



Bing Crosby

May 3, 1903 - October 14, 1977

Alcobendas, undefined

Harry Lillis "Bing" Crosby, the singer and actor whose easy baritone helped invent the sound of twentieth-century American popular music, died of a heart attack after a round of golf at La Moraleja Golf Club near Alcobendas, Spain, on October 14, 1977. He was seventy-four.

He was born in Tacoma, Washington, on May 3, 1903, the fourth of seven children of Harry Lowe Crosby and Catherine Helen Harrigan Crosby, and grew up in Spokane. At Gonzaga University he studied law while singing with a local band; a nickname from a newspaper comic character, the Bingville Bugle, stuck for life. With Al Rinker he left Spokane for Los Angeles, joined Paul Whiteman's orchestra as one of the Rhythm Boys, and by the early 1930s was a solo star on radio and records.

His microphone technique - soft, conversational, intimate - suited the new electric recording era and made him the best-selling recording artist of the first half of the century. "White Christmas," first sung in the 1942 film *Holiday Inn*, became for decades the best-selling single in history. He starred in dozens of films, including the Road pictures with Bob Hope and Dorothy Lamour, and won the Academy Award for Best Actor for *Going My Way* (1944). During World War II he tirelessly entertained troops and sold war bonds.

Away from the camera he was an early television pioneer, a thoroughbred owner and a golf obsessive who helped popularize the sport on American screens. He died suddenly on the course in Spain after shooting what companions said was one of his better rounds, collapsing as he walked toward the clubhouse. He was buried at Holy Cross Cemetery in Culver City, California. Decades later his voice remains the default sound of an American Christmas.

Services

Died in Alcobendas, Spain, October 14, 1977, aged 74. Portrait: Paramount Pictures publicity photograph, June 1942 (public domain), hosted by Notice Nearby.

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