



**A PROFILE OF TODAY'S ITALIAN AMERICANS**

**A REPORT BASED ON THE YEAR 2000 CENSUS**

**COMPILED BY THE SONS OF ITALY**

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# **A PROFILE OF TODAY'S ITALIAN AMERICANS**

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

### **INTRODUCTION:**

This report is based on data and statistics from the U.S. Census Bureau's Year 2000 Census.

The information it contains presents a fact-based portrait of today's Italian Americans that is far different from the way they are portrayed by the entertainment, advertising and news industries.

For example, *"A Profile of Today's Italian Americans"* reveals that Italian Americans are above average in their levels of education, income and occupation. The vast majority (88%) live in or near a big city, have small families (one child), low divorce rates (8%) and white collar jobs (66%).

These and other facts are found in this report. For the sake of clarity, the numbers cited in the Executive Summary have been rounded off to the nearest whole number. The exact figures are on Census Bureau tables in the body of the report.

*"A Profile of Today's Italian Americans"* was compiled by the Order Sons of Italy in America (OSIA), the nation's oldest and largest national organization for men and women of Italian descent.

Founded in 1905, today OSIA has 600,000 members and supporters and a network of more than 700 lodges or chapters coast to coast. Its national headquarters are in Washington, D.C.

For more information, contact OSIA at 202/547-2900.

**FALL 2003**

# REPORT HIGHLIGHTS:

## I. ETHNICITY

- Over 15.7 million people in the United States identify themselves as Italian Americans. They constitute nearly six percent (6%) of the U.S. population.
- Italian Americans are the nation's fourth largest European ancestry group after the Germans, Irish and English.

German	43,000,000	15%
Irish	30,600,000	11%
English	24,500,000	9%
Italian	15,700,000	6%

- Despite being in the U.S. for more than 120 years, Italian Americans still strongly identify with their Italian roots.

The number of people who identified themselves as Italian American in the Year 2000 Census increased by 1,000,000 people or seven percent (7%) compared to the 1990 census.

- Italian Americans are the only European group whose population has increased since the 1990 census.

In fact, the number of Americans claiming German, Irish, English and Polish descent decreased nearly 19 percent collectively—dropping from 128 million in 1990 to 108 million.

- Italian is the fourth European language most spoken in U.S. homes.

## II. DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION:

Median Age:	34 years old
Marital Status:	married
Family Size:	one child
Median Income:	\$61,300/year (in 1999) [National Median Income: \$50,000/year]
Education:	High School Graduates: 29% [National Percentage: 28.5%]  College Graduates: 18.5% [National Percentage: 15.5%]
Advanced Degrees:	Master's Degree: 7% [National Percentage: 6%]  Professional Degree: 2% [National Percentage: 2%]  Doctorate Degree: 0.85% [National Percentage: 0.95%]
Occupation:	White Collar workers: 66% [National Percentage: 64%]  Blue Collar workers: 34% [National Percentage: 36%]

### III. GEOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

#### A. THE TEN STATES WITH THE MOST ITALIAN AMERICANS

New York	2,700,000
New Jersey	1,500,000
California	1,450,000
Pennsylvania	1,400,000
Florida	1,001,000
Massachusetts	860,000
Illinois	745,000
Ohio	676,000
Connecticut	634,000
Michigan	451,000

#### B. STATES WITH 15% OR MORE ITALIAN AMERICANS OR MORE THAN ONE MILLION ITALIAN AMERICANS

<u>STATE</u>	<u># OF ITALIAN AMERICANS</u>	<u>% OF POPULATION</u>
California	1,450,000	4%
Connecticut	630,000	19%
Florida	1,004,000	6%
New Jersey	1,500,000	18%
New York	2,700,000	14%
Pennsylvania	1,420,000	12%
Rhode Island	200,000	19%

### **C. THE TEN METRO AREAS WITH MOST ITALIAN AMERICANS**

<b><u>Metro Area</u></b>	<b><u># Italian Americans</u></b>	<b><u># Total Population</u></b>
New York	3,400,000	21,200,000
Philadelphia	886,000	6,189,000
Boston	801,000	5,800,000
Chicago	637,000	9,158,000
Los Angeles	568,000	16,373,000
San Francisco	423,000	7,039,000
Washington/Baltimore	378,000	7,600,000
Pittsburgh	358,000	2,359,000
Detroit	321,000	5,456,000
Cleveland	278,000	2,946,000

