

Visions of Paradise: Hope Rides the Rails

Discover the history of downtown San Diego, the city's first neighborhood, along with adjacent areas of National City and Logan Heights. Learn how visionaries' investments, booms, busts, and the entrance of San Diego on the world stage shaped these neighborhoods.

Our City, Our Neighborhoods: Hillcrest—A Town to Call Home

Hillcrest, one of San Diego's earliest neighborhoods north of City (Balboa) Park, was founded as Hillcrest in 1907, attractive to young families because of affordable housing and easy access to downtown by local electric railway. Learn how Hillcrest has changed, becoming a vibrant area with a rich past recognized with great pride.

San Diego City's Favorite Park

Set aside as City Park in 1868, today's Balboa Park has undergone a multitude of changes in its 150 years. Once a series of mesas covered in native plant life, the park now boasts several well-known gardens and museums. Learn how the Park has evolved in this presentation, and discover some of its less famous uses.

Settling the San Diego Mission and Presidio

As the first permanent European settlement in Alta California, the founding of the mission and presidio in San Diego was a major turning point in the history of the region. Mission San Diego de Alcalá and Presidio de San Diego were the products of an expanding Spanish empire that would bring new people to the region; alter the Native cultures; and introduce new foods, animals, and technology.

World War I in San Diego

San Diego experienced WWI in its own way – this presentation will look at the camps and training centers that developed during this era. These camps were supported by a network of civilian charities that drew on the region's population for support. The presentation will also look at the war's impact on daily life for civilians.

Dam the Water and Pray for Rain

The story of San Diego is inextricably bound up with the story of water; people cannot long survive in a region without access to this most vital resource. This presentation starts with a brief look at how indigenous groups, and early Spanish and Mexican settlers were shaped by water considerations. After California joined the United States, water agencies, plans, and infrastructure blossomed, bringing the presentation into the modern era.

Old Town to New Town: The Development of San Diego

Before it was the second largest city in California, San Diego was a small Mexican pueblo. As the demographics quickly changed with statehood, however, the pueblo did not meet the needs of the new population. This presentation explores the geographical shift from Old Town to New Town – as well as the cultural and economic implications of the move.

San Diego History to 1915

This presentation tracks the history of the region from its indigenous beginnings to 1915. It looks at the arrival of Spanish colonizers and their impact on the region, the role of the Mexican government in shaping San Diego, and the early American era. The presentation stops in 1915, just as the city has prepared for a grand exposition they hope will put them on the map.

San Diego History 1900-1985

This presentation picks up where the presentation “San Diego History to 1915” ends, but can stand alone as well by incorporating a brief overview of the region in the early 1900s. Moving forward in time, this presentation looks at how the Great Depression, World War II, and the post-war trends of urban-flight and redevelopment shaped the region.

San Diego – It’s All About Diversity

This presentation takes an overview look at San Diego’s history, focusing particularly on the people living here. It begins by looking at the region’s original inhabitants, and tracks the changes made by the arrival of the Spanish, the change to Mexican government, and eventual American control. The presentation also looks at the significant migratory waves that brought new people to the region and the governmental policies and attitudes that shaped these new communities.

