

*The Trail Yesterday*

El Camino Real de Tierra Adentro is the earliest Euro-American trade route in the United States. Tying Spain's colonial capital at Mexico City to its northern frontier in distant New Mexico, the route spans three centuries, two countries, and 1,600 miles. El Camino Real was blazed atop a network of footpaths that connected Mexico's ancient cultures with the equally ancient cultures of the interior West.

El Camino Real de Tierra Adentro began in Mexico City. As the "Royal Road of the Interior Lands," the frontier wagon road brought Spanish colonists into today's New Mexico.

Once travelers crossed the arid lands above Ciudad Chihuahua, they followed the wide Rio Grande Valley north into New Mexico. Many of the historic *parajes* (campsites) and early settlements created by the Spanish colonists became today's modern cities in the Rio Grande Valley. In the United States, the trail stretched from the El Paso area in Texas, through Las Cruces, Socorro, Belen, Albuquerque, and Santa Fe to Ohkay

Mexico. In Mexico, the historic road runs through Chihuahua, Durango, Zacatecas, San Luis Potosí, Aguascalientes, Guanajuato, and Querétaro to Mexico City.

The trail fostered exchanges between people from many backgrounds, including American Indians, Spaniards, Mexicans, New Mexicans, and Americans.

From 1598, when the first Spanish colonizing expedition made its way up the Rio Grande, through the 1870s, the wagon road was the main thoroughfare between Mexico and New Mexico. The trail corridor is still very much alive 125 years after the railroad eclipsed its commercial use.

The trail corridor nurtures a lively exchange of ideas, customs and language between Mexico and the American Southwest. Recognition as an international historic trail commemorates a shared cultural and geographic heritage. It helps eliminate cultural barriers and enriches the lives of people living along El Camino Real de Tierra Adentro.

Added to the National Trails System in October 2000 by the U.S. Congress, El Camino Real de Tierra Adentro National Historic Trail extends 404 miles from El Paso, Texas, to Ohkay Owingeh Pueblo, New Mexico. Visit some of the places featured here to experience the trail today.

top attest to its significance for Indian peoples and Catholic pilgrims alike.



## omé Hill

his distinctive conical hill has served as a natural landmark for travelers from prehistoric times into the present. Petroglyphs carved into its flanks and crosses at its top attest to its significance for indigenous peoples and Catholic pilgrims alike.



*The Trail Today*

The trail corridor nurtures a lively exchange of ideas, customs, and language between Mexico and the American Southwest. Recognition as an international historic trail commemorates a shared cultural and geographic heritage. It helps eliminate cultural barriers and enriches the lives of people living along El Camino Real de Tierra Adentro.

Added to the National Trails System in October 2000 by the U.S. Congress, El Camino Real de Tierra Adentro National Historic Trail extends 404 miles from El Paso, Texas, to Ohkay Owingeh Pueblo, New Mexico. Visit some of the places featured here to experience the trail today.

served as a natural corridor for travelers from prehistoric times into the present. Petroglyphs carved into its flanks and

top attest to its significance for Indian peoples and Catholic pilgrims alike.



## Mesilla

Mesilla, New Mexico, began its life as a part of Mexico, a new community established for Mexican citizens who found themselves on the U.S. side of the border following the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo in 1846. Those same settlers found themselves back in the U.S. again after the Gadsden Purchase of 1853. The new town became a commercial crossroads for the Mesilla Valley. The Butterfield Overland Stage stop was one block from the Plaza, and travelers on El Camino Real could stop in Mesilla on their way to Chihuahua and Santa Fe.

## Fort Crai

Fort Craig is the largest of eight U.S. forts built along El Camino Real de Tierra Adentro during New Mexico's Territorial Period. Between 1854 and 1884, Fort Craig was home to Buffalo Soldiers of the 9th Cavalry and 38th and 125th Infantry, the predominantly Hispanic New Mexico Volunteers and New Mexico Militia, and historic figures including Kit Carson, Rafael Chacón and Captain Jack Crawford.



Riddle, Courtesy Palace of the Governors Photo Archives (NMMN/DCA), 014523

## Fo

Fort Selden was established in 1865 to protect settlers and travelers in the Mesilla Valley. Built on the banks of the Rio Grande just north of the traditional *parajes* of Doña Ana and Robledo, this adobe fort housed units of the U.S. Army's infantry and cavalry. The fort remained active until 1891, five years after Geronimo's capture and six years after the railroad had taken over El Caminal Real's role in commercial freight and transport.

