

Native American Lands



Native Americans have lived on the California landscape at least 13,000 years.

The Ohlone people arrived in the the Bay Area about 3,000 years ago, before 500 B.C.E..

During the last 250 years, other peoples have arrived from all over the world; the population on this land has increased by 2,000 times.

Although few traces survive of most of the sovereign Native groups who once lived here, many Bay Area Native Americans are rediscovering and celebrating their history and traditions.

Missions, Presidios, and Pueblos



“ . . . the call should be heeded of so many thousands of pagans who are waiting in California on the threshold of holy Baptism . . . ”

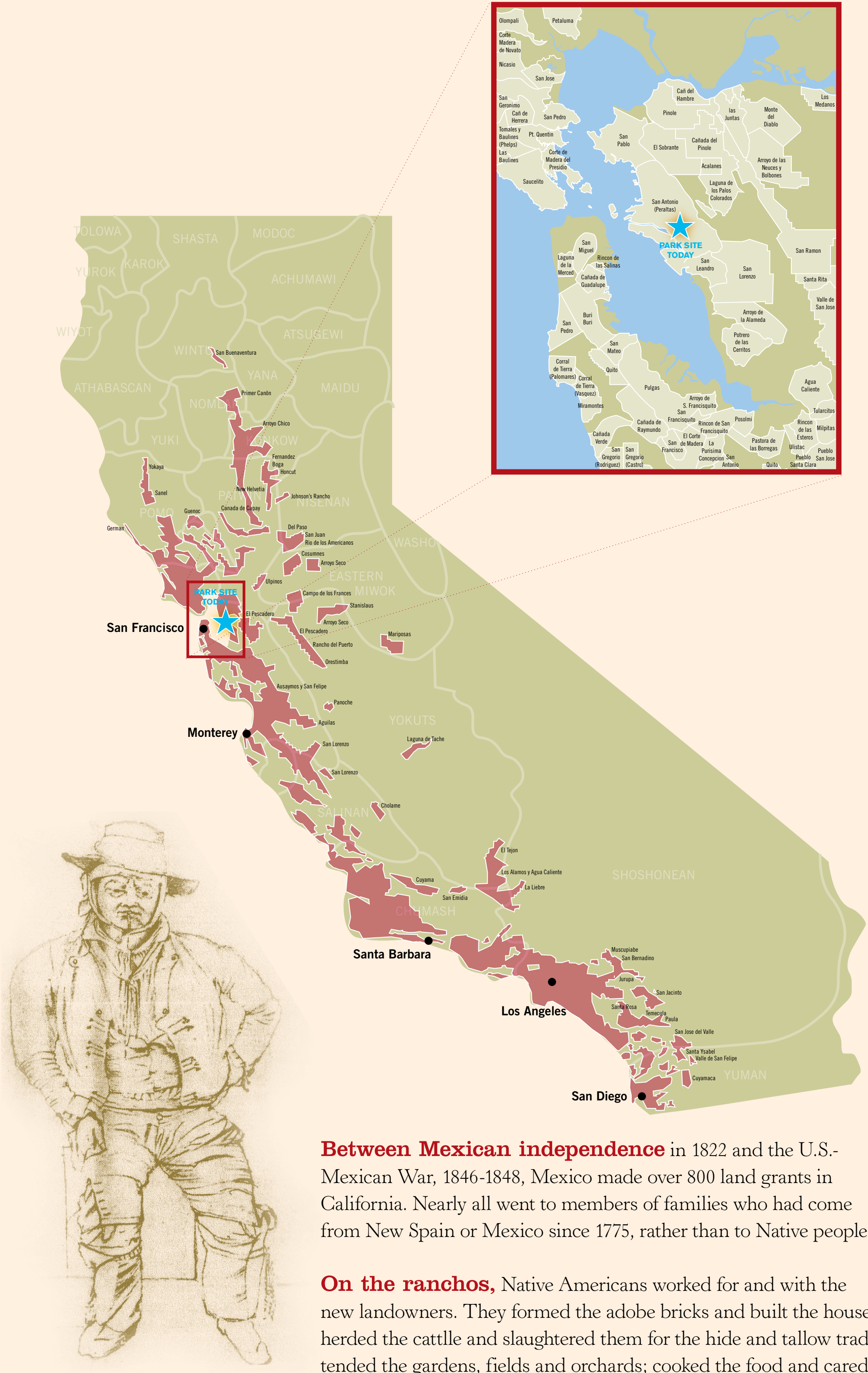
JUNÍPERO SERRA,
HEAD OF CALIFORNIA MISSIONS, 1767



“ . . . at the appropriate time the natives could be taught Christianity, and reduced to obedience to my Royal officials . . . ”

CARLOS III, KING OF SPAIN, 1770

Ranchos



Between Mexican independence in 1822 and the U.S.-Mexican War, 1846-1848, Mexico made over 800 land grants in California. Nearly all went to members of families who had come from New Spain or Mexico since 1775, rather than to Native peoples.

On the ranchos, Native Americans worked for and with the new landowners. They formed the adobe bricks and built the houses; herded the cattle and slaughtered them for the hide and tallow trade; tended the gardens, fields and orchards; cooked the food and cared for the children.

Native Americans outnumbered the Spanish-speaking landowners on the ranchos by about twenty to one; the ranchos' history is part of the heritage of California's Native Peoples.

Visit the alcoves on the adobe wall outside to learn about daily life on the Peralta rancho from both perspectives.