

El Presidio de Santa Barbara State Historic Park



Our Mission

The mission of the California Department of Parks and Recreation is to provide for the health, inspiration and education of the people of California by helping to preserve the state's extraordinary biological diversity, protecting its most valued natural and cultural resources, and creating opportunities for high-quality outdoor recreation.

GRAY DAVIS
Governor

MARY D. NICHOLS
Secretary for Resources

RUTH COLEMAN
Acting Director, California State Parks



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Historic Preservation**
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Settled snugly between the high peaks of the Santa Ynez Mountains and the vast reaches of the Pacific Ocean, the city of Santa Barbara is home to El Presidio de Santa Barbara State Historic Park.

The two-acre park encompasses much of the site of the original 1782 Presidio—the last Spanish fortress built in Alta California. Two sections of the original presidio quadrangle still stand in downtown Santa Barbara on Canon Perdido



Presidio Visitor Center

Street, between Anacapa and Santa Barbara Streets. El Cuartel (the soldiers' quarters), abutting Canon Perdido Street, is the oldest building in the city of Santa Barbara, and the second oldest in California. The Cañedo Adobe, which adjoins the reconstructed Padres' Quarters, was named after the Presidio soldier to whom it was eventually deeded.

THE PRESIDIO'S HISTORY

In April 1782, Lieutenant José Francisco Ortega arrived in Santa Barbara with an expedition of soldiers and settlers. The native people, including Yanonalit—a chief of note with authority over thirteen villages—were friendly to the newcomers. At a dedication mass on April 21, Father Junípero Serra blessed the Santa Barbara Royal Presidio. Presidios protected the missions and settlers against foreign

invasions and Indian attacks, and provided a cultural and social center. The Presidio soldiers and their families became vital in the colonization of California, and today many of their descendents still reside in Santa Barbara.

CONSTRUCTION OF THE PRESIDIO

Work began at once on shelters and a palisade enclosure for a temporary garrison, which was later replaced by a quadrangle of adobe structures surrounded by a thick defense wall.

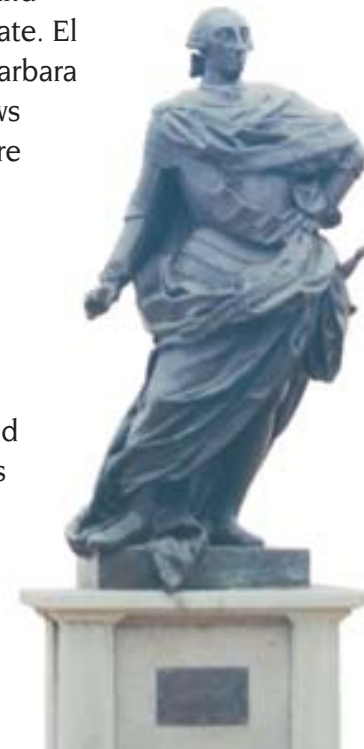
The Chapel and various buildings, mostly housing, formed a quadrangle around the Plaza de Armas. In 1806 and 1812, earthquakes caused extensive damage to the buildings. After Mexico took possession of Alta California in 1821,

expelling all Spaniards who would not pledge loyalty to the new government, the Presidio fell into further disrepair. By the 1840s it was partly in ruins.

The Presidio's military role ended in 1846 with the arrival of Colonel John C. Frémont's troops and the United States occupation of California. In the 1850s and 1860s, city streets were laid and constructed through the Presidio site. Though several portions of the quadrangle survived into the 20th century, most of the original structures were lost to the forces of growth and nature.

RECONSTRUCTION

In 1963 the Santa Barbara Trust for Historic Preservation (Trust) was formed to reconstruct the Presidio. It acquired El Cuartel, the residence of the last soldier who guard the West Gate of the Plaza de Armas, restored it, and donated it to the State. El Presidio de Santa Barbara State Historic Park was created in 1966. More than 35 years of archaeological excavations and research have revealed detailed information on the Presidio's history and the chronology of its construction.



*Statue of Carlos III,
King of Spain*



Presidio chapel

While public and private funds have provided for more recent property acquisitions, the Trust has been responsible for the planning, financing and reconstruction of buildings.

