feuding parents rival pizzerias put a chill on their sizzling romance? The all-star cast includes Emma Roberts, Hayden Christensen, Alyssa Milano, Andrea Martin and Danny Aiello. 2018

[CLICK TO WATCH THE FILM TRAILER](#)

Admission \$15 / Refreshments Included / Doors open at 1:30 pm

[CLICK TO LEARN MORE ABOUT: Little Italy in Sacramento](#)

ITALIAN AMERICAN EXPERIENCE / VETERANS DAY FILM

**"I'M STAYING WITH MY BOYS"
The Heroic Life of Sargeant John Basilone**

Sunday, November 5 at 2:00 pm

Admission \$15



PHOTO ABOVE: *This framed print of John Basilone is on display at the Italian Center in Carmichael, CA.*

“I’m staying with my boys....” Is a firsthand look inside the life of one of the greatest heroes of the Greatest Generation. Sgt John Basilone was lauded by General Douglas MacArthur as “a one-man Army” for his heroic actions on Guadalcanal and celebrated by the nation. It was the turning point of the war and Basilone’s foxhole was the site of the turning point in that battle. That was just the beginning of the legend.

The movie allows viewers to experience the development of Johnny Basilone into a warrior, undefeated light heavy weight boxer and nationally revered war hero.

Basilone is one of the Greatest icons in Marine Corps history. He is the only marine soldier of the war to receive both the Medal of honor and the Navy Cross. His story is part of every marine’s boot camp education. Machine Gun John was killed on the beach at Iwo Jima defending his Boys. A postage stamp was issued in his honor.

The Italian-American Radio Show



Italian Americans have created a musical legacy that endures as a source of pride to Italian Americans.

This musical legacy can be heard on Italian American radio Shows across the nation. Since the early 1980s, the Italian Cultural Society has sponsored “Sacramento Italian Style” where you can listen to the soundtrack of our musical heritage.

Each week, Society Radio hostess Phyllis Cupparo, puts together specially themed shows around holidays, performers and events. Her shows are a mix of the best of Italian American and Italian song.

In August, Phyllis recorded a Tony Bennett Tribute Show following his recent death at age 96, with pop standards from the Great American songbook like “I left My Heart in San Francisco,” his biggest hit. And selections from his duet albums with Lady Gaga (Stefani Joanne Angelina Germanotta) and Andrea Bocelli. Born Anthony Dominick Benedetto to Italian immigrant parents, he was Frank Sinatra’s favorite singer.

Other themed radio shows included Mother’s Day with Italian American favorites like “Mamma” by Connie Francis (Concetta Rosa Maria Franconero) and of course, Christmas, with holiday songs by various Italian American artists.

[CLICK TO READ The Italian-American Music Decade](#)

[CLICK TO READ Musical Migration: From Italy to America](#)

Sinatra Statue Unveiled in Hoboken



Old Blue Eyes lives on at the Sinatra Park Amphitheater in Hoboken, New Jersey. A new life-sized bronze statue of the singer depicts the iconic crooner against a lamp post, wearing a three-piece suit. The statue was created to memorialize him and the impact he had on Italian American and American Society. Frances Albert Sinatra passed away in 1998 in Los Angeles. He was 82.

Society Folk Dancers Perform at SF Giants Game



PHOTO ABOVE: *The Balliamo! Dancers at the SF Giants Italian Heritage Night game, 2023.*

This year, both Italian Cultural Society folk-dance troupes made the journey to San Francisco and the annual Italian Night Giants game. For many years, our folk dancers have been performing at the Italian Night games in the City by the Bay.

Our folk-dance troupes have been performing for Italian events in northern California as standard bearers of our dance heritage from Italy. They have mastered many of the traditional and regional dances of the Italian Peninsula.

Our dance program is one of the many cultural programs the Society underwrites financially and otherwise. From costumes to instructors, these heritage dance programs would not be in existence without the resources the Society provides and has for decades.

The folk dancers reflect our mission to serve the cultural needs of our community. And a good reason why our members and contributors should be proud of their support for the good work of the Society in the Italian community.

These wonderful dancers are representatives of the Italian community. Next time you join or make a contribution to the Society, remember that it helps young Italian American families and their children to participate in their Italian heritage through our bambini dance and other children's cultural programs.

