

Christopher Columbus Italian Society

201 Piazza Italia
San Antonio, Texas 78207



The Christopher Columbus Italian Society (CCIS) of San Antonio, Texas is recognized as one of the oldest, if not the oldest, Italian-American organization in the United States. One hundred and twenty-three years of continuous existence is an accomplishment we are very proud of.

The purpose of this Society is to perpetuate Italian culture and heritage in San Antonio, Texas, and to honor Christopher Columbus, Discoverer of America.

The goals of the Society are to:

- Promote and conduct educational, charitable, religious, social welfare, and public relief work.
- Promote social and intellectual intercourse among its members and their families.
- Aid and enhance its members to better their moral and material condition and elevate their social prestige.

- Create a fraternal feeling of respect among members.

The motto of the Society is
"Union and Fraternity".

HISTORY OF THE CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS ITALIAN SOCIETY

Near the end of the nineteenth century, when San Antonio's population was 37,673, a small group of Italians, most of them immigrants, arrived in the Alamo City. For their mutual aid and benefit, they united and formed a fraternal organization which would assist Italian families in adapting to a new language and a new way of life.

The Christopher Columbus Italian Society, known to the first generation of Italians in San Antonio as "Societa Italiana Cristoforo Colombo", was founded on the 14th of May 1890.

In 1927, on land donated by the Society, the Italian community built its Church of San Francesco di Paola. Members of the Society were the leaders in planning, funding and building the church. On the same tract of land where the church was built, the Christopher Columbus Italian Society erected its permanent home, the Italian Hall.

The Society opened its building in 1928. It was the first Italian Hall in Texas. On

October 12, 1957, the Society donated a statue, made in Italy, of Christopher Columbus to San Antonio. The statue was appropriately placed in Columbus Park.

Through the years, the Christopher Columbus Italian Society has carried out its original purposes. The Italians of San Antonio have prospered and assumed positions of leadership in social, political and the economic life of San Antonio. The Society's benevolent services include three charity dinners every year. The profits go to community groups, direct donations to disaster relief efforts, and support of local projects and organizations.

The Christopher Columbus Italian Society is noted for its homemade meatballs, authentic Italian sauce and pastry dishes offered at the spaghetti dinners served at the Italian Hall.

The first dinner by the CCIS was just before WWII. Ravioli was served the first time. That was the only time that ravioli was on the menu. Spaghetti and meatballs has been the staple ever since.

After more than a century, the members of the Christopher Columbus Italian Society and United Brotherhood of San Antonio, Texas, continue to be proud of their heritage

and equally proud to be citizens of the United States and the city of San Antonio. Numerous Italian-American artifacts are permanently displayed at the Institute of Texan Cultures.

The Christopher Columbus Ladies Auxiliary (CCLA) is a support organization to the CCIS and is open to all interested women.

The Christopher Columbus Italian Society and Ladies Auxiliary meetings are held at 4:00 PM every first Sunday of the month at the Society Hall, with a post-meeting dinner for everyone. Visit their Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/ItalianSociety>

COME JOIN US! CIAO!

For additional information or membership information, please check out our website at: <http://www.ccis-satx.org> or call (210) 223-8284

Italian Americans

(From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia)

Italian Americans are the fourth largest European ethnic group in the United States. Italian Americans rank seventh, behind German, Irish, African American, English, American, and Mexican).

About 5.5 million Italians immigrated to the United States from 1820 to 2004. The greatest surge of immigration, which occurred in the period between 1880 and 1920, alone brought more than 4 million Italians to America. About 80% of the Italian immigrants came from Southern Italy, especially from Sicily, Campania, Abruzzo and Calabria.

After the American Civil War, which resulted in over a half million killed or wounded, immigrant workers were recruited from Italy and elsewhere to fill the labor shortage caused by the war. In the United States, most Italians began their new lives as manual laborers in Eastern cities, mining camps and in agriculture.

Italian Americans gradually moved from the lower rungs of the economic scale in the first generation (1890s–1920s) to a level comparable to the national average by 1970. By 1990, more than 65% of Italian Americans were managerial, professional, or white-collar workers. The Italian-American communities have often been characterized by strong ties with family, the Catholic Church, fraternal organizations and political parties. Today, over 17 million Americans claim Italian ancestry.

Italians and their descendants in America helped shape the country, and were in turn shaped by it. They have gained

prominence in politics, sports, the media, the fine arts, the culinary arts, and numerous other fields of endeavor.

Famous Italian Americans

Italian Americans founded a number of well known business enterprises, including: Barnes & Noble, Tropicana Juices, Zamboni, Transamerica, Subway, Blimpie, Castro Convertibles, Prince Pasta, American Italian Pasta Company, Mr. Coffee, Conair Beauty Products, and the Macaroni Grill and Carrabba's Italian Grill restaurant chains.

Italian Americans in baseball alone are Joe DiMaggio, Yogi Berra, Phil Rizzuto, Carl Furillo, Sal Maglie, Vic Raschi, Roy Campanella, Dom DiMaggio, Ernie Lombardi, Joe Pepitone, Rico Petrocelli, Sal Bando, Rocky Colavito, Dave Righetti, and Tony Conigliaro. Also, Yogi Berra, Billy Martin, Tony La Russa, Tommy Lasorda and Joe Torre became well known professional baseball coaches.

There are many other people worth mentioning, so please visit:

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Italian_American (don't forget the underline!)