The Trust, the California Conservation Corps and Presidio volunteers have reconstructed the Padre's Quarters, the Chapel and Bell Tower, the northeast corner of the quadrangle, and the Commandancia (Commandante's Quarters).

FUTURE PLANS

Future reconstruction will include the northwest corner of the quadrangle and the main gate. The buildings will host museum exhibits depicting Presidio life during the Spanish colonial period, and changes in the Presidio neighborhood over the past 200 years. The research center will focus on early California history and culture. Educational programs will include living history demonstrations, lectures, interactive guidebooks, teachers' resources, performances and workshops on the Presidio's story.

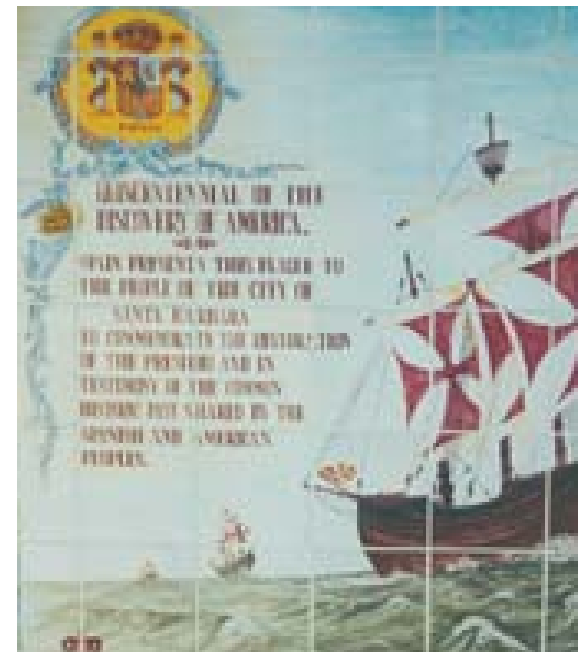
PATHWAY THROUGH THE PRESIDIO: 1782-1848

1. **Cañedo Adobe**—A row of rooms named for and granted to José Maria Cañedo, a Presidio soldier.
2. **Padre's Quarters**—Rebuilt quarters reserved for visiting chaplains from nearby missions.
3. **Chapel Bell Tower**—Reconstructed after more than 30 years of research, and rededicated on Founding Day, April 21, 2001.
4. **Chapel**—An active parish church until the mid-1850s, where many of Santa Barbara's earliest settlers lie buried beneath its tile floor.
5. **Comandancia (Comandante's Quarters)**—Once extended across today's Santa Barbara Street, adjoining other officers' quarters.
6. **Northeast Corner**—The foundations of a two-story observation tower, officers' quarters, and soldiers' quarters.



Comandancia

7. **Cocina**—A kitchen furnished with Presidio-era equipment, foods and utensils, with a period garden.
8. **El Cuartel**—The only surviving structure in a row that extended along the Presidio's western side. Each room housed an entire family. Part of the smaller room was destroyed during construction of Canon Perdido Street.
9. **Northwest Corner**—More residences for soldiers and their families, a communal cooking area, and parts of the original outer defense wall.



Plaque at El Cuartel

ACCESSIBLE FEATURES &

- Visitors may use an accessible staff restroom. Contact the volunteer at the reception desk for directions.
- Various buildings and exhibits, including the Chapel, the Cañedo Adobe Museum and the Comandancia, are accessible. Call for details.





