

# Historic Missions are part of California State Parks

Three of the 21 stone and adobe California missions are part of California State Historic Parks.

Once outposts of Spain's presence in California, the missions were located along El Camino Real, the Royal Highway that stretched from San Diego to Sonoma.

**La Purísima Mission State Historic Park (Misión la Purísima Concepción de María Santísima)** [SANTA BARBARA COUNTY] is located three miles northeast of Lompoc along Highway 246 on Purísima Road. The park, founded in 1787, is the 11<sup>th</sup> in the chain of 21 California missions. The park was named for "the Immaculate Conception of Holy Mary, the Most Pure." It is one of the most completely restored missions of the 21 missions in the state.

The park contains the church, shops, quarters, springhouse, cemetery and mission gardens. An earthquake destroyed the original buildings in 1812. During the 1930s, the federal Works Progress Administration and California Conservation Corps restored many of the mission's adobe buildings.

The Native Americans who built and worked at the mission were from the Chumash tribe. The economy of the mission was based on agriculture. The mission was also well known for its soap, candles wool, and leather goods, as well as its fruits and wine.

The historic park is one of the largest, most complete and most authentic mission restoration projects in the American West. Along with the restored

buildings, the park contains the mission's rebuilt intricate water system, which collects water from springs located more than a mile above the mission and carries it to the mission gardens and fields. The gardens contain one of the finest collections of early California flora. A self-guided tour gives visitors the opportunity to step back in time for a look at California mission life in the early 1880s. There are 12 miles of maintained trails in the park. Special living history events with docents in historic costumes are scheduled throughout the year.

**Santa Cruz Mission State Historic Park (Misión la Exaltacion de la Santa Cruz)** [SANTA CRUZ COUNTY] is located at 144 School Street, just off of Mission Plaza in downtown Santa Cruz. Misión la Exaltacion de la Santa Cruz was the 12<sup>th</sup> mission built in California. It was founded in 1791 and named for the Sacred Cross.

Flood and earthquakes damaged the building. It collapsed in 1857. In 1889, the current Gothic style Holy Cross Church was built on the original old mission property. It is an active parish today. Santa Cruz Mission State Historic Park is part of the mission complex. The Santa Cruz Mission adobe, built in 1824, and the last of the original mission complex buildings to survive, was a dormitory that served as living quarters for mission Indians.

The Native Americans who built and lived at the mission were from the Yokut and Ohlone tribes. The economy of the mission was based on planting crops of wheat and corn as well as vineyards, and raising cattle and sheep.

**Sonoma State Historic Park (Misión San Francisco Solano)** [SONOMA COUNTY] is located at 20 East Spain Street in Sonoma. The mission, founded on July 4, 1823, is the last of California's 21 missions and is located within Sonoma State Historic Park. It was named for Saint Francis Solano, a missionary to Peruvian Indians. Native Americans from the Pomo and Coastal Miwok tribes came to work and live in the mission settlement. Wheat, corn and vineyards were planted and cattle and sheep were raised in the area.

Three years after construction of the mission, General Mariano Guadalupe Vallejo, commander of the San Francisco presidio, was instructed by the Mexican government to move his troops to Sonoma and secularize the mission settlement. In 1846 a group of American settlers took over the town and imprisoned Vallejo in the "Bear Flag Revolt." The General was later released and became a State Senator and Mayor of Vallejo.

The mission contains the Jorgensen collection of mission paintings.

Sonoma State Historic Park also contains historic buildings, such as the barracks and General Vallejo's home ("La Casa Grande"), as well as restaurants, shops and a museum, which is located in the padres' quarters.

For more information about California State Parks, visit the website at [www.parks.ca.gov](http://www.parks.ca.gov).

For California State Parks camping reservations, the toll-free ReserveAmerica, Inc. camping reservations hotline is (800) 444-PARK (7275) between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m. Pacific Time, seven days a week. Reservations may be charged to VISA or Master Card.

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