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The Italian Cultural Society & Italian Center & Museum
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AUGUST 2021 EDITION

**CARI AMICI,
Grazie For Your Support!**



Grazie For Your Support

On behalf of the Italian Cultural Society we would like to thank you for your continued support of the Society and the Italian Center. During this time of many crises in our nation the Italian Society has continued to keep our heritage alive. The Italian Center has faced lockdowns which have affected our programs over the past year and a half, but we are doing what we can to rebuild our programs and keep them going and to keep the Center in operation. [CLICK TO READ "A Dream Realized. The Carmichael Italian Center"](#)

Play Bocce On New Courts

Earlier this year the new Bocce courts were opened in Carmichael Park behind the Italian Center and they are open for play by everybody. Maybe take some time out for a picnic at the courts and play some bocce any day of the week. Our future plans include Bocce in the Park events sponsored by the Society.

Italian Language Classes, Folk-Dancers, Sacramento Italian Style Radio Show

Our Italian dancers are once again practicing at the Italian Center and getting ready to perform at any of our upcoming events. Our weekly radio show is back on the air. Our language classes have never stopped and are still being offered online. While we hope to do in person classes again soon and had planned to, the uncertainty over the health crisis makes it necessary to continue online classes for now. We have a full line up of new classes coming up in October so be sure to check our website for the latest class schedule which will be posted there at: italiancenter.net. [CLICK TO LEARN MORE](#)



Looking Forward To Resuming Cultural Programs and Children's New Year Festival

Our hope is to resume full operations by next year with our weekly cultural events and daily classes for children and adults, food shows, movies, lectures, exhibits, and festivals. We look forward to resuming our New Year Children's Festival, *La Festa Della Befana*, for the children of Sacramento's Italian community in January. [CLICK TO LEARN MORE](#)

We Appreciate Our Volunteers

We can thank our volunteers for keeping up with everything and producing our monthly online newsletter and special notices and who maintain our membership program and mailing lists. We can also thank our language teachers and volunteer administrators for their important role in maintaining us for the future.

Little Italy Recognition Project

Our staff and volunteers have been busy preparing us for success in the future. The society is currently coordinating the Recognition of East Sacramento's "Little Italy" neighborhood with the City of Sacramento. This is a major and very important project to reclaim our historical heritage in Sacramento. The Society has been working on this project for over a year and we are making progress. We hope to be able to announce the project with a special event later in the year.

East Sacramento has more than a century of Italian-American history. It was the neighborhood with the largest concentration of Italian Americans and one in which they created a social and commercial "Little Italy" neighborhood. The time has come for recognition of this community of Italian people and the historical legacy they

created.

Update Your Membership and Donations

And don't forget, we still need your support and participation in all our many wonderful and unique cultural programs. Don't forget to update your membership or send in your annual donations to keep the Italian Center going and keeping the Society afloat.

**You can make a donation or update a membership on our website
OR, you can send in a check payable to the Italian Cultural Society,
PO Box 189427, Sacramento, CA 95818.**

[CLICK TO LEARN MORE/DONATE](#)

**Bill Cerruti,
Executive Director**



If you have questions or would like information about the Italian Cultural Society or the Carmichael Italian Center please contact Executive Director Bill Cerruti by phone (916-482-5900) or email (italy1@surewest.net)

Or VISIT OUR WEBSITE AT WWW.ITALIANCENTER.NET FOR MORE INFORMATION.

Ferragosto-Italy's Summer Vacation



On the 15th of August, the streets of Italy shut down as Italians and their families leave their homes and cities to vacation. It is a tradition as ancient as the days of the Roman Empire.

For the Italians it is 'Ferragosto'.

The first Ferragosto festivals can be traced back to Rome in 18 BC when a month long festival was initiated by Emperor Octavian Augustus, the first ruler of the Roman Empire, to celebrate the growth and prosperity of the Empire.

The holiday marks the end of the summer agricultural calendar when the harvest has finished and when factories and shops are closed for the holidays. In August, nearly every region of Italy is at its hottest and most humid. It is traditional for Italians to take a week or even a month to relax and vacation.