For more information about the Bambini Dancers or Balliamo Dancers schedule, to book them or to attend practice with them visit our website at www.Italiancenter.net. or contact them at: ics.bambini@gmail.com for children and at balliamodancers@gmail.com for adults.



[CLICK TO WATCH Bambini Dancers at SF Giants Heritage Night](#)

Southern Italy Found Its Groove With The Tarantella



Folk dances tell stories and reflect a group's diverse history and culture. While the Tarantella – arguably Italy's most famous folk dance – is best known today as a staple of Italian American weddings – it traces its origins to Taranto, a city in Puglia, on the “heel” of Italy's boot.

The dance dates to at least the 15th century and began as a cure for a condition called “*tarantism*”, which was believed to be caused by the bite of a wolf spider that was the subject of myth and lore.

Its origins are as ancient as they are peculiar. According to popular belief, after being bitten by the spider, the victim, who was referred to as the *tarantata*, would begin dancing in a state of delirium. To save *the tarantata*, musicians were beckoned to perform a very fast paced rhythmic style of music, which became known as the pizzica, a word derived from pizzico, which means bite in Italian.

The music would awaken the *tarantata* from her stupor or the mandolins, guitars and tambourines would provide the rhythm to which she would dance for hours or even days to expel the venom from her body. **The *tarantata* continued dancing until she was exhausted, at which point she was cured.**

This type of dance mania spread across southern Italy and the combination of dance and music was accepted as a remedy. Towns people surrounded the *tarantata* as she performed the ritual and even participated in it. Over the centuries, tarantella evolved into a dance performed by couples. In Italy contemporary musical groups embrace this living tradition of dance and music with its regional variations which are passed down from generation to generation.

The folk-dance troupes of the Italian cultural society continue the dance traditions of

Italy and perform the various regional versions of the **Dance of the Ancient Spider** which are found in the seven regions of southern Italy. (Calabria, Puglia, Abruzzo, Sicily, Campania, Basilicata, Molise)

An earlier version of the dance called the *Tammurriata* (the dance of the drum) from the Campania region using castanets from Naples hand carved from olive trees, is over 2000 years old.

Most Italian Americans don't know the steps to beautiful Italian folk dances like the tarantella. The Italian American Museum of Los Angeles has created a curriculum for educators and parents interested in teaching youth about this subject. The curriculum is free and can be found at: iamla.org/curriculum.

Or join the Society's **Bambini** dance group for children or its adult group **Balliamo** at their next folk dance open practice lesson.

Remembering Tony Bennett



***"If Something Is Good, It's Always Good. You Don't have To Change It"** - Tony Bennett*

Legendary Singer Tony Bennett passed away in June 2023.

He was born, Anthony Dominick Benedetto, in 1926 In New York to Italian immigrant parents. Tony was a proud Italian American and consummate entertainer who made

enormous contributions to American Music. Over his seven-decade career, he serenaded generations of fans with his smooth vocals.

He achieved early stardom in the 1950s with No 1 hits like **“Because Of You”** and **“Cold, Cold Heart”** both in 1951 and **“Rags To Riches”** in 1953.”

He was one of the most recognizable voices in American popular music. His 1962 signature hit **“I Left My Heart in San Francisco,”** cemented him as one of the most popular singers of the Century - and one of the biggest draws in the business.

In the Italian American world of iconic Italian crooners, each with their own unique style and hits, he shared a common thread of identity and pride.

Their Names were Dino Paolo Martino Crocetti, Pierino Ronald Como, Francis Albert Sinatra, and Anthony Dominick Benedetto. Or, as we know them, Dean Martin, Perry Como, Frank Sinatra and Tony Bennett. They were contemporaries and knew one another.

These four singers, stalwarts of American musical history, share their roots in the Italian American family. With a shared identity, a common culture and history and an ancient heritage binding them. Together, they created a timeless soundtrack that transcended generations.



Comedian Bob Hope hired Benedetto in 1949 but disliked his stage name and told him “We’ll call you Tony Bennett. And the name stuck. In 1950, he signed with Columbia Records after Frank Sinatra’s contract had expired. His television debut came in the summer of 1956 on the Tony Bennett show, replacing the Perry Como Show.

His relationship with Sinatra was unique. Sinatra once proclaimed that Bennett “was the best singer in the business.” He earned 20 Grammy awards.

