

REPUBLIC DAY

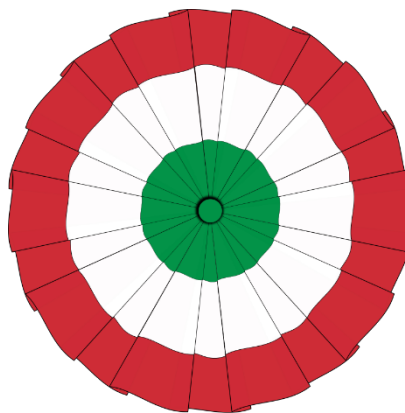
Republic Day = Festa della Repubblica

June 2nd = il Due Giugno

On June 2nd, 1946, in the form of a popular referendum, Italians were asked to choose the type of government they wanted for the country. Voters were given the choice between a monarchy or a republic. Also, it was the first time in their history that Italian women were allowed to vote. The vote revealed that 54.3% of voters chose to abolish the monarchy and establish a republic. The new republic was officially inaugurated on June 2, 1946, and this date has been recognized as an Italian holiday ever since to commemorate the birth of the Italian Republic.

Republic Day is considered a national and public holiday. The general population has the day off. Schools and businesses are closed, and the holiday is celebrated with parades, fireworks, concerts, and picnics. Republic Day is like Independence Day in the United States.

The main celebration is held in Rome with several military ceremonies. The Republic Day celebration in Rome features a solemn flag-raising ceremony at the Altare della Patria as well as a tribute to the Italian Unknown Soldier (**Milite Ignoto**) with the placing of a laurel wreath by the president of the Italian republic in the presence of many important officials. After the playing of the National Anthem, **Il Canto degli Italiani**, the **Frecce Tricolori** (like the US Air Force Thunderbirds) cross the skies of Rome, and a large patriotic military parade marches down Via dei Fori Imperiali, a large road that cuts through the ancient forums and connects the Colosseum with Piazza Venezia. Here the Head of State meets other dignitaries all of whom are wearing the Italian tricolor cockade (**Coccarda italiana tricolore**), one of the national ornaments of Italy worn during military parades. It is a red, white, and green ribbon folded into a plisse' (folds, pleats). In the afternoon musical performances and the Changing of the Guard take place at the Quirinal Palace, the official residence of the President of the Italian Republic.



Other Italian cities also celebrate this holiday with parades. For example, Florence celebrates Republic Day by having a procession in the Piazza Della Signoria. During the celebration, the National Anthem is played, and those that have served their country are honored. This event symbolizes and exemplifies

Italian patriotism and cultivates a strong relationship between Italians and the culture of their country. This form of celebration is repeated in other Italian cities and Italian embassies and consulates all over the world.

The Republic Day celebrations, specifically the Parades, have different themes each year. A few examples include:

- 1) 2003 Theme - 57th Anniversary was: The Armed Forces in the international security system for the advancement of peace and democratization of peoples
- 2) 2004 Theme - 58th Anniversary was: The Armed Forces for the Homeland.
- 3) 2010 Theme - 64th Anniversary was: The Republic and its Armed Forces committed to peace missions
- 4) 2011 Theme - 65th Anniversary was: 150th anniversary of the unification of Italy.

This very important holiday celebrating Italy's unification is always a joyous occasion. Many Italians gather with family and friends to enjoy a celebratory meal at home, in the park, or at the beach. Since most museums and public buildings are open and free to the public on that day, many Italians also enjoy visiting them.

There are several foods/meals that are connected to Republic Day. They often feature the three colors (tricolore) of Italy's flag - red, white, and green.

Some of the tri-color dishes include:

- Insalata Caprese
- Lasagne alla Bolognese con Sfoglia Verde
- Pasta Tricolore
- Pizza Tricolore
- **Tajarin al ragu'**, a pasta dish from Piedmont featuring red tomatoes, mozzarella, and basil
- grilled tomato, basil, goat cheese sandwiches
- Roman pizza
- **bicchierini salati con pomodori, ricotta e pesto** -simple finger foods or appetizers featuring the tri-colors of the Italian flag
- **Bucatini con le sarde**, a pasta dish traditionally prepared with a finely chopped mixture of local sardines and anchovies

In the US some Italian families might also prepare sweets, pizzelle, cool summer treats, Italian flag cake, and rainbow cookies.

