

8. Pottery Shop, Grist Mill, and Kitchen

The pottery shop is located directly behind (west of) the chapel. Here ceramic jugs, pots, plates, and other items – including tens of thousands of floor and roof tiles – were manufactured over the years by Indian workers.

Just north of the pottery shop is a grist mill where a burro was kept busy turning a wheel that ground corn, wheat, and other kinds of grain into flour.

The next room was a *pozolero* or group kitchen where food was prepared for the padres and their guests.

At this point on your tour of La Purisima you have the option of returning directly to your starting point by way of the garden – or, you may elect to sample the extraordinary serenity of La Cañada de los Berros. Planted fields, orchards, and ancient water systems in the upper valley have all been carefully preserved so that even now, in this industrial age, it is possible to experience the pastoral tranquility that surrounded the California missions two centuries ago.

A loop trail takes you past the restored blacksmith shop, the filter building or springhouse, the site of the old Indian barracks, and back to the fountain in the center of the garden. Allow half an hour or so for this side trip.

9. The Blacksmith Shop

About a hundred yards north of the residence building is the recently reconstructed blacksmith shop. Cooking and sleeping rooms for the blacksmith and his family were located in this building along with the forge.

10. The Springhouse

The footbridge in front of the blacksmith shop is the trailhead to the springhouse. Water from nearby springs and reservoirs was brought to this vaulted stone building for storage (and perhaps filtering) before being piped underground to the central fountain in the mission garden. Sections of original tile pipe are on display in the little museum in the residence building.

Take the service road above the springhouse to continue your tour.

11. The Indian Barracks

In 1817 two long narrow adobe buildings were constructed as living quarters for the Indian residents of La Purisima. Divided into two-room apartments, these buildings made it possible for many Indian families to move out of the cone-shaped, thatched huts – traditional Chumash dwellings – that previously housed them. Archeological work has been done on this site, but restoration and reconstruction of the old buildings remains for some future time.



Take the path across the footbridge.

12. The Mission Garden

In this garden you will see several important features of the old mission's original water system, including the central fountain and two *lavanderias* – one for the main mission buildings, another for the Indian barracks. Near the central *lavanderia* is a settling basin where water was allowed to clear somewhat before being re-used for irrigation purposes further down the canyon.

Elaborate gardens were maintained at some of the missions; although this one is not an authentic restoration effort, it contains a wide variety of plants that were used by the Indians and padres for food, fiber, or medicinal purposes – both native plants and many species introduced by the missionaries. The pomegranates, figs, pears, pepper trees, grape vines, and Castilian roses now growing here were started from grafts, buds, and cuttings taken from plants at other California missions. The olive trees were fifty years old in 1938 when they were transplanted from an orchard near Solvang, where they had been started as cuttings from trees at Santa Barbara Mission.

13. The Girls' Dormitory

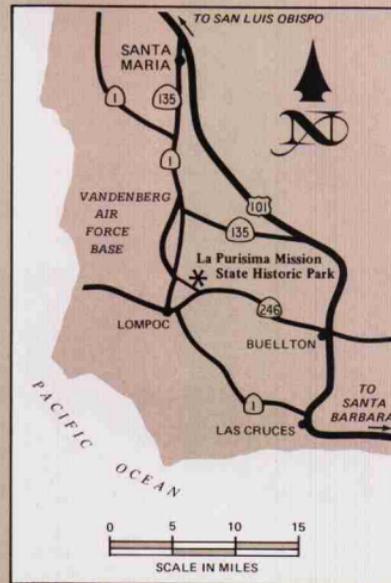
The building with the small attached courtyard, located at the edge of the garden beside the creek, is the *monjerio*, or girls' dormitory. Here, as one mission-period observer put it, young Indian girls were quartered and watched over at night "in order to protect them from every insult."

14. The Infirmaries

The buildings that now house the visitor center, rest-rooms, and gift shop were used during the mission period as infirmaries. The influx of Europeans brought many diseases to which the native inhabitants had little or no resistance. Although a nurse was employed by the mission, medicine was primitive and relatively ineffective. As a result, the mortality rate for California mission Indians was quite high both here at La Purisima and elsewhere throughout the California mission system.

