

Congress established the Anza Trail in 1990 as part of the National Trails System. In the U.S., the 1,200-mile trail connects Nogales, AZ, to the San Francisco Bay Area. Another 600 miles of historic trail pass through Mexico. Explore the trail by car, foot, horse, bicycle, or train. Visit www.anzahistorictrail.org for an interactive trail map.

¡Vayan subiendo!

“Everyone mount up!”

This was the familiar call from Spanish Lt. Col. Juan Bautista de Anza.

In 1776, Anza arrived at San Francisco, leading 30 families on the West Coast’s first overland colonizing expedition.

An era of tremendous change arrived with them.

Tubac

Horcasitas

Culiacán

1775–1776 Anza Expedition

Pursuing a Dream

Juan Bautista de Anza’s father had a dream. As a soldier on the frontier of New Spain, he wished to find an overland route to the coastal province of *Alta California*. He died in an Apache ambush when Anza was three years old. His dream was unfulfilled.

Like his father, Anza joined the Spanish military, eventually becoming a captain at the frontier presidio (fort) of Tubac.

By 1774, Spain had established several military and religious outposts in distant *Alta California*. The priests and soldiers there struggled in isolation, and sea routes were dangerous.

Like his father, Anza requested permission from the Viceroy of New Spain, Antonio Maria Bucareli, to find a route across the desert separating Tubac and *Alta California*. Spain had come to fear Russian and English encroachment on its territory, and so Bucareli agreed.

Sebastián Tarabal, an Indian guide, helped Anza identify a desert crossing on an exploratory expedition in 1774. Upon this success, the Spanish tasked Anza to lead settlers, livestock, and supplies to *Alta California*. Spain’s plan was to establish a colony at a place they called *el río de San Francisco*.

Anza’s goal was to safely deliver the settlers and fulfill his father’s dream.



Above: Ana María Josepha de Soto joined the 1775–1776 Anza Expedition with her husband, Juan Francisco Bernal, and their seven children (ages 2–17). Illustration by David Rickman.

Left: Annual events along the Anza Trail include festivals and historic reenactments. Photo by Charity Vargas.



Trusting a Promise

In September 1775, Anza traveled to Culiacán, Horcasitas, and other towns in present-day Mexico to recruit his settlers.

Anza told of lush lands and plentiful resources in a place far from the desert frontier.

Men could join Anza’s expedition as paid soldiers on two conditions: they would not return, and they would bring their wives and children on the dangerous journey.

When the expedition left the Tubac Presidio on October 23, 1775, thirty families had joined Anza.

The families reflected the diverse castes of Spanish society—a mix of Native American, African, and European heritage.

These 200 men, women, and children put their trust in a man who did not guarantee they would reach their destination.

Their reward was the chance at a better life. It was a risk they were willing to take.

Traveling Town

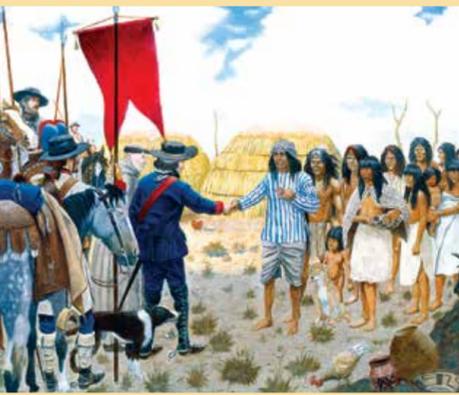
The settlers, their military escorts, support workers (cowboys, mule packers, and Indian guides), and 1,000 head of livestock comprised an enormous group. Led by Anza, the expedition resembled a traveling town.

Most days started with mass and the alabado, a hymn of praise, led by Franciscan priest Pedro Font, the expedition chaplain. Not only did Font provide religious leadership, he recorded latitudes with a quadrant and kept a meticulous journal. Where the tone of Anza’s journal was official, Font’s was eloquent.

These two journals documented the struggles and successes of the expedition. Without the diaries, details of this epic journey would never have been known.

American Indians

Anza ordered his expedition soldiers not to harm American Indian communities along the route, and he forged alliances with several tribes. The O’odham and Chumash provided much-needed food. A Quechan group, led by Chief Palma, helped the families cross the Colorado River.



To Catholic Spain, the frontier was full of souls to be saved. As the empire expanded, the church acculturated American Indians into mission communities. Indians were the required labor that built the missions.

Colonization decimated Indian populations. It disrupted Native traditions and changed the landscape.

Many Spanish believed they were serving the Indians’ best interests. Ultimately, Spanish colonization advanced a devastating blow to the tribal world as it existed.

