

# Santa Barbara Mission Walk



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## **Tour Summary**

Mission Santa Barbara is one of the most photographed sites in the United States, but few know its secrets. Learn some surprising information about the Queen of the Missions. This magnificent structure is not the first chapel to be built on this site. There were two preliminary chapels prior to an adobe structure destroyed by earthquake in 1812.

Find out how the city of Santa Barbara received its name and what technology brought by the Spanish changed California's landscape. This tour will enhance your experience as you stroll the exterior grounds of Old Mission Santa Barbara. The Franciscans who have occupied this site since 1786 manage the 15 most important acres in Santa Barbara.

Cover Photo: Carol M Highsmith 1946.  
Library of Congress

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# Introduction



Please join me, Lisa Knox Burns, for a tour of Mission Santa Barbara. A docent since 2013, I try to capture the attention of my tour groups, especially 4th graders, with fascinating facts and engaging stories about the 65-year Mission period in Alta California, from 1769 with the founding of Mission San Diego, to 1834 with the Mexican Secularization Act. Approximately 7000 4th graders with chaperones visit the Old Mission each year. Santa Barbara Mission is the number one civic attraction in

Santa Barbara. The Old Mission is so much more than a pretty facade. People who stop for a photo are missing many sites hidden in plain view. Understanding what you are seeing will enhance your experience. Just ask a 4th grader who's taken my tour.

Photo credit: Betsy J. Green

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## **Tips**

- This tour is of the exterior grounds of Old Mission Santa Barbara, a National Historic Landmark.
- The Old Mission is located at 2201 Laguna Street, corner of Los Olivos and Laguna streets, Santa Barbara, California. It is on the Santa Barbara Trolley route. MTD no longer serves the site. The nearest public bus stop is at State and Pueblo streets, a pleasant walk of 5 blocks through a beautiful residential neighborhood which takes you to the Mission. The downtown shuttle stop at Sola and State Street is approximately 1.1 miles, or 10 blocks from the Mission.
- The tour will provide background historical information about why Spain built missions, why the Franciscans chose this site, and how the orientation of the mission was

designed to send a powerful spiritual message.

- How the mission system affected the indigenous people is also addressed.
- Tickets are required to go inside the Old Mission to see its beautiful sacred garden, impressive chapel, cemetery, and curated museum exhibits. Self-guided tours are available daily, please check the Mission website or tour desk for hours and pricing. The Franciscan Friars have occupied and cared for the 15 acre property since its founding in 1786. Old Mission Santa Barbara is a predominantly self-sufficient non-profit organization that does not receive state or federal funds, nor does it receive financial support from the Catholic Church. The Mission relies on the revenue from museum tour ticket sales, the gift shop, and venue rentals to cover annual expenses.

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# Welcome to Old Mission Santa Barbara



