

Columbus Day

On October 12th, 1492, Christopher Columbus (Cristobal Colon), landed on San Salvador Island in the Bahamas. He had sailed from Spain with three ships and a few men.

For a long time, Columbus was said to have discovered America. He was not the first European to get there. But, after his landing, people from Europe began to go to the Americas to live.

Some people feel this was not a good thing. It brought suffering to the native people.

However, Columbus Day is a U.S. federal holiday. Government offices close, though businesses and schools stay open. It is now on the Monday closest to the 12th, to give government workers a long weekend.

Spanish-speaking countries, including Spain itself, celebrate *Dia de la Raza* or *Dia de la Hispanidad*. This is a celebration of Spanish culture, which spread to the Americas after Columbus.

Columbus himself was Italian. It was Italian-Americans who got the government to make the day of his landing a holiday.

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