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# What is Latinx/Hispanic Heritage Month?

Hispanic Heritage Month is an annual celebration of the history and culture of the U.S. Latino and Hispanic communities. Hispanic Heritage Month 2023 will last from Friday, September 15, 2023 through Sunday, October 15, 2023. The event commemorates how those communities have influenced and contributed to American society at large.

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## Origins of Hispanic History Month

The term Hispanic or Latino (or the more recent term Latinx) refers to a person's culture or origin—regardless of race. On the 2020 Census form, people were counted as Hispanic or Latino or Spanish if they could identify as having Mexican, Mexican American, Chicano, Puerto Rican, Cuban, or “another Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin.”

Hispanic Heritage Month actually began as a commemorative week when it was first introduced in June of 1968 by California Congressman George E. Brown. The push to recognize the contributions of the Hispanic community had gained momentum throughout the 1960s when the civil rights movement was at its peak and there was a growing awareness of the United States' multicultural identities.

Brown, who represented East Los Angeles and a large portion of the San Gabriel Valley—both heavily populated by members of the Hispanic and Latinx communities—wanted to recognize the role played by those communities throughout American history.

On September 17, 1968, Congress passed Public Law 90-48, officially authorizing and requesting the president to issue annual proclamations declaring September 15 and 16 to mark the beginning of National Hispanic Heritage Week and called upon the “people of the United States, especially the educational community, to observe such week with appropriate

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ceremonies and activities.” President Lyndon B. Johnson issued the first Hispanic Heritage Week presidential proclamation the same day.

## **Why the Date of Hispanic Heritage Month Is Important**

The timing of Hispanic Heritage Month coincides with the Independence Day celebrations of several Latin American nations. September 15 was chosen as the kickoff because it coincides with the Independence Day celebrations of five “Central American neighbors,” as Johnson called them—Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua. Those five nations declared their independence from Spain on September 15, 1821.

In his proclamation, Johnson also acknowledged Mexico, which declared its independence from Spain on September 16, 1810. Although not mentioned specifically by Johnson, Chile also celebrates its independence during that week (September 18, 1810 from Spain) and Belize, which declared its independence from Great Britain on September 21, 1981, was subsequently added to the list of nations specifically celebrated during what is now Hispanic Heritage Month.

## **Hispanic Heritage Expands From a Week to a Month**

From 1968 until 1988, Presidents Nixon, Ford, Carter and Reagan all issued the yearly proclamations, setting aside a week to honor Hispanic Americans. In 1987 U.S.

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Representative Esteban E. Torres of California proposed the expanding the observance to cover its current 31-day period. Torres wanted more time so that the nation could “properly observe and coordinate events and activities to celebrate Hispanic culture and achievement.”

In 1988, Senator Paul Simon (D-Illinois), submitted a similar bill that successfully passed Congress and was signed into law by President Ronald Reagan on August 17, 1988. And on September 14, 1989, President George H.W. Bush (who had been a sponsor of the original Hispanic Heritage Week resolution while serving in the House in 1968) became the first president to declare the 31-day period from September 15 to October 15 as National Hispanic Heritage Month.

“Not all of the contributions made by Hispanic Americans to our society are so visible or so widely celebrated, however. Hispanic Americans have enriched our nation beyond measure with the quiet strength of closely knit families and proud communities,” Bush said.

In the decades since, National Hispanic Heritage Month proclamations have been made by every sitting president of the United States.

## Sources

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[National Hispanic Heritage Month](#)

[Hispanic Heritage Month](#), United States Census Bureau

[The Creation and Evolution of the National Hispanic Heritage Celebration](#), United States House of Representatives

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# Top 20 greatest Latin pop songs