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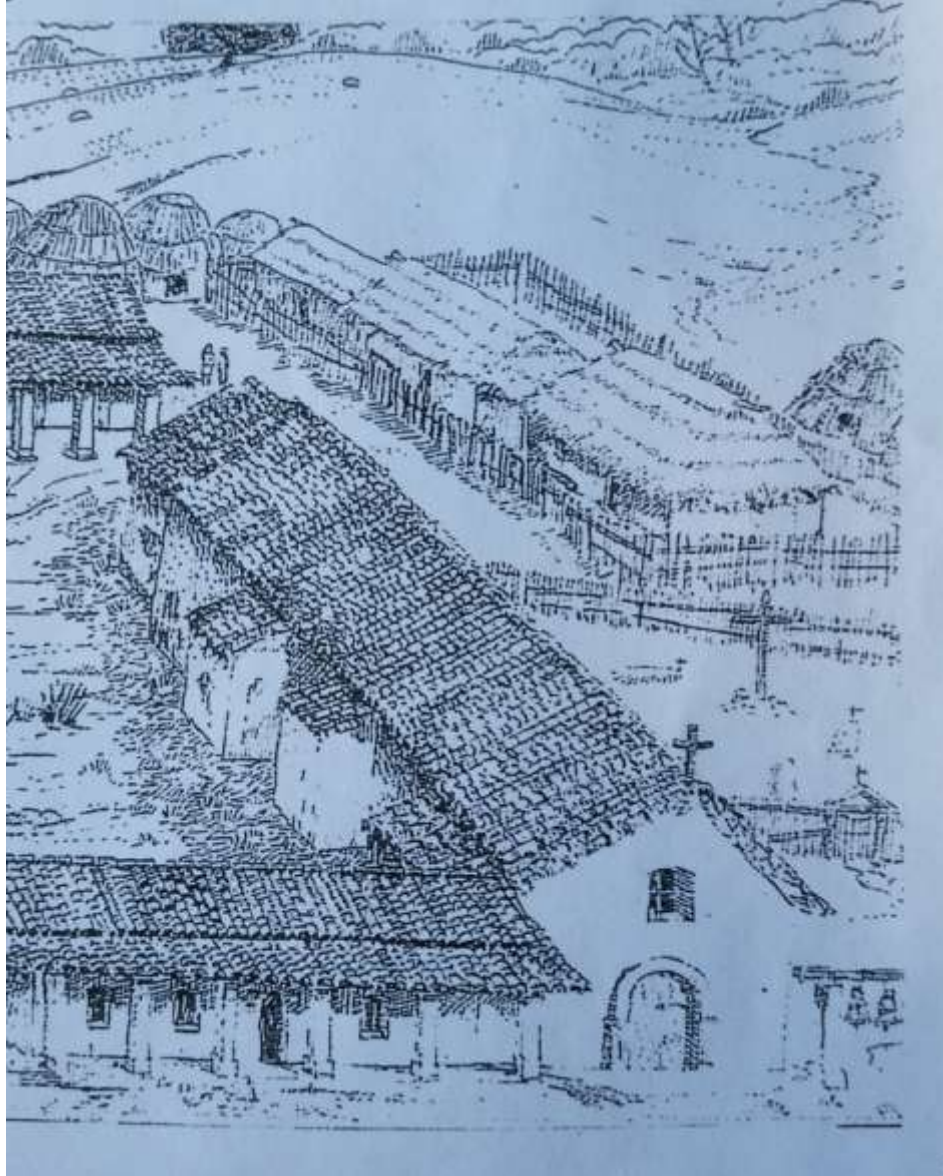
## ***Stop 1 We begin at the Moorish Fountain***

Welcome - Bienvenidos!- to Old Mission Santa Barbara. This, the tenth of 21 missions established by the Franciscans in Alta California, was unsurpassed in its design by the eleven that were later constructed. And its location, within view of the Pacific, with the islands visible in the Channel on a clear day, adds to its beauty. Fr. Engelhardt Zephyrin, (1851-1934) was

the first to call it the "Queen of the Missions" because of its size, classical design, imposing twin towers, and feminine namesake.

Photo: Library of Congress





The Old Mission is unique because a Catholic Mass has been continuously held by the Franciscans at this site since 1786.

This impressively tall structure replaced a smaller ~26' by 124' one-story adobe

chapel constructed prior to 1790, which was severely damaged by a massive earthquake in 1812 that historians estimate at 7.2, generated from the Santa Barbara Channel. Thirteen and one-half arches of the 1794 mission's sixteen arch arcade can be seen today. The larger 1820 chapel enclosed two and one-half arches for the expanded 1820 church, with a buttress to support the 73' tall bell tower.

Original drawing by Russell A. Ruiz.  
Permission by Russell C. Ruiz



***Proceed toward the Mission Tours entrance***

Tickets are required to go inside the Old Mission to see its beautiful sacred garden, impressive chapel, cemetery, curated museum exhibits, and video presentation.

Self-guided tours are available daily. Please check the Old Mission Santa Barbara website or at the tours desk for hours and pricing. The gift shop is open from 9-5 every day. The Franciscans who have occupied this site since 1786 manage the 15 most important acres in Santa Barbara.

Visitors are given limited access to the chapel, mainly to pray, when its doors are open to the public, usually weekdays 10 AM to Noon depending on availability of volunteer docents, who welcome your questions.