He teamed up with fellow Italian American singer and pop queen, Lady Gaga (Stefani Joanne Angelica Germanotta) on two duet albums in 2014 and 2021. Their 2014 ***Cheek-to-Cheek*** album earned a Grammy and a worldwide tour. In 2021, Their second duet album, ***Love for Sale***, soared to the top of the charts.

While performing timeless American classics onstage together across the nation and overseas, Bennett and Gaga forged a bond not often seen. Bennett has Calabrian origins, and she Sicilian origins and that sense of connection served as a bridge between them.

Tony Bennett, accompanied by Lady Gaga, gave a final performance in 2021 in a farewell concert at Radio City Music Hall in New York. His final song was the poignant ***“I Left My Heart In San Francisco.”*** Lady Gaga, a devoted fan, wrote in her remembrance: ***“Take care of your elders and you will learn something special. Maybe even magical.”***



Proud to be Italian American

Tony Bennett was a proud Italian. His roots were firmly planted in Italy. His father Giovanni Benedetto emigrated to the United States in 1906 from Calabria, Italy, His mother Anna Suraci was born shortly after her parents emigrated in 1899 from Calabria.

Like so many Italian Americans of his generation in the war years of the 1940s, he served in France and Germany and was nearly killed more than once. He was at the liberation of the Landsberg labor camp in Germany.

Tony frequently visited Italy. In a 2012 interview with Vanity Fair Magazine, he expressed ***“I regard my Italian roots as the most profound gift I’ve ever received. As children, the notion that our family originated from there deeply struck both my brother and me.”***

In a 2017 discussion with the Italian agency ANSA he **added** *“one doesn’t have to be Italian to cherish Italy. But for me it holds a special place to be able to return to the land where my family has its roots.*

He has also been quoted as saying, **“the stereotypes in the movies don’t paint a true picture of Italian Americans.”** He didn’t shy away from his Italian American heritage. He was the Italian Tribunes Grand Marshal for the 1991 Columbus Day Parade in New Jersey. He was awarded the Leonardo da Vinci Award in Music by the National Italian American Foundation in 2021

There is a statue of Tony Bennett in front of the Fairmont Hotel in San Francisco. A homage to his iconic “I left My Heart In San Francisco” first performed there in 1961.

[CLICK TO WATCH Tony Bennett & Lady Gaga Performance](#)

Italian Navigators of the Renaissance

Columbus was one of many Italian based navigators, map makers and seamen that used the latest technology of their time in service of the emerging modern nations of Europe. These navigational skills opened the world to commerce. Within 30 years of Columbus’ voyages of discovery the world was circled and Columbus’ theories were proven true.

Italian explorers, Cristoforo Colombo, Giovanni and Sebastiano Caboto, Amerigo Vespucci and Giovanni Verrazzano were among the maritime navigators from the Italian Peninsula who set off into the unknown. We can appreciate these men of the sea, their accomplishments and the technological genius of the Renaissance which made their voyages possible.

Columbus of Genoa sailed for Spain, Caboto of Venice sailed for England, Verrazzano of Florence sailed for France and Vespucci of Florence sailed for Spain. Each of the claims of these nations in the New World were established by Italian Navigators.

A Voyage Westward: Amerigo Vespucci and a New World

A Voyage Westward: Amerigo Vespucci and a New World

Amerigo Vespucci's voyages defined the New World. Born in Florence, Italy. His voyages demonstrated that the New World, first discovered by Columbus in 1492, was not Asia's eastern outskirts but an entirely separate landmass unknown to the people of the Old World.

It came to be known as America, a name derived from *Americus*, the Latin version of Amerigo. Vespucci had made several voyages that explored the east Coast of South America between 1499 and 1502. The expeditions became widely known in Europe after Vespucci wrote about them in 1502, realizing it was a continent and dubbing it the New World. In 1507, German Cartographer, Martin Waldseemuller, produced a world map on which he named the new continent *America* after the feminine Latin version of Vespucci's first name.

In 1508, King Ferdinand made Vespucci Chief navigator of Spain to found a school of navigation to develop advanced navigation techniques to explore the World.

500th Anniversary of Verrazzano's Discovery



PHOTO ABOVE: *The Verrazzano Bridge Spans New York Harbor*

The Verrazzano Bridge links the New York boroughs of Brooklyn and Staten Island. Giovanni da Verrazzano was born near Florence, Italy. In 1523, with the support of Florentine bankers and the French King, Verrazzano set sail in search of a passage

to the Pacific Ocean and the Far East.

