

California History



California

California is a state with a large area of land.

This land is very diverse in terms of vegetation, climate, landforms, natural resources, and geology.

In addition to California's diversity in terms of land and climate, it also has a diverse history.

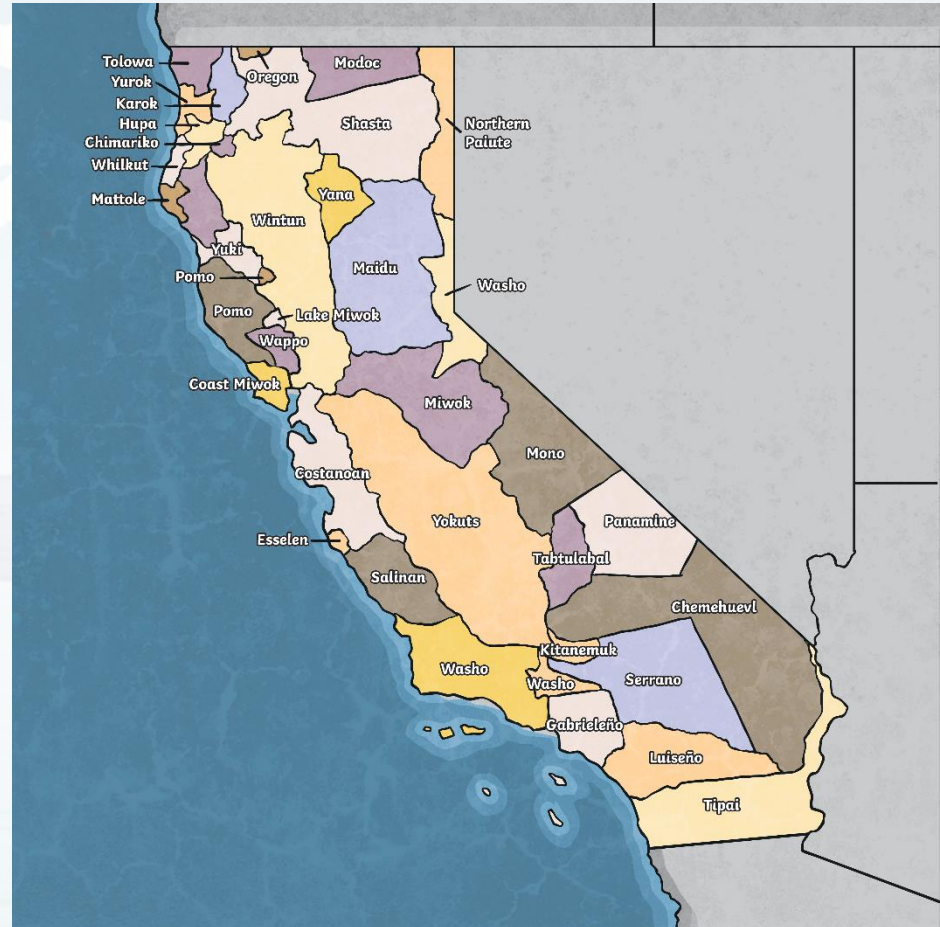


Native Americans

California's first inhabitants were Native Americans.

Currently, there are over 100 Native American tribes living in California.

Each tribe has their own traditions and has adapted to their unique geography and environment.



European Explorers

The first European explorer to land in California was Juan Rodríguez Cabrillo. He came to California in 1542.

Then, in 1579 Sir Francis Drake landed in California.

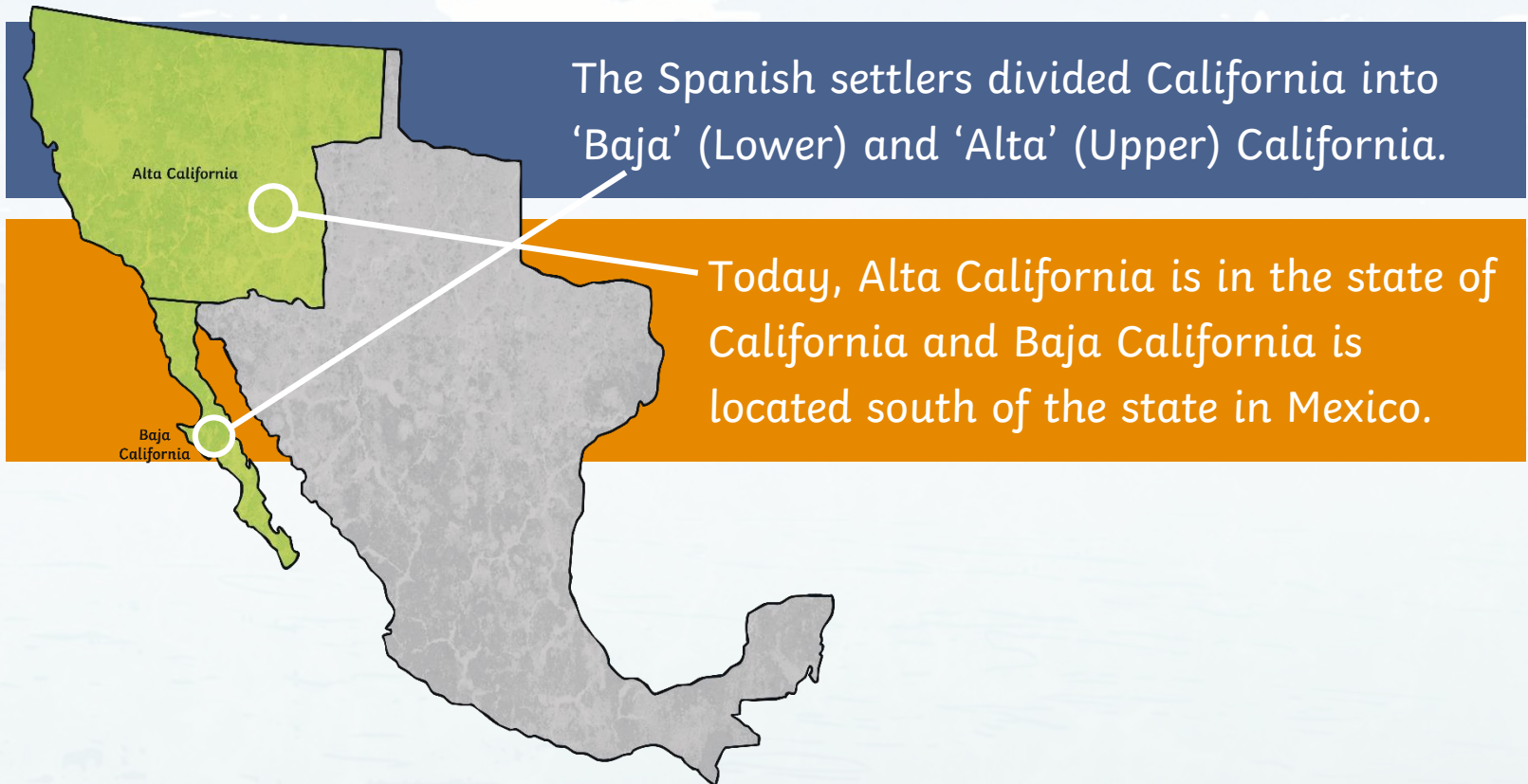
Hernán Cortés conquered Mexico for Spain. He sent explorers out to explore the surrounding area. His explorers reached California. They chose the name 'California' because it was the title of a popular book.

