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Santa Barbara Locals History & Nature Tour is designed and operated by Local Youth through a Social Enterprise Class under the guidance and direction of Joseph Natale, an internationally experienced Social Entrepreneur. These entrepreneurial youth are committed to developing unique and profitable businesses that give back to the community by allocating a portion of their profits to social causes helping land, sea and people. See Santa Barbara 'where the locals go,' while contributing to social causes, helping land, sea and people.



We create
itineraries for the
curious &
adventure-seekers.

SANTA BARBARA LOCALS NATURE & HISTORY TOUR



"An experience
designed for you!"

HISTORY

- The history of Santa Barbara, California, begins approximately 13,000 years ago with the arrival of the first Native Americans.
- The Spanish came in the 18th century to occupy and Christianize the area, which became part of Mexico following the Mexican War of Independence.
- In 1848, the expanding United States acquired Santa Barbara along with the rest of California as a result of defeating Mexico in the Mexican-American War.

Santa Barbara transformed then from a dusty cluster of adobes into successively:

- a rowdy, lawless Gold Rush era town;
- a Victorian-era health resort;
- a center of silent film production;
- an oil boom town;
- a town supporting a military base and hospital during World War II;
- and finally it became the economically diverse resort destination it remains in the present day.
- Twice destroyed by earthquakes, in 1812 and 1925, it was rebuilt in a Spanish Colonial style.

PRE-CONTACT HISTORY

- The lands flanking the Santa Barbara Channel, both the mainland including present day Santa Barbara, and the Channel Islands, has been continuously inhabited by the Chumash people and their ancestors for at least 13,000 years.
- The oldest human skeleton yet found in North America, Arlington Springs Man, was unearthed on Santa Rosa Island, approximately 30 miles (48 km) from downtown Santa Barbara.

CHUMASH

- In more recent pre-Columbian times the Chumash had many villages along the shores and inland, at least one of which, on present-day Mescalitan Island,
- They had over a thousand inhabitants in the 16th century.
- They were peaceful hunter-gatherers, living from the region's abundant natural resources, and navigating the ocean in tomols, craft closely related to those used by Polynesians.
- Their rock art work can be seen in nearby Chumash Painted Cave, and their sophisticated basket weaving at the Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History.
- The Santa Barbara bands spoke the Barbareño language dialect of the Chumashan languages group.
- As Europeans settled in their homelands the Chumash population declined.

MORE MESA PRESERVE

The 300-acre More Mesa just west of Hope Ranch has been one of the preservation community's highest priorities for decades. While most of More Mesa is owned by an out-of-state investor who does not seem interested in selling it for preservation, the Land Trust did succeed in buying one property on the northwestern edge of More Mesa in 1991. The former "Austin/Andrews Property" was purchased with Proposition 70 bond funds, and transferred to the County. With a Coastal Resource Enhancement Fund grant, the Land Trust prepared a 1992 management plan for this property. In recent years, the County Flood Control District has begun planting native riparian plants there, as part of its mitigation program for flood control maintenance along Atascadero Creek.

Visiting More Mesa

The More Mesa open space includes oak woodland and riparian habitat, and has nice trails that are popular with local birdwatchers, bikers and horseback riders.



SPANISH PERIOD 2

· Portola's expedition encountered large numbers of exceptionally friendly natives, many of whom lived in Syuxtun, a village just in back of the beach between present-day Chapala and Bath streets. Indeed, the natives – which the Spaniards dubbed the Canaliños for the "canoes" (actually tomols) they used so skillfully – so irritated their guests with gifts and boisterous music that Portola changed the location of his camp on August 19 so the party could get some rest.

The Portolá expedition was the beginning of Spanish efforts to occupy Alta California and fortify it against perceived threats from other encroaching European colonial powers – principally the early British Empire and tsarist Russian-Pacific Empire. In addition, missions established by Franciscans under Junípero Serra were intended to convert the natives to Christianity and turn them into loyal Spanish colonists.

Portola himself, however, did not stay, and it was not until 1782 that a force of soldiers, led by Don Felipe de Neve came to build the Presidio of Santa Barbara, one of several military outposts meant to protect Alta California against foreign interests and to protect the missions against attacks by hostile natives. The Presidio was not completed until 1792, and Father Fermín Lasuén dedicated the nearby Mission Santa Barbara on the feast day of Santa Barbara (December 4, 1786). He chose for his building site the location of a Chumash village on Mission Creek named Tay-nay-án.