His ship, the Delfina, was designed in Genoa, the birthplace of Columbus, as the first high-capacity type of European ship large enough for oceanic trade and exploration. On this voyage, Verrazzano explored the coastline of the eastern seaboard of the United States and Canada. He was the first European to enter New York Bay. He named the area Santa Margherita, also the name of a famous seaside town on the Italian Riviera near Florence.

Verrazzano wrote a report based on his travels to the New World, used by later explorers including Henry Hudson (Hudson's Bay). During his third voyage in 1528, after he had explored Florida and the Bahamas, Verrazzano anchored out to sea and rowed ashore. He was killed by native Caribs.

Columbus also had done battle with the Caribs to protect his men and the friendly native tribes. The Caribs practiced cannibalism on other tribes and the Caribbean Sea is named after them.

[CLICK TO READ America, A Nice Italian Name](#)

**The 'Most Beautiful Ship In The World'
- The Amerigo Vespucci**



The sailing ship, the Amerigo Vespucci, often described as “**the most beautiful ship in the world,**” will embark on a two-year voyage, spanning 40,000 nautical miles around the globe.

It will grace the five continents and visit 29 countries as it circumnavigates the globe. Leaving the port of Genoa, Italy, it will sail through the Strait of Gibraltar crossing the Atlantic to Brazil, a country with 40 million Italians and Argentina, a country with 30 million Italians. The United States has an estimated 25 million people of Italian descent.

Then on to the Pacific through the Strait of Magellan and up the coast of South and Central America to the USA. **It will stop in Los Angeles in July 2024.** Its journey will continue to Hawaii and Asia and return through the Suez Canal to La Spezia, Liguria, Italy.

The Amerigo Vespucci is Italy's most revered naval training ship which provides young officer cadets an initiation into life at sea. Launched in 1931 in honor of the Florentine navigator Amerigo Vespucci who christened the New World, it is currently the oldest vessel in service of the Italian navy. It joined with another ship of the time, the “Cristoforo Colombo, to conduct educational campaigns across the Mediterranean.”

The Vespucci is a national treasure. Its world tour will dock at 31 cities as Italy's ambassador to the world to showcase the art, wine, design, technology and identity of Italy's national culture.

The Amerigo Vespucci will dock in Los Angeles in July 2024.

Honoring Italian-Americans On Veterans Day



As Veterans Day approaches in November, we would like to honor and recognize those Italian Americans who have served our country in times of war.

They have a proud history of military service. Countless Italian Americans have distinguished themselves by their bravery. Italians have fought in every major conflict from the Revolutionary War to the present.

More than two dozen Italian Americans have earned the Congressional Medal of Honor. From 2005 to 2007, three of the six members of the Joint Chiefs of Staff were of Italian descent: Army Lieutenant General Raymond Odierno, Navy Admiral Edmund Giambastiani Jr. and Marine General Peter Pace. Another Italian American, Admiral Lisa Franchetti, has been nominated to take over as Secretary of the Navy and will become a member of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

More than a million sons and daughters of the immigrant generation served during World War II, making them the largest ethnic fighting group in that conflict, while at the same time, many of their families were restricted on the home front because of their ancestry. President Franklin Roosevelt decided not to intern all Italian Americans when he was informed that over 10% of the armed forces were Italian American. Tens of thousands of Italian Americans died for their country in that war.

The war produced a galaxy of Italian American heroes. **Rosina Bonavita** became

the symbol for women working in factories and shipyards in the war effort. **She is better known as “Rosie the “Riveter.”**



In the Pacific, **Marine Sargeant John Basilone**, the son of an Italian immigrant tailor, emerged as one of the first Italian Americans to be commended for military valor and the first enlisted man to receive the Medal of Honor during the war. Basilone was the only man in U.S. history to win the country's two highest honor's – the Navy Cross and the Medal of Honor.

General Douglas MacArthur described him **“as a one-man Army”** when he took on an entire enemy regiment with his machine gun unit on Guadalcanal in 1942. Basilone won the battle. It was the first battle of the war in the Pacific and changed the direction of the war. “Machine Gun John” returned home as a hero to raise millions in war bonds. He then volunteered for the Navy, saying **“I’m staying with my boys”** and returned to the Pacific theater. Basilone died at the battle of Iwo Jima in 1945 at age 29 protecting his men.

