



Image: [Tamalada](#) (detail), by Carmen Lomas Garza
Smithsonian American Art Museum

- ❖ In September 1968, the U.S. Congress authorized President Lyndon B. Johnson to proclaim National Hispanic Heritage Week, observed during the week that included Sept. 15 and Sept. 16. In 1989, Congress expanded the observance to a month-long celebration (Sept. 15-Oct. 15) of the culture and traditions of those who trace their roots to Spain, Mexico and the Spanish-speaking nations of Central America, South America and the Caribbean.
- ❖ September 15 is the starting point for the celebration because it is the anniversary of independence of five Latin American countries: Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua. In addition, Mexico and Chile celebrate their independence days on Sept. 16 and Sept. 18, respectively.
- ❖ According to the [U.S. Census Bureau](#), as of July 2015, people of Hispanic origin make up 17.6 percent of the nation's total population. Hispanics or Latinos have [served](#) our country over 150 years. Latinos continue to advance communities across the country as small business owners, veterans, teachers, public servants, and many other professions.
- ❖ Hispanic Heritage Month allows us to recognize their achievements and contributions to our national story. Some arrived in the United States as immigrants or refugees while others trace their ancestry to Spanish-speaking or indigenous peoples living in North America, long before the United States was established. It is impossible to tell the experiences of these various groups with a single history.

People <https://www.nps.gov/subjects/tellingallamericansstories/latino-featured-people.htm>

Places <https://www.nps.gov/subjects/tellingallamericansstories/latino-featured-places.htm>

Art <https://americanart.si.edu/art/highlights/latinx>