### **D. THE TEN CITIES WITH THE MOST ITALIAN AMERICANS**

<b><u>City</u></b>	<b><u># of Italian Americans</u></b>	<b><u># Total Population</u></b>
New York	692,800	8,008,300
Philadelphia	140,000	1,517,600
Chicago	101,900	2,896,000
Los Angeles	95,300	3,695,000
Phoenix	58,600	1,321,000
San Diego	55,800	1,223,400
Boston	49,000	589,100
San Jose, CA	43,200	893,900
Pittsburgh, PA	40,000	335,000
San Francisco	39,200	776,800

## DEMOGRAPHIC CHART

<b>United States Census Analysis</b> <b>U.S. Italian American Demographics vs. Total Population Demographics*</b> <i>Figures Rounded to the nearest 100</i>		
	Italian American Population	Total U.S. Population
<b>TOTAL POPULATION</b>	15,723,000	281,422,000
<b>Male</b>	49.5% (7,789,000)	48% (137,916,000 )
<b>Female</b>	50.5% (7,935,000)	52% (143,506,000)
<b>Population 17 and under</b>	14% (2,240,000)	13% (37,007,000)
<b>MEDIAN AGE</b>	33.8	35.4
<b>Male</b>	33.1	34.1
<b>Female</b>	34.6	36.6
<b>MARITAL STATUS</b> <i>(Population 15 and over)</i>		
<b>Male: Never Married</b>	32% (1,916,000)	30% (32,381,000)
<b>Female: Never Married</b>	27% (1,665,000)	24% (27,532,000)
<b>Male: Now Married</b>	57% (3,375,000)	59% (62,692,000)
<b>Female: Now Married</b>	54% (3,296,000)	55% (62,309,000)
<b>Male: Divorced</b>	8% (468,000)	8.5% (9,255,000)
<b>Female: Divorced</b>	10% (623,000)	11% (12,305,000)
<b>FAMILY</b>		
<b>Number of Families</b>	3,948,000	72,262,000
<b>Average Family size</b>	3.08	3.14
<b>MEDIAN INCOME IN 1999</b>	\$61,297	\$50,046



<b>LIVING ENVIRONMENT</b>		
<b>Urban</b>	88% (13,809,000)	79% (222,358,000)
<b>Rural</b>	12% (1,914,000)	21% (59,064,000)
<b>PLACE OF BIRTH</b>		
<b>U.S. Native</b>	96% (15,119,000)	89% (250,314,000)
<b>Foreign Born</b>	4% (604,000)	11% (31,108,000)
<b>Foreign Born: % from Europe</b>	76% (459,000)	16% (4,916,000)
<b>Naturalized Citizen</b>	2.5% (409,000)	4.5% (12,543,000)
<b>Not a Citizen</b>	1.2% (195,000)	6.5% (18,565,000)
<b>EDUCATION (Population 25 and Over)</b>	9,853,000	182,212,000
<b>High School Graduate</b>	29% (2,893,000)	28.5% (52,169,000)
<b>Bachelor's Degree</b>	18.5% (1,843,000)	15.5% (28,318,000)
<b>Master's Degree</b>	7% (691,000)	6% (10,771,000)
<b>Professional School Degree</b>	2% (229,000)	2% (3,620,000)
<b>Doctorate Degree</b>	0.85% (84,000)	0.95% (1,754,000)
<b>OCCUPATION (Employed 16 years and older) TOTAL IN WORKFORCE</b>	49% (7,692,000) / (15,700,000)	46% (129,722,000) / (281,422,000)
<b>White Collar Occupations</b>	66% (5,081,000) / (7,692,000)	64% (82,472,000) / (129,722,000)
<b>Blue Collar Occupations (Includes farmers, police officers &amp; fire fighters)</b>	34% (2,611,000) / (7,692,000)	36% (7,205,000) / (129,722,000)

**ITALIAN AMERICAN POPULATION OF THE U.S.  
ALL 50 STATES AND THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA\***

*\*Listed in alphabetical order. States in bold have percentages of Italian Americans five percent or above or more than 100,000 Italian Americans.*

