



General Information

About Mission San Juan Capistrano:

Known as the “Jewel of the Missions,” Mission San Juan Capistrano is a historic landmark and museum that boasts of quality permanent exhibits featuring original artifacts as well as traveling and temporary exhibits on a wide variety of topics.

The site itself serves as a living outdoor museum with original buildings constructed by Native Americans in the 18th century including the Serra Chapel, Great Stone Church, and the original padres’ quarters of the South Wing.

The Mission was founded on November 1, 1776 by Padre Junipero Serra as the seventh in the chain of the twenty-one California missions established by Spain, and is Orange County’s only mission. Every year, over 50,000 students visit the Mission and engage in an inspirational learning experience via the Mission Matters programming, as part of their State required California history studies.

Mission San Juan Capistrano is owned by the Diocese of Orange and is supported by the Mission Preservation Foundation, which is comprised of business and community leaders committed to ensuring the long term preservation and viability of Orange County’s only Mission. The Mission receives no funding from either the Church or the State of California and charges admission funds as a means of providing public access.

Location:

Mission San Juan Capistrano is located at 26801 Ortega Highway in San Juan Capistrano. This historic landmark and museum is a short walk from the train station for Amtrak and Metrolink transportation. There is plenty of free public parking available surrounding the Mission.

Hours:

Open daily: 8:30 A.M. - 5:00 P.M. Closed Thanksgiving and Christmas Day. Closed at noon Good Friday and Christmas Eve.

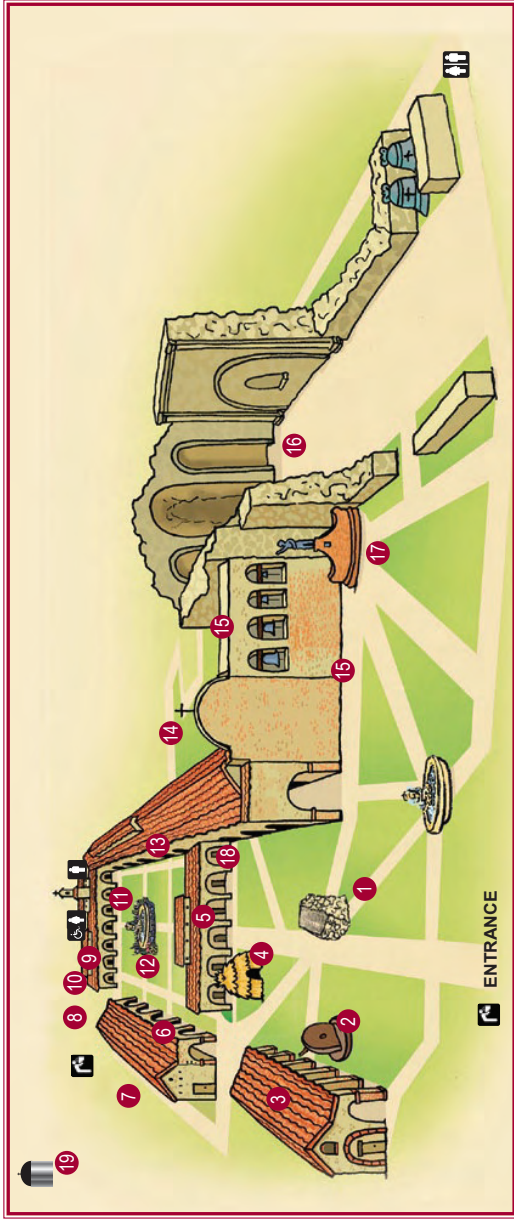
Admission:

\$9 adults; \$8 seniors (60 years or over); \$5 children (ages 4 to 11); and children ages 3 and under are admitted free. Free audio guide with senior and adult admission.

Public information: (949) 234-1300 www.missionsjc.com

Media Contact:

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Mission grounds are rough and irregular.
PLEASE WATCH YOUR STEP.

THANK YOU FOR TREATING THE MISSION GROUNDS WITH RESPECT.

- Do not tease or feed the fish.
- Do not write on or touch the historic walls.
- Please put all trash in trash bins.
- No gum chewing or smoking allowed.
- Do not climb on walls.

1 Founding Document
Mission San Juan Capistrano, the seventh mission in a chain of twenty-one, was founded November 1, 1776 by Father Junipero Serra. The bronze replica shows the items needed for the founding of the Mission. Please note Father Serra's ornate and unique signature.

2 Olive Millstone
A stone powered by a boy of the Mission or by a donkey, used for crushing olives for oil. Olive oil had many uses at the Mission including cooking and traded for other goods. This dated replica is in need of preservation.

3 Soldiers Barracks
Built in 1791, the Barracks, or the Cuartel, housed about six Spanish soldiers stationed at the Mission. The barracks later became guest quarters. Features welcome video and overview of Mission San Juan Capistrano.

