



A Brief History of Temecula Valley

Temecula is a name derived from the valley's largest, Native American ancestral village; it has come to mean "place of the sun." Since its early beginnings the Temecula Valley's combination of mild climate and beautiful rolling hills has attracted people to share the natural richness of the valley.

THE FIRST PEOPLE

For centuries, the Temeeeku village was home to the Temeekuyam band of Native American people. Identified tribally as Payomkawichum, they thrived in a land abundant with game and waterfowl. When the Mission San Luis Rey de Francia established supporting ranchos in the Temecula Valley for raising cattle and farming in 1821, the Temeekuyam became known as San Luiseños, later shortened to Luiseños.

TRAVELERS TO TEMECULA

Native Americans created California's early trails. In the 1700s and early 1800s, Spanish explorers and Franciscan missionaries followed these early trails. What would become known as the Southern Emigrant Trail into California passed through Temecula. First travelled by trappers, hunters, and explorers, it became a road for wagons and the primary route for tens of thousands of prospectors during the California Gold Rush beginning in 1849. Temecula, which had been a back-country settlement and rancho became a popular place for pioneers and gold-seekers to camp on the way to Los Angeles and the gold regions beyond.

THE STAGECOACH ERA

One of the challenges facing the early U.S. Postal Service was the transportation of mail across vast areas of wilderness. Getting the mail as far as California became even more critical when California became part of the United States in 1850. It was the Butterfield Overland Mail, an experienced stagecoach company, was awarded a contract to deliver mail between St. Louis, Missouri, and San

Francisco in 1858. Temecula was one of the stops along the Butterfield Stage Route which followed the southern Emigrant trail.

On board the stagecoach and accompanying the U.S. mail on the very first trip was Waterman Lilly Ormsby, a New York Herald newspaper reporter who mentioned Temecula in his dispatches. "Our road lay through some delightful oak groves," he wrote. He also noted the cool, delicious springs of water; the excellent accommodations at Temecula; and of the road there being lined with prosperous ranches. A century later, Mr. Ormsby's name would be etched along with the names of explorers and pioneers in the 150-ton, "They Passed This Way" granite monument that overlooks Old Town Temecula's largest park.

TEMECULA'S U.S. POST OFFICE

In 1859, the first U.S. post office was established in Temecula. It became one of only seven post offices in California south of the Tehachapi Mountains. Having a Temecula postal designation implied permanence and importance, the stagecoaches brought new settlers to the valley, and mail became an important link with the rest of the country.

ARRIVAL OF THE RAILROAD

In 1882, the first rail line to Temecula was completed and a new town site was established. With the California Southern and Santa Fe Railroads, Temecula was to become an important shipping point for cattle. The turn of the century saw great cattle drives from the backcountry.

AUTOMOBILES

Just as the stagecoaches and railroad had done, new roads in the early 1900s helped to open up Temecula to the outside world. The Inland Highway (the first, paved, two-lane, county road and ancestor of Highway 395) was built through Temecula Valley in 1915. Until 1949 it ran down Front Street where restaurants, gas stations, and motels served those travelling through the Temecula Valley.

VAIL RANCH

From the 1800s until the 1960s, cattle were the backbone of the Temecula Valley economy. The grazing land around Temecula was owned and leased by various ranchers until 1905 when cattle baron Walter Vail began buying vast acreage surrounding the town of Temecula. By 1947, the Vail Ranch included

more than 87,500 acres. Walter's son, Mahlon Vail managed the operation for many years and Temecula's Old West lifestyle flourished.

RANCHO CALIFORNIA

In 1964, the Vails announced the sale of their ranch to a consortium of developers who had plans for a semi-urban, pastoral, master-planned community to be known as Rancho California. Besides housing, Rancho California was to include light industry and agriculture including avocados, citrus, and wine grapes.

TEMECULA VALLEY WINE COUNTRY

With funding from Rancho California developers, vineyards of wine grapes were planted to demonstrate the Temecula Valley's wine grape growing capability. In the late 1960s and the 1970s, the first of Temecula Valley Southern California Wine Country pioneers purchased acreage and planted their vineyards. In 1974, the founding of Callaway Winery marked the beginning of winemaking in the Temecula Valley.

THE CASUAL, PICTURESQUE VALLEY EVOLVES

Residential and commercial development happened slowly and thoughtfully in the Temecula Valley. In 1985, Interstate 15 was completed and 1989 saw the incorporation of the City of Temecula. Today, the Temecula town site established by the railroad more than a century ago is Downtown Old Town Temecula. This vibrant cloistered corner of the valley hosts festive and celebratory, special events year-round; and is a popular, pedestrian-friendly, arts-entertainment-shopping and dining district. The burgeoning Old Town Temecula culinary scene includes a variety of independently owned eateries with delicious, one-of-a-kind menus; and the Old Town Temecula Tasting Trail with its artisanal food emporiums and tasting rooms.

