



# Italian Historical Society of America Newsletter

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

The first issue of *Tutto Italiano* was sent in April 2004, emailed every two weeks until October 2004, and then every month since. Over the years, the newsletter has evolved to include Italian American news and social and cultural issues, notices about Italian American authors and books, and news about Italy. Articles have expanded and provide numerous links, granting me the luxury of thousands of virtual trips to Italy.

Although it's not an anniversary year, month, or a celebratory issue – 239 this month – *Tutto Italiano* is honoring the occasion of summer 2023 and taking a break in July and August. It will resume in September and will include the 2023-2024 List of Thirty-One Days of Italians. This year Yogi Berra, on Thirty-One Days of Italians when it launched in 2006 and focus of a [recent documentary](#); and Helen Barolini, known for her literary works on Italian American women and added to Thirty-One Days in 2009, are each honored with a special day in October. [Helen passed in March](#). (Names matched with dates in October rotate every four to five years. Berra and Barolini were both selected for 2023 last year.)

I recently prepared a list of sites to see in Sicily for a visitor traveling there this summer; most are from prior newsletters. Below are links to some places you may want to explore, either virtually or in person.

### **Northwest**

Aeolian Islands, Sicily: A Detailed Travel Guide

<https://www.adventurousskate.com/aeolian-islands-sicily-travel-guide/>

The Oratory of the Rosary of Saint Dominic, Palermo

<https://visionsofthepastblog.com/2018/04/23/the-oratory-of-the-rosary-of-saint-dominic-palermo-sicily-italy/>

Pretoria Fountain

<https://www.theworldofsicily.com/en/sights/sights-of-palermo/pretoria-fountain-in-palermo/>

La Martorana

<https://www.atlasobscura.com/places/the-martorana>

Antonio Pasqualino International Puppet Museum

<https://www.museodellemarionette.it/en/>

Santuario di Santa Rosalia (Cave Shrine on Monte Pellegrino)

<https://www.atlasobscura.com/places/santuario-di-santa-rosalia>

Monreale - the Cathedral (Duomo)

<https://www.wondersofsicily.com/palermo-monreale-cathedral.htm>

Agostino Pepoli Regional Museum, Trapani  
<https://westofsicily.com/en/points-of-interest/regional-museum-agostino-pepoli/>  
<https://museumspeedia.com/en/i/6693-agostino-pepoli-regional-museum/> (Reviews)

Just Added:  
10 Places in Palermo You've Never Heard Of  
<https://italysegreta.com/10-places-in-palermo/>

### **Northeast**

Taormina  
<https://www.taormina.it/>

Acireale Carnival Museum  
<https://www.carnevaleacireale.eu/carnival-museum/?lang=en>

### **Southwest**

Agrigento, Sicily is Crowned Italy's Capital of Culture for 2025  
<https://americadomani.com/agrigento-sicily-is-crowned-italys-capital-of-culture-for-2025/>

Valley of the Temples  
<https://www.theworldofsicily.com/en/sights/sights-of-agrigento/valley-of-the-temples/>

Villa Romana del Casale (Piazza Armerina) [Close to center of island.]  
<https://villaromana.mused.org/en/>

### **Southeast**

Caltagirone  
<https://italoamericano.org/caltagirone/>

Ragusa  
<https://www.lifeinitaly.com/art-cities/ragusa>

## **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**

[\*My Perfect Wife, Her Perfect Son\*](#) by Joe Benevento

Told from Joseph's perspective, this historical fiction details the dramatic developments in the lives of Joseph, Mary, and Jesus. Starting with Mary's announcement of her miraculous pregnancy, Joseph recounts their journey to Bethlehem, the visit from the Magi, and occurrences of their everyday life in the Middle East.

Joe's thoughts on the book's topic:

"..., I have always been interested in St. Joseph; ... in NYC where I grew up and when I grew up, Italians made a big deal about St. Joseph's Day, including a parade and a pastry in the Italian bakeries especially for that day. And as I grew older I also began to appreciate how undervalued St. Joseph is by most Catholics. We're asked to believe he had one dream that told him the virgin birth was a real thing and he never questioned anything again, nor did he ever get to say a word in the Bible. It just became more and more clear to me that if we're supposed to believe Joseph was a real person and not just a plaster saint, then it had to be a lot more difficult than that, especially since my novel follows Catholic belief that Mary remained a virgin for all of their married lives. The title comes from the belief that Mary, born without original sin, and Jesus, the son of God, were the only two perfect people to ever live, and Joseph was the odd man out, just a fully normal human being asked to believe impossible

things and maintain his faith and try to be a good father and husband. Those thoughts were more than inspiration enough to proceed with the novel.”