<u>STATE</u>	<u># OF ITALIAN AMERICANS</u>	<u>% OF STATE</u>
Alabama	56,220	1.3%
Alaska	17,944	2.9%
<b>Arizona</b>	<b>224,795</b>	<b>4.4%</b>
Arkansas	34,674	1.3%
<b>California</b>	<b>1,450,884</b>	<b>4.3%</b>
<b>Colorado</b>	<b>201,787</b>	<b>4.7%</b>
<b>Connecticut</b>	<b>634,364</b>	<b>18.6%</b>
<b>Delaware</b>	<b>72,677</b>	<b>9.3%</b>
District of Columbia	12,587	2.2%
<b>Florida</b>	<b>1,003,977</b>	<b>6.3%</b>
<b>Georgia</b>	<b>163,218</b>	<b>2.0%</b>
Hawaii	22,094	1.8%
Idaho	34,553	2.7%
<b>Illinois</b>	<b>744,274</b>	<b>6.0%</b>
<b>Indiana</b>	<b>141,486</b>	<b>2.3%</b>
Iowa	49,449	1.7%
Kansas	50,729	1.9%
Kentucky	62,383	1.5%
<b>Louisiana</b>	<b>195,561</b>	<b>4.4%</b>
Maine	58,866	4.6%
<b>Maryland</b>	<b>267,573</b>	<b>5.1%</b>
<b>Massachusetts</b>	<b>860,079</b>	<b>13.5%</b>
<b>Michigan</b>	<b>450,952</b>	<b>4.5%</b>
<b>Minnesota</b>	<b>111,270</b>	<b>2.3%</b>
Mississippi	40,401	1.4%

<b>Missouri</b>	<b>176,209</b>	<b>3.1%</b>
Montana	28,031	3.1%
Nebraska	42,979	2.5%
<b>Nevada</b>	<b>132,515</b>	<b>6.6%</b>
<b>New Hampshire</b>	<b>105,610</b>	<b>8.5%</b>
<b>New Jersey</b>	<b>1,503,637</b>	<b>17.9%</b>
New Mexico	43,218	2.4%
<b>New York</b>	<b>2,737,146</b>	<b>14.4%</b>
<b>North Carolina</b>	<b>181,982</b>	<b>2.3%</b>
North Dakota	5,328	0.8%
<b>Ohio</b>	<b>675,749</b>	<b>6.0%</b>
Oklahoma	49,970	1.4%
<b>Oregon</b>	<b>111,462</b>	<b>3.3%</b>
<b>Pennsylvania</b>	<b>1,418,465</b>	<b>11.6%</b>
<b>Rhode Island</b>	<b>199,077</b>	<b>19.0%</b>
South Carolina	81,377	2.0%
South Dakota	7,541	1.0%
Tennessee	94,402	1.7%
<b>Texas</b>	<b>363,354</b>	<b>1.7%</b>
Utah	57,512	2.6%
<b>Vermont</b>	<b>38,835</b>	<b>6.4%</b>
<b>Virginia</b>	<b>257,129</b>	<b>3.6%</b>
<b>Washington State</b>	<b>191,442</b>	<b>3.2%</b>
West Virginia	69,935	3.9%
<b>Wisconsin</b>	<b>172,567</b>	<b>3.2%</b>
Wyoming	15,286	3.1%

## STATE-BY-STATE PERCENTAGES OF ITALIAN AMERICANS\*

### All States and the District of Columbia

*\*Listed in order of percentage of the population*

<u>STATE</u>	<u># OF ITALIAN AMERICANS</u>	<u>% OF POPULATION</u>
Rhode Island	199,077	19.0%
Connecticut	634,364	18.6%
New Jersey	1,503,637	17.9%
New York	2,737,146	14.4%
Massachusetts	860,079	13.5%
Pennsylvania	1,418,465	11.6%
Delaware	72,677	9.3%
New Hampshire	105,610	8.5%
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Washington State	191,442	3.2%
Montana	28,031	3.1%
Wyoming	15,286	3.1%
Missouri	176,209	3.1%
Alaska	17,944	2.9%
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Utah	57,512	2.6%
Nebraska	42,979	2.5%
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District of Columbia	12,587	2.2%
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Kansas	50,729	1.9%
Hawaii	22,094	1.8%
Iowa	49,449	1.7%
Tennessee	94,402	1.7%
Texas	363,354	1.7%
Kentucky	62,383	1.5%
Oklahoma	49,970	1.4%
Mississippi	40,401	1.4%
Alabama	56,220	1.3%
Arkansas	34,674	1.3%
South Dakota	7,541	1.0%
North Dakota	5,328	0.8%

