



Italian Historical Society of America Newsletter

JANUARY/FEBRUARY 2024

BY JANICE THERESE MANCUSO

VOLUME 20, NUMBER 1

Tutto Italiano Benvenuto a *Tutto Italiano*

Starting this month, *Tutto Italiano* will be published bi-monthly.

One of the most enduring images of Italy is a castle, in most cases, on a hilltop overlooking a medieval village, picturesque valleys and mountains, and even the sea. Italy's slightly more than 113,500 acres of land encompasses approximately "[45,000 castles, towers and villas](#)." That's about one ancient structure every two to three acres.

Generally, castles were built for two reasons – either as a residence for the sovereign or as a fortress. With constant changes in land ownership, it was common for a disposed ruler's residence to become a fortified castle. Today, the castles in Italy have a broader significance. Many are tourist attractions: some are historic sites inscribed on [UNESCO](#), others are landmarks regardless of their condition. Castles have become museums, administrative buildings, [hotels](#), [wedding venues](#), restaurants, and are [offered for sale](#).

An online search for castles in Italy brings up numerous lists. Most have some of the same castles but provide a different view or description. Visit several sites to create your personal virtual tour.

[Castles of Italy](#)

[Magnificent Castles of Italy](#)

[Five of Italy's Most Spectacular Castles](#)

[10 Most Beautiful Castles in Italy](#)

[15 Best Castles in Italy](#)

[The Best 20 Castles to Visit in Italy](#)

[Italian Castles: A Journey Through Architecture and Legends, Where the Timeless Fascination of History is Preserved](#)

(Thanks, John.)

Italian American Press

The Italian American Press offers a great selection of books – culture, history, memoirs, art, family, food, sports, 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

Double Murder at the Grand Hotel Miramare by Elena and Michela Martignoni

Deputy Assistant Chief of Police Luigi Berté, transferred from Milan to the Italian Riviera village of Lunganiva, has been assigned to investigate a *Double Murder at the Grand Hotel Miramare*. Berté's analytical skills are the basis for a series of more than a dozen books written by sisters Elena and Michela Martignoni under the pen name Emilio Martini. *Double Murder at the Grand Hotel Miramare* is the first English translation of the popular Italian detective series now available through [Kazabo Publishing](#).

The fictional coastal town of Lunganiva substitutes for the real town of Santa Margherita Ligure, but the [Grand Hotel Miramare](#) is an historic resort providing luxury accommodations since 1903. With exquisite garden and sea views, elegant interiors, and superior service, the Grand Hotel Miramare is an unlikely place for murder. Yet, the Martignoni sisters weave a story of suspense, intrigue, and animosity with Italian history, culture, and food, adding touches of humor and human emotions to create an enticing murder mystery.

Berté has a large list of suspects, and – as the story unfolds – his observations about the murderer and his own inner thoughts as he proceeds through the investigation reveal his reasonings for both the murder and Berté's own actions.

[Read book review on La Gazzetta Italiana.](#)

Italian American Heritage Project

In the past few years, nationwide media outlets have been focusing on the separation of American society. From politics to education, the division is widening, with attacks on culture and heritage becoming more apparent. While the controversy of the October 2023 uprising in the Middle East has created much disruption especially for two distinct countries, the ingrained discrimination towards Italian Americans continues.

Very often, a cultural organization will step in to defend its population, but Italian American organizations have many issues to address, and it's sometimes difficult to keep track of the latest indignation. Last March, Italian American restaurant owners in Boston's North End filed a discrimination lawsuit against the mayor – elected in 2021 – who [“ordered that restaurants in the area that wanted to have outdoor dining for that summer would have to apply for a license to do so, which would cost \\$7,500, and the use of parking spaces would cost an additional \\$480 per space used—but this did not apply to the rest of Boston.”](#) The lawsuit was dismissed, but earlier this month [“Nearly two dozen restaurants from Boston's North End are joining together in a lawsuit alleging ‘unequal, unfair, and discriminatory treatment’ ...”](#)

Is it discrimination or a city regulation [“to ensure residents can live in their neighborhoods with ease of access, safety and opportunity ...”](#) Support from the Italian American community is not mentioned. Would it help?