Italians greet one another on this holiday by saying:

"Festa Della Repubblica" or "Buona Festa Della Repubblica."

Most of our immigrant ancestors probably did not celebrate this holiday after arriving in the US.

Celebrating this holiday in our lodges or Italian communities would serve to educate about Italian history and to inspire pride in our Italian heritage.

Activities and ideas for lodges that would appeal to different age levels (children, young adults, other members, families, specific interest groups) to commemorate and educate about this day:

- Post on social media on June 2nd to recognize the holiday.
- Dedicate a section of the June edition of *Questo Mese* to highlight Republic Day.
- Incorporate this holiday into meetings/events by hosting a picnic.
- Sing the Italian National Anthem (**Il Canto degli Italiani**). See lyrics below.
- Have a presentation/moment to honor Republic Day and show videos of how Italy celebrates the holiday.
- Incorporate Italian flag activities: Display Italian flag. Children color Italian flags.
- Make the **coccarda italiana** with red, white, and green ribbon.
- Play Republic Day trivia/jeopardy and offer prizes for winners!
- Reflect on our roots, Italy's history, and the role it plays in our lives today as a moment of reflection.
- Host a Republic Day Birthday Party to celebrate Italy's "birthday".
- Prepare a lodge meeting dinner or luncheon with a Republic Day Theme.
- Plan a themed potluck where members bring dishes like those prepared for a Republic Day holiday celebration in Italy. Some are listed above.



Il Canto degli Italiani

Fratelli d'Italia,
L'Italia s'è desta;
Dell'elmo di Scipio
S'è cinta la testa.
Dov'è la Vittoria?
Le porga la chioma;
Ché schiava di Roma
Iddio la creò.

Chorus:

*Stringiamci a coorte!
Siam pronti alla morte, (Repeat)
L'Italia chiamò.*

2. Noi fummo da secoli
Calpesti, derisi,
Perché non siam popolo,
Perché siam divisi.
Raccolgaci un'unica
Bandiera, una speme;
Di fonderci insieme
Già l'ora suonò.

3. Uniamoci, amiamoci;
L'unione e l'amore
Rivelano ai popoli
Le vie del Signore.
Giuriamo far libero
Il suolo natio:
Uniti, per Dio,
Chi vincer ci può?

4. Dall'Alpi a Sicilia,
Dovunque è Legnano;
Ogn'uom di Ferruccio
Ha il core e la mano;
I bimbi d'Italia
Si chiaman Balilla;
Il suon d'ogni squilla
I Vespri suonò.

5. Son giunchi che piegano
Le spade vendute;
Già l'Aquila d'Austria
Le penne ha perdute.

Il sangue d'Italia
E il sangue Polacco Bevé, col Cosacco,
Ma il cor le bruciò.

English translation

1. Brothers of Italy,
Italy has awakened;
Scipio's helmet
she has put on her head.
Where is the Victory?
Offer her the hair;
because slave of Rome
God created her.

Chorus:

*Let us unite!
We are ready to die;
Italy called.*

2. We have been for centuries
stamped on, and laughed at,
because we are not one people,
because we are divided.
Let's unite under
one flag, one dream;
To melt together
Already the time has come.

3. Let's unite, let's love;
The union and the love
Reveal to the people
God's ways.
We swear to liberate
the native soil:
United, for God,
Who can beat us?

4. From the Alps to Sicily,
Everywhere is Legnano;
Every man of Ferruccio
has the heart and the hand;
the children of Italy
are called Balilla;
The sound of every church bell
calling for evening prayers.

5. They are branches that bend
the sold swords;
Already the eagle of Austria

has lost its feathers.
the blood of Italy
and the Polish blood Drank with Cossacks
But its heart was burnt