**4,000 BP**

- Archaic pit house village is established at edge of the Rio Grande.
- Prehistoric occupation of Rio Grande Valley dates back to at least 12,000 years ago.

**1521**

- Aztec ruler Montezuma II surrenders Tenochtitlan to Spanish conquistador Hernán Cortés.

**1540**

- Francisco Vasquez de Coronado and his army of 1,100 camp near the Tiwa pueblo of Kuaua.

**1598**

- Juan de Oñate leads first Spanish colonists up the Rio Grande along El Camino Real de Tierra Adentro.

**1608-1610**

- Villa de Santa Fe is established, relocating the Spanish capital from San Juan de los Caballeros, on Ohkay Owinge Pueblo lands.

**1643-1662**

- Spanish ranches and villages are established along El Camino Real north of Isleta Pueblo, including Pajarito and Atrisco, independent communities now within the greater Albuquerque area.

**1670**

- German trader Bernardo Gruber dies on the Jornada del Muerto, fleeing jail at Sandia Pueblo and the Spanish Inquisition.

**1680**

- On the night of August 10, 1680, nearly two dozen Pueblos revolt over the Spanish practices of extracting tribute, forcing conversion to Catholicism, and brutally suppressing Native religion. This act of resistance against European colonists regains the Pueblos their homeland for 12 years.

**1692**

- Spanish return to New Mexico, rebuild missions and settlements.

**1706**

- Villa of Albuquerque is established, with today's "Old Town" and Plaza as its historic center.

**1739**

- The Tomé grant is settled after the Rio Grande shifts west, creating an inner valley branch of El Camino Real through the Tomé Plaza.

**1760**

- Still a rough camp in 1760, the paraje of Doña Ana is settled as a town in the 1840s.

**1789**

- San Elizario is established as a military presidio to protect citizens of El Paso del Norte from Apache attacks.

**1807**

- U.S. Lieutenant Zebulon Pike illegally enters Spanish territory while exploring the West.

**1821**

- Mexico is freed from Spain. Santa Fe Trail opens with the arrival of William Becknell's trading party from Missouri.

**1846**

- Missouri volunteers under Colonel Alexander W. Doniphan defeat a Mexican unit at the Battle of Bracitos, go on to take El Paso del Norte and march into Chihuahua.

**1848**

- Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo establishes American control over about half of Mexico's lands, including the lands traversed by El Camino Real north of El Paso del Norte.

**1850**

- New Mexico becomes incorporated, organized territory of the U.S. on September 9, 1850.

**1853**

- American-Mexican border is redefined through the Gadsden Purchase, which brought a strip of land from Texas to California into American hands, 29,142,400 acres for \$10 million.

**1862**

- Battle of Valverde, first major battle of the Civil War in the Southwest, takes place north of Fort Craig, February 1862.

**1865**

- Fort Selden is established to control the Mesilla Valley.

**1878**

- The region's first operational railroad, the Atchison, Topeka & Santa Fe Railway, enters New Mexico Territory by way of Raton Pass; the rails reach El Paso, Texas, in 1881.

**1909**

- New Mexico Territorial Highway Commission appropriates funds to re-engineer La Bajada section of El Camino Real for automobile traffic.

**1912**

- New Mexico achieves statehood; State Highway I incorporates many sections of El Camino Real.

**1926**

- U.S. Route 66 is built over parts of El Camino Real, including the steep descent known as La Bajada.

**1935**

- New Mexico's roadside historic markers begin to tell the trail's history. In 1992 many of the 82 El Camino Real markers are installed as part of the Columbus Quintenary Commemorations.

**2000**

- El Camino Real de Tierra Adentro is added to the National Trails System on October 13, 2000.

**2003**

- El Camino Real de Tierra Adentro Trail Association is formed.



# El Camino Real

## Official Map and Guide



El Camino Real de Tierra Adentro National Historic Trail  
New Mexico, Texas

Bureau of Land Management  
National Park Service  
U.S. Department of the Interior



**THE FIRST CAPITAL**  
In 1598, Juan de Oñate's original colonizing party was welcomed at Ohkay Owingeh Pueblo, christened "San Juan de Los Caballeros" by the Spaniards. By the winter of 1599, the colony had moved to an outlying pueblo, Yungue, which they renamed "San Gabriel." In 10 years the capital was relocated once again to Santa Fe.