Across America, nationwide and regional Italian American organizations provide support under varying circumstances: community service, connecting to Italy, education, medical studies, political, and sustaining memberships, among others. Different causes demand different resources, and – with the constant bombardment on Italian American culture and heritage – resources are scarce. Still, some organizations are better equipped to focus on the root of discrimination, instead of trying to balance the prejudices with appeasing a political climate.

[Italian American One Voice Coalition](#), based in New Jersey, was founded by Dr. Manny Alfano in 1992 “enabling the Italian American community to act as one united voice when dealing with defamation, discrimination and negative stereotyping.” Dr. Alfano passed in June 2022, but his legacy lives on in the numerous causes the organization confronts nationwide to “defend Italian American heritage.” [IAOVC 2023 Year In Review](#). (Scroll down.)

In Sacramento, California, the [Italian Cultural Society](#) is a thriving Italian American organization offering numerous events and programs: Italian language classes,

children's dance classes, two annual festivals and an Italian movie festival, all held at its Carmichael Italian Center and Museum; and it also conducts tours of Italy. The organization is very involved in preserving Italian American heritage and culture through the advocacy of its [California Italian American Task Force](#), and exhibits in its Museum.

An informative newsletter includes articles on Italian American heritage and culture in Sacramento and how political actions can harm Italian Americans. In some cases, abolishing Columbus Day is a closed-door decision, where the public is not even notified that it is on the agenda.

From the newsletter:

"In Sacramento County, Columbus Day was replaced as a county holiday in April 2023 in favor of Indigenous Peoples Day. ... Congress has declared Columbus Day to be the only national Holiday in October. Indigenous People's Day is not a legal national holiday. Unfortunately, the county issued a Press Release to the public and carried by the local media stating that 'Columbus Day is not a national holiday.' Abolishing Columbus Day in the County was engineered by the new Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion (DEI) Staff in the County in collusion with Native Americans and done under false pretenses. It is unfortunate that the Italian community was the victim of the rise in anti-Italian and anti-white racial sentiment now at work in our county government. The Italian Cultural Society has made proposals to correct this mistake by the county government so both holidays are respected." [Read full article.](#)

In California – as with other states – Native Americans have a large presence. The Italian Cultural Society explains [the role of DEI in cancelling Columbus Day](#). "The replacement of Columbus Day was part of a national movement by Native Americans to replace Columbus Day with a holiday of their own. One rooted in grievance and reckoning. The DEI movement supports racial discrimination and opposes the Supreme Court decision outlawing racial discrimination. It exists to promote racial and gender preferences. It is the fox in the henhouse and has become embedded in our institutions. Following the Black Lives Matter riots of 2020, many government agencies, corporations and universities adopted DEI policies in reaction. At the time, even the federal government sought to replace the existing Columbus Day holiday with Juneteenth as a national holiday. [[Read IAOV statement here.](#)] Due to resistance against that idea, the federal government created a new and separate Juneteenth national holiday, as did Sacramento County. DEI programs separate people according to race and gender. They are a license to discriminate."

Additionally, the Italian Cultural Society brings attention to "a very controversial Bill [that] has been introduced in the United States Senate to eliminate Columbus Day as a national holiday. The [Indigenous People's Day Act](#) is being pushed by a Native American coalition [supported by the Cherokee Nation and the Navajo Nation, the two largest tribal nations in America]. The purpose of the Bill is to replace Columbus Day with Indigenous Peoples Day as a Federal Holiday. This is a serious threat to Italian Americans and if passed will empower Native American tribes to cancel Columbus Day in every state, city, and town in America. ... Columbus Day is a symbol of America and of Italian Americans. Take away our symbols, you take away our identity." [Read full article.](#)

Where is the support of nationwide Italian American organizations, cultural institutions, podcasts, and other associations? Rather than playing politically correct, pandering to the media (see Tale of Two Quarterbacks below), or generally avoiding the issues that are jeopardizing our heritage and culture, why won't they step up and take action to preserve it? Strengthening ties with Italy is an admirable cause, but shouldn't strengthening Italian American culture and heritage in America be the priority?

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. The statements of truth and facts posted on Italian American websites are not working. Columbus Day has lost much of its relevance in American history. 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

Note: Websites may be temporarily unavailable during transition to another web host.