### Italian American Heritage Project

If you read or watch any type of media on any platform, you know that social diversity and celebrating one's culture and heritage is a significant part of today's world. Articles, blogs, commercials, television shows, and movies feature their missions to celebrate heritage; and June being [National Immigrant Heritage Month](#) has made it an even more popular topic throughout the country.

In his proclamation, President Biden said “The First Lady and I are proud descendants of immigrants — the Giacobbas, from the northeast corner of Sicily in Italy, and the Finnegans of County Louth and the Blewitts of County Mayo in Ireland.” It was nice to see Italian heritage acknowledged in his message, but the acclamations for Italian American heritage and culture are surely lacking.

The history of Italian immigrants in America is riddled with discrimination, starting with hateful newspaper and magazine articles and graphics ([The Mascot, 1888](#)) in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries and continuing to today, primarily because of [stereotype casting](#) in movies, television shows, and streaming videos.

In 2021, the [U.S. Census of People Reporting Ancestry](#) estimated Italian at almost sixteen million (15,947,138), fifth after German (42,220,180), English (31,825,171), Irish (31,495,897), and American (17,625,957). Because they are self-reported, the numbers provide an overall approximation. It's noted that Italian immigrants sometimes hid their nationality, and Americans with Italian ancestry may be close to double the recorded amount.

Considering the number of Americans with Italian ancestry, the respect for our ethnicity and representation in social, cultural, and governmental issues is deficient. The star of a recent movie about “[a suburban American woman who finds herself the don of a crime family](#),” proclaims “We're gonna make three ... If there were three *Godfathers*, there's gonna be three [movie title]” An [article about fatherhood](#) begins with “There must be something in the water for two Italian gangsters from ‘The Godfather’ to end up with new babies later in life.” The 1972 film defined a misrepresentation of the culture of Italian heritage and skewed how others view Italian Americans. The damage this film has caused cannot be overlooked.

Additional damage to the Italian American community is from the constant bombardment of replacing Columbus Day. On January 13, 2023, Senator Jessica Ramos of the New York State Senate introduced a [Bill to replace Columbus Day](#) throughout the entire state with Indigenous People's Day: “An act to amend the executive law, the transportation law, the vehicle and traffic law, the town law, the county law, the general construction law and the personal property law, in relation to changing the designation of the public holiday of Columbus day to Indigenous People's day.”

The Bill's Summary of Provisions states: “Christopher Columbus did not discover America. Indigenous People's Day reimagines Columbus Day and changes a celebration of colonialism into an opportunity to reveal historical truths about the genocide and oppression of indigenous people in the Americas, to organize against current injustices and to celebrate indigenous resistance.” The Justification: “Renaming the holiday is a small beginning in recognizing indigenous people for their historic and ongoing contributions to our history culture and economic life ...”

This Bill was first introduced – by another senator – to the New York State Senate in the 2017-2018 Legislative Session, and this year is in its sixth submission. Each time, it has been stalled in the Finance Committee. The American public – most notably those in any type of media and government officials – need to learn about Italian Americans and “their historic and ongoing contributions to our history culture and economic life ...”

The History and Smithsonian television channels support all nationalities and lifestyles in their commercials, proclaiming their celebrations of culture and heritage months. It would be extremely beneficial to see Italian American Heritage Month commercials or public service announcements on these channels during October.

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](#).

Learn about Columbus. It's difficult to correct over 30 years of misinformation, and the rapid spread through digital sources is disheartening. 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.](#)

The groups opposing Columbus Day have an organized agenda to eliminate it from America. Although the statements of truth and facts posted on Italian American websites are filled with historical facts, they are not very effective in reaching and educating the intended audience. Columbus Day has lost much of its relevance in American history; but battles for his legacy in American history are being won. Even so, the war against Columbus and our Italian heritage continues. Indigenous People already have a designated day, and Native Americans have a day and a month to celebrate their culture.

Indigenous Peoples Day – August 9

Native American Month – November

Native American Heritage Day – Friday after Thanksgiving

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.](#)

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**Read my articles in *La Gazzetta Italiana***

[The Aeolian Islands: Volcanic Phenomena](#)

[Architecture – Italian Style](#)

**Italian American News**

[Where'd 'Italian' Go?](#) (independent.com; June 1, 2023)

[Yogi Berra: 'It Ain't Over' Documentary Reassesses Baseball Great's Remarkable Career and Life](#) (cnn.com; May 31, 2023)

[About Robert De Niro](#) (italic.org; May 29, 2023)

[Guardians Marker Unveiled in Cleveland's Little Italy Neighborhood](#) (orderisda.org; May 23, 2023)

[Evviva La Festa! — A Listing of 2023 Patron Saint Festivals](#) (franoi.com; May 16, 2023)

[Adriana Caselotti | Snow White Voice | Side By Side Comparison](#) (YouTube)

## De Cecco Celebrates Its 130th Anniversary in the US with a Stamp

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