



# Italian Historical Society of America Newsletter

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

In the northwest corner of Tuscany, slightly less than five miles from the coast of the Ligurian Sea, and even closer to Tuscany's border with Liguria, the Apuan Alps cradle the city of [Carrara](#). From the time of the Roman Empire, the mountains have been harvested for marble, and the city was constructed to house the workers in the quarries.

Different areas of the mountains produce numerous varieties of stone, based on color and vein patterns, and sculptors and architects of the Renaissance favored the pristine white marble – that has since been depleted. Demand for the marble continued to grow, and in the late 1800s almost any man physically able to work in the quarries was hired, drawing in renegades and revolutionists from other countries.

Although the marble industry had been regulated by the ruling Cybo-[Malaspina](#) family since the mid-1500s, the quarry workers of the nineteenth century rebelled against the working conditions, forming unions and anarchists groups that led to demonstrations against raising taxes and a strike, known as the [Lunigiana Revolt](#).

The mountains of Carrara are the source of the most marble produced in the world. In 1982, [Museo Civico del Marmo](#) (Civic Museum of Marble) was founded “where the culture of marble is preserved and promoted not only through its rich permanent collection, but also with conferences, temporary exhibitions and sculpture symposiums.”

[Carrara Marble: A History Written in Stone](#) (Postcards From Italy)

[Visiting Carrara Marble Quarries - Apuan Alps' Eternal Snow](#) (Italy Magazine)

[Art Cities: Carrara](#) (Life in Italy)

[The Contrasts of Carrara](#) (ItalianNotes.com)

[Different varieties of marble from Carrara](#) (LitosOnline.com)

[Inside Italy's \\$1 Billion Marble Mountains](#) (YouTube Video)

## **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.

## **Make it a Movie**

[Selected books](#) listed on the IAP that would make wonderful moves.

## Italian American Heritage Project

Much has been happening in the United States, and Christopher Columbus is back in the news. The recent spate of destroying statues that chronicle America's past have now added Jefferson, Washington, and Roosevelt – among others – to the unworthiness of Columbus.

Columbus is the topic, though, and his intrinsic ties to Italian immigrants and Italian American culture make his story imperative. When waves of Italians left Italy for the promise of new lives, for many, life in America was a huge disappointment. Italian Americans may be aware of the 1891 lynchings in New Orleans and the Sacco and Vanzetti trial during the 1920s, but discrimination against Italians was rampant to the point where many Italians were ashamed to admit their nationality.

On April 3, 2008 in reply to a post on an Italian genealogy forum, Philip R. Piccigallo, National Executive Director of the Order Sons of Italy in America, wrote (in part): “While America of the late 19th century witnessed widespread racist, ethnic and anti-Catholic hatred, few immigrant groups suffered more than Italians: in 1891, in New Orleans, ten Italian prisoners found not guilty by a jury were executed by a mob in the largest lynching in American history. That same year, several Italians were lynched in West Virginia. In March 1894, several hundred Italians were driven out of Altoona, Pennsylvania, by an armed mob. In 1895, six Italian labor organizers were lynched in Colorado, six more in Hahnville, Louisiana, as were five Italian shopkeepers four years later in Tallulah, La. Fatal mob attacks against Italians were recorded in 1901, in Mississippi, 1906 in West Virginia, and 1910 in Tampa, Fl. In addition to the highly prejudicial and legally tainted Sacco and Vanzetti case of the 1920s, historian John Higham wrote that ‘No pogrom has ever stained American soil, nor did any single anti-Jewish incident in the 1920's match the violence of the [vigilante mob-led] anti-Italian riot’ in West Frankfort, Illinois.” [Full post](#). (Scroll down.)

Many of the statues of Columbus were paid for by Italian immigrants. Even with the prejudices they faced, they found hope in the Italian explorer, who was becoming a popular and symbolic figure for the spirit of a developing country. By the time of the four-hundredth-year anniversary of Columbus's landing, America honored the Genoese navigator with tributes of books, poems, monuments, celebrations, and a world's fair – the World's Columbian Exposition, held in Chicago in 1893.

Less than one-hundred years later – just in time for the five-hundredth-year anniversary – the denigration of Columbus had taken root. The slow decline picked up speed with an ideological version of history taught in schools, and was exacerbated by the misinformed through social media.

For numerous reasons, Italian Americans ignored the threats to Columbus and Italian American history being taught in schools, and the repercussions could be insurmountable. However, many have been calling for a deeper look into American history, and this could be the time to include the unbiased historical accounts of Christopher Columbus.

[Christopher Columbus: When Did the Hero Become a Villain?](#) (Italian Historical Society of America)

[CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS: 2020 Hindsight](#) (Italic Institute of America; July 4, 2020)

[The Old Switcheroo](#) (Italic Institute of America; July 5, 2020)

[To The Barricades!](#) (Italic Institute of America; June 21, 2020)

The groups opposing Columbus Day have an organized agenda to eliminate it from America; Italian Americans do not have an organized defense. The statements of truth and facts posted on so many Italian American websites are not working. Italian Americans need a nationwide program to battle the campaign to abolish Columbus

