

# **Tumacácori National Historical Park**

As English colonists were arriving at Jamestown and Plymouth Rock on the east coast of North America, the southwestern Native Americans were starting to see visitors from the south. Catholic missionaries from Spain traveled north from Mexico to establish missions in the Southwest region that is now Texas, New Mexico, Arizona and California.

The oldest Jesuit mission in Arizona has been preserved in Tumacácori National Historic Park, south of Tucson, Arizona. The San Cayetano del Tumacácori Mission was established in 1691. Jesuit, and later Franciscan, priests ministered to the O'odham Indians and Spanish settlers until 1848.

You can visit this special place, tour the mission church, cemetery and grounds, and enjoy the peaceful and quiet atmosphere reminiscent of the mission period. A museum offers dioramas, artifacts and exhibits about the Native American and Spanish colonial cultures. Ranger-led tours, living history, craft presentations, and even full-moon tours of the church and riverside can make your experience unforgettable.

This National Park also preserves land which was part of the Juan Bautista de Anza National Historic Trail, and you can walk along the trails 4.5 miles tracing the expedition's footsteps under the shade of cottonwoods along the Santa Cruz River.

## **Source(s):**

<http://www.nps.gov/tuma>

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