SPANISH PERIOD 3

· Many of the soldiers who came to build and garrison the Presidio had brought their families with them, and after their terms of service ended settled in Santa Barbara. They built their adobes near the Presidio, arranged haphazardly; a Boston journalist described the scatter of these buildings "as though fired from a blunderbuss." Most of Santa Barbara's old families are descended from these early settlers, and many of their names linger in the street and place names, such as Cota, De la Guerra, Gutierrez, Carrillo, and Ortega.

Building the Mission itself continued throughout the rest of the century, along with the work of converting the Native Americans to Christianity, a task which proved difficult: according to the Mission registers, by 1805, only 185 of the more than 500 Native Americans in Santa Barbara had been baptized. The burial register shows that 3,997 Native Americans died between 1787 and 1841, the majority from diseases such as smallpox, to which the natives had no natural immunity. By 1803 the Mission's chapel was finished, and by 1807 a complete village for the Native Americans had been completed, largely by their own labor. The site of this village is on the Mission grounds along modern-day Constance Street.

MEXICAN PERIOD 1

In 1822 the Spanish rule ended and their flag came down forever, with their loss in the Mexican War of Independence. Santa Barbara, along with the rest of Alta California, became a territory of independent Mexico.

MEXICAN PERIOD 2

One of the earliest notable events in the Mexican period in Santa Barbara was the February 1824 Native American rebellion. The Native Americans especially resented the poor and scapegoating treatment given them by the soldiers stationed at the Presidio, who were resentful of being unpaid by the new government. The rebellion, incited by the more warlike Yokut–Tulares, inland relations of the Chumash, began at Mission Santa Inés, near present-day Solvang on the other side of the Santa Ynez Mountains, and quickly spread to Mission La Purísima Concepción. In Santa Barbara, the Native Americans seized control of the buildings of the Mission complex, but immediately the buildings were surrounded by Presidio soldiers, since the Presidio was little more than a mile away. Overnight the Native Americans were able to make a getaway north into Mission Canyon and then over the mountains, where they eventually linked up with other unsubdued groups of Native Americans in the southern San Joaquin Valley. After a battle near San Emigdio Creek in March, and a subsequent three-month pursuit and negotiation, the Native Americans were recaptured near Buena Vista Lake, and brought back to Santa Barbara. By 1833 the process of secularization at the Missions was completed, and the lands and property were given to soldiers, leading Californios, and occasionally the original Native American owners, with most of the Indians becoming Mexican citizens.

MEXICAN PERIOD 3

This had a dramatic effect on the economy and culture, commencing what is called the Rancho Period in California history, a period which overlapped the end of the Mexican era. Lands formerly owned by the Church were parceled out in land grants to applicants; the Mexican governors of California awarded over 800 separate land grants before the end of Mexican control in 1847. Many local place names derive from these grants, including Dos Pueblos, San Marcos, Refugio (the only Spanish-era land grant in Santa Barbara County), Las Positas, and Goleta.

ITALIAN PERIOD 1

Italian immigrants who played a significant role in transforming our sleepy little Hispanic village into an American town. The steady stream of Italian immigrants to Santa Barbara started from the Piedmont region of Italy in the late nineteenth century and continued from the Veneto region in the following mid-century, all seeking a new life in the land of opportunity. And with these pioneering families came specific industries which have distinguished Santa Barbara to this day. The illustrated lecture features wonderful historic photos including those of the earliest Italian families such as the Parma, Craviotto, Jordanos and photos of the industries dominated by Italian immigrants including dairy (i.e. Panizzon, Prevedello, Zanesco, etc.), stone masons, and fishing (Castagnola, Larco) as well as other early images of Santa Barbara. The history of Italians in California is in many ways unique. In no other state were some immigrants so successful, and in no other state did they leave such an indelible mark.

ITALIAN PERIOD 2

Yet, Italians in California provided much of the cheap labor that allowed agriculture, lumbering, mining, construction Historical Perspective 17 and industry to develop. They suffered discrimination, both at the hand of Americans and of those Italians who were well established.

The first Italian settlers arrived some time after the start of Spanish colonization, which began in 1769. Italian migration to California has largely followed the economic development of the state. It is California's economic growth that has determined the fortunes of Italian immigrants, how they were received, and where they chose to settle. This was true for the early period of Italian immigration immediately before the Gold Rush, through the 1920s when Italians were the largest immigrant group in the state, until the 1950s. when in the wake of a national decrease, their numbers in California increased. Many Italians were independent miners, who, together with Native Americans, Latins, Chinese and blacks, had to face the brunt of discrimination. Because of this many were soon pushed away from mining and settled in adjoining towns. By this time there were small Italian businesses established throughout gold country as well as in the major northern California cities of San Francisco, Stockton and Sacramento (see Rhodes, 1988:942). It may have been initial discrimination that pushed so many Italian miners into shopkeeping, but they soon realized that greater financial opportunities awaited merchants who catered to the needs of miners, thus leading to the oft quoted: "The miners mined the gold, and the Italians mined the miners"

