



IRC page

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COLUMBUS DAY Second Monday in October



Christopher Columbus

Columbus Day is the annual U.S. commemoration of explorer Christopher Columbus' landing in the New World (at San Salvador Island, also known as Waitling Island, today part of the British Bahamas) on October 12, 1492. Columbus was not the first European to cross the Atlantic successfully. Viking sailors are believed to have established a short-lived settlement in Newfoundland sometime in the 11th century, and scholars have argued for a number of other possible pre-Columbian landings. Columbus, however, initiated the lasting encounter between Europeans and the indigenous peoples of the Western Hemisphere.

A number of nations celebrate this encounter with annual holidays: among them are Discovery Day in The Bahamas and Colombia, Día de la Hispanidad (Hispanic Day) in Spain, and Día de la Raza (Day of the Race) in much of Latin America.

In the United States, Columbus Day is typically a celebration of Italian and Italian-American cultural heritage, Columbus generally being considered a native of Genoa, Italy.

Italian immigrants were the first to celebrate the holiday annually in U.S. cities where they had settled in large numbers, in part as a celebration of their heritage, since Columbus is considered Italian. Both New York (1866) and San Francisco (1868) claim the first such celebration. In 1937, President Franklin D. Roosevelt proclaimed Columbus Day a national holiday, then held every October 12.

Many localities, including Berkeley, California, have replaced Columbus Day with Indigenous Peoples Day to honor the original inhabitants of the islands where Columbus landed. South Dakota renamed the holiday Native American Day, and Alabama celebrates a combination Columbus Day

and American Indian Heritage Day. Hawaii calls it Discovery Day.

U.S. federal government offices close on Columbus Day, as do most banks. Schools typically remain open, as do most American businesses. New York City, Denver and many other cities continue to host festive Columbus Day parades, more than 500 years since the historic appearance of three ships off the coast of a small Caribbean island.



Columbus Day's Celebration

The United States of America - Focus On: Las Vegas



All of Las Vegas is a the last of any visitor's priorities. Those party. Imagine a giant tourists looking for a slightly less-flashy adult theme park full of Vegas experience venture to Fremont Street downtown where many of the brightest lights and the most decadent, over-the-top buildings. One needs only walk down the Las Vegas Strip to see that vision realized. Visitors here find everything from towering fountains to laser light displays to high-stakes casino games to variety shows headlined by perfectly choreographed performers. Sleeping is



Fremont Street



When did the Congress move the Columbus Day from October 12 to the second Monday in October?

- A. In 1971
- B. When Christopher Columbus died, May 20, 1506
- C. In 1937, proclaimed by President Franklin D. Roosevelt

The correct answer is:

Email your answer to wfr@state.gov.
The first three persons who finds the correct answer will win a prize from us!

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