

The New York Times



Areas that are at least
20% **Mexican**

You can see the descendants of Mexicans who arrived along the southwestern U.S. border long before 1900.



Areas that are at least
20% **African American**

Many of the second- and third-generation Americans in the South originated north of the 36th century.

Areas that are at least
20% **Italian**

Descendants of Italian who began arriving in New York Harbor in the late 19th century are largely concentrated in the Northeast.



Areas that are at least
20% **German**

After the Civil War, many Scandinavian farmers settled in the Upper Midwest, where their descendants remain today.



Areas that are at least
20% **American**

Some people, including second- and third-generation, French and Scotch-Irish settlers, now identify themselves simply as American.



Areas that are at least
20% **Chinese**

Chinese people were barred from entering the country for decades, but newer arrivals are spreading beyond cities of Chinatown.



Areas that are at least
20% **Native American**

The Native Americans who were already here — the Navajo, Hopi, Pueblo, Chinle and many others — have descendants across the country today, largely concentrated on reservations in the West.

An American Story, Told by Americans

Tracing the Ancestries of a Nation of Immigrants

By ALBERT RUI, JEFF KREMER, LARRY WITKOWSKI and LIZ VORPERS

Why are there so many Greeks in Tampa, Fla.? Because in the early 1900s, Greek sponge-divers came from the Dodecanese islands and colonized the sponge industry on Florida's Gulf Coast. What explains the pockets of Russians and Cape Verdeans in New Bedford, Mass.? In the 19th century, sloop-purloining boats came to the Azores and Cape Verde, where experienced whalers joined the crews.

That's the unique population in America, states, where centuries created a mosaic of ethnic groups. Immigrants and their descendants have been here since the first Europeans landed in the Americas and the first Africans arrived in the Americas. They came from all over the world, and they brought with them their own cultures, languages, and traditions. They are the people who have shaped the United States into the nation we know today.

This map of American ancestry shows how people described their backgrounds in the Census Bureau. Nearly 200 unique ancestries are represented. Most of them — an estimated 100 million Americans — are active as a political, state-identified identity.

Over 200 years, the country has grown to be more than just white people. It can trace the generations that passed and passed them down — and the patterns that emerged, certain groups while leaving others out — through the generations to their descendants today.

Now, a large share of the country was born abroad. First- and second-generation Americans are now the majority, and the Census Bureau's sweeping immigration data will show how many of them are now citizens.

These patterns reflect Americans for generations, from efforts to limit immigration with quotas after World War I to American citizens' rights and descent.

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A Nation of Immigrants Traces Its Roots

Each state, county and city has an identity, often made of many identities. This is how 340 million Americans describe their backgrounds, according to the U.S. Census Bureau.



Explore an interactive map of Americans' ancestral origins.

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|--|---|---|---|
| BLACK OR AFRICAN AMERICAN
Includes African, Indian, Nigerian, Ethiopian | WESTERN EUROPEAN
Includes English, Irish, Scottish, French | NORTH AMERICAN
Includes Canadian, Mexican, Guatemalan, Honduran | EAST AND CENTRAL ASIAN
Includes Chinese, Korean, Japanese, Vietnamese, Filipino |
| MIDDLE EASTERN OR NORTH AFRICAN
Includes Lebanese, Turkish, Israeli, Palestinian, Syrian, Egyptian, Moroccan | CENTRAL EUROPEAN
Includes German, Polish, Czech, Slovak, Hungarian, Austrian, Czech | CENTRAL AMERICAN AND SOUTH AMERICAN
Includes Cuban, Puerto Rican, Colombian, Venezuelan, Peruvian, Bolivian, Chilean, Argentine, Paraguayan, Uruguayan, Ecuadorian, Guatemalan, Honduran, Nicaraguan, Costa Rican, Panamanian | SOUTH ASIAN
Includes Indian, Pakistani, Bangladeshi, Nepalese |
| SOUTHERN EUROPEAN
Includes Italian, Portuguese, Spanish | EASTERN EUROPEAN
Includes Polish, Russian, Ukrainian, Belarusian, Czech, Slovak, Hungarian, Austrian, Czech | NATIVE AMERICAN
Includes Navajo, Hopi, Zuni, Pueblo, Apache, Sioux, Nez Perce, Chinle, Navajo, Hopi, Zuni, Pueblo, Apache, Sioux, Nez Perce, Chinle, Navajo, Hopi, Zuni, Pueblo, Apache, Sioux, Nez Perce, Chinle | SOUTHWEST ASIAN
Includes Iranian, Pakistani, Bangladeshi, Nepalese |
| | SCANDINAVIAN
Includes Swedish, Norwegian, Danish | NATIVE AMERICAN AND PACIFIC ISLANDER | |
- Note: Some categories represent combinations of two or more categories.

About the Colors in This Map
The map of American ancestry today is not really drawn, and people overlap and spill into one another. Some people don't know the color categories about their origins at all. For others, it's a combination of several people. For example, they identify themselves as African American or Hispanic, but they are unable to trace their roots to a specific place. Many also may identify more closely with their religious background, but the map does not ask about religion.

In fact, the census records nearly 200 unique categories of ancestry or family origin. They are represented here grouped by color. The map shows a blend of those colors based on how Americans in each census tract identify themselves.



