**Portugal Day - June 10**

Day of Portugal, Camões and the Portuguese Communities is celebrated annually on 10 June. The official celebrations of this day take place in Portugal but communities of Portuguese immigrants around the world also mark this day. The June 10 marks the death of the celebrated Portuguese poet Luís de Camões in the year 1580.

**Camões**

Luís de Camões wrote the *Os Lusíadas*, an epic poem celebrating the heroic deeds of the Portuguese people. The work focuses on the Portuguese discoveries of the fifteenth century and is considered one of the most important of Portuguese literature, a symbol of the Portuguese empire in the world.

Camões wrote *The Lusiadas* while traveling. He is known to have been in India, Macau and Mozambique. Owner of an adventurous spirit, he lost an eye fighting in Ceuta and survived a shipwreck in Cochinchina ( Vietman at present).

Camões became a symbol of Portuguese nationalism but the date of his death coincides with the loss of independence of Portugal. The succession crisis of 1580 resulted in the occupation of the throne of Portugal by Philip II of Spain. On December 1, 1640 Portugal regains its independence expelling the Spanish and acclaiming John IV king of Portugal.

**Race Day**

During the Estado Novo dictatorship period in the twentieth century, Camões was used as a symbol of the nation. In 1944 the 10th of June was called day of Camões and the Portuguese race, which served the purposes of nationalist head of state António Salazar. The race day intended to exalt the Portugal with a history of centuries, one of the oldest states in Europe, with a colonial empire that almost no other European country had. In the 60s, on June 10 the Portuguese Armed Force were honored, which was also meant to exalt the war in Africa and colonial power.

After the revolution of April 25th 1975, June 10 became the day of the Portuguese Communities indicating the presence of the Portuguese around the world. This replaces the image of the Portuguese as colonizers by an image of the Portuguese as emigrants spread all over the world.

**St. Michael the Archangel**

The 10th of June is also in the liturgical calendar the day of St. Michael the Archangel, Angel of Portugal that protects the Portuguese nation. It is thought that the Angel appeared for the first time at the Battle of Ourique, contributing to the victory of the forces of Dom Afonso Henriques (fist king of Portugal) against the Muslim invaders, thus achieving the independence of Portugal.

The celebrations of the Day of Portugal, Camões and the Portuguese Communities are marked throughout the country. Only the official celebrations are chaired by the President, Prime Minister, Ambassadors and other government entities. The celebrations involve various military ceremonies, exhibitions, concerts, processions and parades, and an awards ceremony assigned by the President.

Every year, the President of the Portuguese Republic elects a city to host the official celebrations. In 2016, for the first time, the ceremonies of June 10 were also held outside Portugal. This innovation introduced by the recently elected President Marcelo Rebelo de Sousa focuses on June 10 as the day of the Portuguese Communities. This is relevant at a time when the Portuguese emigration has grown in recent years due to the economic crisis and now exceeds two million people.