

California Mission Glossary

adobe - sun-dried bricks made of clay earth, straw and water

alcalde - Indian leader elected by his people at the mission

altar - a table used by religious people in church service

arrowhead - the pointed tip of an arrow made of stone or metal

asistencia - a small mission or sub-mission

atole - a mush made of cornmeal

awl - sharp, pointed tool used for making small holes in leather

baptism - religious ceremony given for a person to become a Christian

barracks - rooms for the soldiers to live

blacksmith - a person who makes objects out of iron

carpenter - a person who make objects out of wood

carreta - wooden cart used to carry heavy objects

ceremony - ritual

chapel - small church

chert - a rock which can be chipped of into pieces with sharp edges

coiled - a way of making baskets which looks like it's made of rope coils woven together

community - a group of people living in the same area

convent - a church and buildings for religious women to live

convento - building for the priests' rooms

design - drawing

dialects - different ways of saying the same language

down - soft, fluffy feathers

excavation - digging in the earth to find the remains from another time

expedition - a group of people taking a long trip to a faraway place

fiesta - a party or celebration

fletching -feathers in the back of an arrow to make it travel in a straight line

gill net - a net hanging in the water to catch fish be their gills

governor - a leader who rules a country or territory

granary - rooms for storing grain

gristmill - a mill used to grind grain

heritage - something passed down to people from their long-ago relatives

kiln - a brick oven used to bake adobe bricks

leaching - washing away a bitter taste by pouring water through foods like acorn meal

loom - a machine used to weave cloth

medicine man or woman - a person called on to heal the sick

mano - a stone used to mash meal

metate - a stone or volcanic slab used for grinding corn or wheat

miracle - an event that cannot be explained

missionary - religious person who travels to tell people about God

mortar - flat surface of wood or stone used for grinding

padre - Spanish name for priest, a religious person in some churches

parching - to toast or shrivel with dry heat

pestle - a small stone used to mash or grind in a mortar

pinole - flour made from ground corn

planks - wooden boards

pozole - a stew of vegetables and beef

presidio - fort

pueblo - town

quadrangle - mission building built in a four-sided shape

reata - leather rope used by Indian cowboys

regidore - Indian leader elected to help the alcalde

reservation - land set aside for the Native American by the U.S.

restoration - repair to original condition

ritual - a ceremony that is always performed the same way

saint - a person who is considered holy by the church

saloon - a bar

sandstone - yellow stone used to build some mission churches

secularization - Mexican laws that took the missions away from the church and gave them to the government

seine net - a net which hangs in the water to catch fish

settle - to come to live

shield - an object designed to protect a person

stable - a building where horses are kept

steatite - a soft stone used for cooking pots and bowls

taboo - something a person is forbidden to do
tallow - animal fat used to make soap and candles
tanner - a person who tans animal hides
tattoo - to mark or decorate the skin
territory - land
tile - a piece of clay baked in kiln, often used for roofs
trade - exchanging one object for another or a type of skilled work
tradition - the handing down of customs from generation to generation
tree pitch - sticky substance found on evergreen trees
tribe - a group of people who share the same language and culture
twining - a method of weaving baskets

vat - pit
viceroi - a leader who rules a country for the king
village - a small group of houses

water channel - a system of water pipes