**THE 50 U.S. METROPOLITAN AREAS  
WITH THE MOST ITALIAN AMERICANS**

Rank	Area	Italian Population	Total Population
1	New York – Northern NJ – Long Island	3,394,397	21,199,865
2	Philadelphia – Wilmington, DE – Atlantic City	886,102	6, 188,463
3	Boston – Worcester – Lawrence, MA	801,020	5,819,101
4	Chicago – Gary, IN– Kenosha, IL	646,399	9,157,540
5	Los Angeles – Riverside – Orange County, CA	568,153	16,373,645
6	San Francisco – Oakland – San Jose, CA	422,969	7,039,362
7	Washington, DC – Baltimore, MD	377,893	7,608,070
8	Pittsburgh, PA	358,317	2,358,695
9	Detroit – Ann Arbor – Flint, MI	321,443	5,456,428
10	Cleveland – Akron, OH	277,628	2,945, 831
11	Miami – Fort Lauderdale, FL	206,119	3,876,380
12	Providence – Fall River – Warwick, RI	200,626	1,188,613
13	Tampa – St. Petersburg – Clearwater, FL	199,457	2,395,997
14	Hartford, CT	191,676	1,183,110
15	Buffalo – Niagara Falls, NY	190,038	1,170,111
16	Rochester, NY	183,815	1,098,201
17	Phoenix – Mesa, AZ	158,959	3,251,876
18	Albany - Schenectady – Troy, NY	148,073	875,583
19	San Diego, CA	133,304	2,813,833
20	Seattle – Tacoma – Bremerton, WA	127,106	3,554,760
21	Denver – Boulder – Greeley, CO	123,553	2,581,506
22	St. Louis, MO	117,754	2,603,607
23	Syracuse, NY	115,057	732,117
24	New Orleans, LA	109,710	1,337,726
25	Atlanta, GA	109,023	4,112,198
26	Scranton – Wilkes-Barre – Hazelton, PA	107,307	624,776
27	West Palm Beach – Boca Raton, FL	106,774	1,131,184
28	Dallas – Fort Worth, TX	106,287	5,221,801
29	Houston – Galveston – Brazoria, TX	105,645	4,669,571
30	Las Vegas, NV	102,708	1,563,282
31	Orlando, FL	99,033	1,644,561
32	Sacramento – Yolo, CA	96,515	1,796,857
33	Youngstown – Warren, OH	86,968	594,746
34	Minneapolis – St. Paul, MN	81,803	2,968,806
35	Columbus, OH	77,307	1,540,157
36	Portland – Salem, OR	76,540	2,265,223
37	Milwaukee – Racine, WI	75,977	1,689,572
38	Cincinnati – Hamilton, OH	75,698	1,979,202

39	Allentown – Bethlehem – Easton, PA	69,671	637,958
40	Norfolk – Virginia Beach – Newport News, VA	62,854	1,569,541
41	Springfield, MA	61,640	591,960
42	Utica – Rome, NY	59,015	299,896
43	Kansas City, MO – KS	57,191	1,776,062
44	Jacksonville, FL	44,953	1,100,491
45	New London – Norwich, CT	44,279	293,566
46	Daytona Beach, FL	42,719	493,175
47	Sarasota – Bradenton, FL	41,407	589,959
48	Raleigh – Durham – Chapel Hill, NC	41,033	1,187,941
49	Charlotte – Gastonia – Rock Hill, NC – SC	40,998	1,499,293
50	Harrisburg – Lebanon – Carlisle, PA	39,258	629,401

