



News Release

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California State Parks Have Connections to Many Countries and Traditions

America is a land of immigrants – and California State Parks reflect their contributions to the history and culture of the state.

Here's a sample of what visitors can find.

(Please note that is just a sample. There are many other state parks that have associations with people from other countries.)

African/African-American

Colonel Allensworth State Historic Park, 20 miles north of Wasco on Highway 43, was established in August of 1908 when Colonel Allen Allensworth and four other settlers established a town founded, financed and governed by African Americans. Colonel Allensworth at the time of his retirement was the highest ranking African American officer in the U.S. Army, and only the second Chaplain to reach the rank of Lt. Colonel. The town that bears his name continued on after the Colonel's death in 1914, struggling to retain its existence and identity until the 1970's. When the State of California, recognizing the historical significance of the site, purchased 240 acres of the original town and surroundings and designated it a State Historical Park. The park is celebrating its 100th anniversary this year. The park phone number is (661) 849-3433 and the park webpage is

http://www.parks.ca.gov/default.asp?page_id=583

Old Town San Diego State Historic Park, on San Diego Avenue and Twiggs Street in San Diego, represents life in the Mexican and early American periods of California from 1821 to 1872. The park, which includes original and reconstructed buildings, shops, restaurants and interpretive features (including museums, exhibits and living history programs), is located. The people who lived in this historic section of San Diego reflect the state's diverse history. These historic residents included African Americans, Native Americans, Hispanic Americans, Asians, Pacific Islanders and people from all over the United States – and all over the world. In 1847 Allen Light and Richard Freeman, two African Americans, opened a saloon called the San Diego House. It was one of the first black-owned businesses in California. The park phone number is (619) 220-5422 and the park webpage is

http://www.parks.ca.gov/default.asp?page_id=663

Canadian

MacKerricher State Park, three miles north of Fort Bragg on Highway 1, is on land purchased Duncan MacKerricher who moved to the area from Canada in 1865. MacKerricher's holdings became the core of the park when his heirs sold the property to the State in 1949. The park offers a wide variety of habitats, including beach, bluffs, headlines, dune, forest and wetland. The park phone number is (707) 964-9112.

http://www.parks.ca.gov/default.asp?page_id=436

Chinese/Chinese-American

Angel Island State Park, in San Francisco Bay, is also alive with history. Three thousand years ago the island was a fishing and hunting site for Coastal Miwok Indians. It was later a haven for Spanish explorer Juan Manuel de Ayala, a cattle ranch, and a U.S. Army post. From 1910 to 1940, the island processed hundreds of thousands of immigrants, the majority from China. The park phone number is (415) 435-1915 and the park webpage is

http://www.parks.ca.gov/default.asp?page_id=468

Bodie State Historic Park, 13 miles east of Highway 395 on Bodie Road, had a Chinese settlement along King Street. Bodie's Chinese residents, many of whom had come from Southern China as contract laborers in 1878, used mule trains to transport wood 20 miles from the sawmills along the eastern slope of the Sierra to Bodie. By 1881, with a population of several hundred people, the Chinese created a town within a town in order to maintain their own customs and traditions. This gold-mining ghost town is in a state of "arrested decay." The park phone number is (760) 647-6445 and the park webpage is

http://www.parks.ca.gov/default.asp?page_id=509

China Camp State Park, four miles east of North San Pedro Road, has the historic remains of a once-thriving Chinese shrimp fishing village. The park has a restored pier, boiler shed, warehouse and store. The park phone number is (415) 456-0766 and the webpage is

http://www.parks.ca.gov/default.asp?page_id=466

El Presidio de Santa Barbara State Historic Park, 123 East Canon Perdido in downtown Santa Barbara, had a small Chinese community that flourished in the area from the late 1800s into the mid 20th century. Several Chinese families lived and operated businesses on property that was once part of the Presidio. The park phone number is (805) 965-0093 and the park webpage is http://www.parks.ca.gov/default.asp?page_id=608

Weaverville Joss House, in downtown Weaverville near the Trinity Alps, is the oldest continuously used Chinese temple in California. On display are art objects, pictures, mining tools, and weapons used in the 1854 Tong War. This Taoist temple is still a place of worship and a fascinating look into the role played by Chinese immigrants in early California history. The park phone number is (530) 623-5284 and the park webpage is

http://www.parks.ca.gov/default.asp?page_id=457

Columbia State Historic Park, three miles north Sonora off Highway 49, is a restored Gold Rush town. It had a diverse population including a sizeable population of French, Chinese, Irish,

Italian, German and Jewish miners and merchants who contributed to the growing cultural and ethnic diversity of the town. The park phone number is (209) 588-9128 and the park webpage is http://www.parks.ca.gov/default.asp?page_id=552

