

Stop 10 – New Skills, New Life

Look closely at the foundations of the mission granary as you walk the path along the south wall parallel to road. The granary was large enough to hold 50 tons of corn, 35 tons of beans, cotton, wool, chilies, and salt. To the natives, a full granary must have been an incredible sight. Before they came to the missions, their home was the wilderness.

If you were a native in the 1700s, you might also be drawn to the stone and adobe structures of the missions and the promise of survival for your family. Natives who came to the missions had never seen permanent structures, but learned to build them. They had never cultivated crops but learned to be farmers. They did not clothe their bodies but learned to weave cloth. Although the missionary's primary goal was the conversion of souls to the Catholic faith, he was also responsible for creating loyal and productive subjects of the King of Spain. Natives were trained to be carpenters, blacksmiths, stone masons, cowboys, farmers, soldiers, and weavers.

By 1759 the Espada pueblo was an enclosed, fortified compound. The Indians lived in apartments built into the walls. Picture the convento, the building next to today's chapel, with a series of arches framing an open air corridor and stairway leading to the second floor where the missionaries lived.

Explore the corner of the mission compound where the open wood covered workshop is today. Imagine the heat of the fire and the sounds of the blacksmith pounding out horseshoes. On your way to the church, imagine an afternoon in the mid-1700s. The smell of stew and corn tortillas emanates from the kitchen. You hear sanding and carving and clacking from the carpenter's and the weaver's workshops. As you exit the chapel, visit the functioning *acequia*, or irrigation ditch just behind the walls. Visualize the farmer flooding the fields. Visit the Espada museum to view tools of the trade for farmers and cowboys and learn about on-site blacksmith demonstrations.