1. "Despacito", Luis Fonsi & Daddy Yankee ft. Justin Bieber
2. "Propuesta Indecente", Romeo Santos
3. "A Pura Dolor", Son by Four
4. "Si Tu Supieras", Alejandro Fernandez
5. "La Tortura", Shakira featuring Alejandro Sanz
6. "Te Quiero", Flex
7. "No Me Doy Por Vencido", Luis Fonsi
8. "El Perdon", Nicky Jam & Enrique Iglesias
9. "Bailando", Enrique Iglesias ft. Descemer Bueno & Gente de Zona
10. "Me Enamora", Juanes
11. "Abrazame Muy Fuerte", Juan Gabriel
12. "Ritmo (Bad Boys for Life)", Black Eyed Peas X J Blavin
13. "Hasta El Amanecer", Nicky Jam
14. "Ay Amor", Ana Gabriel
15. "Suerte (Whenever, Wherever)", Shakira
16. "Dakiti" Bad Bunny & Jhay Cortez
17. "MIA", Bad Bunny ft. Drake
18. "No Me Queda Mas", Selena
19. "De Mi Enamorate", Daniela Romo
20. "Ginza", J Blavin

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## Top 10 Famous Latin Dances

1. Salsa
2. Merengue
3. Bachata
4. Cha-Cha-Cha
5. Rumba
6. Samba
7. Paso Doble
8. Jive
9. Mambo
10. Argentine Tango

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# Books to consider that are focused around Latinx/Hispanic Heritage Month

- *Vanishing Maps* by Cristina Garcia
  - From the acclaimed author of *Dreaming in Cuban*, a follow-up novel that tracks four generations of the del Pino family against the tumultuous backdrops of Cuba, the U.S., Germany, and Russia in the new millennium.
- *Solito* by Javier Zamora
  - A young poet tells the unforgettable story of his harrowing migration from El Salvador to the United States at the age of nine in this moving, page-turning memoir hailed as “the mythic journey of our era” (Sandra Cisneros). *Solito* is Javier Zamora’s story, but it’s also the story of millions of others who had no choice but to leave home.
- *A Nation of Women* by Luisa Capetillo
  - In concise prose, Puerto Rican activist Luisa Capetillo advocates a workers’ revolution, forcefully demanding an end to the exploitation and subordination of workers and women. Her essays cover topics such as sexuality, mental and physical health, hygiene, spirituality, and nutrition. At once a sharp critique and a celebration of the gathering fervor of world politics, *A Nation of Women* embraces the humanistic thinking of the early twentieth century and envisions a world in which economic and social structures can be broken down, allowing both the worker and the woman to be free.

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- *Undocumented* by Dan-el Padilla Peralta
  - Discover Dan-el Padilla Peralta's journey from a New York City homeless shelter to the top of his Princeton class. *Undocumented* is essential reading for the debate on immigration, but it is also an unforgettable tale of a passionate young scholar coming of age in two very different worlds.
- *The Undocumented Americans* by Karla Cornejo Villavicencio
  - Author Karla Cornejo Villavicencio was one of the first undocumented immigrants to graduate from Harvard, but it wasn't until after the 2016 election that she decided to share her truth of being on DACA. Traveling around the country, Cornejo Villavicencio meets with other undocumented immigrants, learning about their unique stories, and discovering more about herself along the way. "The Undocumented Americans" brings these voices to light.
- *Finding Latinx* by Paola Ramos
  - The diversity and intersectionality of the Latino community are often overlooked: From Afro-Latinos and Muslims to the queer and undocumented, Latinos are often put into one monolithic group, ignoring its rich diversity. Exploring the rising use and visibility of the controversial term "Latinx," journalist and activist Paola Ramos embarks across the country to discover the people defining this term and finds how it's given a sense of belonging and solidarity to Latinos that have felt invisible. "Finding Latinx" is essential reading for those looking to understand the complexities and diversity of the Latino community.

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## Statistics in Cherokee & Cobb County (per capita)

Cherokee County population: 266,620

White (alone) population: 204,670

Hispanic or Latino population: 32,111

Poverty Status in the last 12 months (White alone): 210,939

Poverty Status in the last 12 months (Latinx/Hispanic): 30,429

Employment Status (Latinx/Hispanic): N/A

Employment Status (White alone): 173,870

Income Estimates (White alone): 213,454

Income Estimates (Latinx/Hispanic): 31,035

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Cobb County population: 766,149

White (alone) population: 387,625

Hispanic or Latino population: 111,240

Poverty status in the last 12 months (White alone): 375,090

Poverty status in the last 12 months (Latinx/Hispanic): 103,685

Employment Status (Latinx/Hispanic): 73,499

Employment Status (White alone): 319,787

Income Estimates (White alone): 156,186

Income Estimates (Latinx/Hispanic): 29,098

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