In memory of John Basilone, the United States Navy christened a second ship in his honor in 2022. The USS John Basilone is a guided missile destroyer. The first ship named after him was also a destroyer commissioned in 1949 that has been decommissioned.

At the Christening, The Secretary of the Navy said “Gunnery Sgt. John Basilone is a national hero. The USS John Basilone will serve as a Constant reminder of the immense impact that actions taken by one sailor or Marine can truly have.”

A Large framed print of Marine Sargeant John Basilone hangs in the Italian Cultural Center of Sacramento as a symbol of the heroic sacrifice Italian Americans have made in defense of their country.

Captain Dominic Gentile never received the Medal of Honor, but he did receive 26 medals including our country's second highest award, the Distinguished Service Cross – twice. General Dwight Eisenhower personally pinned the Distinguished Service Cross on him and referred to the 24-year-old Captain Gentile as **“a one-man air force”** for downing 30 enemy aircraft which made him the highest scoring fighter

pilot in American history and earned him the title “Ace of Aces.”

The Italian American participation in military history deserves to be hailed and known.

[CLICK TO READ In Defense Of Our Country](#)



Italian-American Medal of Honor Winners:

Pfc. Lewis Albanese (Army)
Sgt. John Basilone (Marines)
M/Sgt. Vito Bertoldo (Army)
1Lt. Willibald Bianchi (Army)
Lt. Vincent Capodanno (Navy)
Cpl. Anthony Casamento (Marines)
S/Sgt. Jon Cavaiani (Army)
Maj. Ralph Cheli (Air Force)
Pfc. James Cicchetti (Army)
Pfc. Michael Colalillo (Army)
T/Sgt. Michael Dalessandro (Army)
Cpl. Anthony Damato (Marines)
S/Sgt. Arthur DeFanzo (Army)
Capt. Reginald Desiderio (Army)
Col. Luigi Palma di Cesnola (Army)
Cpl. Frank Fratellencio (Army)
S/Sgt. Salvatore Giunta (Army)
Pfc. Gary Martini (Marines)
Pfc. Gino Merli (Army)
SFC Jared Monti (Army)
Pfc. Frank Petracca (Army)
WO. Louis Rocco (Army)

Pvt. Michael Valente (Army)
Capt. Hubert Versace (Army)
2Lt. Robert Viale (Army)
Cpl. Joseph Vittori (Marines).

Discovering Columbus Day

Italian Americans Need Columbus Day - A Holiday Rooted In Our History



Columbus Day was first declared a national Holiday in 1892 following the mass lynching of Italians in New Orleans, Louisiana in 1891. The New Orleans massacre was one of the largest single lynchings in American history when a mob lynched 11 innocent Italian Americans who were falsely accused and found innocent after a trial.

During this dark episode, mobs across the city attacked the Italian community and ransacked homes and shops. Italy broke off diplomatic relations with the United States over the incident and the widespread mistreatment of Italian immigrants in the United States. There was talk of war.

The following year, President Benjamin Harrison declared Columbus Day as a National Day of Unity to unite a divided nation. It was also the 400th anniversary of Columbus' landing in 1492. Columbus Day was seen as a symbol of bringing together a nation of diverse peoples and the millions of immigrants who found inspiration in Columbus.

This tragic incident in New Orleans was the reason Columbus day came to be.

In 2019, the mayor of New Orleans issued an apology.

The following decades saw dozens of lynchings of Italian Americans across the country. Italians were the second largest group of Americans to be lynched. Five Italian American grocers were lynched by a mob in Tallulah, Louisiana in 1899 for serving black people as equals in their stores. A State Historical marker was dedicated at their burial site

