

Lawrence Township Celebrates Hispanic Heritage Month 2022

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Hispanics, who now [make up about 19%](#) of our country's population, have long played an influential role in shaping our country into what it is today. Hispanic Heritage Month, observed from September 15 to October 15, honors their contributions, history, and culture. It is an opportunity for us to look inward and celebrate their legacies, and the efforts of those working towards a more just and inclusive future.

What Does it Mean to be Hispanic?

According to the [U.S. Census Bureau](#), the term Hispanic refers to a “person of Cuban, Mexican, Puerto Rican, South or Central American, or other Spanish culture or origin regardless of race”.

Origins of the Celebration

Hispanic Heritage Month began as a week-long celebration in 1968 under Lyndon B. Johnson. The dates were chosen to overlap with September 15 and 16 because they are the independence days of several Central American countries. Then 20 years later, President Ronald Reagan expanded the celebration to the 30-day-long holiday we now know it as.

How to Celebrate

So how can we celebrate? Hispanics encompass many ethnicities, each with unique cultures and traditions, so there is no singular sweeping definition of what Hispanic culture is. It is important to learn about the history of Hispanic Americans, in a way that is inclusive towards Afro-Latinos, Indigenous, LGBTQ, disabled, and Asian Americans in particular who identify as Hispanic and have been historically left out of the conversation.

Eating food from local Hispanic or Latinx-owned businesses or consuming Hispanic books, movies, art, tv shows, and music are great ways to immerse in the culture. Most importantly, be sure to put in the work of learning lessons that you may have missed in history class. Consider researching topics like the Zoot Suit Riots, Mendez v. Westminster, the Alamo, the Spanish-American War, or former NJ resident and trailblazer for LGBTQ and Latinx justice Hilda Hidalgo, Ph.D

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Consider supporting Hispanic local businesses such as:

- La Taqueria, Lawrenceville
- Buen Provecho, Hamilton
- Taste of Mexico, Princeton
- Chenchay Chole, Lawrenceville

Celebrating Hispanic Heritage Month Resources:

[A Hispanic Heritage Reading List for Every Age](#)

[An LGBTQ Latinx History in New Jersey](#)

[Explore a Timeline of Hispanic History Milestones](#)

[Learn about Cultural Appreciation, Appropriation, and Application](#)

[The Library of Congress Information and Resources](#)

[Smithsonian's Top 8 Reasons Why and How to Celebrate Hispanic Heritage Month](#)

[Hispanic Heritage Virtual Learning Labs](#)

[Visit the Smithsonian Museum of the American Latino](#)

