



September 2007

ZOOM

in on america

A Monthly Publication of the USA Mission to Poland. Warsaw • Krakow • Poznan

Volume IV. Issue 40.

H
I
S
P
A
N
I
C

H
E
R
I
T
A
G
E



H
I
S
P
A
N
I
C

H
E
R
I
T
A
G
E

In This Issue: Hispanic Heritage Month

ZOOM in on America

With 42.7 million people, the Hispanic population is now the largest ethnic minority in the United States. It is estimated that by 2050, one in four Americans will come from this ethnic group. The term Hispanic, as defined by the U.S. Census Bureau, refers to people of Spanish-speaking backgrounds in the United States of any race.

Throughout the history of the United States, Hispanic Americans have contributed to U.S. culture in many ways, influencing its art, architecture, values, sports, and food. The Spanish language has also had an impact on American English, as many Spanish words have become part of the average American's everyday language.

In order to officially recognize the contribution of Hispanics to U.S. culture and society, in 1968 the U.S. Congress passed a law giving the president the right to proclaim the week of September 15 as Hispanic Heritage Week.

Origins of Hispanic Heritage Month



*Latino Cultural Center in Dallas
Photo © AP Images/LM Otero*



*At the Art Museum at the National Hispanic Cultural Center in Albuquerque
Photo © AP Images/Jake Schoellkopf*

The timing was meant to coincide with the independence celebrations of the Central American countries of Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua on September 15, as well as Mexico's Independence Day on September 16. Over the years, the celebration of Hispanic Culture became so popular in the United States, that the original one week celebration now lasts an entire month, from September 15 to October 15 of each year. During this time, the United States celebrates the heritage, culture and contributions of Hispanic Americans through educational programs, cultural events, and other festivities.

The September issue of *Zoom in on America* wishes to join these celebrations by featuring articles devoted to a place, a person and a dance which are popular in the United States and have Hispanic roots.

Enjoy!

The Dry Tortugas is the name of a group of seven islands west of the Florida Keys which form one of the most beautiful, though one of the least visited, American National Parks. The islands, some green with vegetation, are surrounded by fabulously blue, crystal clear water and coral reefs. They are ephemeral islands, changing their size and shape in accordance with the movement of the Atlantic and the strength of hurricanes, at times the smaller ones completely disappear. For the pirates of long ago, these mysterious and secluded islands must have seemed an ideal hiding place for their looted treasures.

The Dry Tortugas islands

A place: Dry Tortugas



*An aerial view of Fort Jefferson in the Dry Tortugas
Photo © AP Images / Rob O'Neal*

were discovered by the Spanish explorer Ponce de Leon in 1513. He named the islands "Tortugas", Spanish for turtles, because turtles abounded on the beaches. The word "dry" was later added to the islands' name to warn seafarers of the lack of fresh water on the land. On one of the islands, Garden Key, a fort was built in 1861. Though its construction was never fully completed, it was used for military purposes - mostly in controlling navigation into the Gulf of Mexico - in several different wars, including the American Civil War and World War I.

Tourists coming to the Dry Tortugas must arrive by plane or ferry, as there is no land connection.

Text by AIRC Krakow

A person: Celia Cruz

Click to listen to the story:

<http://www.usinfo.pl/zoom/audio/audio12.wma>

When Celia Cruz died in July 2003 at the age of 78, approximately 200,000 people came to pay their final tributes to her in both New York City and Miami. It is no wonder. For many, she was the undisputed queen of salsa music. Her powerful voice and unique style and rhythms popularized salsa music in the United States and made her a musical legend in both her native Cuba and her adopted country of the United States. Her concerts were extravagant shows full of colorful outfits and energetic singing, dancing and storytelling. Over the span of her career, she recorded more



Celia Cruz holds up the award she won for best salsa album for "La Negra Tiene Tumbao" at the 3rd annual Latin Grammy Awards, Wednesday, Sept. 18, 2002. Photo ©AP Images

<http://americanhistory.si.edu/celiacruz/>

than 70 albums and received numerous awards, including several Grammys and the National Medal of the Arts. Additionally, a street in Miami was renamed to honor her. She attributed much of her success to the simple fact that she loved what she did. She loved to sing, and she loved life.

If you want to read more about Celia Cruz, or listen to her music and see pictures of her fabulous stage dresses and shoes, please visit the Smithsonian National Museum of American History's website at:

A dance: Salsa

Click to listen to the story:

<http://www.usinfo.pl/zoom/audio/audio13.wma>

The word "salsa," which means "sauce" in Spanish, first entered English dictionaries well after the middle of the 20th century referring to a hot and spicy sauce that is an essential part of Mexican cuisine. Only later did it also come to be known as a type of music encompassing Afro-Caribbean rhythms blended with Cuban big-band dance melodies, jazz, and rock. As a dance, salsa draws on Puerto Rican dances and *Son Cubano*. Salsa is clearly a Latin American mix, popularized - and some say actually invented - in the New York districts of the South Bronx and El Barrio in the 1960s.



