



# Italian Historical Society of America Newsletter

MARCH 2023

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VOLUME 19, NUMBER 3

## **Tutto Italiano** **Benvenuto a *Tutto Italiano***

The craggily northern coast of Italy curves around the Ligurian Sea forming the Gulf of Genoa, with the city at its pinnacle. About thirty miles down the southwest coast, the road leads to Monaco, and further south, the French towns of Nice and Saint-Tropez. Around fifty miles from Genoa on the southeast coast, five villages hug the rugged shoreline, forming [Cinque Terre](#), and part of the [Italian Riviera](#).

Inscribed on the [UNESCO World Heritage List](#) in 1997, the five towns – Monterosso, Vernazza, Corniglia, Manarola, and Riomaggiore, along with several others – are described as a “cultural, evolved organic landscape,” and an “exceptional testimony to the way traditional communities interacted and still interact with their difficult and isolated environment to produce a sustainable livelihood.” The centuries-old stone wall terraces support olive, lemon and other fruit trees, grape vines, and a variety of vegetation spanning from the coast to the cliffs. The area is known for its distinctive honey, flavored with “[tree heather, acacia, chestnut and wild flowers](#),” and for its [anchovies](#).

The year before inscription, the [Cinque Terre Consortium](#) was founded as “the point of reference for Italian and foreign tour operators, teaming up with the local government authority, to support the local tourism sector.” Paths and mule tracks date back to the early eleventh century, and the Consortium provides updated reports on walking conditions, as well as notification of upcoming events.

A network of walking trails connect the five villages and provide stunning views of each hamlet, the surrounding landscapes, and the Ligurian Sea. The main [paths are divided into three](#): [Sentiero Alto](#) (High Path) runs along the ridge, [Via dei Santuari](#) (Road of the Sanctuaries) leads to the church uphill in each village, and [Sentiero Azzurro](#) (Blue Path) is “one of the most appreciated pedestrian routes of the whole peninsula.”

In 1999, the five towns and the land encompassing the towns were designated a National Park and Protected Marine Area. Weather and tumbling stone walls can block access to sections of a path, and daily monitoring is essential. [Parco Nazionale delle Cinque Terre](#) provides up-to-date information about the [paths and outdoor activities](#).

Overall, the five villages string along about 12 miles of the coast. Starting with the most northern of the villages, [Monterosso](#) – established in the 900s – is the largest of the five and divided into an historic and new district. One of its most popular events is the [Lemon Festival](#) held in May. Several miles southeast, [Vernazza](#) is built into the hillside, directly on the shore, with terraced cliffs forming the background of the village.

Just a few miles south, [Corniglia](#) is the smallest and highest of the towns; and the only town with no direct access to the shore. The ancient Roman town was built on a promontory, and visitors arriving at the train station must climb more than 300 steps or take a shuttle bus to enter the village. Further south in [Manarola](#), layers of buildings rise from the jagged shore, separated by narrow passageways and stairways, and

backed by terraced hills. A trail carved out of the hillside overlooks the Ligurian Sea on one side and is bordered by perpendicular rutted rock formations on the other side.

In the southern-most village, the tiered structures of [Riomaggiore](#) form a crescent shape built in a valley through the coastal hillside. Legend dates its founding to the eighth century and its picturesque small harbor with colorful buildings and small fishing boats is often used today as an iconic image of Cinque Terre.  
(*Thank you, John.*)

Virtual Walking Tours (You Tube)

[Monterosso](#), [Vernazza](#), [Corniglia](#), [Manarola](#), [Riomaggiore](#)

[Best of Cinque Terre Photo Gallery](#)

[Parco Nazionale delle Cinque Terre](#)

[5 Beautiful Villages of Cinque Terre](#)

[Italy's Fabulous Five: Planning Your Visit to the Cinque Terre](#)

[You Could Get a Huge Fine If You Don't Wear the Right Shoes to Italy's Cinque Terre](#)

[Cinque Terre: ... View from the Drone!](#) (YouTube)

### **Italian American Press**

The Italian American Press offers a great selection of books – culture, history, memoirs, art, family, food, the supernatural, the natural beauty of Italy, and more – for every interest. Help preserve Italian American heritage and history. Support authors of Italian heritage who write about Italian American and Italian culture and let them know you found their books on the Italian American Press.

### **New on the Italian American Press**

Two sports novels by Mike DeLucia

[Madness](#)

Started in 1939, each year in the spring the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) basketball season is capped by a tournament of qualified and selected teams that compete to play for the national championship. The method of matching the teams that will play is based on a variety of factors and in a series of rounds, named March Madness.

