

toric events for the Creek nation in the state of Alabama," said Sandy Faulk, a representative of the Alabama Division of Tourism and Travel. "When the battle of Horseshoe Bend was completed and the treaty was signed, four-fifths of the state of Alabama was ceded to the United States."

A museum at the site uses models to re-create scenes from the battle in miniature. Other exhibits feature regalia worn by Creek men both during the battle and for everyday occasions.

Several native groups still live in the state, and festivals and powwows throughout the year give visitors a chance to experience their cultures. One of the largest of these takes place every October in Moundville, an area just southwest of Tuscaloosa.

The area boasts more than 20 ancient mounds, which historians attribute to the Mississippian people. For the festival, Choctaw, Creek and other groups bring their traditional foods, clothing and dances to Moundville, along with arts and crafts that the Mississippians may have influenced.

"They have some of the most beautiful historic art pieces that today are copied by other people," Faulk said. "They've found art that is 10,000 years old out there."

www.800alabama.com

Mission San Luis Tallahassee, Florida

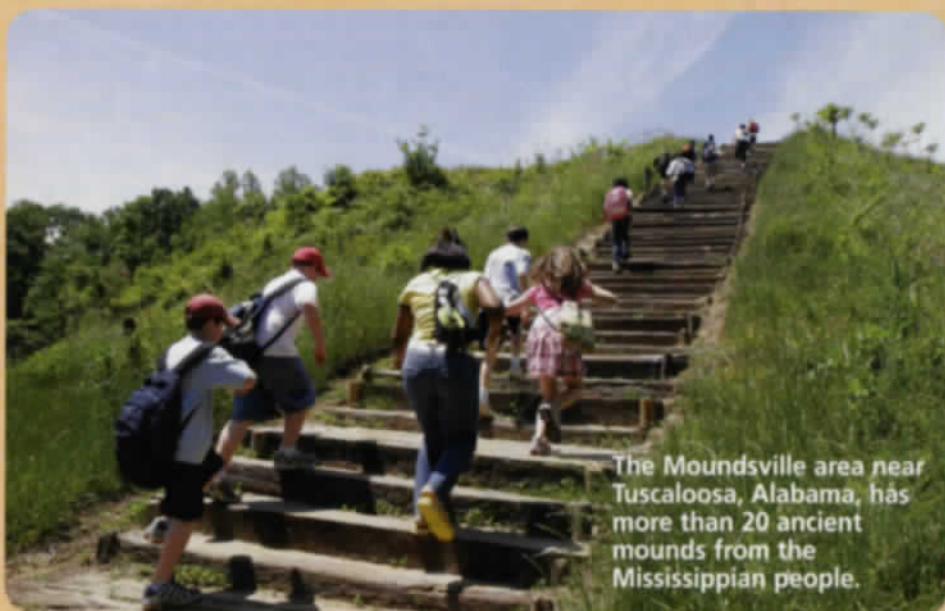
We often think of Catholic missions as having been built to proselytize native people in California, but around 100 missions were also instituted in Florida for the same purposes. At Mission San Luis in Tallahassee, visitors can see a 17th-century community where Spanish settlers and Apalachee Indians lived in harmony.

Mission San Luis was established in 1656 at the request of the Apalachee people.

"The Spanish were invited by the Apalachee chiefs," said Karin Stanford, program supervisor at the museum. "They sensed that there was a change coming, so they allied themselves with this new power. It's rare, because you have Indian tribes living next to English colonies; but they weren't governing together."

The original mission burned in 1704, but archaeology in the 1980s unearthed the foundations of numerous structures, which have been rebuilt on the site. Today, visitors can tour the chief's house, the mission church and a council house built to hold meetings of up to 3,000 people.

In the visitors center, exhibits showcase some of the artifacts that have been found in excavations at the site. Groups



The Moundville area near Tuscaloosa, Alabama, has more than 20 ancient mounds from the Mississippian people.

Courtesy Alabama Division of Tourism and Travel

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mask carving and other native arts.

Modern artwork with a centuries-old heritage is featured at Qualla Arts, a cooperative effort of Cherokee artists in the area. Shoppers will find earthenware, baskets, weapons and other items handmade by the local artists.

Historical artifacts are on display at the Museum of the Cherokee Indian, which chronicles some 11,000 years of Cherokee history. Museum exhibits include ancient Cherokee myths and legends, and items related to warmaking and peacemaking efforts undertaken by the tribe.

Visitors can also get an overview of the Cherokee story at Unto These Hills, an outdoor drama entering its 59th season this year.

www.cherokee-nc.com

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New Echota State Historic Site Calhoun, Georgia

From 1825 to 1838, the Cherokee Nation set up a government capital at New Echota, an area just outside of Calhoun, Georgia. Today, visitors can see the site where the capital city was established before the Trail of Tears removed the Cherokee from the Southeast.

"The Cherokee Nation included most of northwest Georgia, and part of southwest North Carolina and the northeast corner of Alabama," said David Gomez, site manager at New Echota. "They established a central government here for the first time. It was modeled on the United States system of government."

Today, the 200-acre historic site features a visitors center, a museum and a number of historic buildings from the Cherokee period. Groups can tour a reconstructed print shop, where the first Cherokee newspaper was published, a framed two-story missionary house and 10 other buildings.

The programs at the site show how much the Cherokee people had been influenced by American customs at the time that New Echota was founded.

"We have two representative Cherokee farmsteads, typical of the 19th century," Gomez said. "One has a timber cabin, a corn crib and a small stable. The other is a middle-class Cherokee farmstead. It has the same three buildings plus a smokehouse."

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