Attendees at the American Folk Festival in Bangor, Maine, dance to salsa music on Aug 27, 2005. Photo ©AP Images

In ballrooms salsa is danced in pairs, but experienced dancers also like to show off their virtuoso steps by dancing alone. Salsa does not require a lot of space, but one of its versions "Rueda de Ca-

sino" is often danced by pairs in a large circle performing the same steps as they are called out by a leader, called a "cantador."

Salsa has a 4/4 meter and the basic rhythm is QUICK-QUICK-SLOW. Men usually begin the dance by stepping forward with the left foot, while the ladies begin by stepping backward or to the right with the right foot.

There are also underarm turns in salsa, for example in the "Casino" style the man turns the lady around himself, giving him an opportunity to admire his partner.

Salsa is a popular dance in the United States. Other Latin dances are also becoming increasingly popular in the United States, for example tango, which is a dance that originated in Argentina.

Activity Page

Win a Prize!

SEPTEMBER 2007
CONTEST

What are other Latin
American dances?

Send the answer (with
your home address) to:
zoom@usinfo.pl

Deadline: October 5

Win a Prize!

The answer to the
Summer 2007 Contest
Question was:

People place horseshoes
on their doors for luck

The winners are:
Marzena from Sanok,
Maya from Gliwice and
Anna from Radom

CONGRATULATIONS

ZOOM

in on america

About ZOOM

Zoom is online at
www.usinfo.pl/zoom/

Subscription issues
[www.usinfo.pl/zoom/
subscribe.htm](http://www.usinfo.pl/zoom/subscribe.htm)

Contact us at
zoom@usinfo.pl

American Information Resource Centers

Warsaw
Ambasada USA
ul. Piękna 14, 00-540
Warszawa
airc_warsaw@state.gov

Krakow
Konsulat Generalny USA
ul. Stolarska 9,
31-043 Krakow
KrakowAIRC@state.gov

■ Exercise 1. Spanish Loan Words:

It is believed that the English language has borrowed some ten thousand words from Spanish. Below are some examples that are grouped into categories. Please add at least one more word to each category highlighted in red and then explain what each word in the "Miscellaneous" section means.

Horses: mustang, rodeo, lasso, ...

Weather: tornado, ...

Food: avocado, banana (originally an African word, but came into English from Spanish), taco, salsa, enchilada, oregano, burrito, tomato, vanilla, chocolate, paella, potato (the last three were originally Native American, but came into English through Spanish), ...

Animals and insects: alligator, armadillo, llama, puma, mosquito, ...

Miscellaneous: bonanza, cafeteria, canyon, guerilla, patio, savvy.

■ Exercise 3. Put in the missing words.

This is a recipe for *Corn, Avocado and Tomato Salsa*. The verbs: *whisk, serve, add and combine* were removed from the directions. Put the words back in the appropriate places:

"... (1) 2 tablespoons of olive oil, 1 tablespoon of fresh lime juice, 1/4 cup (62 g) of chopped cilantro (another word for coriander), 1/4 tablespoon of salt, 1/4 tablespoon of ground pepper, 2 1/2 cups (625 grams) of freshly ground corn kernels, 1 1/2 cups (375 g) of diced avocados, 1 pint (0.47 l) of quartered tomatoes and 1/2 cup (125 g) of finely diced red onion. In a large bowl ... (2) together the olive oil, lime juice, cilantro, salt and pepper. ... (3) the corn, avocado, tomatoes and onion and ... (4) at room temperature."

Are you as pleased as Corey Folks and Sean Sorrin (the salsa makers in the photo) with how your salsa turned out?



Photo © AP Images/
Scott Neville

If so, treat your family and friends to it!

■ Exercise 2. Some Names of Places in the U.S. of Spanish Origin:

In which part of the United States are the places in red located? Example: **Florida** is the southernmost state on the east coast of the United States.

Florida was given its name by Ponce de Leon and the word means "flowery". **Colorado** is "reddish", the color of the mud in the Colorado River. **El Paso** or "passage" refers to a gap between the Rockies and the Juarez Mountains in Mexico. **Las Vegas** means "meadows," while **Los Angeles** is the city of "angels." **Nevada** means "snow covered," **Santa Fe**, "holy faith" and **Alcatraz**, a "pelican".

■ Exercise 4. Answer these questions based on the reading in this issue:

1. What percentage of the U.S. population will Hispanic Americans be by 2050?
2. Why was Hispanic Heritage Week extended to a month?
3. Why was the word "dry" added to the name of the Tortuga Islands?
4. Look on the internet to find the story behind Celia Cruz's famous shout of "Azucar."
5. On what type of rhythms is salsa music based?

Glossary -

(in the order of appearance)

census - official count of population

impact - effect or influence

proclaim - announce officially

coincide - happen at the same time

ephemeral - lasting for a short time

secluded - not visited by many people

loot - stolen goods

seafarer - a person traveling by sea

tribute - an act, statement or gift intended to show gratitude

encompass - surround and hold within



Photo © AP Images/
Alexa Welch Edlund