Each of the 20 regions of Italy has its own special series of events during August. In Rome on August 15, the Piazza del Popolo is decorated for the big Ferragosto dance, "Gran Ballo di Ferragosto" and the piazze of Rome turn into a city of dance parties and music. On August 16, The city of Siena in Tuscany, holds its famous traditional horserace, the "Palio di Siena," in the main city Piazza.

Italians are blessed with a beautiful country and know where they can find a picturesque setting in the countryside, hills, forests. Parks and seashores. Among the most common ways Italians celebrate Ferragosto is with a trip to the beach or mountains.

Seaside resorts like the Cinque Terra and Italian Riviera in Liguria, The Tuscan beaches of the Versilia and Viareggio, Rimini on the Adriatic Sea, the Amalfi Coast and Island of Capri in Campania are some of the most popular beach destinations. Italy is a Peninsula surrounded by the sea. From North to South, it's hundreds of miles of beaches are full during the summer.

For Italians who prefer the mountains and lakes, the gorgeous lakes of Como, Garda, Iseo and Maggiore in the Lombardy region are the favorites. The stunning Dolomite Mountains which run across the northern region of Italy fill with campers and hikers.

Ferragosto is the climax of summer, a time spent with family and friends. In every Italian town, the highlight of the festivities is when families enjoy a lavish **“Pranzo”** or luncheon and catch up with one another during this period of freedom from work and school.



Italy Adds Three New UNESCO Sites



Italy is a land known for its great beauty and vast cultural heritage. There are more

world UNESCO sites in Italy than in any other country in the world. Recently, the World UNESCO Foundation added 3 new sites to the list bringing the total to 58.

The new sites include the northern city of Padua and its frescoes, the Porticos of Bologna, and Tuscany's Gran international spa of Montecatini Terme.

The **Frescoes of Padua** adorn the walls of its many monumental buildings and were created in the Middle Ages {1400} by some of the most extraordinary artists of the Age, including Giotto. The frescoes are part of the identity of the city.

Bologna is considered one of the most beautiful cities in Italy. The Portici of Bologna, covered pathways supported by columns, stretch for over 25 miles around the city along its streets and surrounding its piazzas. Each Portico has its own characteristics. The oldest of the iconic Porticoes dates back to 1100 when the growth of the cities University led to the need for areas where people could socialize and merchants sell their wares. The university of Bologna, the oldest in Italy, was founded in 1088.

Tuscany's Montecatini Terme is known for its thermal complexes developed around natural mineral water springs. The monumental architecture of the grand Tuscan resort was one reason for inclusion in UNESCO'S Great Spas of Europe. Italy is a country rich in thermal springs. Anyone who has visited the hot mineral geyser at Saturnia, Italy understands the pull these natural springs have on Italians.

Next time you visit Italy, check out the UNESCO World sites in the areas you visit. For those who travel to Italy with the Italian Cultural Society, you will have the opportunity to visit many of the most famous UNESCO sites in Italy. Be sure to check the Italian Cultural Society website at italiancenter.net for the latest about our coming tours to Italy.

PHOTO AT TOP OF ARTICLE:

Bologna's Sanctuary of the Madonna of San Luca sits high above the city and its connected by porticoes over two miles long to the historic city center.

PHOTOS BELOW:

(R) Montecatini-Terme (L) Frescoes in Padua



Pro-Columbus Movement Is On The Rise



The last few years have been a painful time for Italian-Americans who are attached to their Columbus Day holiday and statues. After years of assaults on Columbus Day and Columbus statues by anti-Columbus protestors, Italian-Americans have increasingly organized to stop the pain and protect their heritage. Columbus Day is widely recognized as a day when Italian-Americans celebrate their American lives. The holiday is closely associated with Italian-Americans as their holiday, and Columbus statues are an important part of that Italian-American heritage.

Italian-Americans have been among the most loyal and constructive of American ethnic groups. They are as American as apple pie. But our nation has not protected us, so Italian-Americans across the nation are organizing to protect Columbus Day and Columbus Statues, with some success.

