

# St. Augustine Celebrates Hispanic Legacy Through a Living Culture, Community, and Everyday Influence

*From historic preservation and culinary traditions to tourism leadership and bilingual hospitality, Hispanics continue to shape the nation's oldest city*

ST. AUGUSTINE, FL, UNITED STATES, June 29, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- As the United States prepares to commemorate its 250th anniversary in 2026, [St. Augustine's](#) Hispanic heritage takes on even greater national significance. Long before the founding of the United States, Spanish settlers, explorers, missionaries, and communities helped shape the cultural and historical foundations of what would become the nation. Founded more than 200 years before American independence, St. Augustine offers a living connection to the earliest chapters of Hispanic influence in the United States.

Founded in 1565 by Spanish explorer Pedro Menéndez de Avilés, St. Augustine is recognized as the oldest continuously occupied European-

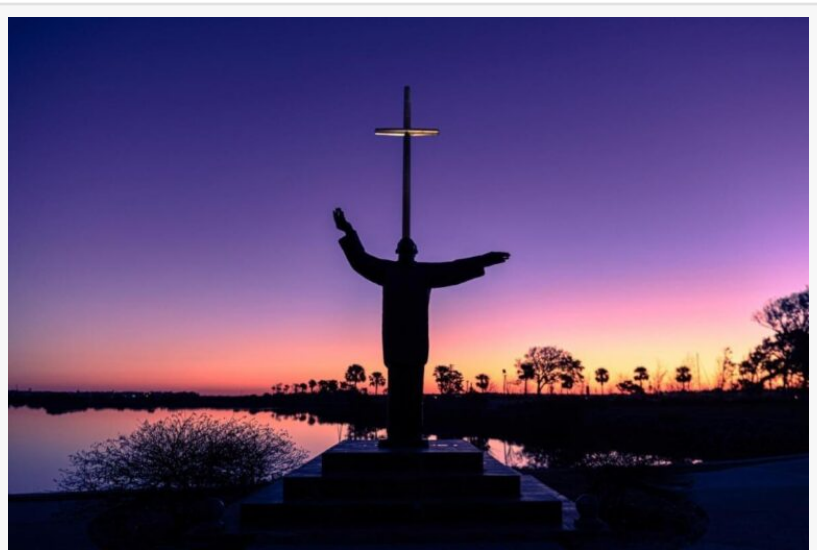
established settlement in the continental United States and served as the capital of Spanish Florida for more than 200 years.

Today, nearly 460 years after its founding, the city's Hispanic influence continues to shape the community through its architecture, language, cuisine, preservation efforts, tourism industry, and the people who welcome visitors every day.

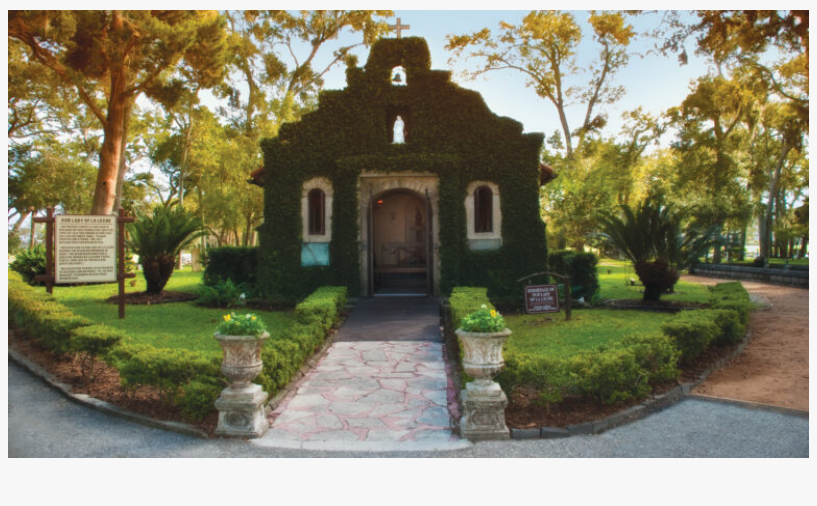


“Hispanic heritage in St. Augustine is not simply part of the city’s past—it is part of its daily identity,” said Susan Phillips, President and CEO of the St. Augustine, Ponte Vedra & The Beaches Visitors and Convention Bureau.

“Visitors experience that influence through local restaurants, historic sites, bilingual storytelling, cultural traditions, and the generations of Hispanic and Latino residents who continue to contribute to the community.”



Local leaders say the city’s role within the national 250-year celebration helps broaden the narrative of American history by recognizing the longstanding contributions of Hispanic communities to the country’s development. Through historic preservation, education, culinary traditions, faith, language, and community life, St. Augustine reflects the multicultural influences that have shaped the United States since its earliest days.



Throughout the destination, Hispanic and Latino influence can be seen across multiple sectors of the tourism industry. Latino hospitality professionals serve as hotel general managers, chefs, restaurateurs, tour guides, preservation advocates, historians, and business owners, helping shape the visitor experience across Florida’s Historic Coast.

Visitors encounter Spanish-language signage, Spanish colonial architecture, Catholic heritage landmarks, and culinary traditions that trace their roots to Spain, the Caribbean, and Latin America. Walking tours throughout the historic district continue to tell the story of the city’s Spanish origins, while preservation initiatives help maintain structures and cultural sites connected to the nation’s earliest Hispanic history.

Among the most iconic symbols of that history is the Old City Gate, originally built as part of the Spanish colonial defensive system protecting the settlement. Historic landmarks such as the Castillo de San Marcos, Mission Nombre de Dios, and the Cathedral Basilica of St. Augustine continue to reflect the city’s enduring Spanish and Hispanic influence.

The city’s Hispanic legacy is also celebrated through annual cultural commemorations, including Founder’s Day festivities recognizing the landing of Pedro Menéndez de Avilés and the founding

of St. Augustine in September 1565. In 2025, the city commemorated its 460th anniversary with historical reenactments, cultural programming, religious observances, and community celebrations honoring its Spanish roots.

This year's Hispanic Heritage Month celebrations will also include the upcoming Taste of Latino Festival in St. Augustine, bringing together Latino food, music, dance, art, and cultural traditions as part of the city's broader recognition of Hispanic contributions to the community and the nation. The festival, scheduled for October at Francis Field in downtown St. Augustine, highlights the growing visibility of Latino culture throughout Northeast Florida while creating opportunities for both residents and visitors to experience authentic culinary and cultural traditions.

While Hispanic Heritage Month provides an opportunity to highlight these stories nationally, local leaders emphasize that Hispanic culture remains integrated into the city year-round.

Restaurants throughout St. Augustine continue to showcase Spanish, Cuban, Puerto Rican, Colombian, and broader Latin American culinary traditions. Local cultural organizations and preservation groups work to protect historic sites connected to the city's Spanish colonial era, while museums and educational institutions continue to interpret more than four centuries of Hispanic influence for new generations of visitors.

This ongoing connection between history and contemporary community life increasingly resonates with travelers seeking authentic cultural experiences rooted in real communities rather than curated tourism narratives.

As Hispanic Heritage Month shines a national spotlight on Latino contributions across the United States, St. Augustine offers visitors the opportunity to experience a destination where Hispanic heritage has remained continuously present for nearly half a millennium—helping shape not only the city itself but the broader cultural history of the United States.

For more information on Hispanic heritage experiences in St. Augustine, visit Florida's Historic Coast.

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