

## Oldest House/San Miguel Chapel/Barrio of Analco

The oldest house in Santa Fe is located on East De Vargas Street. Tree rings from the vigas in the ceilings suggest that they were cut sometime between 1646-1767, however the exact age of the building remains unknown. Legend says that the Tlaxcalan Indians traveling with Don Juan Oñate built the oldest house and San Miguel church next door, by 1610.

The original adobe house has become a historic museum with attached rooms added in the late 1800s. According to the museum curator, the house was built over an ancient dwelling dating back to the 1200 A.D. Many travelers including Spaniards, Franciscan friars, traders, and Indians have lived at the house. In Ray John de Aragon's book, *Enchanted Legends and Lore of New Mexico*, he shares a tale that dates back to the early 1600s, of Juan Espizona, a soldier whose eerie fate was attributed to two witches who lived at the oldest house.

A metal plaque from the Historic Santa Fe Foundation, embedded into the wall at the corner of East De Vargas Street and Old Santa Fe Trail, marks the Barrio de Analco district that was established in the 1600s. The name's origins are thought to come from Mexico, where there are "barrios de analco" in the cities of Puebla, Durango, and Jalisco, Mexico. The Nahuatl word "analco" means "the other side of the water".

In Santa Fe, the north side of the Santa Fe River housed the Spanish colonists and royal officials, and the south side was occupied by servants, soldiers, laborers and teachers; many Tlaxcalan Indian descendants from Mexico that came with the Franciscan missionaries and Spaniards.

According to historian Marc Simmons,

"When Fernando Cortez initiated his conquest in 1519, he met and befriended the Tlaxcalans. They had suffered dreadfully at the hands of the Aztec enemies and looked upon the Spaniards as deliverers. The Tlaxcalans furnished Cortez thousands of warriors to augment his small army of soldiers. Their help played a major role in bringing down the Aztec state. The Spaniards never forgot this assistance and the king granted the Tlaxcalans a number of political, social and economic privileges denied to other Indians. For instance, they were exempted from certain tribute payments and allowed to carry European arms. Because of the special status, the Tlaxcalan Indians loyally served the Spanish government and church. In the latter 1500s, many of them were recruited as colonists on Mexico's dangerous northern frontier. Missionaries liked to use them as teachers, believing that they served as a healthy role model for the wild Indians they were trying to convert. Mine owners found that they made excellent laborers and paid them well. And everyone agreed that Tlaxcalans were superior fighters."

In a research paper titled "Tlatoani Cuauhtemoczin, el barrio de Analco, y la Mexicanidad La Conformidad de Danza AztecaChichimeca de Conquista," historian Jorge A. Garcia states:

"In 1521 the Mexica-Tenochca people from Mexico-Tenochtitlan took their last stand against the invasion of the Spanish army and their native allies. The story tells us that during this confrontation the Tlatoani Cuauhtemoczin addressed the people and gave them their last command. He told them that "our sun has concealed itself. Our sun has hidden itself and has left us in darkness. However, we know that it will return. It will come forth again and once again give us light. But while it remains in the house of

resting and transformation, we should unite, concealing deep within our hearts all that we love” and “let the fathers and mothers become the teachers and guides that will lead their children while they live.” After addressing his people for the last time, the Tlatoani Cuauhtemoczin met Hernan Cortez with dignity for his duty to protect his people had ended. At that very moment a new chapter in the history of Anahuac<sup>2</sup> had begun. At that precise moment of confrontation between the young leader and the Spaniard a new Mexicanidad<sup>3</sup> emerged. This new Mexicanidad meant a religious syncretism that intended to safe guard the spiritual beliefs of the Mexica people by ingraining them into the beliefs of the Catholic Church.”

By 1610, the Spaniards reached the Southwest almost 100 years after the encounter between Hernan Cortez and Cuauhtemoczin. There were an estimated 250 Spaniards, 170 of which were soldiers, 4 were second-generation mestizos, and many descendants of wealthy families. An estimated 700 Tlaxcaltecas accompanied the Spanish colonists and created a settlement called, “El Barrio de Analco”.