**RIO ABAJO, RIO ARRIBA, AND LA BAJADA**  
In the Spanish colonial period, New Mexico was divided into two administrative units. These were the Río Abajo, or lower river, and the Río Arriba, or upper river. The dividing line was the escarpment known as "La Bajada," north of Cochiti Pueblo.

**THE RIO GRANDE**  
The Río Grande is New Mexico's major river. Its valley stretches the full length of the state and holds the best agricultural land, the most extensive wetlands and wildlife, and is the state's major travel corridor. Known to Tewa Pueblo peoples as P'Osoge, or the big river, the Spanish called it the Río Bravo, or wild river, as well as El Río Grande del Norte, or the big river of the north. The Río Grande forms the border between New Mexico and Texas near El Paso, and the international border between Mexico and the United States from El Paso and Ciudad Juárez.

**THE CIVIL WAR IN NEW MEXICO**  
Confederate troops marched into New Mexico Territory in June 1861. They battled Union forces and New Mexico reserves at Valverde, and took both Albuquerque and Santa Fe. The Confederates were turned back at Glorieta Pass, east of Santa Fe, before they could reach the gold and silver fields of Colorado.

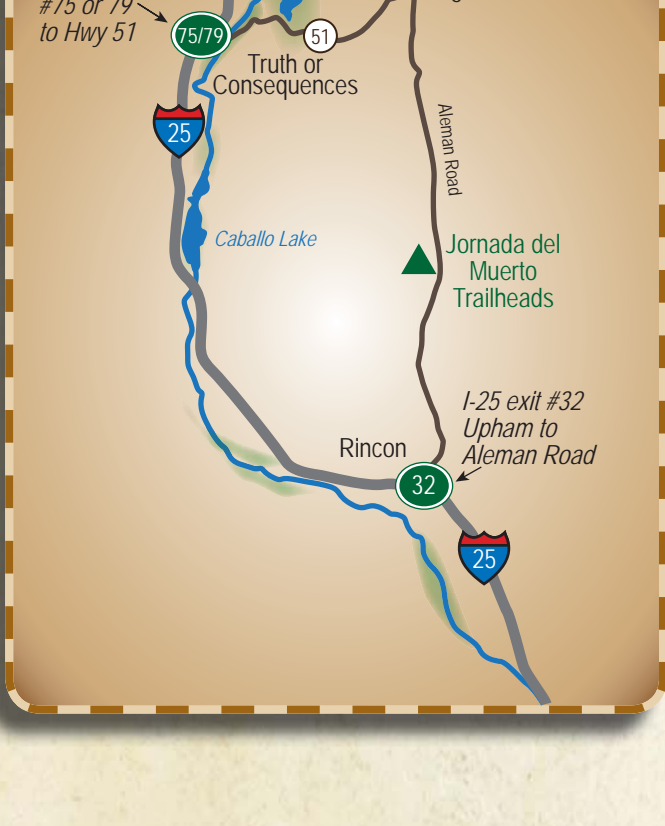
**THE JORNADA DEL MUERTO**  
The "Dead Man's Journey" is the longest of the waterless stretches of El Camino Real that the Spanish called jornadas. The "dead man" of this 60 mile, two-day trek, was Bernardo Gruber, who died on the Jornada while fleeing the Holy Office of the Inquisition in 1670.

**PARAJES**  
The caravans made camp every 20 miles or so on the journey from northern Mexico to northern New Mexico. These simple campsites, or parajes, served travelers for centuries. Until the 19th century, none of the parajes on the Jornada del Muerto—Paraje San Diego, Paraje del Perrillo, Paraje del Aleman, Las Peñuelas, Laguna del Muerto, El Contadero, Valverde, and Fray Cristobal—were settled permanently.

**PRESIDIOS AND FORTS**  
The Spanish established a handful of presidios, or forts, along the trail. El Paso del Norte and San Elizario controlled and protected the settlements near present-day Juárez, and the Presidio de Santa Fe protected the capital and northern New Mexico. After 1848 the Americans developed their own military system of smaller posts along the trail on the Jornada del Muerto, and at Santa Fe, El Paso, Valverde, Dona Ana, La Joya, and Socorro.

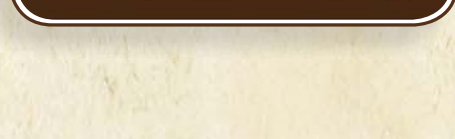
**NEW MEXICO**  
**TEXAS**  
**MEXICO**

- ▲ Jornada del Muerto Trailheads
  - Parajes, Presidios and Historic Communities
  - Pueblos
  - Sites of interest
  - Modern Cities and Towns
- El Camino Real de Tierra Adentro National Historic Trail
- == Interstate 25
- == Río Grande
- North
- 0 25 50 Miles



## Visiting the Trail Today

**El Camino Real de Tierra Adentro National Historic Trail** runs through the heart of the Río Grande Valley. The Bureau of Land Management and the National Park Service administer the Trail together to foster trail preservation and public use. These agencies work in close partnership with El Camino Real de Tierra Adentro Trail Association, the Indian Tribes and Pueblos—whose ancestors greeted the first Spanish colonists—as well as state, county, and municipal governmental agencies, private landowners, nonprofit heritage conservation groups, and many others. Trail sites are in private, municipal, tribal, federal or state ownership. Please ask for permission before visiting any trail sites on private lands and check with public sites for visiting hours and regulations. Follow trail signs to retrace El Camino Real de Tierra Adentro along highways, streets, and backcountry roads.



Visit these sites to learn more about the trail. Sites that are open to the public are shown in **green** on the map.

### Historic Sites

#### Palace of the Governors

105 West Palace Avenue, Santa Fe, NM  
(505) 476-5100  
[www.palaceofthegovernors.org/](http://www.palaceofthegovernors.org/)

#### El Rancho de las Golondrinas

334 Los Pinos Road, La Cienega, NM  
(505) 471-2261  
[www.golondrinas.org](http://www.golondrinas.org)

#### Coronado State Monument/Kuaua Pueblo

Both Kuaua Pueblo and the nearby Coronado campsite have been studied by archaeologists and their history is on display at the New Mexico State Monument near Bernalillo.  
State Highway 550/44, 1.27 miles west of Interstate 25, Exit 242  
(505) 867-5351, (800) 419-3738  
[www.nmmonuments.org/](http://www.nmmonuments.org/)

#### Casa San Ysidro: The Gutierrez-Minge House

The Gutierrez-Hubbell House is in the village of Corrales, just north of Albuquerque. The original home, built by the Gutierrez family, dates to the 1870s. Today Casa San Ysidro includes a recreated 19th century rancho, a small family chapel, central plazuela, and an enclosed corral area.  
973 Old Church Road, Corrales, NM  
(505) 898-3915  
[www.cabq.gov/museum/history/casatour.html](http://www.cabq.gov/museum/history/casatour.html)

#### The Gutierrez-Hubbell House

The Gutierrez-Hubbell House is a 5,800 square foot adobe hacienda that dates to the 1840's. It has been used as a private residence, mercantile, stagecoach stop, post office, and Pajarito village gathering place along El Camino Real.  
6029 Isleta Boulevard S.W., Albuquerque, NM  
(505) 244-0507  
[www.bernco.gov/live/standalone.asp?dept\\_id=3946&link\\_id=191954](http://www.bernco.gov/live/standalone.asp?dept_id=3946&link_id=191954)

#### Tomé Hill

Access at Tomé Hill Park, intersection of Tomé Hill Road (Río del Oro Loop North) and La Entrada Road, Tomé, NM  
(505) 864-6654  
[www.v-i-a.org/tomehill.htm](http://www.v-i-a.org/tomehill.htm)

#### Fort Craig National Historic Site

South of Socorro on County Road 273, off New Mexico Highway 1, use Interstate 25 Exit 115 northbound, or Exit 124 southbound.  
(575) 835-0412  
[www.blm.gov/nm/st/en/prog/recreation/socorro/fort\\_craig.html](http://www.blm.gov/nm/st/en/prog/recreation/socorro/fort_craig.html)

#### Jornada del Muerto Trailheads

County Roads A013, E070, Sierra and Doña Ana Counties  
For more information, contact Las Cruces District Office, Bureau of Land Management.  
1800 Marquess Street, Las Cruces, NM  
(575) 525-4300  
[www.blm.gov/nm/st/en/fo/Las\\_Cruces\\_District\\_Office.html](http://www.blm.gov/nm/st/en/fo/Las_Cruces_District_Office.html)