4 Native American History
This shelter, made of willow branches and tule leaves, is called a kitcha and was the traditional housing for Juaneño Indians before the Spanish arrived. The large stone with holes in it was used by native women to grind acorns.

5 South Wing Museum Rooms
Living and House Quarters of the Mission's founding period (viewing from west to east end)
(a) Dormitory
(b) Kitchen
(c) Pantry
(d) "Resurgum" or entry to Central Courtyard
(e) Padres living room
(f) Guest bedroom
(g) Padres dining room
(h) Exhibits from the Rancho Period 1845-1865.

6A West Wing Museum Rooms
6B California Missions Resource Studio
Free information on all 21 California missions.

6C Exciting New Exhibit
7 Mission Industrial Center
An excavation in the 1930's revealed the tallow vats where Indians made soap, candles, grease and ointments from animal fat. Below the tallow vats are dyeing vats, where Mission inhabitants dyed wool. To the south of the dyeing vats are the Catalan furnaces, the oldest metal furnaces in California. South of the forge area is the kitchen where Juaneños cooked their food. Use caution on steep stairs.

8 Picnic Area
9 Administrative Offices
10 The Leon René Music Room
Features original sheet music signed by Leon René and the piano he used in 1939 to compose "When the Swallows Come Back to Capistrano."

11 North Corridor
The original location of the "Bodega," or warehouse in which tallow, grains, woolens and hides were stored. Reconstructed by Fr. O'Sullivan in the late 1920's, the building served as the first Mission school and convent for the teaching sisters.

12 Central Courtyard
Also known as the Plaza, was a work area and the heart of Mission life. Three zanjas (water channels) ran through Mission grounds and under the west wing into the Industrial area. Fr. O'Sullivan built the Moorish-style fountain, dedicated to the Four Evangelists, and planted most of the trees in the 1920's. Most of the Mission's concerts and special events take place here.

13 The Serra Chapel
Completed in 1788, this is the only original Mission church in California still standing in which Father Serra is known to have celebrated the sacraments. In the early 1920's, Father St. John O'Sullivan, pastor of the Mission from 1910-1933 restored the chapel. The beautiful baroque altar is from Barcelona, Spain, and is made of hand-carved wood with a gold leaf overlay. It is estimated to be over 400 years old. The side chapel is dedicated to S. Peregrine, patron saint of sufferers. Near the entry is the original baptismal font that once stood in the Great Stone Church. Candles available for purchase in the Gift Shop. The Chapel was conserved from 2005-2008 at a cost of \$1.8 million. This stop on the audio tour is highly recommended.

14 Cemetery
Up to 2,000 Catholics, and mostly Native Americans, the Achechemen people, were laid to rest in this area of unmarked graves. The monument, topped with a Celtic cross, was installed by Father O'Sullivan as a memorial to those who originally built the Mission. The tomb of Father O'Sullivan is at the foot of the monument.

15 Sacred Garden and Bell Wall
The bells originally hung in the bell tower of the Great Stone Church until the earthquake of 1812. The two large bells are recast of the original that date back to 1796. The small bells date back to 1804. Bells were important to early Mission life, and called the community to meals, religious services, work, funerals, the sighting of a supply ship or a returning padre and for recreation purposes.

16 Great Stone Church
Begun in 1797, the Church took nine years to build. On the Feast Day of the Immaculate Conception, December 8, 1812, an earthquake struck during morning Mass. The walls crumbled and the domes caved in, killing 42 Indian worshippers. The church was never rebuilt. A stabilization project was completed in 2004.

17 Statue of Father Serra and Indian Boy
This statue was commissioned by Fr. St. John O'Sullivan in 1914. Fr. St. John O'Sullivan was the model for Fr. Serra and a local resident. Clarence Mendelson, was the model for the boy. The statue symbolizes the meeting of the two cultures, the old and the New Worlds. The cross was added in 2009 after it was discovered that the original location of the statue also included a cross which disappeared in the mid 1900's.

18 Gift Shop
One of the first buildings to be built and used intermittently as the Mission's chapel both prior to the construction of the Serra Chapel and later when the Chapel was in disrepair. The Gift store hosts Mission-themed gifts, books, cards, jewelry, pottery and educational materials.

19 Mission Basilica (Access off site)
Home to the Grand Retablo, installed in 2007. 15 ton, 45 foot tall gilded altarpiece adorns the beautiful Basilica. Enter from Camino Capistrano, separated from the historic Mission. No admission charge. Access from the Mission by walking up Camino Capistrano sidewalk. This is the Church that most of the Mission parish community attend.

