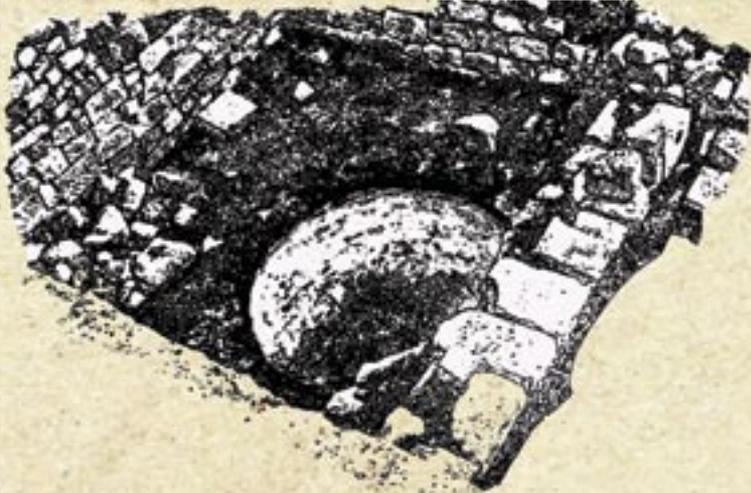


Mission Wine & Olive Oil Production



Wine Making

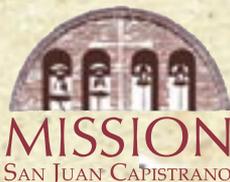
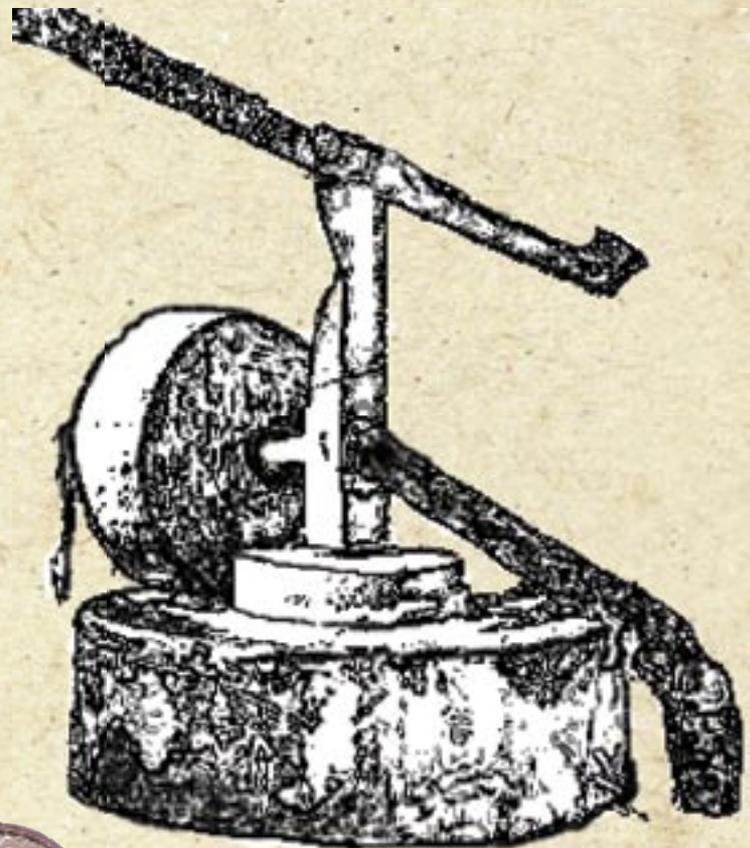
The California Mission padres required wine for their service of Mass. Father Serra wanted to produce wine in California instead of waiting for supply ships to import it, so he made a request to the Viceroy in Mexico City to send grape cuttings to California. Scholars assume the vine cuttings were planted at the Southern California Missions around 1779, and northern missions most likely received the cuttings in the early 1780s.

Grape harvests usually began in September and early October. Native American men and woman picked the grapes and collected them for the annual grape stomping. A well washed Native American man, usually with good physical endurance, was chosen to stomp and crush the grapes. The juices that flowed out were collected and poured into clean water tight hides, jugs, or barrels. Once the containers of juice were tightly sealed, they would be taken to a dark cool place to ferment.

Olive Oil Production

Olive trees were first planted at Mission San Diego. The first reported harvest of olives was in 1800. Mission San Diego distributed olive seeds and cuttings to all the missions by 1810 and around 1818, olive oil production was in full order.

Olive harvesting usually occurred in the winter months. Young Native American boys and girls would collect olives by picking them off the tree, or by climbing the trees and shaking or striking the branches to get the fruit to fall. Once the olives were collected, they were carried to the olive mill where they were crushed by a revolving stone propelled by a burro. Once the olives were crushed, the pulp was scooped away by workers, and stuffed into sacks and placed into a press. Two strong men squeezed the remaining juices out with a screw or lever press. The oil and juices that were collected from this process were stored in jars to be used as virgin olive oil for food preparation.



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