

# History of Galisteo: AD 400 to present

GALISTEO, NEW MEXICO 87540

---

La Iglesia Nuestra  
Señora de los  
Remedios 1884





### La Iglesia Nuestra Señora de los Remedios

Located just a short drive south of Santa Fe New Mexico is a beautiful old mission church which traces its roots back to the 1500's. This is the church of **Iglesia Nuestra Señora de los Remedios (The Church of Our Lady of the Remedies)**. The village was at one time the pueblo dwelling of the Tano Indians. This far predates the Spanish colonization of the area. Coronado's first explorations were in 1540. The first historical record of the Galisteo pueblos was furnished by Pedro Castaneda of the Coronado expedition in 1541. The Tano Indians had a bustling multi-storied pueblo settlement. In fact, the Galisteo Basin was a thriving trade route for both the pueblo Indians and later for the Spaniards. Before the Spaniards stepped foot into Galisteo Basin, it was inhabited by about a dozen tribes and one thousand Indians. Where the village of Galisteo is located today was a 1600's Spanish land grant. The Galisteo Basin today is also one of the best known archeological sites in the United States. To the northeast lies the Sangre de Cristo Mountains and to the southwest

are the Sandia Mountains which are to the immediate east of Albuquerque.

The church at this site today was originally constructed in 1884. It was a reconstruction of the post Spanish reconquest church built on this site. According to the New Mexico state historian, the village of Galisteo was founded about the same time as Santa Fe, perhaps just a few years later circa 1612. Another interesting historical note from the state historian is that the pueblo Indians around Galisteo actually warned the Spanish governor of Nuevo Mexico of the planned **Pueblo Revolt of 1680** on the eve of the violent uprising. When Diego de Vargas explored the Galisteo Basin upon the Spaniards return in 1692, he found that virtually all of the missions in the Galisteo basin were abandoned. The church in Galisteo was in bad repair and just about ready to collapse when a rebuilding project was undertaken. In 1706 the church rebuilding was completed and about 150 families were settled in the pueblo. The new church had one nave as opposed to the three the old mission had. Something apparently affected this particular mission as opposed to the majority. By the end of the 1700's, most church missions in Nuevo Mexico were doing quite well.

# Pueblo History

## HISTORY OF GALISTEO

---



### **Tano Indian/Pueblo History:**

The present settlement is located along the Galisteo Creek in the Galisteo Basin. All of these are named for Galisteo Pueblo, one of several abandoned and ruined Tanoan villages in the basin, sited near the settlement.

### **Pueblo Galisteo/Las Madres**

Las Madres pueblo had around 47+ rooms, and was inhabited between AD 1275-1370. The larger Galisteo Pueblo was inhabited up into the 1700s, and included a mission. Both sites were abandoned by the middle of the 18th century due to epidemic disease and resettlement by the Spanish. The inhabitants of both sites moved to Santa Domingo Pueblo, downstream on the Rio Grande.

### **San Cristobal Pueblo**

Also known as Yam-p-ham-ba (a narrow strip of willows). The site of San Cristobal lies just below a rocky bluff on the banks of a creek that flows out of the hills and into the broad basin. In addition to hiding a number of painted caves and sacred places, the bluff provided its ancient residents a vantage point to watch for raiders from the eastern plains. The first habitation of this drainage was between AD 400-600. The pueblo itself

# Pueblo History

## HISTORY OF GALISTEO

---

dates from the Pueblo III period, when the central pueblo was built and rooms were added. This was a trade center for the lead-based galena glaze. The population boomed in AD 1450-1680. The architecture was stone and adobe, with rectangular roomblocks and regular kivas.

At one time, San Cristobal was one of the largest pueblos in the Southwest, four or five stories high and containing as many as 600 ground-floor rooms. Just up the hill from the pueblo are the ruins of the Spanish mission built in AD 1620.

Following the Pueblo Revolt in 1680, San Cristobal's last inhabitants probably migrated to the other pueblos along the Rio Grande, and some traveled as far away as the Hopi mesas in Arizona.

The Galisteo Basin was a difficult and dangerous area for many centuries, as it served as a buffer between the plains tribes and the Rio Grande pueblos. The Spanish entrada complicated the problem, as the Galisteo Basin lay in the path of El Camino Real. Eventually, the Tano inhabitants gave up their homes and became assimilated with other pueblos. After the reconquest, the Galisteo basin was repopulated with Christianized Indians, birthing the communities that still exist today.



# Archeological Sites

Rock-art scholar Polly Schaafsma called this a "magical place bristling with protective powers." War imagery dominates the rock art here, created by the Galisteo Basin Tano between AD 1350-1680.

Petroglyphs here include Shalako kachinas; star motifs; predatory animals and birds; and warriors with shields and clubs.

These Petroglyphs would have been done by the ancestors of the Santo Domingo Pueblo. Currently the village of Galisteo has taken great care to

protect these all being on private land.

Highway 41 extends just yards away from the end of the hog back housing hundreds of prime examples of petroglyphs.

Current concerns are with the future traffic and semi-trucks that are slated to use Highway 41.

Ruins in the village date back to the 1700s.





## Notable Families Dating Back to the Early 1800s

Anaya Family

Chavez Family

Montoya Family

Pena Family

Ortiz y Pino Family

Mares Family

Sena Family

Galisteo is also known as a reservoir for internationally acclaimed painters, sculptors, writers, movie actors, musicians and more. Many of these individuals are credited for putting the arts on the map in New Mexico.