Living Legacy

On June 27, 1776, the expedition families arrived at what is now San Francisco.

The expedition suffered just one fatality. One day north of Tubac, María Ignacia Manuela Piñuelas died shortly after giving birth. She was one of eight women who were pregnant at the start of the journey.

Anza’s leadership ensured the settlers reached their destination, and Spain successfully established its northernmost colony in *Alta California*.

In the new land, many of the colonists and their descendants obtained the better livelihoods Anza had promised.

Modern towns and landmarks bear the name of expedition families, such as Alviso, Berryessa, Bernal, Peralta, and Moraga.

Descendants of these *Californio* families commemorate their heritage along the Anza Trail.

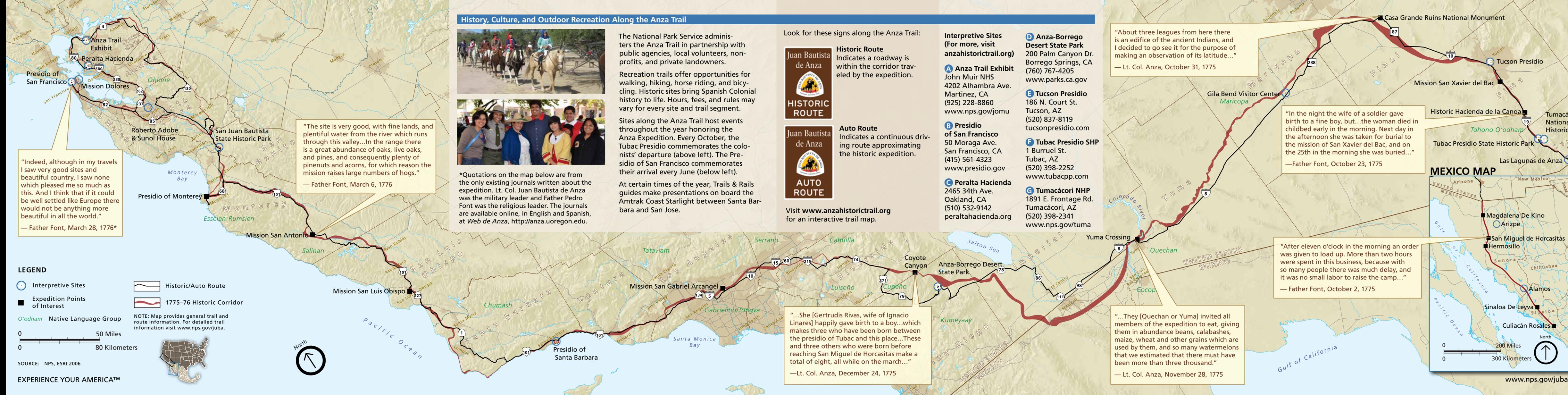
The tribal communities whose lands Anza traveled through—Quechan, Ohlone, O’odham, Tongva, and many more—continue to thrive and pass on their traditions.

The 1775–76 Anza Expedition delivered change to colonial Spain’s northern frontier. The Anza Trail tells the complex story of migration and colonization, of family and community, and of our country’s Native and Latino heritage.

Discover for yourself history, culture, and outdoor recreation along the Juan Bautista de Anza National Historic Trail.

Left to right: The Anza Expedition was like a moving town of people and livestock. Today, the Anza Trail connects recreation and diverse cultures, including the same vibrant tribal communities that encountered Anza in 1775–76. “A-Mountain” by Bill Singleton. Photos: NPS. “The Pima” by David Rickman.

Contact Us:
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Cover photo by Bob Wick. Watermarks by Wade Cox.



History, Culture, and Outdoor Recreation Along the Anza Trail



The National Park Service administers the Anza Trail in partnership with public agencies, local volunteers, non-profits, and private landowners.

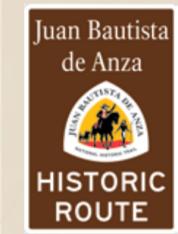
Recreation trails offer opportunities for walking, hiking, horse riding, and bicycling. Historic sites bring Spanish Colonial history to life. Hours, fees, and rules may vary for every site and trail segment.



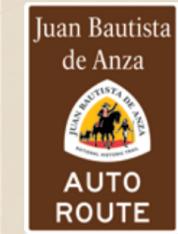
Sites along the Anza Trail host events throughout the year honoring the Anza Expedition. Every October, the Tubac Presidio commemorates the colonists' departure (above left). The Presidio of San Francisco commemorates their arrival every June (below left).