The most accomplished players are from contemporary times; Hank Luisetti played for Stanford University from 1935 to 1938. Many consider him to be one of the greatest basketball players of all time: Luisetti revolutionize the game. *Madness* is based on Luisetti's life, and interweaves it with his love for basketball.

[Born for the Game](#)

With baseball the underlying theme, three unusual characters band together to create a formula for a supreme player. Carefully masterminded by a determined and eccentric billionaire, both nature and nurture are meticulously planned for “the greatest baseball player of all time.”

### **Italian American Heritage Project**

#### **Columbus Day is in Peril**

Earlier this week, The Washington Post published “‘Slavery was wrong’ and 5 other things some educators won’t teach anymore.” According to the article, teachers “face pressure from parents worried about political indoctrination and administrators wary of controversy ...,” and they are being told not to take a “stance.”

One of the topics was presented as “Passages from Christopher Columbus’s journal describing his brutal treatment of Indigenous peoples.” This prejudiced view

permeates history lessons throughout the nation; and according to those who teach from Howard Zinn, Columbus is responsible for the ever-evolving havoc of intolerance in America. In the article, a teacher in North Carolina has been using Zinn's book, *A People's History of the United States*, to miseducate her students for 14 years.

Last year "a parent wrote an email complaining that her White son had been made to feel guilty" and "escalated the issue to human resources ... spurring an administrator to warn that she [the teacher] needed to stop 'pushing my agenda – telling me that having my children learn the truth about Columbus was biased.'" This teacher believes Zinn's book is historically accurate in its minimum telling of chosen excerpts of Columbus's interactions with the natives.

The article not only quoted this passage "As soon as I arrived in the Indies, on the first Island which I found, I took some of the natives by force," but also included a screen shot of the page in the book, as a visual is always more memorable. The article also provided a link to a website that provides a reinterpretation of selected passages taken out of context from Columbus's journal – its inclusion appears as a reinforcement of the alleged crimes perpetrated by Columbus.

Instead of examining the unsubstantiated claims about Columbus through numerous websites addressing Zinn's biased perceptions and misleading statements, both teacher and journalist prefer to push their agenda of misinformation with disregard for historic accuracy and for Italian American heritage, and The Washington Post supports their view. ([Link to article](#), now only available to subscribers.)

Towns and school districts continue to rename Columbus Day; and major media supports their decisions. It's difficult to correct over 30 years of misinformation, and the rapid spread through digital sources is disheartening. In all probability, many of today's educators, journalists, and public officials learned about Columbus through Zinn's book.

Nationwide, the Italian American community has to do more to educate Italian Americans and people of all nationalities about Columbus. Parents need to contact school administrators and voice their concerns about how Columbus is being taught in their school districts.

In 2018, the Italian American Heritage Project was established to provide educational resources about Italian American history, heritage, and culture. The website also addresses the Columbus Controversy by providing facts about Columbus, how the controversy started, and why it continues. Read [What is the Truth About Columbus?](#) To understand how Columbus became an important part of American history, read [Christopher Columbus: When Did the Hero Become a Villain?](#) (Some links are no longer active.)

[Lesson plans developed from the letters Columbus wrote after his first voyage.](#)

Keep your Italian heritage alive. An excellent source for learning about Italian American culture and heritage is a museum specifically established to focus on the Italian American experience. Many have virtual exhibits and tours available on their websites. [List of Italian American Museums.](#)

Talk with your children (no matter what age), grandchildren, other family members, friends, and educators. Tell them about the significant contributions people of Italian heritage have made to America ... and the world. [List of more than 70 contributors on Thirty-One Days of Italians.](#)

Visit the [IAHP website](#) to read my articles, learn about the lesson plans, see the resources I've used, and support my work. Donate for a cause – preserving Italian heritage and Italian American history and culture through education. [All donations are tax-deductible.](#)

### Potentially Dangerous: When it was a Crime to be Italian

[Watch Mike Piazza Give Team Italy a Tour of Its Home Country](#) (mlb.com; March 2, 2023)

[Top 300 Most Common Italian Surnames in the U.S.](https://www.usworldherald.com/top-300-most-common-italian-surnames-in-the-u-s/) (usworldherald.com; February 24, 2023)

[Barilla Group Takes Over US Bakery Brand Back To Nature](https://news.italianfood.net/2022/12/19/barilla-group-takes-over-us-bakery-brand-back-to-nature/) (news.italianfood.net; December 19, 2022)

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March 2023: Volume 19, Issue 03

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