FERRAGOSTO

Feast of the Assumption, August 15th = Ferragosto, il 15 agosto

Ferragosto originates from Feriae Augusti which is the festival of Emperor Augustus.
Originally, it was considered a day of rest after weeks of hard work in the agricultural sector.
At that time, it became a custom for the workers to wish their employers "buon ferragosto"
and receive a monetary bonus in return. Furthermore, during that time the date of ancient
Ferragosto was on August 1st however, it was the Catholic Church that moved the date to
August 15th. In fact, it was during the 7th century that Ferragosto was assimilated by the
Catholic Church and this date change was made to make Ferragosto coincide with the
religious celebration for the Assumption of Mary who died and was reborn and received into heaven on this day.

Ferragosto is considered a public holiday and a Religious (Catholic) holiday.
This holiday is celebrated with street festivals, beach parties, fireworks, musical concerts,
dances, and feasting. Around Ferragosto (August 15th), many Italians navigate to the
following popular destinations for vacations: the Emerald Coast in Sardinia, the Amalfi Coast, and the Adriatic Coast. They are also known to travel north to Lakes Como and Garda or to the Italian Alps, the Apennines, or the Dolomites for hiking and trekking options.

Some of the special customs connected to Ferragosto are horse racing and draft animal
parades. Oftentimes, many Italians will recognize this holiday by going to church for Mass and
continuing the celebration with family and friends. During these celebrations with loved
ones, they are often feasting and enjoying traditional dishes, while watching fireworks or
taking part in processions.

The foods eaten on Ferragosto vary from region to region in Italy. For example, in Tuscany roast pigeon and panzanella is popular on this holiday. In Lazio, a popular dish includes chicken with peppers, while in Liguria, people are known to eat fish. In Puglia, they eat orecchiette alle cime di rapa, whereas in Basilicata they eat lamb on this holiday. Another popular dish includes tomatoes stuffed with rice.

However, one of the most consistent foods eaten around Italy on this holiday is watermelon.

Some traditional Ferragosto Foods:
- Panzanella
- Pomodori al Riso,
- Roast Squab
- Pollo ai Peperoni
- Galluccio
- Biscotti,
- Watermelon
- Gelu di Muluna (Gelo di Languria = Watermelon Jellly)
- Ricotta Salata
- Mint Salad (Insalata di Anguria, Ricotta Salata e Menta).

The greeting on this day is "Buon Ferragosto a tutti" or "Buon Ferragosto."

Most immigrant families do not celebrate this holiday with Italian traditions butFerragosto presents a great opportunity to gain insight into Italian culture and comprehend its deep historical, religious, culinary, and artistic roots.

How to incorporate this holiday celebration at our lodges:
- National social media campaign/messaging on August 15th to recognize the holiday
- Dedicate a section of the Questo Mese to highlight Republic Day (in August)
- Host a lodge event dedicated to celebrating Ferragosto (Ex. potluck/luncheon/dinner)
- Plan a field trip to the beach/ocean (if a lodge is located near one) and host a lodge beach party to honor the holiday
- Research street festivals and participate in one (around Ferragosto) and utilize your lodge booth to recognize the holiday and serve one of the popular dishes (For example: watermelon or the Gelu di Muluna
- Bring in entertainment/Italian singers or bands and host your own musical concert
  to celebrate Ferragosto and be sure to incorporate dancing into the fun!
- Bring a history lesson of Ferragosto into your August lodge meeting to learn about the holiday (Ex. guest speaker, PowerPoint Presentation, video, etc.)
- Host a Ferragosto Food Competition and choose one dish to signify the holiday and have various lodge members sign up to make it… then "judges" can vote to determine which recipe they liked the best
- Host a Ferragosto recipe day with lodge members and make one of the Holiday recipes together while learning and having fun together