At certain times of the year, Trails & Rails guides make presentations on board the Amtrak Coast Starlight between Santa Barbara and San Jose.

Look for these signs along the Anza Trail:



Historic Route
Indicates a roadway is within the corridor traveled by the expedition.



Auto Route
Indicates a continuous driving route approximating the historic expedition.

Visit www.anzahistorictrail.org for an interactive trail map.

Interpretive Sites (For more, visit anzahistorictrail.org)

A Anza Trail Exhibit
John Muir NHS
4202 Alhambra Ave.
Martinez, CA
(925) 228-8860
www.nps.gov/jomu

B Presidio of San Francisco
50 Moraga Ave.
San Francisco, CA
(415) 561-4323
www.presidio.gov

C Peralta Hacienda
2465 34th Ave.
Oakland, CA
(510) 532-9142
peralhacienda.org

D Anza-Borrego Desert State Park
200 Palm Canyon Dr.
Borrego Springs, CA
(760) 767-4205
www.parks.ca.gov

E Tucson Presidio
186 N. Court St.
Tucson, AZ
(520) 837-8119
tucsonpresidio.com

F Tubac Presidio SHP
1 Burruel St.
Tubac, AZ
(520) 398-2252
www.tubacpp.com

G Tumacácori NHP
1891 E. Frontage Rd.
Tumacácori, AZ
(520) 398-2341
www.nps.gov/tuma

"Indeed, although in my travels I saw very good sites and beautiful country, I saw none which pleased me so much as this. And I think that if it could be well settled like Europe there would not be anything more beautiful in all the world."
— Father Font, March 28, 1776*

"The site is very good, with fine lands, and plentiful water from the river which runs through this valley...In the range there is a great abundance of oaks, live oaks, and pines, and consequently plenty of pinenuts and acorns, for which reason the mission raises large numbers of hogs."
— Father Font, March 6, 1776

*Quotations on the map below are from the only existing journals written about the expedition. Lt. Col. Juan Bautista de Anza was the military leader and Father Pedro Font was the religious leader. The journals are available online, in English and Spanish, at Web de Anza, <http://anza.uoregon.edu>.

"About three leagues from here there is an edifice of the ancient Indians, and I decided to go see it for the purpose of making an observation of its latitude..."
— Lt. Col. Anza, October 31, 1775

"In the night the wife of a soldier gave birth to a fine boy, but...the woman died in childbed early in the morning. Next day in the afternoon she was taken for burial to the mission of San Xavier del Bac, and on the 25th in the morning she was buried..."
— Father Font, October 23, 1775

"After eleven o'clock in the morning an order was given to load up. More than two hours were spent in this business, because with so many people there was much delay, and it was no small labor to raise the camp..."
— Father Font, October 2, 1775

"...She [Gertrudis Rivas, wife of Ignacio Linares] happily gave birth to a boy...which makes three who have been born between the presidio of Tubac and this place...These and three others who were born before reaching San Miguel de Horcasitas make a total of eight, all while on the march..."
— Lt. Col. Anza, December 24, 1775

"...They [Quechan or Yuma] invited all members of the expedition to eat, giving them in abundance beans, calabashes, maize, wheat and other grains which are used by them, and so many watermelons that we estimated that there must have been more than three thousand."
— Lt. Col. Anza, November 28, 1775

LEGEND

- Interpretive Sites
- Expedition Points of Interest
- Historic/Auto Route
- 1775-76 Historic Corridor

- O'odham Native Language Group

NOTE: Map provides general trail and route information. For detailed trail information visit www.nps.gov/juba.

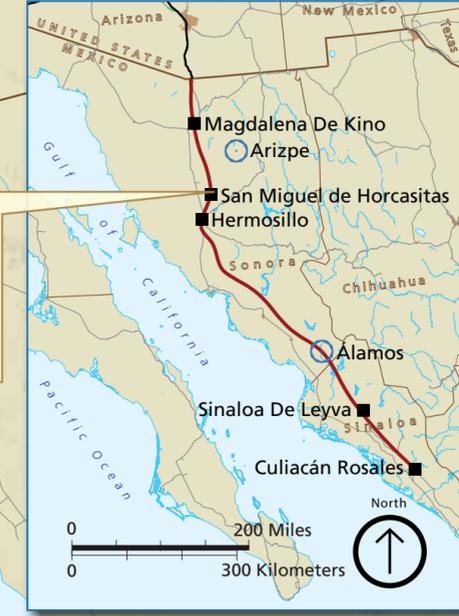


SOURCE: NPS, ESRI 2006

EXPERIENCE YOUR AMERICA™



MEXICO MAP



www.nps.gov/juba