On Exhibit

[Ferrari: The Essence of Italian Design](#)

Closes March 30th, WRHS, Cleveland, Ohio

Italian American News

[Tale of Two Quarterbacks](#) (italic.org; January 6, 2024)

[The NFL Pushed Negative Italian American Stereotypes in Celebrating Quarterback's Success](#) (msn.com; January 3, 2024)

[In This Neighborhood, Every House is a Winter Wonderland](#) (cnn.com; December 20, 2023)

From the Past: [How Brooklyn's Dyker Heights Became America's Most Festive Neighborhood](#) (theguardian.com; December 21, 2019)

[Poor Person's 'Feast of the 7 Fishes' for Christmas](#) (dowdnotesonnapkins.blogspot.com; December 14, 2023)

[The Italian Roots & Legacy of San Francisco Opera Celebrated at Museo Italo Americano](#) (berkeleydailyplanet.com; November 12, 2023)

[The Media's Protection Racket](#) (italic.org; November 12, 2023)

News About Italy

[Italy's Box Office Recovers in 2023 Thanks to Local Megahit 'There's Still Tomorrow,' Which Beat 'Barbie'](#) (msn.com; January 10, 2024)

[9 Jobs Likely To Get You a Work Permit in Italy in 2024](#) (forbes.com; December 26, 2023)

[VOV: Where the Story of Italy's Eggnog War Began](#) (bbc.com; December 20, 2023)

[Film Sheds a Shocking Light on Naples' Plight During WWII](#) (franoi.com; December 20, 2023)

[This 2300-Year-Old Mosaic Made of Shells and Coral Has Just Been Found Buried Under Rome](https://www.cnn.com/2023/12/20/ancient-mosaic-rome/index.html) (cnn.com; December 20, 2023)

[I Couldn't Afford a Home in the United States — So I Bought a House in Italy for \\$62,000](#) (nypost.com; December 16, 2023)

[Italy Ranks No. 1 in Cultural Influence in the World: US News and World Report](https://www.lavocedinyork.com/en/italy-ranks-no-1-in-cultural-influence-in-the-world-us-news-and-world-report)
(lavocedinyork.com; December 13, 2023)

[Extra Virgin Olive Oil is Getting Very Expensive, and It Might Not Even Be Real](https://www.cnn.com/2023/12/09/food/olive-oil-price/index.html)
(cnn.com; December 9, 2023)

[‘Lost’ Botticelli masterpiece worth \\$109 million found in home in southern Italy](https://www.cnn.com/2023/12/01/italy/masterpiece-botticelli/index.html)
(cnn.com; December 1, 2023)

[A Rare Treat: A Painting by Renaissance Master Titian is on Display at a High School](https://www.npr.org/2023/11/25/1224444444/a-rare-treat-a-painting-by-renaissance-master-titian-is-on-display-at-a-high-school)
(npr.org; November 25, 2023)

[Venice Reveals First 2024 Dates for Charging Day-Trippers](#) (cnn.com; November 23, 2023)

[Italian Tribunal Sentences More Than 200 in Crime Syndicate](#) (npr.org; November 21, 2023) [No relationship.]

[The Vatican Broadens Public Access to an Ancient Roman Necropolis](#) (npr.org; November 18, 2023)

Buon anno, buon tutto, buona vita,
Janice

Janice Therese Mancuso
 Publisher, [Tutto Italiano](#)
 Director, [Italian American Press](#)
 Founder, [Italian American Heritage Project](#)
 Founder, [Thirty-One Days of Italians](#)
 Author of [Con Amore](#)
 Writer, Author, Researcher

Note: Websites may be temporarily unavailable during transition to another web host.

Please Note: It's become increasingly difficult to avoid cookies, pop-ups, advertisements, unusual formats, and other digital nuisances on web sites. While the links below provide a source for further reading, some do require acceptance of their "cookie policy". Inclusion of a web site link in this newsletter is not an endorsement of any product or service offered on the link's web page.

Notice About Links: On the date of publication, the links in this newsletter were current. In older newsletters, some links may be inactive if the URL has changed or is no longer available.

January/February 2024: Volume 20 Issue 01

© 2024 Janice Therese Mancuso. All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced without permission except when quoted for promotional purposes. Publish with this credit: Excerpt from *Tutto Italiano*, © January/February 2024 Janice Therese Mancuso. www.jtmancuso.com