## THE 50 U.S. CITIES WITH THE MOST ITALIAN AMERICANS\*

*\*Based on Year 2000 U.S. Census*

Rank	Area	Italian Population	Total Population
1	New York city, NY	692,739	8,008,278
2	Philadelphia city, PA	140,139	1,517,550
3	Chicago city, IL	101,903	2,895,964
4	Los Angeles city, CA	95,263	3,694,834
5	Phoenix city, AZ	58,578	1,320,994
6	San Diego city, CA	55,764	1,223,341
7	Boston city, MA	49,017	589,141
8	San Jose city, CA	43,165	893,889
9	Pittsburgh city, PA	39,632	334,563
10	San Francisco city, CA	39,144	776,733
11	Yonkers city, NY	36,907	196,086
12	Columbus city, OH	35,236	711,644
13	Buffalo city, NY	34,379	292,648
14	Las Vegas city, NV	32,124	478,868
15	Houston city, TX	31,899	1,954,848
16	Cranston city, RI	27,359	79,269
17	Toms River, NJ	27,250	86,452
18	Jacksonville city, FL	25,385	735,503
19	Waterbury city, CT	24,476	107,271
20	Providence city, RI	23,960	173,618
21	Virginia Beach city, VA	23,949	425,257
22	Metairie, Louisiana	23,259	145,852
23	Rochester city, NY	22,077	219,766
24	Cleveland city, OH	22,053	478,393
25	Seattle city, WA	21,754	563,375
26	San Antonio city, TX	21,697	1,144,554
27	Syracuse city, NY	20,778	147,326
28	Worcester city, MA	19,950	172,648
29	Stamford city, CT	19,873	117,083
30	Portland city, OR	19,810	529,025
31	Tucson city, AZ	19,636	486,591
32	Warwick city, RI	19,549	85,808
33	Denver city, CO	19,333	554,636
34	Omaha city, NE	18,716	390,112



35	Baltimore city, MD	18,492	651,154
36	Levittown, NY	18,020	53,063
37	Mesa city, AZ	17,724	397,215
38	Charlotte city, NC	17, 676	542,131
39	Revere city, MA	17,662	47,283
40	Milwaukee city, WI	17,499	596,956
41	Indianapolis city, IN	17,442	782,414
42	Medford city, MA	17,390	55,765
43	Scottsdale city, AZ	17,283	202,744
44	Tampa city, FL	17,096	303,512
45	St. Petersburg city, FL	16,736	247,793
46	Albuquerque city, NM	16,721	448,627
47	Coral Springs city, FL	16,709	117,482
48	Colorado Springs city, CO	16,692	360,798
49	Sterling Heights city, MI	16,556	124,471
50	Norwalk city, CT	16,397	82,951

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- The **Order Sons of Italy in America (OSIA)** is the largest and oldest national organization of Italian American men and women in the United States.
- Founded in 1905, OSIA now has 600,000 members and supporters and a network of more than 700 chapters coast to coast.
- Originally established as a mutual aid society for the early Italian immigrants, today OSIA is the leading service and advocacy Italian American organization.
- OSIA promotes the study of Italian language and culture in American schools and universities; conducts research on Italian American traditions, culture, history and heritage; and encourages closer cultural relations between Italy and the United States.
- **The Sons of Italy Foundation (SIF)** is a private, grant-making philanthropic institution established by OSIA in 1959. To date, the **SIF has given more than \$83 million** to scholarships, medical research, cultural preservation, disaster relief and other projects.
- **The Commission for Social Justice (CSJ)** is the anti-defamation arm of OSIA. The CSJ is committed to fighting racism, prejudice, and the stereotyping of all races, religions and cultures.
- OSIA's national headquarters is in Washington, D.C. near Capitol Hill.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

For extensive bibliographies on Italian American history, literature and culture, visit OSIA's Web site at [www.osia.org](http://www.osia.org) see "Italian American Culture and History - Research and Reports" or the American Italian Historical Association at [www.mobilito.com/aiha](http://www.mobilito.com/aiha).

***Italians In America: A Celebration* Gay Talese, editor.**

An illustrated history of Italian Americans that begins with the 15<sup>th</sup> century explorers, and traces the Italians in America from the American Revolution to the present day.

Available through the ORDER SONS OF ITALY at a discount. For details, call: 202/547-2900 or see [www.osia.org](http://www.osia.org) at "Market Place"

***Blood of My Blood* by Richard Gambino. New York: Anchor Books, 1975.**

Landmark study on the Italian America experience.

***The Children of Columbus* by Erik Amfitheatrof. Boston: Little Brown, 1973.**

Perhaps the most intelligently written study on what Italian immigrants found in "la Merica."

***The Italian American Experience: An Encyclopedia*  
LaGumina, Cavaoli, Primeggia and Varacalli, eds. New York: Garland Press, 1999.**

Excellent reference book on Italian American history, literature, culture and issues.

***The Italian American Reader* Bill Tonelli, editor; William Morrow & Co.**

The first hardcover, mainstream press anthology of Italian American writing, this collection of 68 fiction and non-fiction pieces presents three generations of Italian American writers.

***WOP! A Documentary History of Anti-Italian Discrimination* by Salvatore J. LaGumina.  
Toronto: Guernica, 1999.**

Documents the prejudice and discrimination the early Italian immigrants faced through citing newspaper articles, speeches and political cartoons of the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries.