

Chapter 31

Spanish Influence in the United States



FIRST SPANISH EXPLORERS

1. Cristóbal Colón (Christopher Columbus) is believed to be the Genoese navigator Cristoforo Colombo, who became an explorer for Spain and the first European to reach the New World (1492). He made four voyages, touching on various parts of what is now Spanish America.
2. Hernán Cortés conquered Mexico (1519–1521), defeating the Aztecs and their king, Moctezuma.
3. Francisco Pizarro conquered Peru (1532–1535), defeating the Incas and their king, Atahualpa. Pizarro founded the city of Lima in 1535.
4. Juan Ponce de León was the first Spanish governor of Puerto Rico and the first European to explore what is now Florida (1513) in his search for the Fountain of Youth. He arrived on an Easter Sunday (Domingo de Pascua Florida), therefore naming it Florida.
5. Álvar Núñez Cabeza de Vaca shipwrecked on the Texas coast in 1528. He was captured by Native Americans, whom he served as a slave and medicine man. He later escaped and wandered for six years, exploring parts of Texas, Kansas, and New Mexico. After traveling thousands of miles, Cabeza de Vaca finally reached Mexico in 1536. His reports from the Pueblo Indians led to the myth of the “Seven Cities of Cibola.”
6. Francisco Vázquez de Coronado was the first Spaniard to explore what are now New Mexico and Arizona (1540, including the Grand Canyon) in his search for the supposedly rich and prosperous “Seven Cities of Cibola.”
7. Hernando de Soto explored much of Georgia, the Carolinas, Tennessee, Alabama, and Oklahoma. He was the first European explorer to reach the Mississippi River (1541), where he was later buried.
8. Juan Rodríguez Cabrillo explored the coast of California in 1542.
9. Vasco Núñez de Balboa was the first European explorer to reach the Pacific Ocean (1513).

EARLY SPANISH SETTLEMENTS

1. St. Augustine (Florida) is the oldest city in the United States. It was established by the Spaniards in 1565.
2. Santa Fe (New Mexico) is the oldest capital city in the United States. It was established in 1609.
3. Spanish missions were established by priests in the southwestern part of the United States.
 - a. Fray Junípero Serra was the most famous of the Spanish missionaries. He and his followers established a chain of twenty-one missions from San Diego to San Francisco (1769–1823) along the Camino Real (royal road), which is today called Coast Highway 101.
 - b. The most famous California missions are San Juan Capistrano and Santa Barbara, which is called the “Queen of the California Missions.”

GEOGRAPHIC NAMES OF SPANISH ORIGIN

1. States: California, Colorado, Florida, Montana, Nevada.
2. Cities: El Paso, Las Vegas, Los Angeles, Sacramento, Santa Fe, San Francisco.
3. Rivers: Brazos (Texas); Colorado (Colorado, Utah, Arizona), Río Grande (New Mexico, Texas).
4. Mountains: San Juan (Colorado); Sierra Nevada (California).

SPANISH INFLUENCE IN ARCHITECTURE

1. Many modern American homes and buildings, especially in the southwest, show the influence of the old adobe ranch houses and mission buildings constructed by the Spaniards.
2. Characteristics of Spanish Architecture
 - a. Patio (inner courtyard). An attractive spot for family relaxation, frequently with flowers, shade trees, and an ornamental fountain.
 - b. Reja (iron grating on windows). Used for security and decoration. In Spanish-speaking countries, it has been a traditional meet-

ing place for sweethearts, with the young lady behind the *reja* and her suitor outside, on the other side of the *reja*.

- c. **Balcón** (balcony). Used for displaying flags during celebrations, watching processions and parades, and sunning flowering plants.
- d. **Tejas** (roof tiles). Made of baked clay, red in color.
- e. **Arcada** (arcade). A covered passageway along a row of columns in front of commercial buildings. Provides protection from the weather (rain or hot sun) for patrons and strollers.

SPANISH INFLUENCE ON ECONOMIC LIFE

1. **Cattle Raising**
 - a. Spaniards brought the first cows, horses, goats, pigs, and sheep to the New World.
 - b. From the Spanish cowboy, the American cowboy copied his dress, equipment, vocabulary, and ranching techniques.
2. **Mining**
Spaniards developed the first gold and silver mines in the New World. Their methods and success influenced the mining industry in America.

SPANISH INFLUENCE ON LANGUAGE

1. Spanish explorers, missionaries, and settlers in North America contributed many Spanish words to our language. Some of these words are identical in English and Spanish. Others have been slightly changed.
2. **Common English Words of Spanish Origin**
 - a. **Ranch life:** bronco, chaps (*chaparreras*), cinch (*cincha*), corral, lariat (*la reata*), lasso (*lazo*), mustang (*mesteño*), ranch (*ranch*), rodeo, stampede (*estampida*).
 - b. **Foods:** avocado (*aguacate*), banana, barbecue (*barbacoa*), chili (*chile*), potato (*patata*), tomato (*tomate*), vanilla (*vainilla*).

- c. **Beverages:** sherry (*Jerez*).
- d. **Clothing:** bolero, brocade (*brocado*), mantilla, poncho, sombrero.
- e. **Animals and insects:** alligator (*lagarto*), burro, chinchilla, cockroach (*cucaracha*), coyote, llama, mosquito.
- f. **Types of people:** cannibal (*canibal*), comrade (*camarada*), desperado (*desesperado*), padre, peon (*peón*), renegade (*renegado*), vigilante.
- g. **Nature:** arroyo, canyon (*cañón*), cordillera, lagoon (*laguna*), mesa, sierra, tornado.
- h. **Shipping and commerce:** armada, canoe (*cano*), cargo (*carga*), contraband (*contrabando*), embargo, flotilla, galleon (*galeón*).
- i. **Buildings and streets:** adobe, alameda, hacienda, patio, plaza.
- j. **Miscellaneous words:** bonanza, cigar (*cigarro*), fiesta, filibuster (*filibustero*), guerrilla, siesta.

POPULAR MEXICAN FOODS

1. **Tortilla**—a flat, thin cornmeal pancake.
2. **Enchilada**—a rolled tortilla filled with chopped meat or chicken and served with hot chili sauce.
3. **Tamal**—seasoned ground meat or chicken rolled in cornmeal dough, wrapped in corn husks, and steamed.
4. **Chile con carne**—red pepper, chopped meat, and hot chili sauce.
5. **Taco**—a crisp tortilla folded over and filled with seasoned chopped meat or chicken, lettuce, and tomatoes.

POPULAR SPANISH-AMERICAN DANCES

1. **Tango** (Argentina).
2. **Rumba** (Cuba).
3. **Mambo** (Cuba).
4. **Cha-cha-chá** (Cuba).
5. **Merengue** (Dominican Republic).

EXERCISE A

If the statement is true, write *Sí*; if it's false, correct it by replacing the word(s) in boldface. Write the correct word(s) in the space provided.

1. Fray Junípero Serra and his followers established **twenty-seven** missions in California.

2. There are many houses of Spanish-style architecture in the **northwestern** United States. _____
3. The **American** cowboy copied a great deal from the Spanish cowboy. _____
4. The Spaniards used **adobe** for building. _____
5. The **Spaniards** established the cattle-raising industry in the New World. _____
6. The words *rodeo* and *corral* are related to Spanish **city** life. _____
7. The oldest city in the United States is **San Diego**. _____
8. In **New Mexico** there are numerous cities that have Spanish names. _____
9. The **rejas** of Spanish houses have flowers and trees. _____
10. A **tamal** is a crisp tortilla filled with meat or beans. _____

EXERCISE B

Match the expressions in column A with their corresponding definitions in column B. Write the letter in the space provided.

- | A | B |
|-------------------------------|---|
| _____ 1. tango | a. tortilla with chopped meat and chili sauce |
| _____ 2. De Soto | b. roofing material |
| _____ 3. Camino Real | c. inner courtyard |
| _____ 4. Santa Fe | d. covered passageway |
| _____ 5. Las Vegas | e. city in Nevada |
| _____ 6. arcada | f. capital city in New Mexico |
| _____ 7. enchilada | g. Spanish word related to <i>alligator</i> |
| _____ 8. lagarto | h. Argentine dance |
| _____ 9. patio | i. road connecting the Spanish missions |
| _____ 10. tejas | j. explorer of the Mississippi River |
| _____ 11. Ponce de León | k. founder of California missions |
| _____ 12. Fray Junípero Serra | l. explorer of Florida |

EXERCISE C

Complete the following statements.

1. A mountain range in California with a Spanish name is _____ .
2. A popular dance of the Dominican Republic is the _____ .
3. Two states with Spanish names are _____ and _____ .
4. The river that separates the United States from Mexico is the _____ .
5. A popular Cuban dance is the _____ .
6. An American city with a Spanish name is _____ .
7. One of the animals that the Spaniards brought to the New World is the _____ .
8. The San Juan Mountains are in the state of _____ .
9. A city in Texas with a Spanish name is _____ .
10. The oldest city in the United States is _____ .

EXERCISE D

In each group of words, select the word that isn't related to the other three. Write the word in the space provided.

- EXAMPLE: rumba, tango, estampida, mambo **estampida**
1. burro, chinchilla, llama, banana _____
 2. bronco, flotilla, mesteño, rodeo _____
 3. bolero, tornado, arroyo, mesa _____
 4. brocado, tortilla, barbacoa, vainilla _____
 5. sombrero, desesperado, poncho, mantilla _____
 6. patio, hacienda, lazo, alameda _____
 7. taco, tamal, enchilada, bonanza _____
 8. camarada, tomate, patata, chile _____
 9. peón, padre, renegado, embargo _____
 10. armada, contrabando, canoa, sierra _____

EXERCISE E

Select the words in parenthesis that correctly complete each of the following sentences.

1. (Francisco Pizarro / Juan Ponce de León / Cristóbal Colón) was the first governor of Puerto Rico.
2. (Álvar Núñez Cabeza de Vaca / Hernán Cortés / Hernando de Soto) was the first European explorer to reach the Mississippi River.
3. (Atahualpa / Moctezuma / Cíbola) was the Aztec king conquered by Hernán Cortés.
4. (Fray Junípero Serra / Atahualpa / Juan Rodríguez Cabrillo) was a famous Spanish missionary.
5. (Santa Fe / Santa Barbara / San Francisco) is the oldest capital city in the United States.
6. (San Juan Capistrano / El Paso / St. Augustine) is a famous Spanish mission.
7. The (*tamal* / *rumba* / *cincha*) is a popular Spanish-American dance.
8. The tango is a popular dance from (Mexico / Cuba / Argentina).