#### Fort Selden State Monument

North of Las Cruces off Interstate 25, Exit 19, on New Mexico State Road 157, Fort Selden Road.  
(505) 476-1150  
[www.nmmonuments.org/inst.php?inst=10](http://www.nmmonuments.org/inst.php?inst=10)

#### Mesilla Plaza

Bounded by Calle de San Albino, Calle de Guadalupe, Calle de Santiago and Calle de Parian, Mesilla, NM  
From Interstate 25, take Interstate 10 west to Mesilla Exit 140, turn south one mile on Highway 28 to Calle de Santiago.  
(575) 524-3262, ext. 117  
[www.oldsesilla.org/](http://www.oldsesilla.org/)

#### Keystone Heritage Park

4200 Doniphan Drive, El Paso, TX  
(915) 584-0563  
[www.keystoneheritagepark.org/](http://www.keystoneheritagepark.org/)

### Visitor Centers and Museums

#### Albuquerque Museum of Art & History

The city's museum preserves and displays artistic and historic items from early Spanish settlement to the present. Exhibit highlights include El Camino Real, Hispanic life, the Civil War, and New Mexico statehood. The museum is near Albuquerque's Old Town, across from Tiguex Park.  
2000 Mountain Road, Albuquerque, NM  
(505) 243-7255  
[www.cabq.gov/museum/](http://www.cabq.gov/museum/)

#### Bosque del Apache National Wildlife Refuge

*Bosque del Apache*, or woods of the Apache, was the Spanish name for the extensive wetlands and forest along the Río Grande below Socorro, New Mexico. Today, this region is one of the Southwest's premier wildlife refuges. Birders from around the world come during fall and winter to see sandhill cranes, snow geese, and ducks.  
State Highway 1, 8 miles south of Interstate 25, Exit 139.  
(575) 835-1828.  
[www.fws.gov/southwest/refuges/newmex/bosque/index.html](http://www.fws.gov/southwest/refuges/newmex/bosque/index.html)

#### El Camino Real International Heritage Center

Thirty miles south of Socorro, NM on County Road 1598, Center visitors step back in time and explore the history and heritage of El Camino Real from Zacatecas, Mexico, to the plaza in Santa Fe. One of New Mexico's State Monuments, the Center overlooks the Jornada del Muerto, the lower Río Grande and the historic trail.  
County Road 1598, Interstate-25, Exit 115  
(575) 854-3600  
[www.caminorealheritage.org/](http://www.caminorealheritage.org/)

#### El Paso Museum of History

The museum promotes the history and significance of the rich multicultural and multinational history of the border region known as "The Pass of the North."  
510 N. Santa Fe Street, El Paso, TX  
(915) 351-3588  
[www.elpasotexas.gov/history/](http://www.elpasotexas.gov/history/)

#### Chamizal National Memorial

The Chamizal Convention of 1963 resulted in the peaceful settlement of a century-long boundary dispute between the U.S. and Mexico. Visitors traveling east or west on I-10, exit at Hwy 54 and follow the brown Chamizal National Memorial directional signs. If traveling south on Hwy 54, take exit marked Juárez, Mexico. DO NOT proceed onto the International Bridge of the Americas, but turn right onto Paisano Street, and continue to follow signs toward Chamizal.  
800 S. San Marcial, El Paso, TX  
(915) 351-3588  
[www.nps.gov/cham](http://www.nps.gov/cham)

### Trail Administrators

For more information, contact:

#### Bureau of Land Management

New Mexico State Office  
P.O. Box 27115  
Santa Fe, NM 87502-0115  
(505) 954-2000  
[www.blm.gov/nm](http://www.blm.gov/nm)

#### National Park Service

National Trails Intermountain Region  
P.O. Box 728  
Santa Fe, NM 87504-0728  
(505) 988-6098  
[www.nps.gov/elca](http://www.nps.gov/elca)

#### Trail Association

El Camino Real de Tierra Adentro Trail Association (CARTA)  
P.O. Box 15162  
Las Cruces, NM 88004  
[www.caminorealcarta.org/](http://www.caminorealcarta.org/)