We hope you have enjoyed your tour of La Purisima Mission State Historic Park. For more information on the mission's history and restoration, you can buy the 32-page illustrated booklet *La Purisima Mission, A Pictorial History, plus many other publications on the missions, at the park's docent-operated gift shop, next to the visitor center.*

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# La Purisima Mission

## State Historic Park



# Self-Guided Tour

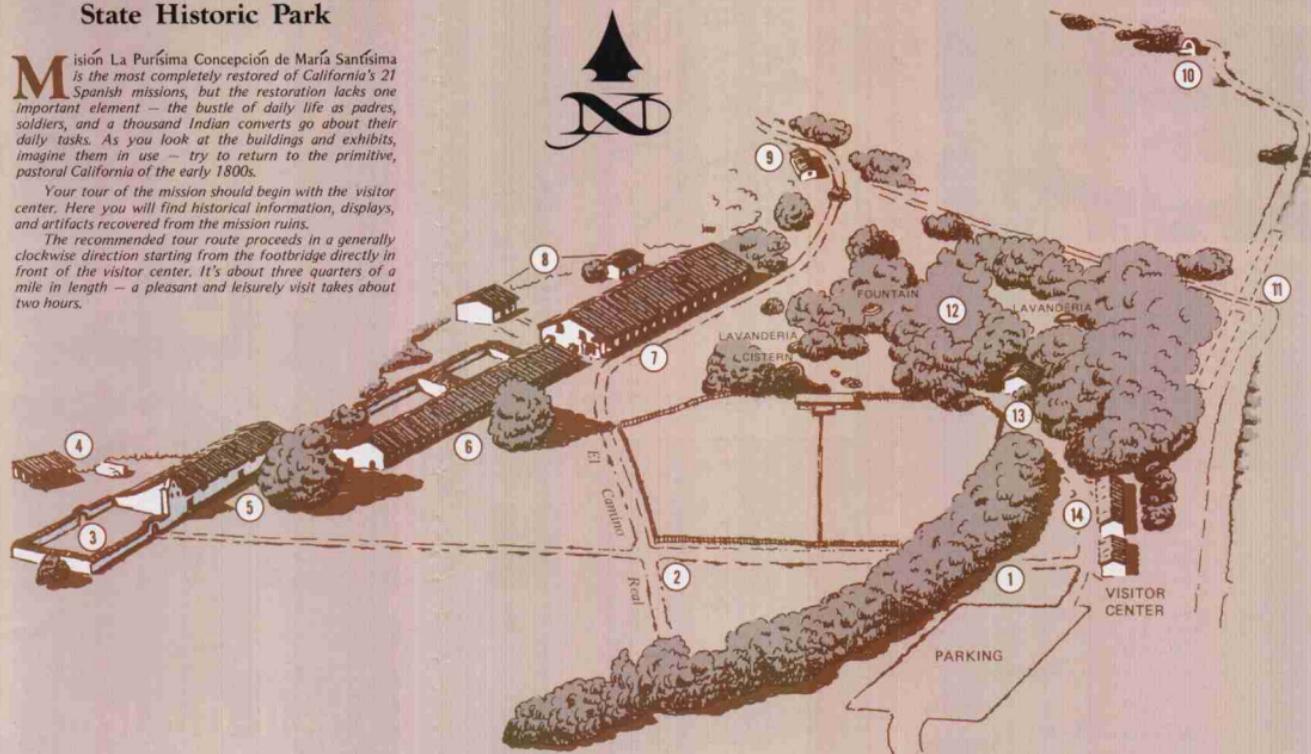
# La Purisima Mission

## State Historic Park

Misión La Purísima Concepción de María Santísima is the most completely restored of California's 21 Spanish missions, but the restoration lacks one important element — the bustle of daily life as padres, soldiers, and a thousand Indian converts go about their daily tasks. As you look at the buildings and exhibits, imagine them in use — try to return to the primitive, pastoral California of the early 1800s.

Your tour of the mission should begin with the visitor center. Here you will find historical information, displays, and artifacts recovered from the mission ruins.

The recommended tour route proceeds in a generally clockwise direction starting from the footbridge directly in front of the visitor center. It's about three quarters of a mile in length — a pleasant and leisurely visit takes about two hours.



### 1. Crossing the Footbridge

This gentle canyon is remarkably little changed from its appearance during the mission period, when hundreds of Chumash Indians lived here.