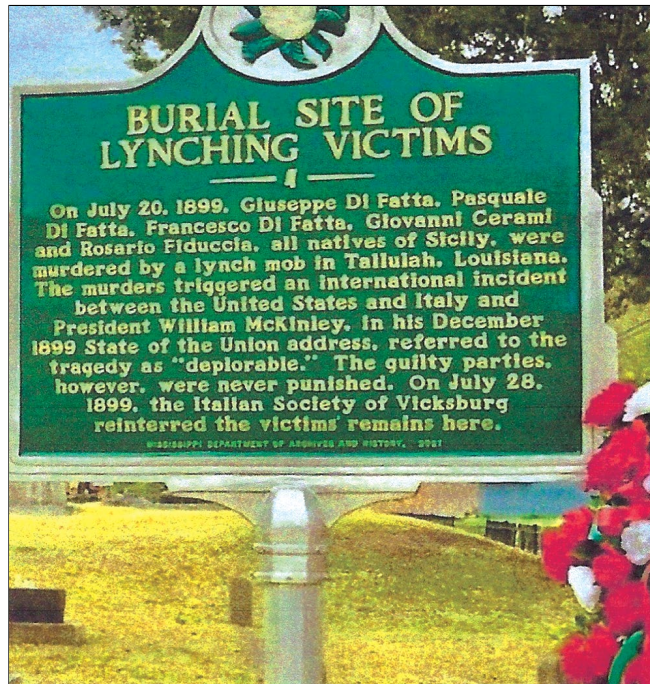


PHOTO ABOVE: *Historical Marker for lynching of five Italians in 1899*

The Pledge of Allegiance was written in honor of the Holiday.

Italian Americans began celebrating Columbus Day in earnest to restore a sense of dignity and self-worth to themselves considering the rampant anti- Italian sentiment of the time.

One million people gathered in New York to honor the new Columbus national holiday and cheer on the 40,000 strong parade the day after its recognition in October 1892.

Columbus Day helped the Italians to forge a needed sense of national identity and pride in the face of the hostility toward them.

They viewed Columbus as one of them, the explorer from Genoa, Italy, whose

voyages led to the creation of America and their own voyages to these shores on their own journey of discovery.

Columbus Day Matters.

Critics of Columbus overlook the historical and emotional stake the Italian American community has in Columbus and Columbus Day as a cherished holiday.

These same critics want to scapegoat and blame him for their own experiences. This is a false narrative and historically inaccurate. He is not responsible for the things they accuse him of, including slavery and genocide. Neither is true.



PHOTO ABOVE: *The Statue of Columbus at Coit Tower overlooking San Francisco Bay. (Removed in 2020)*

PHOTO BELOW: *The Monument to Columbus in Genoa, Italy*



For Italian Americans, celebrating Columbus Day has been a symbol of their national identity, unity and pride. If any group has a vested interest in Columbus Day, it is the Italian Americans. They have erected statutes and monuments in honor of Columbus, they celebrate Columbus Day together across the nation with parades, and public Columbus Day celebrations.

Italian Americans chose Christopher Columbus to celebrate their American lives. Columbus Day was celebrated by Italian Americans long before it became a national Holiday. The first Columbus Day Parade in San Francisco was held in 1869. In 1994 that city would no longer permit it to be called a Columbus Day Parade. That was the city's response to the 500th anniversary of Columbus arrival in 1492.

For generations of Italian Americans, Columbus Day has been a defining feature of Italian American culture and history. It is the day they celebrate their contributions, history and cultural heritage. Italian Americans were instrumental in the recognition of Columbus Day in the States and nation.

Angelo Noce, an Italian immigrant to the California foothills of the Gold Rush in 1858, is credited as the "Father of Columbus Day." In the United States for obtaining

recognition of Columbus Day as a State Holiday in the States. Upon his death, thirty-five states had recognized Columbus Day.

★ SAVE COLUMBUS DAY ★

PROTECT & PRESERVE OUR PAST

There is no replacement for Columbus Day in Italian America. Historians consider Columbus as perhaps the most important historical figure of the last millennia for his amazing voyage of discovery and its impact on the world. With ratings like that it would not be possible to replace him.

To answer the critics, when Columbus Discovered America, it stayed discovered. It was a discovery as much as a prospector discovers gold in the ground. As Italian Americans seek to preserve their cultural heritage and protect Columbus Day, they face those who would tear down this legacy and replace it with their own, using claims about Columbus that are greatly exaggerated and even false to malign him and his holiday.

The Italian American attachment to their Columbus legacy has and continues to endure despite attempts to rewrite 500 years of the history of America.

As one Italian American student stated, "As a child growing up in Sacramento, there was one time of year where I felt proud of my heritage, one day a year where I felt proud to be an Italian American. That day was Columbus Day. The one time of year when I could raise my hand in class and have my voice heard, the one time I could ask if anyone knew who America was named after. Only once, in my K-12 education did someone in the classroom know America was named after an Italian, but forgot the name was Amerigo Vespucci: that was my 10th grade history Teacher. Great!"

