

WELCOME TO JEMEZ HISTORIC SITE

JEMEZ HISTORIC SITE

How to use the Trail Guide
Numbered markers beside the trail correspond to numbered paragraphs in this guide. The main trail is paved and handicapped accessible.

PLEASE

- Stay on the designated trails. Do not climb or stand on any walls.
- Do not remove any artifacts, look at anything laying on the ground from Site boundaries. Do not litter or disturb wildlife or plants.

Thank you very much! - JHS Staff

13 Courtyard (Patio)

The church and convento rooms built against the hillside to the north, as well as the building that clung to the bluff above Oak Canyon Creek to the south, formed a walled compound that would have been defensible against invading enemies. In addition to vegetables and fruit trees grown in the courtyard garden, the friars who lived here probably oversaw one or more small fields of corn, beans and squash in the valley below. Wild game supplied village hunters supplemented dairy products and meat that mission cows, goats, sheep and pigs provided. These domesticated animals, initially introduced to the Native peoples by Spanish colonizers, also furnished wool, leather, and tallow for soap and candles.

14 An Ongoing Story

Historical sources about Gisewa and the San José de los Jemez are often confusing and contradictory. Perhaps, as archaeological and historical methods improve, future research will reveal Gisewa's true past.

New Mexico Historic Sites is a division of the Department of Cultural Affairs. In cooperation with the Pueblo of Jemez, Jemez Historic Site is dedicated to continuing efforts that began more than a century ago to preserve and protect these ruins. It is our mission to tell the story of the Jemez People who lived here as accurately and respectfully as possible.

JEMEZ HISTORIC SITE

THANK YOU FOR VISITING

Please return to the Visitor Center by way of the paved trail.

NEW + MEXICO HISTORIC SITES

18160 Highway 4
P.O. Box 143
Jemez Springs, N.M. 87025

575-829-3530
800-426-7850

www.nmhistoricsites.org

1 Visitor Center

Please begin your visit in the Visitor Center. Exhibits of Artifacts, historical photographs and hand-on activities will provide an orientation for your self-guided tour outside.

Ask about our Junior Ranger Activity Book, and you could receive a Junior Ranger patch.

PLEASE: Stay on the designated trails— Do not climb or stand on any walls— Do not remove or disturb wildlife or plants. Do not litter— Do not lay on the ground from Site boundaries— Do not disturb wildlife or plants.

Thank you — JHS Staff

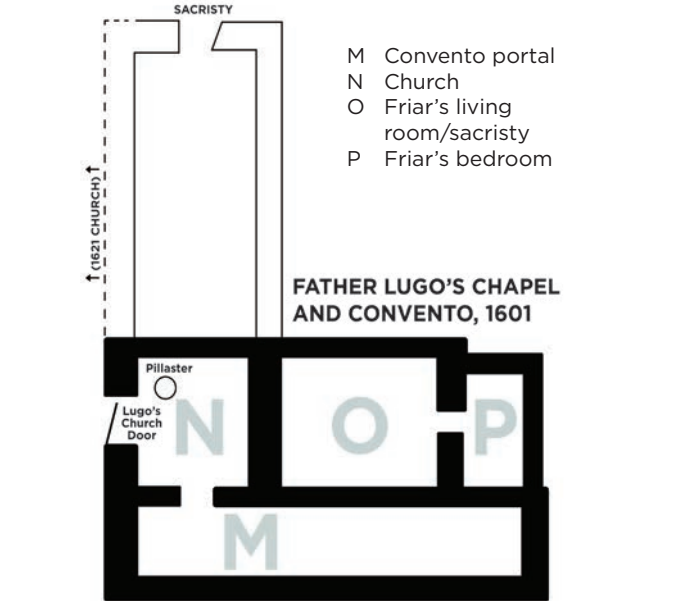
The large ruins that stand today are the remains of the San José de los Jemez Mission. Fray Gerónimo Zárate Salmeron designed it in the winter of 1621-22, and the Jemez people living at Gisewa built it of local materials. Note that the walls throughout the site are of stone, and in some places, they are seven feet thick. Before the arrival of the Spanish, the villagers of Gisewa had conducted their religious ceremonies in underground kivas. Here, they performed rituals that revered spiritual crops and healthy families. Though we have limited written records of San José de los Jemez Mission specifically, once Salmeron expanded the mission and built the massive church, it is likely that the people of Gisewa attended mass three times per day, as was common at other missions. Jemez people also learned reading writing, and European crafts. The Spanish brought innovations such as new farming techniques, domestic animals, fruit trees, and iron tools.

Though the Spanish invested a substantial amount of effort in this mission, it was only in use for about twenty years. Franciscans abandoned the mission in 1640, when Spanish authorities chose to concentrate their efforts on a more easily accessible neighboring mission at *Walatowa* (modern *Jemez Pueblo*).

11 The Original Mission Church

Room N, the long room in which you now stand, is part of the first, temporary church built for the Jemez people. Father Alonso de Lugo and a lay brother were assigned to the Jemez district. Father Lugo constructed a church around 1598. He returned to Zacatecas, Mexico, in 1601.

The 4 rooms (M, N, O, P), along with 2 adobe buildings that are no longer visible, made up the original Lugo church and convent complex.



12 Sacristy, Chapel and Bell Tower

The priest vestments, altar vessels, linens, candlesticks, and other utensils used for worship were stored in this room (D) the main sacristy.

Room (C) was a private chapel. In Room (B), a staircase led up to the second floor of the sacristy and to a hatch that opened onto the earthen roof of the church.



The area you are standing in served as a plaza for Gisewa. Enclosed by houses and kivas, the plaza was the center of activity—the heart of the pueblo. Top of the crumbling walls of at least eight pueblo rooms (grey). The dotted lines represent walls of the Spanish building—no longer visible—that extended south of the present administrative building that served as an inn for visiting Spanish officials, an office for collecting tribute from local natives, and a storage area. The room on the eastern end was likely a stable.



The word "Jemez" is the Spanish spelling of the Jemez word "HEE-MEESH," which is the name of the people.

Gisewa is an ancestral village of the present Jemez Pueblo, located 13 miles south. The original inhabitants, the *Jemez* (*HA'-mes*), occupied this village as well as numerous other villages throughout this region. Jemez people began living here in the 1500s.

The rubble mounds you see in front of you are the remains of the San José de los Jemez Mission. Fray Gerónimo Zárate Salmeron designed it in the winter of 1621-22, and the Jemez people living at Gisewa built it of local materials. Note that the walls throughout the site are of stone, and in some places, they are seven feet thick. Before the arrival of the Spanish, the villagers of Gisewa had conducted their religious ceremonies in underground kivas. Here, they performed rituals that revered spiritual crops and healthy families. Though we have limited written records of San José de los Jemez Mission specifically, once Salmeron expanded the mission and built the massive church, it is likely that the people of Gisewa attended mass three times per day, as was common at other missions. Jemez people also learned reading writing, and European crafts. The Spanish brought innovations such as new farming techniques, domestic animals, fruit trees, and iron tools.



10 Adaptation of a Space

The remainder of the stops along the Ruins Trail are considered part of the convento. It included rooms where the blue-robed Franciscan friar and perhaps a few converted Jemez assistants conducted church business, cooked and ate meals, and slept. They also held classes to learn trades, religion and the Spanish language. Being stationed far from home and living among people who were just learning Spanish must have contributed to a lonely life for each of the several priests who lived here, at a time.

The room to right of the trail (K) evidently had 2 uses through time. Built originally as a Spanish room in the convento, it was later converted to a square kiva. In the 1930s excavators found the following clues as the latter use:

- A stone bench built along the entire interior east wall
- A hearth with altar
- A ventilator shaft in the west wall (nearest you)

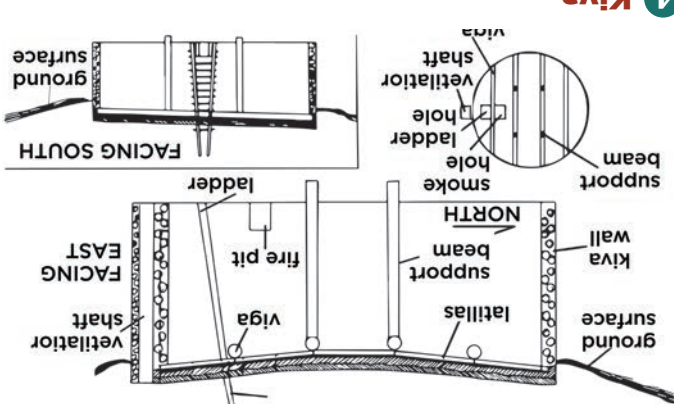
Why and when was the room remodeled? One explanation is that the people of Gisewa, re-established their ancient religious traditions after the Spanish clergy had departed during the Pueblo Revolt of 1680, transformed it for their own purposes in the last years of the 17th century.

17th-century Spanish structures built over pre-existent pueblo rooms. Dotted lines are former walls that are no longer visible.