During the Pueblo Revolt of 1680, houses in the Barrio de Analco were burned in attacks, and residents sought refuge behind the military fortress walls of the Palace of the Governors until their mass exodus to El Paso occurred just days later. Only a few former settlers returned to the Barrio with the Spanish, in 1692. Damage to the church from battles fought during the Pueblo Revolt were repaired in 1710. By 1776, the Barrio de Analco was again a place of residence for soldiers and their families, genízario servants (Indians living in a Europeanized status), and other laborers.

At the top of the hill at the Louis Montano Park, located on Alto Street near St. Francis Blvd, the words "Analco, Nuestro Barrio Querido ... Aztlan!" were painted on the wall of a terrace in 1994. Two adobe stucco walls, painted as red serpents with depictions of figures from the Mexica calendar adorn the terraces and line the stone walkway into the park from the street.

Artist, Carlos Cervantes, led the mural paintings in 1994, with help from community members. Cervantes’ family has been living along the Santa Fe River for hundreds of years, in the Barrio Analco, which extended all the way up to the San Miguel Mission.

During the 1990s, the group Danza Tonantzín de Analco (named after the mother earth goddess, Tonantzín), started dancing at the park every Tuesday evening, to honor the history of Aztec ruler Tlatoani Cuauhtémoc, family ties, agricultural connections, and the area’s buildings and waterways that were built by indigenous people from Central Mexico. The group continues to practice their traditional dances at the park; a true testament of strength, perseverance, and the preservation of identity and cultural roots.

Sources:

1. [Tlaxcalans of Barrio de Analco have been largely forgotten | Local News | santafenewmexican.com](https://www.santafenewmexican.com/news/local-news/tlaxcalans-of-barrio-de-analco-have-been-largely-forgotten)
2. Barrio of Analco: [Barrio de Analco — Historic Santa Fe Foundation Barrio de Analco sign on de Vargas Street, Santa Fe, New Mexico - Palace of the Governors Photo Archives Collection - CONTENTdm Title \(unm.edu\)](https://www.santafenewmexican.com/news/local-news/barrio-de-analco-sign-on-de-vargas-street-santa-fe-new-mexico-palace-of-the-governors-photo-archives-collection)
3. [Neighborhood watch: Barrio de Analco | Pasatiempo | santafenewmexican.com](https://www.santafenewmexican.com/news/local-news/neighborhood-watch-barrio-de-analco)
4. [Back to the Barrio: Barrio Analco | Santa Fe Reporter \(sfreporter.com\)](https://www.santafenewmexican.com/news/local-news/back-to-the-barrio-barrio-analco)

5. [Tlaxcalans of Barrio de Analco have been largely forgotten | Local News | santafenewmexican.com](#)
6. De Aragon, Ray John. Enchanted Legends and Lore of New Mexico: Witches, Ghosts & Spirits. Arcadia Publishing, Jan. 1872.
7. Jorge A. Garcia. [Tlatoani Cuauhtemoczin, el barrio de Analco, y la Mexicanidad La Conformidad de Danza Azteca-Chichimeca de Conquista \(core.ac.uk\)](#)
8. The Urrutia map shows main roads entering and leaving Santa Fe, acequias, scattered buildings, three churches, the Palace of the Governors and the Plaza: [Map of Santa Fe by José de Urrutia, 1766 - Palace of the Governors Photo Archives, Jesse Nusbaum Collection - CONTENTdm Title \(unm.edu\)](#)
9. Video: ["Nacion Genizara", a presentation by Moises Gonzales and Virginia Sanchez. - YouTube](#)

Photos:

1. 1884 - 1892?-[Oldest House, Santa Fe, New Mexico - Palace of the Governors Photo Archives Collection - CONTENTdm Title \(unm.edu\)](#)
2. [Barrio de Analco sign on de Vargas Street, Santa Fe, New Mexico - Palace of the Governors Photo Archives Collection - CONTENTdm Title \(unm.edu\)](#)
3. 1920: [Oldest House, built prior to 1636, Santa Fe, New Mexico - Palace of the Governors Photo Archives Collection - CONTENTdm Title \(unm.edu\)](#)
4. 1965: [Fireplace in the Oldest House, Santa Fe, New Mexico - Palace of the Governors Photo Archives Collection - CONTENTdm Title \(unm.edu\)](#)