Admission:
Adults: \$9 Seniors 60+: \$8
Children 4-11: \$5
Children under 3 are FREE

Hours: 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. daily
Closed on Thanksgiving and Christmas
Closed at noon on
Good Friday and Christmas Eve

Efforts to raise funds to improve Museum rooms and displays are underway. Proceeds from Mission memberships fund this work.

Signature Events



Saint Joseph's Day and Return of the Swallows Celebration

World renown celebration hosted every March. This annual celebration includes: Ringing of the historic bells. Live music Community presentations. Special Guest Lecture On Cliff Swallows Mission Parish School performances .History of St. Joseph's Day and Swallows Legend.



Annual Battle of Mariachis Festival

A friendly competition of young, mariachi musicians celebrating talent, interpretation and inspiration within one festival, presented by the generous support of the Thomas J. and Erma Jean Tracy Family Foundation. Typically hosted every May.



Music Under the Stars

Summer concert series of evening concerts beginning in June continuing on alternating weekends through first Saturday in September. Concert gates open at 5:30 p.m.; Music begins at 6:30 p.m. and ends at 9:30 p.m.



Romance the Mission Benefit Gala Concert & Dinner

The most memorable gala benefit hosted in Orange County every year in September. Features a pre-show hosted reception, extravagant entertainment in the Great Stone Church and the most romantic dinner setting display. Underwriting opportunities available.



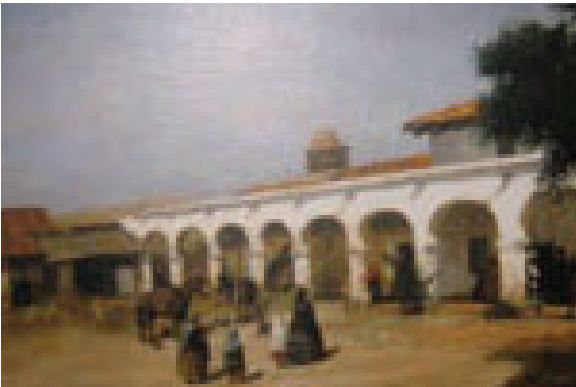
Christmas at the Mission

Mission San Juan Capistrano is proud to participate in San Juan Capistrano's annual Christmas tree lighting festivities. Bring the whole family to this event as we invite the public to celebrate the holidays with us the first Saturday in December.



Mission Treasures: Historical Collection Revealed

The exhibit features precious and rare paintings, religious artifacts, and documents related to the Mission's history. Don't miss out on this limited exhibit and the chance to view this one-of-a-kind collection.



Plein-Air Art Reproductions Exhibition from the Collection of Mrs. Joan Irvine Smith and the Irvine Museum

Mission San Juan Capistrano is proud to partner with longtime Mission supporter Mrs. Joan Irvine Smith to display reproductions of historic plein-air paintings from her private collection at the Irvine Museum. Mrs. Smith and the Irvine Museum are committed to conserving the art of plein-air painting and its ability to record history in a unique and beautiful way. It is through this partnership that we are able to bring these reproductions of historic landscape paintings to the Soldiers Barracks Gallery at Mission San Juan Capistrano, historic landmark and museum.



South Wing of The Mission

The exhibit highlights the lives of the padres who lived in the South Wing of the Mission during the 18th century. The exhibit showcases such items as abalone fish hooks, padres' ledgers, music sheets, musical instruments, books, branding irons, coins, lassos, flags and images. The exhibit focuses on the founding and decline of the Mission, the period of secularization, the transfer of ownership of the Mission to and from the Catholic Church, and the pivotal role Abraham Lincoln played in returning the Mission during the last months of his life.

AUDIO TOUR

Award Winning Audio Tour

VOICES OF THE MISSION

Mission San Juan Capistrano is now providing its guests with a free digital audio tour with paid admission for adults and seniors. The Tour entitled "Voices of the Mission" features music, history, and storytelling about California history and the story of the Jewel of the missions.

The Tour is available in English, Spanish, French, German, Italian and Vietnamese.

A free audio download is available in English on the website.

Audio Tour For Children

SAVED BY THE MISSION BELL:

A CHILD'S JOURNEY THROUGH CALIFORNIA HISTORY

Tour is available in English and Spanish at \$2 per child.
(Additional fee with admission)

TOURS

Guided Tours

Monday through Friday • 1:00 p.m.

Saturdays and Sundays • 11:15, 1:00, 2:15 & 3:45 p.m.

Garden Tours

Wednesdays • 10:15 a.m. and at 10:45 a.m.

ACTIVITIES

California Missions Resource Studio

Open Daily • 8:30 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

Curiosity Carts

Tuesdays • 10:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

Native American Basket Weaving

Wednesdays (1st & 3rd of each month) • 10:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

Living History Day

Second Saturday each month • 11:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.

Pan for Gold

Saturdays • 12:00 p.m. - 2:00 p.m.

Koi Fish Feeding

Daily • 12:45 p.m.