The walls before you are all that is left of two different building periods. The figure to the right shows a Spanish building that was built between 1625 and 1627 on top of the crumbling walls of at least eight pueblo rooms (grey). The dotted lines represent walls of the Spanish building—no longer visible—that extended south of the present administrative building that served as an inn for visiting Spanish officials, an office for collecting tribute from local natives, and a storage area. The room on the eastern end was likely a stable.

The flat, earthen roof of this kiva, is supported by wooden posts crisscrossed by smaller posts called latillas. There is a fire place near the ladder roof above the fireplace served as an opening for smoke to escape and as a ladder entrance. As warm air ascended through the hatchway, cool air from outside descended through the ventilator shaft.

A kiva is a special and sacred place. It is used for ceremonies and social gatherings by Pueblo People. These structures are usually round (sometimes square) and subterranean (underground). They represent origins from the underworld and remain sacred throughout Pueblo country.

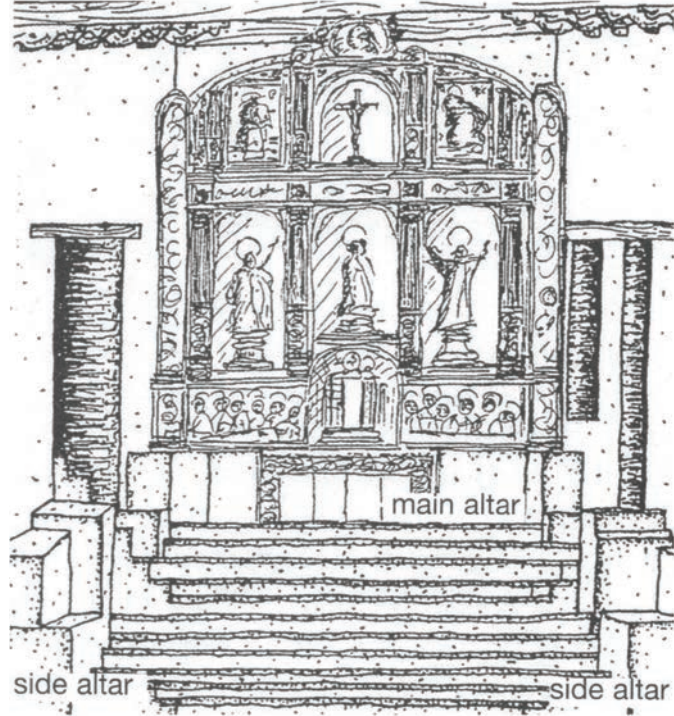


6 Colorful Walls

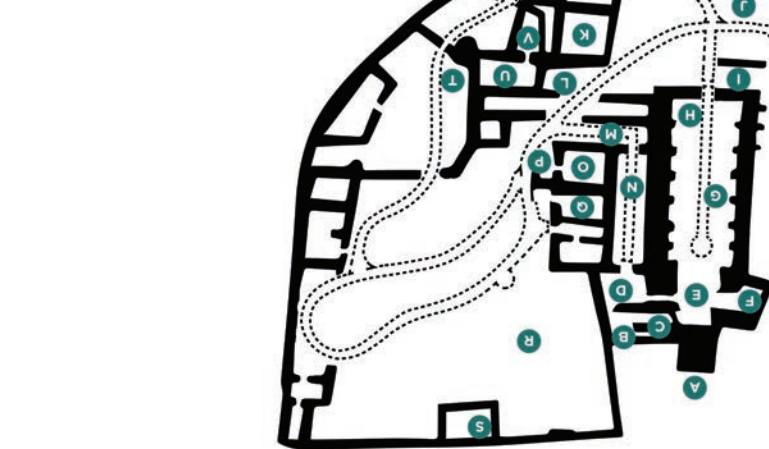
Brightly painted frescoes once adorned these walls. Three different layers of patterns were applied to white plastered walls throughout the church's history.



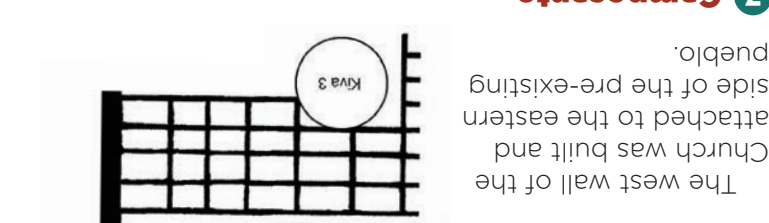
Artist's conception of sanctuary (E) of San José de los Jemez Church, looking north. A hypothetical altar screen is shown over the main altar; similar arrangements of sacred art, like Holy figures painted on pine panels (*retablos*) and carved wooden statues (*bultos*), would have been over the side altars. Drawing by James E. Ivey.