Photo by Lisa Knox Burns



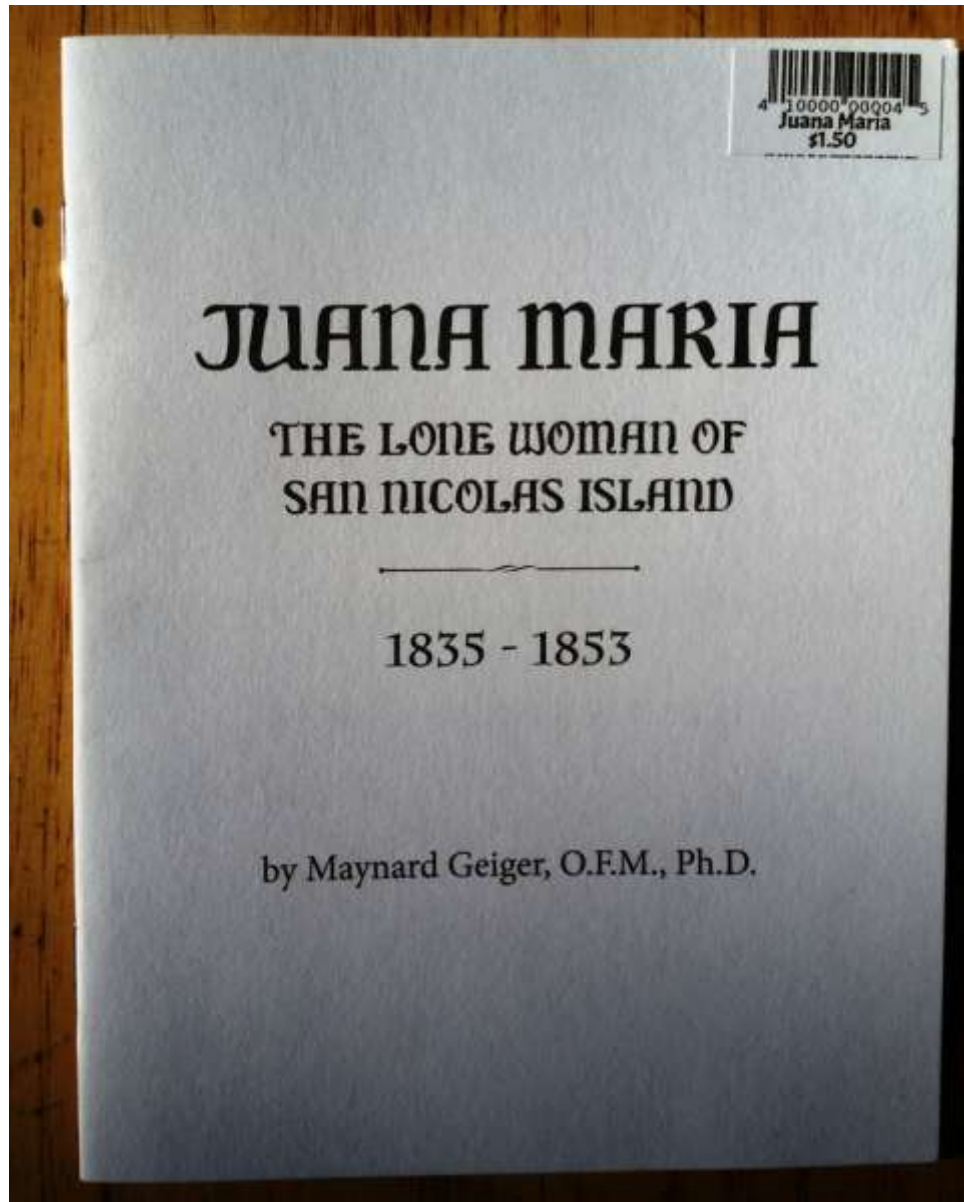
## ***Chumash Ethnobotanical Garden***

Located adjacent to the Mission Tours entrance, near a sloped access to public restrooms, is the Chumash Ethnobotanical Garden containing California native plants used by the Chumash Indians. Acorns from



the Island Oak were a primary source of food protein in the Chumash diet. Mugwort leaves applied to skin rash from poison oak are a medicinal antidote. Arroyo Willow branches were used to construct conical huts, called Aps. The bark of the willow was also used to cure fevers and inflammations because it contains salicin, the basis for aspirin. Coastal sagebrush was used after bathing by hunters to mask human scent. Deer grass, basket rush and juncus grasses were some of the materials used for tightly woven baskets used by the Chumash that are highly prized by collectors. White sage was used in rituals to promote spiritual balance.

