

1 [Italian American Heritage Month - October]

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3 **Resolution recognizing October of each year to be Italian American Heritage Month in**
4 **honor of the countless Italian American individuals and organizations who have**
5 **contributed to the City and County of San Francisco.**

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7 WHEREAS, San Francisco was built by entrepreneurs, innovators, and communities
8 dedicated to promoting the City as a world leader and destination. The City owes a great deal
9 of gratitude to the Italian immigrants and Italian American individuals, families, and
10 communities who have made innumerable contributions to our City's society, culture,
11 landscape, and history; and

12 WHEREAS, San Francisco is named for St. Francis of Assisi - an Italian Catholic friar,
13 deacon, and preacher, whose compassion for service to all living beings led him to act as a
14 champion for those in extreme poverty and for the protection of the world's natural spaces and
15 environment; and

16 WHEREAS, The first Italian immigrants arrived and settled in the San Francisco Bay
17 area in the 1840 's, around the time of California's official statehood and the incorporation of
18 San Francisco; and

19 WHEREAS, Italian immigrants who settled in San Francisco from the Gold Rush
20 through the 1880 's built a strong economic foundation in the Bay Area and Northern
21 California in trades such as fishing, agriculture, culinary arts, winemaking, and merchantry,
22 and

23 WHEREAS, One such Italian merchant to settle in the area in 1847 was Domenico
24 Ghirardelli, the owner and operator of a confectionery which introduced visitors and residents

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1 to Italian sweets and chocolate. Ghirardelli Square remains today one of the top economic
2 centers and tourist destinations in San Francisco; and

3 WHEREAS, Other skilled Italian merchants, laborers, and master craftsmen imported
4 and utilized Italian marble in San Francisco homes and buildings, including the seat of City
5 government, City Hall; and

6 WHEREAS, In the 1850 's, Italian Jesuit priests, Father Nobili and Father Accolti,
7 founded St. Ignatius College, which we know today as the University of San Francisco; and

8 WHEREAS, Throughout the 1860 's, early Italian settlers filled roles in City public
9 works and sanitation, contributing to the creation of Golden Gate Park, and

10 WHEREAS, After the devastation caused by the 1906 earthquake and fire, the City's
11 Italian American community banded together in City neighborhoods such as North Beach and
12 Telegraph Hill, to rebuild homes, businesses, and streets. The resilience and work ethic of the
13 Italian American community led to a rapid recovery from the disaster in these areas, and

14 WHEREAS, Famed local photographer Giovanni Monaco captured hundreds of photos
15 of the 1906 disaster, which remain some of the only records documenting the impact of the
16 earthquake and fire on neighborhoods, communities, and families, and

17 WHEREAS, The Bank of Italy 's Amadeo P. Giannini set up a desk from two barrels
18 and a wooden plank in Fisherman's Wharf in the aftermath of the 1906 disaster to help
19 provide Italian Americans with financial resources to overcome hardship. Giannini believed
20 that financial institutions should first serve the individual, and he brought the first network of
21 branch banking into communities and neighborhoods - the first branch opening in the Mission
22 District. Giannini's network and institution expanded into what we now know as Bank of
23 America; and

24 WHEREAS, The City's reputation as a vibrant, world-renowned center of arts is built
25 upon a foundation of contributions by Italian artists, singers, dancers, filmmakers, and

1 philanthropists. For example, Gaetano Merola led the establishment of the City's first resident
2 opera company in 1923. Merola's leadership and collaboration with other community
3 members led to the creation of the San Francisco Opera Association, which stands today as
4 the oldest surviving opera company on the West Coast. He also connected with City leaders
5 and residents to construct the War Memorial Opera House during the Great Depression as a
6 monument to San Francisco's veterans of the First World War; and

7 WHEREAS, Italian American poet Lawrence Ferlinghetti founded beloved literary site
8 City Lights Bookstore in 1953. City Lights continues today as a free and open space for poets,
9 authors, and book lovers all across the world, and

