

# Why Do People Celebrate Cinco de Mayo?

**By History Channel**

Cinco de Mayo—or the fifth of May—is a holiday that celebrates the date of the Mexican army's 1862 victory over France at the Battle of Puebla during the Franco-Mexican War (1861-1867). A relatively minor holiday in Mexico, in the United States Cinco de Mayo has evolved into a commemoration of Mexican culture and heritage, particularly in areas with large Mexican-American populations.

France, however, ruled by Napoleon III, decided to use the opportunity to carve an empire out of Mexican territory. Late in 1861, a well-armed French fleet stormed Veracruz, landing a large force of troops and driving President Juárez and his government into retreat.

**The Battle of Puebla**

Certain that success would come swiftly, six thousand French troops under General Charles Latrille de Lorencez set out to attack Puebla de los Angeles, a small town in east central Mexico. From his new headquarters in the North, Juárez rounded up a ragtag force of two thousand loyal men—many of them either indigenous Mexicans or of mixed ancestry—and sent them to Puebla. The vastly outnumbered and poorly supplied Mexicans, led by Texas-born General Ignacio Zaragoza, fortified the town and prepared for the French assault. On May 5, 1862, Lorencez gathered his army—supported by heavy artillery—before the city of Puebla and led an assault. The battle lasted from daybreak to early evening, and when the French finally retreated,



they had lost nearly five hundred soldiers. Fewer than one hundred Mexicans had been killed in the clash. Although not a major strategic win in the overall war against the French, Zaragoza's success

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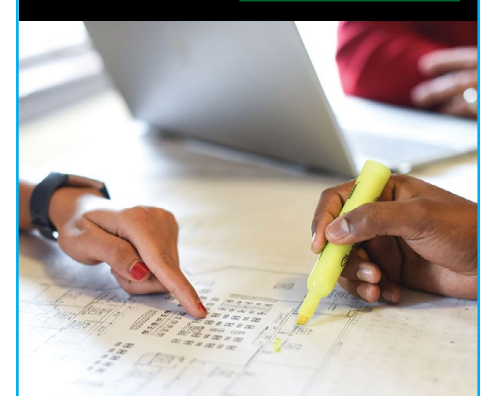
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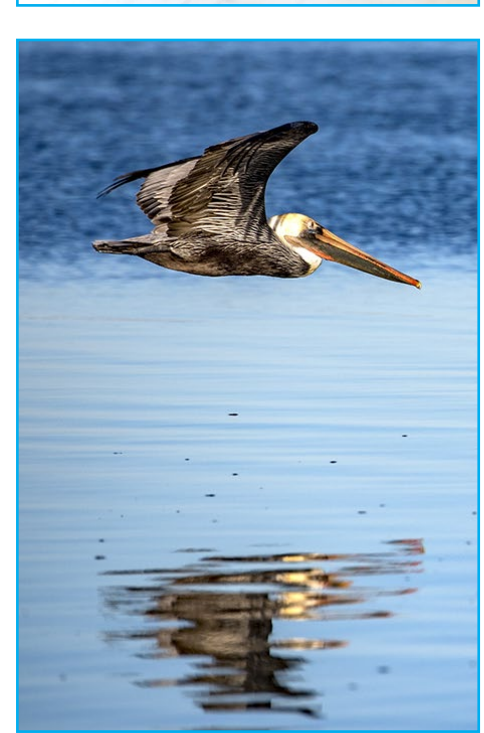
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**Federal Contracting for Small Businesses Webinar**  
Tuesday, May 12, 2026, 11:00 am–12:30 pm CDT Online  
Main Sponsor(s): US Small Business Administration  
Contact: Irene Gonzalez, 208-334-1673, [irene.gonzalez@sba.gov](mailto:irene.gonzalez@sba.gov)  
Fee: Free; registration required  
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Monday, May 18, 2026, 8:00 am–9:00 am CDT Online  
Main Sponsor(s): US Small Business Administration, Rhode Island District Office  
Contact: Brian Hopkins, 401-528-4575, [brian.hopkins@sba.gov](mailto:brian.hopkins@sba.gov)  
Fee: Free; registration required  
This free workshop, presented by the Rhode Island

District Office, is designed to help entrepreneurs understand the various SBA programs and services available to help them as they start, expand, grow, and recover their businesses. This overview presentation covers: Introduction to the SBA; SBA Resource Partner Network—Business Training and One-on-One Counseling; Selling to the Federal Government—SBA Contracting Certification Programs; Access to Capital—Loan and Surety Bond Programs; International Trade Assistance; Emergency Preparedness and Disaster Assistance Loans. Register online for the free workshop webinar at <https://www.sba.gov/event/80669>

**Federal Contracting: Woman-Owned Small Business (WOSB) Certification Program Webinar**  
Tuesday, June 16, 2026, 1:00 pm–3:00 pm CDT Online  
Main Sponsor(s): US Small Business Administration  
Contact: Patrice Dozier, [patrice.dozier@sba.gov](mailto:patrice.dozier@sba.gov)  
Fee: Free; registration required  
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