Photo by Lisa Knox Burns



The entrance to the Mission, "La Sala" was originally constructed in 1805. From this room you can purchase access to the interior of the Old Mission quadrangle with its Sacred Garden used for receptions, see

Chumash artifacts and Mission crafts, beautiful 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century art in the Chapel, and tour the cemetery, including where the "Lone woman of San Nicolas Island" is buried. Her story is told in the famous children's book, "Island of the Blue Dolphins" and a booklet, "Juana Maria, The Lone Woman of San Nicolas Island, 1835-1853" which can be purchased in the Mission Gift Shop.

Photo by Lisa Knox Burns

f. 1.º

Libro de Difuntos,

En el se asientan las partidas de los Entierros de  
los que mueren en ~~este~~ Real Presidio de  
Santa Barbara y Fr.  
de la administracion de los RR. PP. Misioneros del  
Colegio Apostolico de propaganda Fide de S. Fernando  
de Mexico del Ord. de N. S. J. San Fran. de la Ob.  
Fundada  
a expensas, y de Orden del Catholico Rey Blas Es-  
pañol, y de sus Indias Don Carlos III (que Dios pro-  
paga eternam.) en la Superior California, y plaza fuerte  
de la Canal de S. Barbara, y los RR. de dho Colegio  
Comensada  
En el Domingo 3. despues de Pasqua, fiesta del Pa-  
trocinio del St. Patriarca San Joseph, Esposo de Ma-  
ria S.ª y dia 21 de Abril del año del S.º de  
1782.  
En el q.º yo el infra-escrito Fr. Junipero Serra Presb.  
de estas Misiones de Indios de dho y dho Colegio  
Apostolico, hechas las Bendiciones de Agua, del terreno,  
de una alta Cruz, q.º enarbolumos, y adoramos, cele-  
bre en Capilla de Enramada, el St. Sacrificio de la Misa,  
la primera de este terreno, con Sermón del Asumpto  
q.º falta de Compañero huvo de ser repada, y  
por la misma en lugar de Deum conclui  
la funcion con el Alabado.  
P. Mayor Gloria de Dios. Propag. de la F.ª y bien de las Almas.  
Los prim. Ministros  
de esta Mision ad tempus incorporada con el Presidio  
del q.º se ha de regregar quanto antes se asignaran. En este solo en  
fund.º de Presb. y no su sueldo la de dho Presb. primer del año 80 86, q.º repado en  
media legua se dio al dho Presb. y como fuere preciso para el libro de dho  
de Difuntos, permanes en el dho destino para solo el Presb.º.  
Consta este libro  
de ciento noventa, y dos folios, tales, sin la prim. y ult.  
quedan blancas, y para q.º todo lo dho conste lo firme  
Fr. Junipero Serra  
Presb.

Pictured here is the first page of the Santa Barbara Mission Register with Serra's signature. Note the flourish on the last letter of his name. The first line of the letter has a word crossed-out. This is because Fr. Serra

assumed he would found a Mission separate from the Spanish Fort (called a Presidio) for the large number of Chumash who lived along this coast.

Photo Credit: Santa Barbara Mission  
Archive Library



### ***King Carlos III (1716-1788)***

But when King Carlos III of Spain learned the Russians in their pursuit of sea otter pelts were planning to occupy lands north of San Francisco Bay, he directed Governor Felipe de Neve to ensure Spain's interests

were protected. In 1782, Fr. Serra presided at the founding of the Presidio in Santa Barbara, but Governor Neve sent Fr. Serra to protect Spain's territory around San Francisco Bay. Fr. Serra amended his journal entry, and obediently traveled north. Fr. Serra personally selected the sites for the first nine missions built in Alta California. He died in Carmel in 1784. In 1786 Fr. Lasuen founded Mission Santa Barbara, the 10<sup>th</sup> Mission.

Photo from Wikipedia, Public Domain

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