10 WHEREAS, San Francisco has inspired the nation with great Italian American athletes,
11 such as baseball's Joe Dimaggio, Dom Dimaggio, Tony Lazzeri, and Frank Crosetti; and

12 WHEREAS, Italian Americans have consistently led and served the City through
13 philanthropic and charitable causes. In 1858, La Societa Italiana di Mutua Beneficenza was
14 created to provide relief for struggling Italian immigrants. La Societa was the first mutual
15 benefit society in San Francisco, and for decades, operated as the oldest, continuously-
16 existing Italian organization in the United States, and

17 WHEREAS, Perhaps some of the biggest contributions Italian Americans have made in
18 San Francisco are in public service, policy-making, and political leadership. Three Italian
19 American mayors have led San Francisco through momentous times: Mayor Angelo Rossi,
20 the first mayor of 100% Italian descent to manage a major U.S. city, presided over the building
21 of the Golden Gate and Bay Bridges. Mayor Joseph Alioto steered the city through the cultural
22 revolution of the late 1960 's and 1970's and through major capital projects such as BART, the
23 Embarcadero Center, and the Transamerica Pyramid. Mayor George Moscone fought to keep
24 the San Francisco Giants in the City, and left a legacy of promoting tolerance and acceptance
25 of individuals from all walks of life.

1 WHEREAS, Italian-American Congresswoman Nancy Pelosi of San Francisco is the
2 first woman to serve as Speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives, and

3 WHEREAS, Italians and Italian Americans continue to promote San Francisco's growth
4 by working and leading in economic and trade sectors, including technology and innovation,
5 and

6 WHEREAS, The Italian Heritage Parade recognizes the accomplishments and culture
7 of all Italians and Italian Americans and remains the oldest in the nation, and celebrated its
8 150th Anniversary in October 2018, and

9 WHEREAS, Those who live or work in, or visit San Francisco are fortunate to
10 experience traces of the earliest contributions and creations of San Francisco Italian American
11 culture through businesses, restaurants, shops, community events, and daily life throughout
12 North Beach, and

13 WHEREAS, Organizations such as the Coalition of Italian American Organizations
14 (CIAO) Bay Area, a coalition of over 25 Italian American organizations, the Italian American
15 Museum (Museo Italo Americano), the Italian Community Services of San Francisco, and the
16 Italian Cultural Institute of San Francisco (Istituto Italiano di Cultura) seek to promote,
17 preserve and celebrate the Italian culture throughout the year, but especially during the month
18 of October, which is the month of the Italian American Parade, Italian American Heritage Day,
19 and other significant events celebrating Italian Culture in San Francisco, and

20 WHEREAS, San Francisco is Sister Cities with Assisi, Italy, the birthplace of the
21 namesake of the City of San Francisco and just celebrated the fiftieth anniversary of the Sister
22 City relationship, and

23 WHEREAS, Other cities throughout the United States of America recognize Italian
24 American Heritage Month, such as Los Angeles and Boston, to acknowledge the significant
25 contributions Italian Americans have made to their growth and prosperity, and

1 WHEREAS, Presidents Barack Obama, Bill Clinton, and George H.W. Bush proclaimed
2 October as Italian American Heritage Month, and

3 WHEREAS, As stated in the Administrative Code, Section 16.4-1 declaring that on the
4 second Monday in October each year, we recognize Italian American Heritage Day, and
5 honor all Italians and Italian Americans for their commitment to San Francisco's growth and
6 vibrancy and will continue to honor their passion for hard work, love and dedication to family
7 and loved ones, and the cherished opportunity to live life; now, therefore, be it

8 RESOLVED, That the Board Supervisors of the City and County of San Francisco
9 recognizes October as Italian-American Heritage Month in honor of the countless Italian
10 American individuals and organizations who have contributed to the vibrancy and prosperity of
11 our San Francisco community.

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