Meanwhile, the cover of the April 30, 1989, edition of *The Wine Spectator* touted "Discovering Wine Country Two Hours from L.A." The companion article stated, "Clean air and vineyard views, new restaurants and a good bed and breakfast make the Temecula wine region a fine weekend destination," and included mention of other activities including hot air ballooning. The article also noted that pioneers set the stage for an influx of wineries, of which there were then 11, and that "Local vintners and

growers, as well as real estate developers, recognize the importance of preserving the agricultural nature of Temecula Valley."

There are nearly 50 wineries in the significant and diverse Temecula Valley AVA (American Viticultural Area), considered to be the major AVA in Southern California. The wine region continues to gain recognition for its award-winning, premium varietal and proprietary blended wines, and for its talented winemakers; and is home to three-time, award-winning California State Winery of the Year, South Coast Winery. A growing collection of thousands of awards attests to the quality of Temecula Valley's vintages. The destination is also popular with visitors for its gracious and friendly wineries; learning experiences and wine education programs; concerts and signature wine-and-live-music events; outdoor activities; and dining in excellent winery restaurants amidst the vineyards.

PECHANGA RESORT & CASINO

The old Luiseño village of Temecula survived until 1875. In time, a few of the Temecula Luiseños settled in nearby Pechanga Canyon, and in 1882 the Pechanga Indian Reservation was established. Today, the Pechanga Band of Luiseño Indians owns and operates the Pechanga Resort & Casino. The property provides the largest and most expansive resort-casino experience anywhere in California and is one of the largest resort-casinos in the United States. The resort has been rated a AAA Four Diamond property consecutively, every year since opening in 2002.

The spectacular, Arthur Hills-designed Journey at Pechanga golf course garners highly desirable accolades from top golf publications and is recognized as one of the finest golf courses in California. Pechanga Resort & Casino is also widely recognized as one of Southern California's premier live venues for concerts and entertainment, and for exceptional dining. With multiple mega-celebrations For New Year's Eve and New Year's Day, an estimated 75,000 people descend upon Pechanga to welcome the New Year.

A STRONG APPRECIATION FOR THE PAST

Temecula demonstrates its reverence for the past in varied ways. In Downtown Old Town Temecula, looking east up Main Street from the bridge at Pujol, the new California mission-revival style Civic Center and Town Square are an impressive site. Meriting a closer view at the base of Temecula Town Square

(and a popular scene for memorable photo opportunities) is the remarkable fountain inspired by the textural design of Luiseño basket artistry.

At Old Town's Sam Hicks Park, the "They Passed This Way" monument is a testament to the brave explorers and pioneers who traveled through Temecula in the years as the West was being settled. In honor of their pioneering spirit, dozens of names are etched in the locally quarried, 150-ton, granite memorial.

Across the way, at the Temecula Valley Museum, key stories are honored and depicted through exhibits including the Luiseño Indians, the early ranchos, stagecoach and railroad transportation influences, and Erle Stanley Gardner (attorney and author most famous for his Perry Mason mysteries) who lived in Temecula from 1937 until 1970. The museum provides docent-led walking tours of historic Old Town Temecula for groups of 10 people and more, by advance reservation.

At Pechanga Resort & Casino, the championship, 18-hole Journey golf course on nearly 300 acres of unique, ancestral land was designed and constructed with respect for the natural habitat and Pechanga heritage. Each hole on the course bears a Luiseño name from "The Beginning Place/Chuxi'vonga" at Hole 1 through "Eagle's Nest/Aswut Potee'l" at Hole 18. The course also hosts cultural exhibits that chronicle the history of the Pechanga people. Of great significance, is the ancient Great Oak visible from the back nine. The Great Oak (namesake for Pechanga's fine-dining Great Oak Steakhouse) is the largest, natural-growing, indigenous coast like oak in the U.S. It is estimated to be 850 to 1,500 years old making it one of the oldest oak trees in the world.

PU'ESKA MOUNTAIN

Each year on November 15, Temecula Valley honors the Pechanga Band of Luiseño Indians on "Pu'eska Mountain Day." The special date pays tribute to a stunning announcement made by the Pechanga Tribal Government on November 15, 2012. The tribe had purchased from Granite Construction and closed escrow on what had become known as the Liberty Quarry project. The Pechanga purchase put an end to a seven-year battle fought by the Pechanga people, the City of Temecula, and the local community including S.O.S. Hills (Save our Southwest Hills), to stop a rock quarry that would have dynamited the mountain. Terms of the Pechanga purchase repelled the proposed construction site from Temecula and

preserved the property in its natural state. With respect and appreciation for Pechanga's actions, the land is now known by its tribal name, "Pu'eska Mountain."

Along with Temecula Valley's natural gifts of climate and geography, visitors are invited to share in the appreciation of the rich history the region is rooted in. That legacy is still very much a part of contemporary Temecula Valley Southern California Wine Country.