



Find Your Italian Ancestors Online Through Portale degli Antenati

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FamilySearch

HISTORY OF ITALIAN RECORD KEEPING

Early – 1800s Churches were solely responsible for recording vital information (births, marriages, deaths). Records were stored by the parish or the dioceses.

1800s – 1810s Civil registration began in the areas of Italy under Napoleonic rule. Records were made in duplicate, with one copy held at the local office and the other sent to provincial/state archives.

1810s - 1865 Civil registration was kept on a locality-by-locality basis, most effectively in the south of Italy.

1865 - present All Italian communities transitioned to a nation-wide civil registration system, with a copy being held in the local office and a duplicate sent to the Tribunale and later to the state archive.

ITALIAN STATE ARCHIVES

Italy has a state archive for each of its 80 provinces. These archives contain copies of civil registration records that have been sent by the individual municipalities of Italy to their corresponding state archive for long-term preservation. These civil registration records are in process of being digitized on the website Portale degli Antenati.

PORTALE DEGLI ANTENATI

Portale degli Antenati is a website, sponsored by the Italian government, with records from archives throughout Italy. It contains:

- Digital images
- Indexed records
- Information on various governmental archives
- Articles on how to conduct family history research

It can be accessed at www.antenati.san.beniculturali.it/?lang=eng.

SEARCH REGISTRIES

From the main page, you will see a search bar titled [Search Registries](#), with the option to search by location, year, or typology.

Search by locations allows you to search for the name of a specific town or province. As you type in the name of a locality, a drop-down box will appear with the list of municipalities that include your search parameters. ***When possible, click the locality from the drop-down to ensure you see all possible results.***

Search by year allows you to input a specific year or year range. If you wish to see all possible records for a specific location, you can search without a year, then add it as a filter after viewing the list of results.

Search by typology allows you to filter your results to a specific record type, in Italian. This is based on how a collection was cataloged. As such if you search for the typology of “nati” you will see results that include births, births and baptisms, birth indexes, and collections with a combination of births, marriages, and deaths. Because your desired collection may have been cataloged under a variety of these terms, it is not recommended to use typology in initial searches.

Once you have entered your search terms, a list of results will appear. You can use the filters on the right side of the screen to filter your results by location, archive custodian, or dates.

Once a filter is selected, it will appear at the top of your page. Click the ‘x’ next to the filter terms to remove the filter from your results.

Navigate Digital Record Collections

Once you have located your desired record, click the record title to open the digital record. Each book opens as a PDF. Make note of the image within the PDF where your record was found, as the link may only open the first page of the collection.

Move quickly through the collection by clicking the three lines on the top-right, clicking the index icon, and enabling thumbnails.

Alternately, enable thumbnails with limited scrolling by clicking the thumbnail icon on the top right and adding thumbnails to the bottom or right side of the image.

SEARCH BY NAME

To the right of the Search registries option, you will see the option [Search by Name](#). This allows you to search the portion of the records that have been indexed and are name-searchable for a specific individual. You can search by given name, surname, location, and year.

- Not all images have been indexed. If you don't see your ancestor in the list of results, browse by location as described above to locate their records.
- If only the province is known, leave the place field blank. Most provinces share their name with a municipality within the province. Entering the name of the province will result in results only displaying for the city with the corresponding name.
- Once you have located a result, click "[record type] record" to open the image.

BROWSE THE ARCHIVES

There is a menu bar across the top of the website. One of the options is [Browse the Archives](#). Click this resource to learn about the archives that have contributed content to Portale degli Antenati.

The archives can be viewed either on a map of Italy, in the alphabetical list located directly underneath the map. Clicking the name of a specific archive will open a page dedicated to the specific archive. You can learn if the civil registration records have been digitized, what civil records are available in person, as well as any military or census records available at the archive.

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