Today's students are being taught a false and anti – Columbus view of history by their teachers. The National Education Association has officially called for the abolition of Columbus Day or any truth telling about the real Columbus.

In the words of one Italian American mother, "My children need to celebrate, and they need to know their heritage. To the voices who say Italian Americans don't need a holiday, I say we do. A day that allows them to have their ethnic roots and to feel there is room enough in this great country for them to celebrate the arrival of their first countryman and the many millions of Italian Americans who crossed the ocean with dreams and made them our legacy."

Columbus Day deserves to be a holiday as much as any other Holiday. And

Italian Americans deserve a holiday as much as any other group of Americans.

Discovering Columbus Day

Columbus Day Is A Symbol Of America

Columbus Day Matters to Italian Americans and to all Americans. It is the one holiday America celebrates its immigrant and patriotic roots. It is also a day rooted in Italian American history.

Our Nation's Capital, The District of Columbia is named after Columbus as are 6,000 places in the United States.

Columbus Day stands as a reminder to all immigrants that their unique history and culture will be recognized and to affirm the United States as a nation of immigrants, no matter when and how they arrived. Whether earlier migrants from Asia, later migrants from Europe 700 years ago or from Africa.

Columbus Day is still the only National Holiday at the federal level recognized in the month of October each year - for now. In fact, October is also recognized at the national level as Italian American Heritage Month. Indigenous Peoples Day is not until Congress says so.

But the gains of our ancestors are being taken away. They came to pursue the American Dream and better their lives for themselves and their children. In their memory we are obligated to protect their legacy and memory of what they passed on to us through their struggles and successes.

Next time you place your hand over your heart for the Pledge of Allegiance, remember that the Pledge comes from Columbus Day.



PHOTO ABOVE: *Italian flag on Sacramento home on Columbus Day 2022.*

Don't forget to show your Italian pride on Columbus Day!

[CLICK TO VIEW Saving Columbus Day Articles](#)

[CLICK TO READ Why We Need A Holiday](#)

[CLICK TO READ Why Italian Americans Should Be In History Books](#)

The Italian American Experience
Muddies the Waters of Racial Discrimination

**NOTA BENE: There Have Been Other Painful
Episodes In The Italian American Experience.**

AMONG THEM:

**The World War II Internment, Relocation and
Restriction of Italian Americans**



PHOTOS ABOVE: *Photo of Guard and Italian Americans arriving at internment camp in Missoula, Montana*

During World War II, over 600,000 Italian Americans were restricted, and thousands subjected to forced relocation from the West Coast while community leaders were interned and imprisoned without trial or due process.

These restrictions included fingerprinting and carrying a government issued identity card, curfews, bans on travel more than 5 miles from home, seizure of personal property and businesses. The Italian language was banned in public as the enemy's language. Their only crime was being of Italian ancestry. At the time, Italian Americans were the largest immigrant group in the United States and in California. These events silenced Italian American culture for a generation and the effects are still being felt.

For decades after World War II, American teachers taught a false history about the wartime experience of Italian Americans, denying that Italian Americans had been interned, relocated or restricted as had the Japanese. Italian American students who raised the issue in class were told it did not happen or their papers on the topic were poorly graded. Parents who told their kids about their experiences were met with the same denial and told it was "Not in the history books." Our story is still not included.

A review of 22 U.S. college and high school history textbooks conducted in 2004 (The Italian American Textbook Project), revealed that none mentioned the WW II experience of Italian Americans other than to mention "they were spared internment, unlike Japanese Americans," "they were not presumed disloyal by virtue of their national origin," and "they were never relocated." All statements in the textbooks used in our schools and all false history. If mentioned at all, it was their association with crime. Chicago mobster Al Capone, the poster boy for organized crime, is featured in virtually every textbook.

How can we expect Italian American youth to be proud of their heritage, which is stigmatized and marginalized in the education they receive. How can we expect them to celebrate their heritage when the symbols of their identity like Columbus Day are trashed and portrayed as bad when they are not. But we do get to learn about other people's history and culture in school, just not our own.

For some 60 years the federal government had denied that Italian Americans had been suppressed during the war years, but Italian American historians documented the truth and as truth be told, in 1990 the federal government admitted these events happened with the passage of the Wartime Violations Italian American Civil Liberties Act of 1990.

LINKS – on website – Rosie the Riveter and the website section on WWII

[CLICK TO VIEW WWII Italian American Articles](#)

[CLICK TO READ Rosie The Riveter](#)

The Anti-Columbus Hysteria of 2020 - The Journey Ahead!



