

Things To Do To Learn About California

Students in 4th Grade learn about the history and geography of California. Here are some suggestions for places to visit to learn about the state. Most of the links are found under “Day Trips/Outings” --- “History.”

Missions:

Visit any mission, among the first permanent settlements in California. The closest mission is San Gabriel. However, if you have the time, it is worth the drive to San Juan Capistrano or Lompoc to visit La Purisima.

Map and information about all 21 missions in California:

http://www.missionscalifornia.com/missions_map.html

If you are visiting Mission Santa Barbara, visit the Presidio (fort) too.

El Presidio de Santa Barbara State Historic Park

<http://sbthp.org/>

La Purisima Mission State Historic Park

<http://www.lapurisimamission.org/>

2295 Purisima Road

Lompoc, CA 93436

(805) 733-3713

Self guided tours are available 9:00am to 5:00pm daily. Try, however, to join a group for a guided tour.

Reconstructed in 1941, this mission leaves nothing to the imagination. There are animals and crops, rooms set up as they would have appeared during the mission period, and more. They offer guided tours every day at 1pm, and have Living History Days, called “People Days,” once a month. On these special days, people dress up and go about their daily chores as if living at the mission in 1822.

Ranchos:

Rancho Los Cerritos Historic Site

<http://www.rancholoscerritos.org/visitor.html>

4600 Virginia Road

Long Beach, CA 90807

(562) 570-1755

Wednesday – Sunday 1:00-5:00pm.

*FREE

Two-story Monterey-style adobe furnished to reflect occupants from the 1860s-1880s.

Old Los Angeles: Olvera Street

(El Pueblo De Los Angeles Historic Park)

<http://olvera-street.com/>

Tours available at the Olvera Street Visitors Center in the 1887 Sepulveda House
622 N. Main Street (213)628-1274

*FREE

Take the train to Union Station and then walk up to Olvera Street. Take a walking tour and visit the Old Plaza (old town square), Avila Adobe built in 1818, Sepulveda House Museum with its 18 –minute video on the history of Los Angeles, and the old Plaza Firehouse Museum.

Westward Expansion

(Ranchos, Stagecoaches, Pony Express, Gold Rush):

Museum of the American West (formerly the Gene Autry Museum)

<http://theautry.org/>

FREE on the second Tuesday of the month.

4700 Western Heritage Way (opposite the LA Zoo)

Los Angeles, CA 90027-1462

They have many family activities on weekends.

Wells Fargo History Museum

<http://www.wellsfargohistory.com/museums/los-angeles/>

333 South Grand Ave., Los Angeles (behind the bank)

*FREE

This is a very small museum, yet it is filled with all kinds of interesting material. See an original stagecoach, Agent's office, Pony Express *mochila*, gold nuggets, tools, and more.

*Make sure you ask to watch the movie and ride on the stagecoach.

TIME FOR A BIG TRIP?

Gold Rush, Transcontinental Railroad, State Capital: Sacramento and Coloma

Sutter's Fort

Old Sacramento

- Wells Fargo Museum
- Pony Express Statue and Schedule
- Notice the wooden sidewalks outside the buildings
- Notice the exterior of the old buildings

California State Railroad Museum

The Capitol Building

Marshall Gold Discovery State Historic Park, Coloma

Guide to Sacramento Museums

<http://www.sacmuseums.org/>

Website for learning about the state government:

http://capitolmuseum.ca.gov/kids/kids_home_flash.html