

## ERITREA



### 1890 - 50 CENTEMISMI - OBVERSE

ERITREA, ITALIAN COLONY of  
MILAN MINT

50 CENTEMISMI/TEN RIYALS 18MM .835 FINE 2.5 GRAMS

(1890) 1890	686,802	frozen date
(1891) 1890	1,113,082	

▲OV: Crowned Head of UMBERTO.I, facing right, UMBERTO I RE D'ITALIA • 1890 (Umberto I King of Italy • 1890) around.

▼RV: Star-burst / C. 50 / native inscription = Colonia Eritrea = Eritrea Colony/ arabic denomination = one/tenth riyal, above small wreath below/ M (mintmark) below.

EDGE: Reeded

MINT: M = MILAN

ENGRAVER: Filippo Spanenza, Chief Engraver Rome Mint.

FOOTNOTE: This one year date struck between 1890 and 1891 by the Milan mint had a total mintage of 1,799,164 all dated 1890.

FOOTNOTE: Eritrea - No complete census had been taken by 1921 when the population was estimated at 350,000; including 115,000 Abyssinians. Europeans, apart from soldiers, number about 4,000, mostly Italians; next in importance came the Greek community. *Encyclopaedia Britannica, 12th Edition 1922.*



### 1890 - 50 CENTEMISMI - REVERSE

FOOTNOTE: Eritrea, a-re-tra'-ah, a small Italian Colonial outpost in Africa, first occupied by white men in 1885 when an Italian Company bought from a local chieftain a spot of land on the coast at Assab for a coaling station. Five years later a greatly extended area some 670 miles along the African coast of the Red Sea from Cape Kaser to Cape Dumerer, with the Soudan on the west, on the south Ethiopia and French Somaliland, had developed into the Colony Eritrea, named in remembrance of "Mare Erythraeum" of ancient Rome.

FOOTNOTE: The Italian Kingdom issued new coinage for their colony of Eritrea in 1890 with a silver tallero d'Italia equal to 100 centemismi and based on the Latin Monetary Union standards. The issue of a crown sized 5 tallero d'Italia was an attempt to replace the Maria Theresa thaler which circulated extensively from Arabia to Ethiopia. The natives refused to accept the new coinage, even when the Maria Theresa thaler was prohibited.



### MARIA THERESIA THALER

FOOTNOTE: The blistering sands of the coastline are almost unendurable for Europeans, where summer finds temperatures almost always 100° and often reaching 120° and the winters are only a little cooler. On this desert strip is Eritrea's only port at which ocean vessels may dock, the Port of Massaua, one of the worlds hottest cities, nearly 200 miles up the coast from the original settlement. Massaua has a population of 15,000 natives and a few hundred Europeans, mostly Italians. The city is a thriving port and famed for its vast salt industry; while dunes that look like sand are solid salt, much of which when refined is exported to Japan. Back from the sea a few miles the country becomes mountainous and inland 40 miles is the capital, Asmara with a population of 19,000 natives and 3,000 Europeans, at an elevation of 8,000 feet, which gives it a delightful climate. *New International Encyclopedua, 1910.*

FOOTNOTE: Eritrea, an Italian colony on the African coast of the Red Sea. The colony is bounded inland by; Anglo-Egyptian Sudan, Abyssinia and French somaliland. The inhabitants of the plains and foothills are for the most part semi-nomadic shepherds, living on durra and milk. In the north these people largely of Arab or Hamitic stock, include various negro tribes. The inhabitants of the plateau are Abyssinians. The nomads are Mussulmans [Mohamadian] , and as a rule, docile and pacific, though the Danakils are given to occasional raiding. The Abyssinians are more warlike, but they have settled down under Italian rule. Among the native industries are mat-weaving, cotton-weaving, silver-working and rudimentary iron and leather working. *Encyclopaedia Britannica, 11th Edition 1911.*