Sebastián Vizcaíno explored Monterey Bay and famously described its beauty.



European Explorers

Spain began to colonize California in the 1600s after realizing that Russia and England were interested in colonizing California.

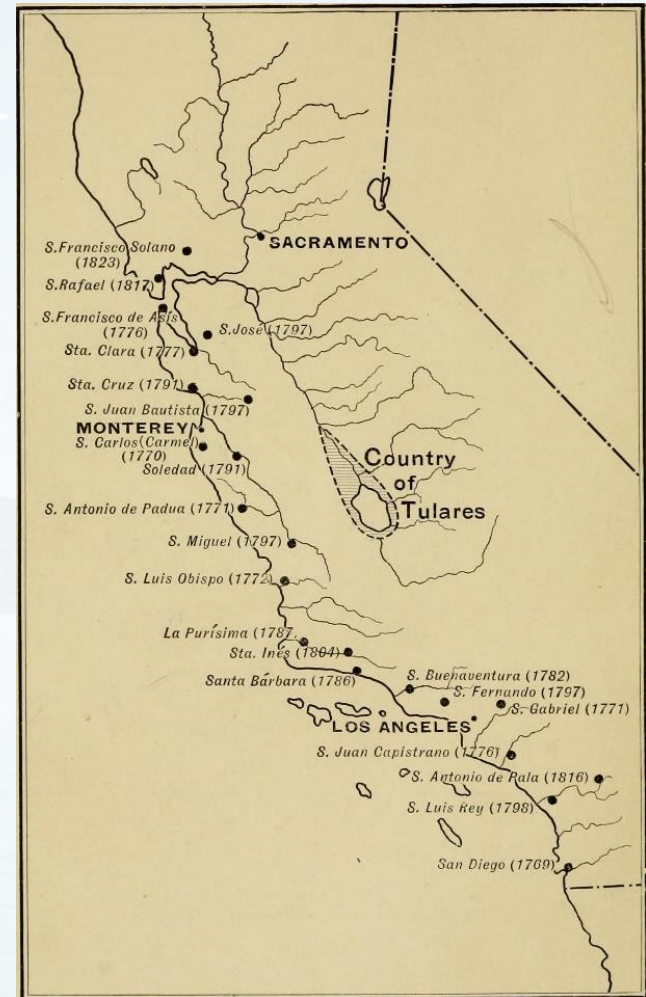


Spanish Missions

In order to demonstrate Spanish power over California, Spain established the missions and presidios.

Presidios were fortified military bases.

The missions were a community established by Spain and led by the Franciscan priests to educate the Native Americans about God and about the Spanish lifestyle.



Settlers from the East

Many Americans believed in Manifest Destiny, or the idea that God wanted the Americans to expand across the entire continent.

Settlers came from the east by way of the Oregon Trail, the California Trail, and eventually the Transcontinental Railroad.



Mexico

Mexico won its independence from Spain in 1821. California became part of Mexico.

During the Mexican rule, ranchos and agriculture flourished in California.

In 1846, the United States declared war with Mexico. Some of the settlers in California were from the United States, so they began to question Mexican rule as well.



The Bear Flag Republic

In 1846, under the leadership of John C. Frémont, the settlers in California declared themselves their own republic and revolted against Mexico.



Eureka!

Eureka, California's state motto, means 'I have found it.' This saying refers to the gold that Californians found.

In 1848 a gold rush began in California.

John Marshall found gold at Sutter's Mill.

News of the gold brought in over 300,000 settlers to California!



Statehood for California

Due to the gold rush, and the boost that it gave to California's economy, California didn't even have to become a territory before it became a state.

California then belonged to the United States and began the process of California's state seal shows the Roman goddess Minerva, also known as the Greek goddess Athena. Mythology tells how she was born an adult. This symbolizes California's transition straight to a state instead of becoming a territory first.



California Today

California has an amazingly diverse economy, population, landscape, and climate.

All of this diversity has contributed to this amazing state as we know it today!