ITALIAN PARLIAMENT VOTES TO DEFEND COLUMBUS DAY

History was made in June when the Italian Parliament voted to defend Columbus Day and Columbus Statues in the United States. Columbus Day is a national holiday in Italy. The Parliament declared that Columbus is a symbol of Italian-American history and pride and committed to take political and diplomatic action to safeguard the Italian cultural heritage and Christopher Columbus in the United States.

The City of Genoa, birthplace of Christopher Columbus, voted to join with Italian Americans in their defense of Columbus on the grounds that these attacks are not only an attack on the figure of Columbus or on the Italian Community, but an attack on the whole of Western Civilization which developed on the American continent on 12 October, 1492. Other Italian cities like La Spezia in Liguria, have followed suit and voted to “show solidarity to all Americans of Italian origin in the face of attempts to criminalize and humiliate their own history and culture.

STATUE OF COLUMBUS TO REMAIN IN SOUTH PHILADELPHIA

In Philadelphia, a city with a deep Italian heritage, a judge reversed a decision by the city of Philadelphia to remove the 144 year old statue of Columbus. The Philadelphia judge issued a ruling in a lawsuit brought by Italian-Americans and slammed the city of Philadelphia for its attempt to remove the Columbus statue from Marconi Plaza. The judge in the case stated, *“It is baffling to this court how the city of Philadelphia wants to remove the statue without any legal basis.”*

As a result of the ruling the Columbus statue will remain on display. Too many Columbus statues have been removed by officials with no good reason other than ill-will. This was a major victory for the Italian American community in the fight to preserve the Columbus statue. A federal lawsuit against the mayor of Philadelphia is pending to prevent the Mayor from abolishing Columbus Day and replacing it with Indigenous Peoples Day. And, in Western Pennsylvania, Italian-Americans have filed suit to block removal of the Columbus statue in a Pittsburg Park. In Syracuse, New York, the Columbus Monument Commission filed suit against the city and mayor to protect the Columbus statue in downtown Columbus Circle. In Waterbury, Connecticut, a judge ordered the man who beheaded a Columbus statue to face criminal charges and pay for the repairs.

CHICAGO ITALIAN COMMUNITY FILES LAWSUIT AGAINST MAYOR

In Chicago, the Joint Civic Committee of Italian-Americans filed a suit to return the Columbus statue to its original location in Arrigo Park. The Chicago mayor ordered it removed during the protests and civil unrest in Chicago by the movements against historical American statues. The mayor had promised to return the statue to its rightful place but did not.

African-Americans in Chicago are objecting to renaming Columbus Day in favor of Indigenous Peoples Day on the grounds that the tribal peoples enslaved many Africans. Native American tribes in the Southern United States participated in slavery; they developed slave plantations that rivaled those of their white neighbors. When native Americans were pushed into the Western territories they brought their slaves with them.

SAVING THE COLUMBUS HERITAGE

Italian-Americans are engaged in efforts to save Columbus Day and Columbus statues across the nation. Many cities and school Boards have eliminated Columbus Day and Columbus statues by making false claims about Columbus. Italian-Americans cannot trust these institutions to do the right thing by them no matter how hard they try. Italian-Americans attend school Board and city council meetings to make our case only to be met with disregard in too many cases. But in some cases they are successful. The future of the Italian-American heritage and whether future Italian-American children will value or reject that heritage is at stake.

WHY COLUMBUS DAY MATTERS

Columbus Day celebrates the heritage and contributions of over 20 million Italian-Americans. It is an important holiday when Italian-Americans recognize their struggles and that of their ancestors to overcome discrimination and prejudice and to celebrate their pride as a distinct people with a distinct culture and heritage. It marks their journey from the lowest of the low to the best America has to offer. Protecting our heritage and holiday is a personal matter to Italian-Americans. Let us not forget where we came from and why Columbus Day matters to us.

PHOTO AT TOP OF ARTICLE:

The Conference of Presidents of Major Italian Organizations has published a brochure on **"WHY COLUMBUS DAY MATTERS"**

[CLICK HERE TO READ/DOWNLOAD THE BROCHURE.](#)

The following article was published by the Italian Cultural Society in 2020;
"WHY COLUMBUS DAY MATTERS TO ITALIAN-AMERICANS"

[CLICK HERE TO READ/DOWNLOAD THE ARTICLE.](#)



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