German

Bodie State Historic Park (Mono County), a gold-mining ghost town in a state of “arrested decay” 13 miles east of Highway 395 on Bodie Road, was known to have “the wildest streets of any western mining town, the wickedest men, and the worst climate out of doors.” Bodie in summertime offers guided tours of the Standard Stamp Mill, history talks, video presentations, a brochure (available in German) which guides visitors to each of the buildings in town and a fine museum. There are also special photographer’s workshops and events. The park phone number is (760) 647-6445 and the webpage is http://www.parks.ca.gov/default.asp?page_id=509

Hispanic/Latino/Chicano

Anza-Borrego Desert State Park, 85 miles north east of San Diego, has many Latino connections. Spaniard Juan Bautista de Anza crossed the park two times (1774 and 1775-76), opening the way for colonists to come to California. A participant on the second trip included Feliciano Arballo, who went on to become the grandmother of the last Mexican governor of California, Pio Pico.

Later trailblazers included Mexican Lt. Santiago Arguello (1824). Anza was preceded in the park by Spaniard Pedro Fages, who went into the desert from San Diego in 1772 in search of army deserters. The park is the largest state park in the continental United States and has spectacular desert scenery.

The park phone number is (760) 767-5311 and the park webpage is http://www.parks.ca.gov/default.asp?page_id=638

El Capitan State Beach, 17 miles north west of Santa Barbara on Highway 101, was named for the first commander of the Santa Barbara Presidio, Jose Francisco Ortega, who received a land grant west of the beach from Mexico shortly before his retirement from the army. The park phone number is (805) 968-1033 and the park webpage is http://www.parks.ca.gov/default.asp?page_id=601

El Presidio de Santa Barbara State Historic Park, 123 East Canon Perdido in downtown Santa Barbara, was the last Spanish fort to be built in Upper California (1782.) Restoration of the site is ongoing. The park phone number is (805) 965-0093 and the park webpage is http://www.parks.ca.gov/default.asp?page_id=608

Refugio State Beach, 23 miles north west of Santa Barbara on Highway 101, was part of a Spanish land grant awarded to former Santa Barbara Presidio commander Jose Francisco Ortega, who received the grant in 1794 shortly before his retirement from the army. The park phone number is (805) 968-1033 and the webpage is http://www.parks.ca.gov/default.asp?page_id=603

Irish/Irish-American

McGrath State Beach, in Ventura, was named for Dominick McGrath, an Irish immigrant who came to California during the California Gold Rush, and made enough money selling supplies to the miners to buy land along the Santa Clara River in Ventura County, some of which became McGrath State Beach. The park phone number is (805) 654-4744 and the park webpage is http://www.parks.ca.gov/default.asp?page_id=607

Old Town San Diego State Historic Park, on San Diego Avenue and Twiggs Street in San Diego, had a growing Irish population beginning in the 1840s. Immigrants like Andrew Cassidy of county Cavan, George Lyons from county Donegal, and James McCoy of county Antrim lived in the area. McCoy's home was reconstructed and now serves as the park's interpretive center. The park phone number is (619) 220-5422 and the park webpage is http://www.parks.ca.gov/default.asp?page_id=663

Italian/Italian-American

Annadel State Park, in Santa Rosa, had basalt quarries that provided paving blocks for the streets of San Francisco. They were in great demand after the 1906 earthquake. The quarries provided work for new immigrants, many of them Italians who had experience in the marble quarries of Tuscany's Carrara.

The park phone number is (707) 938-1519 and the webpage is http://www.parks.ca.gov/default.asp?page_id=480

California State Railroad Museum, in Old Sacramento at 125 "I" Street, is the world-class tribute to the role of the "iron horse" in connecting California to the rest of the nation. The museum tells the story of the people who built the railroad, including workers from Italy. The park phone number is (916) 445-6645 and the webpage is http://www.parks.ca.gov/default.asp?page_id=668

Japanese/Japanese-American

Angel Island State Park, in San Francisco Bay, from 1910 to 1940 processed hundreds of thousands of immigrants, many from Japan. Also, during World War II, Japanese prisoners were held on the island. The park phone number is (415) 435-1915 and the park webpage is http://www.parks.ca.gov/default.asp?page_id=468

Russian

Fort Ross State Historic Park, 12 miles north of Jenner on Highway 1, was established by Russians in 1812 as an outpost for sea otter hunters and a permanent trade base. The park features historic buildings and a museum. The park phone number is (707) 847-3286 and the park webpage is http://www.parks.ca.gov/default.asp?page_id=449

Sonoma Coast State Beach's Bodega Bay (north of Bodega Bay on Highway 1) was the site of a Russian warehouse and buildings at Bodega Head.

The park phone number is (707) 875-3483 and the park webpage is http://www.parks.ca.gov/default.asp?page_id=451

Scandinavian

Emerald Bay State Park features Vikingsholm, one of the finest examples of Scandinavian architecture in the western hemisphere. The park phone number is (530) 541-3030 and the park webpage is http://www.parks.ca.gov/default.asp?page_id=506

Visit California State Parks on line at www.parks.ca.gov

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