NEARBY STATE PARKS

- El Capitan State Beach, 17 miles northwest of Santa Barbara (805) 968-1033/899-1400
- Carpinteria State Beach, 12 miles south of Santa Barbara (805) 684-2811/899-1400

El Presidio de Santa Barbara

State Historic Park

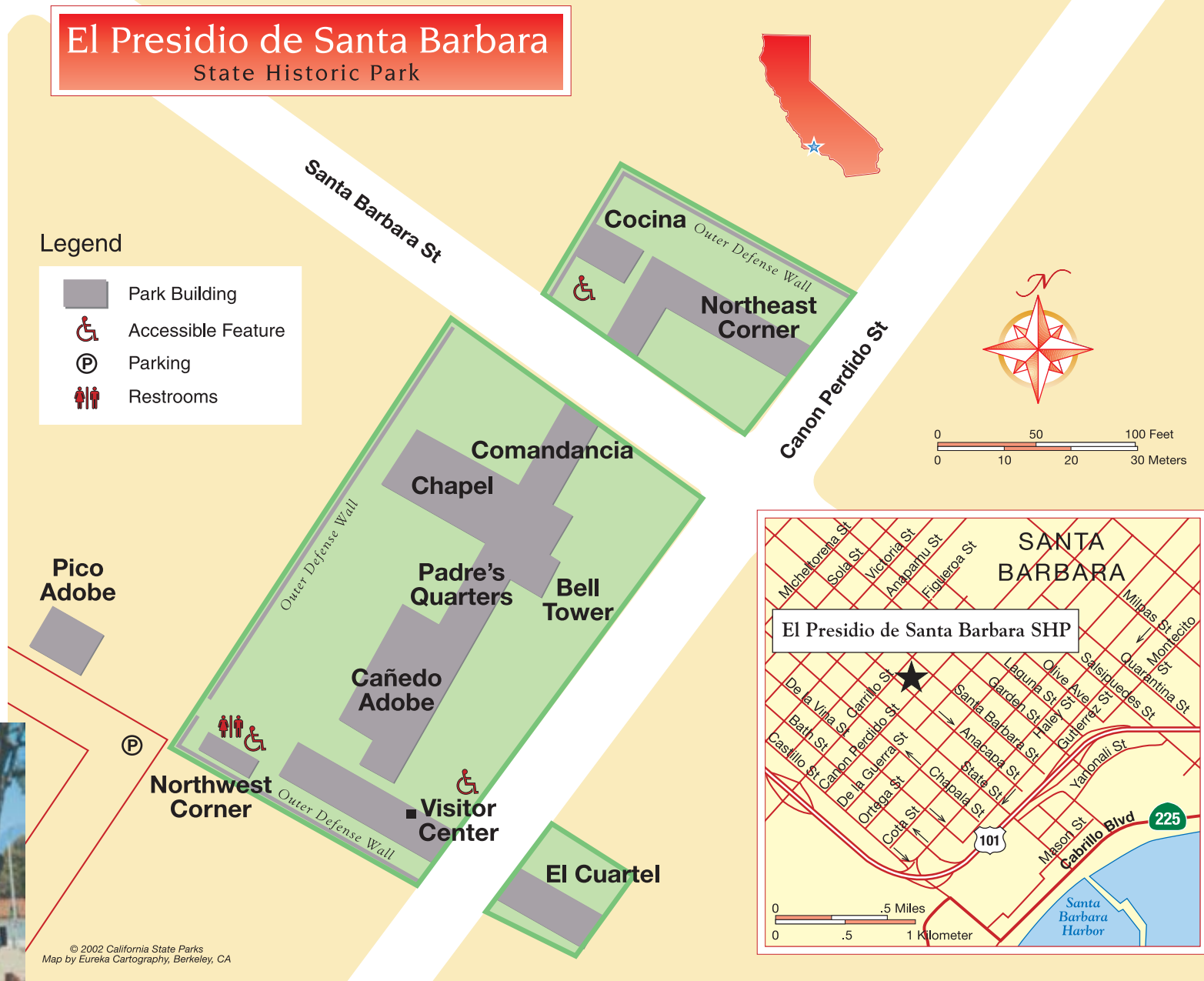
Legend

-  Park Building
-  Accessible Feature
-  Parking
-  Restrooms



Reconstructed northeast corner of the Presidio

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Map by Eureka Cartography, Berkeley, CA



PLEASE REMEMBER

- The Visitor Center is located in the Cañedo Adobe.
- The law prohibits removal of any natural, cultural or historical feature.
- Parking is available on city streets and in public parking lots off Anacapa Street.
- Only service dogs are permitted in buildings. Pets must be on a leash while on the grounds.