La Purisima Mission was originally founded in 1787 at a site about three miles to the south, across the river within the city limits of present-day Lompoc. A series of severe earthquakes destroyed the original buildings in 1812 and the mission was re-established here in *La Cñada de los Berros*, the Canyon of the Watercress.

### 2. Crossing El Camino Real

La Purisima Mission was connected to the other California missions by *El Camino Real*, the "Royal Highway." This primitive roadway, or path, came down the north side of the river from Mission Santa Inez and then veered northward through this canyon on its way to Mission San Luis Obispo.

Livestock in the corral are representative of mission-era animals. The sheep, for example, are descended from those brought to the southwest by early Spanish settlers. The longhorn cattle closely resemble those originally brought into California from Mexico.

Directly before you are the main buildings of the mission settlement. The path takes you straight toward the tile-covered wall of the cemetery. The adjoining church was built in 1818; the cemetery and *companario*, or bell tower, were added in 1821.

The long low building to the right of the church contains various workshops and living quarters; further to the right is the larger and more impressive residence building.

The colors you see on these buildings are authentic. They have been carefully matched to remnants of colored plaster from the original mission walls.

### 3. The Cemetery

This was the official church cemetery at La Purisima after 1821. Archeological work indicates that hundreds of Indians were buried here along with a number of Spaniards, including those who were killed during the Indian uprising of 1824. Wooden crosses mark the site of an earlier cemetery near the present-day parking lot.

The original La Purisima bells were cast in "the city of bells" — Lima, Peru — in 1817 and 1818, specifically for this mission. The bronze bells were tuned and balanced so that a skillful bellringer could create a wide range of tonal sequences, each with a different message: time to wake up, time for morning mass, time to eat or have a siesta or go to bed.



### 4. The Tallow Vats

If you pass through the cemetery and go out the far side you will discover the mission's tallow rendering center. Here the fat from slaughtered cattle was rendered into tallow for soap and candle-making.

### 5. Inside the Church

The long, narrow church with its paintings and other colorful fixtures was large enough to hold all of the mission residents including as many as a thousand Indian neophytes. The bells in the *campanario* normally called the faithful to services here twice each day. These services and other special ceremonies or instructional programs were given in Latin, Spanish, or the native Chumash. The commonly used language of the mission was probably a combination of Chumash and Spanish. The Indians took great interest in music of all kinds and their performance of sacred music was often highly praised by the mission padres.

Beneath the altar of this church is the grave of Father Mariano Payeras, perhaps the best known and most accomplished of La Purisima's Franciscan missionaries, who served here from 1804 until his death in 1823. Much loved and highly respected for his religious zeal as well as his administrative and diplomatic abilities, Father Payeras travelled widely, but did not follow tradition by taking up residence at Mission San Carlos Borromeo at Carmel when he became *presidente* in 1815. Instead, he chose to stay on at La Purisima, which therefore served as headquarters of the California mission system for eight years.

### 6. Shops and Quarters Building

Along with housing the soldiers and their families, the Shops and Quarters Building and the courtyard behind the *mayordomo's* quarters provided space for a variety of manufacturing activities: weaving, soap and candle-making, leather-working, carpentry.

The flag flying from the flagpole just outside the door to the *cuartel*, or unmarried soldiers' quarters, is the Spanish Imperial Ensign. Five to ten soldiers were ordinarily stationed at La Purisima to enforce mission rules and to protect mission residents from attack.

### 7. The Residence Building

The great stone buttress at the south end of the main residence building and the uniquely designed pillars along the colonnade give evidence of the padres' attempt to make this building earthquake resistant. Their success can perhaps be judged by the fact that the building remained standing for nearly a century without significant maintenance, long after the missionaries were gone.

The building includes the padres' living quarters, library, and office space, as well as the mission store, leather shop, wine cellar, guest quarters, and a chapel. Originally this chapel was for the private use of the padres, but sometime after 1830 the main church building became structurally unsound and had to be abandoned. The ceiling of this room was then raised to its present height to permit the inclusion of a choir loft and, thereafter, this space served as the mission church. Be sure to visit the little museum in the school room that adjoins the chapel.



The residence building as it looked shortly before restoration began in 1934.