- A Octagonal Bell Tower
- N Church in 1600
- O Convento room; office/sacristy in 1600
- P Convento room; bedroom in 1600
- Q 3-room 19th century house
- R Courtyard
- S Blacksmith workshop
- T Stone Buttriss— Reinforces high walls
- U Kitchen pantry in 1600s
- V Secure storeroom

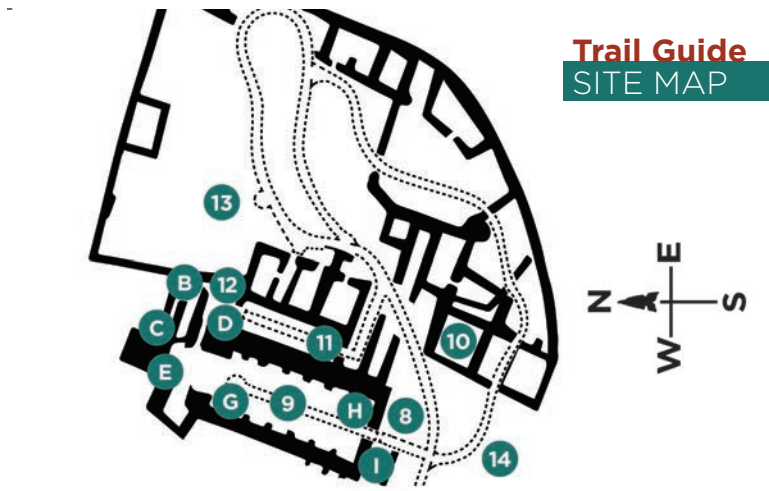


The open space in the south served as the mission church cemetery or *camposanto*. It was customary for Christian converts at Franciscan missions in Spanish colonial New Mexico to be buried in a cemetery surrounded by a low wall. The *camposanto* here was bounded by convento rooms on the north and Oak Canyon creek on the south. On the east, the pueblo on the west, the church on the north and Oak Canyon creek on the south.



6 Two Sacred Places

The shorter wall remnants in front of you are all that remains of a three-story, apartment-like block of pueblo rooms that attached to a kiva on the southwestern corner.



8 1621 Mission Church and Convento

The San José de los Jemez Church. Designed by Fray Gerónimo Zárate Salmeron and built by Jemez people living at Gisewa in 1621-1622. This church measures 33ft x 10ft on the interior. The walls are 6 feet thick on the west and south and 7 feet thick on the east.

Fresco paintings, painted pine panels (*retablos*) and carved wooden statues (*bultos*) of saints would have adorned the inside.

After a 1623 fire destroyed much of the church, including the interior choir loft (H), parishioners built a new, 2-story façade onto the church south of the original front wall and erected a new choir loft (I) in this front addition. additions remains today.

The walls of the Nave (G) converge slightly as they approach the front of the church. They are about a foot closer together as they reach the sanctuary (E) than they are at the nave entry.

The large clerestory windows on each side descend in width on a mathematically decreasing scale as they approach the front of the church, visually lengthening the nave.

The floor level of the nave rises six inches from the back to the front. The sanctuary rises eight steps above the nave floor, and the base of the altar is three steps higher than the sanctuary floor.

The twelve plinths that line the sides of the nave and the no-longer-visible series of flat stones which lay in a straight line up the middle of the nave may have served as joists for a wooden floor in the church before it burned.

JEMEZ

HISTORIC SITE

...hear the echoes
of the past

*I will come to you
And take you by the hand,
Let you walk with me in my paths,
The paths of moccasin footprints,
in search of things
of my people I love.
We will call the stars to guide us.
We will follow the music
of the Fluteplayer in the air we breathe.
When we have reached these places of worship,
these humble places
where my ancestors once stood in silent prayer
I will try to explain the meaning
of our beautiful prayers from the Old Ones.
And why my people are the way your eyes see them
And you sometimes cannot understand.*

*I would teach you names
of Mother Earth's creatures and all her gifts.
I would share my moccasins with you
And let you walk my paths,
my corn meal paths,
my yellow pollen paths.
That you may know
And hear the echos of the past as I do.
Then you will know why it is not easy
sometimes to be Indian
And live as you do, my non-Indian friends*

*You are also a great people
with much to learn,
much to give.
Together we will walk
on this Mother Earth's land,
in peace with love
and respect for each other
As only Mother Earth intended.*

Lucy Yepa Lowden of Jemez Pueblo
created the following poem for her
non-Indian friends
From Nee Hemish by Joe S. Sando

