

# *How Many Italian-Americans Are In The United States?*

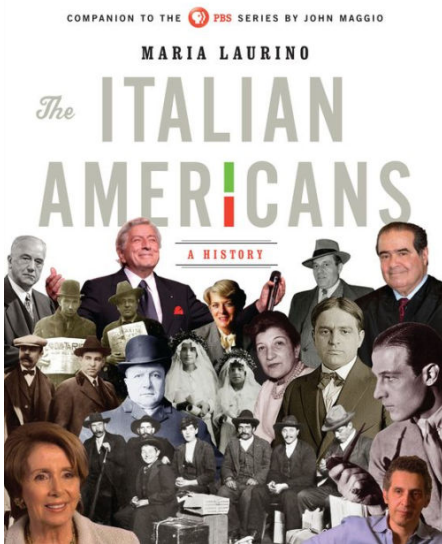


## *Did You Know the U. S. Census Will Allow You To Identify As Italian-American?*

**This year every household will receive a letter explaining how to respond to the 2020 Census. People may respond online or by mail. The 2020 Census will have a question which asks those people who identify as “White” to also write in their ancestry, including Italian.**

The last time European Americans were allowed to designate their ancestry was on the 2000 Census. In that Census around 16 million Americans chose to identify themselves as Italian Americans. They consisted of 6% of the total US population or about one out of every 20 Americans. In that Census, Italian Americans were the only European group to show an increase from the 1990 census

A national community survey in 2015 found that nearly 18 million Italian-Americans identified as Italian-American. In that survey, Italian-Americans were again the only European group to show an increase from the earlier census.



**Why the increase? The increase shows that Italian-Americans are very loyal to and proud of their Italian ancestry and feel a stronger connection to their heritage than other European ancestral groups. It also shows that many younger Italians are choosing to identify with and maintaining their ties to their ancestral heritage.**

- Studies show that one's ethnic ancestry is as important as gender to one's identity. There is a growing realization among Italian-Americans that who we are and where we came from is an essential part of our identity and our life.
- Among the continuing ties Italian Americans have to their heritage is the strong bond they have to their families which have passed down from generation to generation.
- Another important tie comes from the Italian food traditions which are an integral part of who Italian-Americans are. Italian food connects one generation to the next as they pass on the tradition of preserving one of the worlds best food.

- Also, Italian-Americans are reporting their ancestry in larger numbers because of the need to maintain a group sense of community and identity which is under duress in a world of competing and outright hostile social and political group agendas with different visions of America that do not include our aspirations, our values, our best interest, or Us.

While Italian-Americans only seek equal treatment and respect, we live in a sea of loud and angry voices with groups that seek separate and preferential treatment and use the institutions of society we helped build to gain an advantage over us and other Americans. Italian-Americans have to rely on their own Italian-American institutions to represent them where other institutions of Society do not.

- **Columbus Day is one of the building blocks of Italian-American identity and community.** Across the nation, in



virtually every Italian community and in the thousands of Italian-American organizations in existence today, generations of Italian-Americans have celebrated Columbus Day as a day of national pride and identity.

Italian-Americans are identified with Columbus Day as an Italian-American holiday even though it is a national holiday to celebrate the immigrant roots of the nation. For the past few decades there has been a continuing assault on the holiday by native American groups and their allies to replace Columbus Day with Indigenous Peoples Day which is "Anti-Columbus Day." The movement to replace Columbus Day is anti-Italian-American.

The need to protect Columbus Day by the Italian-American community has resulted in a greater awareness by Italian-Americans of the need to act to protect their identity and their heritage. Columbus Day has played a major role in building that heritage and needs to be protected.

It is not in quiet assimilation that we become stronger but only in noisy celebration of our past, our heritage and our national celebration of the Columbus Day holiday.



**One way Italian-Americans can stand up and let their voice be heard is by identifying as an American of Italian ancestry when you fill out your 2020 Census form. Both the government and private institutions rely on the group numbers collected to distribute services, benefits and opportunities. Our people came to America to take advantage of the opportunities it offered. Take the opportunity to express your pride in our heritage by making sure you are counted and we are respected by American institutions.**