SPANISH PERIOD 1

· The first Europeans to see the area were members of a Spanish expedition led by the Portuguese explorer Juan Rodríguez Cabrillo, who sailed through the Channel in 1542, and anchored briefly in the vicinity of Goleta. Later, on the return voyage, Cabrillo injured his leg during a fight with natives on Santa Catalina Island and died from gangrene. He was buried either on San Miguel Island or Mescalitan Island – the exact burial place of Cabrillo has long been a mystery.

In 1602, Spanish maritime explorer Sebastián Vizcaíno gave the name "Santa Barbara" to the channel and also to one of the Channel Islands[5] in gratitude for having survived a violent storm in the Channel on December 3, the eve of the feast day of that saint.

A land expedition led by Gaspar de Portolà passed through in 1769, and spent the night of August 18 in the area of today's lower Laguna Street, where at that time there was a freshwater pond (Spanish: laguna). There was a large native town nearby, which Franciscan missionary Juan Crespi, who accompanied the expedition, named "Laguna de la Concepcion". Vizcaíno's earlier name, however, is the one that has survived. The next night, August 19, the expedition moved a short way to a camp by a creek, probably Mission Creek, but not as far up as where the mission was later established

THE CHUMASH PEOPLE ONCE NUMBERED IN THE TENS OF THOUSANDS AND LIVED ALONG THE COASTS OF CALIFORNIA. THROUGH CENTURIES OF HARDSHIPS AND ABUSE, THE TRIBE HAS OVERCOME ALL ODDS IN ORDER TO THRIVE ON THE LAND OF OUR CHUMASH ANCESTORS ONCE MORE.

Ancient Roots: The Tribe's Origins

At one time, Chumash territory encompassed 7,000 square miles that spanned from the beaches of Malibu to Paso Robles. The tribe also inhabited inland to the western edge of the San Joaquin Valley.

Utilizing resources from both the land and the sea, we called ourselves “the first people,” and pointed to the Pacific Ocean as our first home. These early Chumash ancestors were hunters, gatherers, and fishermen who lived in large, dome-shaped homes that were made of willow branches. As the Chumash culture advanced with boat-making, basketry, stone cookware, and the ability to harvest and store food, the villages became more permanent. The Chumash society became tiered and ranged from manual laborers to the skilled crafters, chiefs, and shaman priests who were also accomplished astronomers. Women could serve equally as chiefs and priests.

In the rolling hills of the coastline, our Chumash ancestors found caves to use for sacred religious ceremonies. The earliest Chumash Indians used charcoal for their drawings, but as the culture evolved, so did the cave markings – using, red, orange, and yellow pigments. These colorful yet simple paintings included human figures and animal life.

Many of the caves still exist today, protected by the National Parks system, and illustrate the spiritual bond the Chumash hold with our environment.

As with most Native American tribes, the Chumash history was passed down from generation to generation through stories and legends. Many of these stories were lost when the Chumash Indian population faced the turmoil to come.

The 1700s-1800s: A People Torn Apart

In 1769, a Spanish land expedition led by Gaspar de Portola left Baja California and reached the Santa Barbara Channel. In short order, five Spanish missions were established in Chumash territory. The Chumash population was all but decimated, due largely to the introduction of European diseases.



By 1831, the number of mission-registered Chumash numbered only 2,788, down from pre-Spanish population estimates of 22,000.

The modern-day towns of Santa Barbara, Montecito, Summerland, and Carpinteria were carved out of the old Chumash territory. After mission secularization in 1834, Mexican authorities failed to live up to their promises of distributing the remaining land among the surviving Chumash, causing further decline in the tribal population.

By 1870, the region’s now dominant Anglo culture had begun to prosper economically. The Santa Barbara area established itself as a mecca for health seekers, and by the turn of the century it became a haven for wealthy tourists and movie stars.

Most of the Chumash who remained in the area survived through menial work on area farms and ranches, far removed from the prestige of their ancestors.

Modern Day: The Culture Revitalized

Through the determination and hard work of Chumash survivors, the tribe was able to overcome the adversities of early modern life and rise to economic self-sufficiency.

With revenue from the tribe’s gaming property, the culture has been revitalized and Chumash descendants once again thrive on tribal land. Resources are devoted to education, health, and culture – ensuring a vibrant future for Chumash generations to come.