PHOTOS ABOVE: *The Statue of Columbus and Isabella stood in the California State Capitol Rotunda since 1883, and the removal of the statue in 2020.*



PHOTOS ABOVE: *The Statue of Columbus in California Capitol Rotunda in Sacramento*

The hysteria and mob riots of 2020 accelerated the mass destruction of all things Columbus. Parades were banned, statues and monuments erected by our ancestors removed and violated, Columbus Day holidays replaced by tribal holidays.

Even the statue of Abraham Lincoln was removed in Boston - and he freed the slaves. Go figure. How many more historical figures will be ideologically lynched and

when and how will it be stopped.

In California, The Statue of Columbus and Isabella was removed in 2021 from The Rotunda of the State Capitol where it had stood since 1880. The California State Columbus Day Holiday was replaced by Indigenous Peoples Day in 2021.

The Columbus international Highway Sign in southern California was removed by the State to be replaced by a native American one. In Los Angeles, the county government banned references to Columbus in public spaces.

These anti- Columbus political actions were taken in California by a political party and Governor with an anti-Columbus bias and ideology. The combination of racially motivated interest groups in league with the political and administrative power of the government has left Italian Americans unprotected and unrepresented in California, at all levels of government.

Sacramento County - As recently as April 18, 2023, of this year, the Sacramento County Board of Supervisors replaced Columbus Day with Indigenous people's day. Courtesy of the (DEI) Diversity, Equity and Inclusion staff in collusion with native American advocates. The County even issued a misleading Press Release saying Columbus Day is not a National Holiday. Nothing could be further from the truth. However, Indigenous People's Day is not a national holiday until Congress says it is.

The Italian community of Sacramento area numbers more than 60,000 people. On their behalf, the Society is challenging the county to reaffirm the Columbus Day holiday. We believe the county's action was racially motivated. We believe the County made a mistake by taking sides and discriminated against Italian Americans when they replaced Columbus Day. We are informed they knew the holiday was associated with Italian Americans.

The county action took place just two months before the Supreme Court of the United States declared that race-based discrimination and diversity policies and goals are a violation of the Equal Protection Clause of the 14th Amendment. Diversity is no longer acceptable as justification for discrimination. When will the County change its ways.

We believe the county used diversity considerations as a justification for replacing Columbus Day. There was no good reason for the county to replace Columbus Day with Indigenous Peoples Day, and to do so behind closed doors. No notice to the public or the Italian American community.

The real issue is whether Italian Americans, in their long and heroic struggle for acceptance are once again being marginalized as second-class citizens.

This cultural conflict is happening nationwide. Italian Americans have been on the frontlines challenging these attacks on our American lives and culture by pushing back with advocacy and lawsuits. Italian Americans have a number of ongoing court cases, and one is against the Mayor of Philadelphia for unilaterally replacing

Columbus Day with Indigenous People's Day, which is before the U.S. Supreme Court.

Ask us how we really feel!

The Mouth of Truth



PHOTO ABOVE: Audrey Hepburn at the Mouth Of Truth in the film 'Roman Holiday.'

Long before the modern lie detector, the untruthful faced a much more severe fate between the jaws of *La Bocca della Verità*, or *Mouth of Truth*, an ancient carving which was said to bite the hands-off liars.

The massive Roman marble disc weighs over a ton and depicts the face of a man thought to be the river god Oceanus. While historians are not certain of its purpose. In the 13th century the disc was removed from the nearby Temple of Hercules and is now in the portico of the Church of Santa maria in Cosmedin in Rome.

The carving is now famous for the legend associated with it, that the mouth of the face would close if anyone placed a hand in it and told a lie. Those who were accused of perjury or adultery were brought to Mouth of Truth where they had to swear under oath and place their hand into the mouth. It was rumored that an

executioner would be positioned behind the Mouth.

The legend became a popular part of culture and even today parents threaten fibbing children with a visit to the Mouth of Truth. It entered American culture when Audrey Hepburn put her hand in it in the 1953 movie "Roman Holiday." Today it attracts tourists who stick their hand in its mouth. This writer has done that but very nervously and unsure of what would happen to my hand.

Try it next time you are in Rome, or not.



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THE SOCIAL MEDIA OR EMAIL LINK BELOW. Grazie!**



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