

# HISPANIC HERITAGE MONTH

2018 Theme: Hispanics: One Endless Voice to Enhance Our Traditions

Each year, Americans observe National Hispanic Heritage Month from September 15 to October 15, by celebrating the contributions of American citizens whose ancestors came from Spain, Mexico, the Caribbean, Central America, and South America.

The Hispanic Heritage observance began in 1968 as Hispanic Heritage Week under President Lyndon Johnson and was expanded by President Ronald Reagan in 1988 to cover a 30-day period starting on September 15 and ending on October 15. It was enacted into law on August 17, 1988, on the approval of Public Law 100-402.<sup>1</sup>



Mexico

Hispanics have had a profound and positive influence on our country through their strong commitment to family, faith, hard work, and service. They have enhanced and shaped our national character with centuries-old traditions that reflect the multi-ethnic and multicultural customs of their community.<sup>2</sup>



Central America

## A Few Facts about Hispanic Heritage Month<sup>3</sup>

- September 15th is the anniversary of Independence for Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua
- Mexico's Independence Day is on September 16th
- Chile's Independence Day is on September 18th
- Hispanic population in the U.S. is around 55 million
- California has the largest Hispanic population
- There are 1.2 million Hispanics serving in the U.S. armed forces
- Hispanics are the largest ethnic, or race minority, in the United States
- 73.3% of Hispanics ages five and older speak Spanish at home
- Spanish is the second most spoken language in the United States
- Dr. Ellen Ochoa was the first Hispanic woman astronaut to go into space
- Mario Molina won a Nobel Prize for his crucial work in understanding how the ozone layer is formed and depleted
- Joseph Marion Hernández was the first Hispanic Member of U.S. Congress in 1822
- Carlos Juan Finlay solved the mystery of what caused yellow fever in 1881
- Roberto Clemente was not only a famous baseball player, he was also a humanitarian who worked in the off-season organizing charity drives, donating his time and money
- In 1990, Oscar Hijuelos was the first Hispanic writer to win a Pulitzer Prize for Fiction for his novel *The Mambo Kings Play Songs of Love*
- José Ferrer was the first Hispanic to win an Oscar for Best Actor in 1951<sup>4</sup>, for the film *Cyrano de Bergerac*
- The projected Hispanic population of the United States in 2060 is 417 million<sup>5</sup>.
- Octaviano Larrazolo was the first Hispanic U.S. Senator<sup>6</sup>.
- Romualdo Pacheco was the only Hispanic who has served as Governor of California<sup>7</sup>.
- Ezequiel Cabeza de Baca was elected New Mexico's first Lieutenant Governor, 1912<sup>8</sup>, and a brief time as Governor in 1917.
- Ignacio Saturnino "Lou" Molinet was the first Hispanic player in the NFL, 1927<sup>9</sup>.
- As a member of the band Santana, Carlos Santana, was the first Hispanic inductee in the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame, 1998.<sup>10</sup>



South America



Caribbean

### Sources:

1. <http://www.nationalcouncilhepm.org/2018-theme-1.html>
2. <https://www.hispanicheritagemonth.org/hispanic-heritage-month/71-hispanic-heritage-month-theme-2018>
3. <https://hispanicdiversity.com/articles/30-Facts-for-Hispanic-Heritage-Month>
4. <https://www.oscars.org/oscars/ceremonies/1951>
5. <https://www.census.gov/content/dam/Census/library/publications/2015/demo/p25-1143.pdf>
6. <http://www.loc.gov/rr/hispanic/congress/introduction.html>
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