

## The Sixth Annual San Diego North County Adobe Home Tour Fact Sheet

**When:** Sunday, March 19, 2017 :: 11 AM to 4 PM

**Website:** <http://adobehometour.com>

**Email:** [info@adobehometour.com](mailto:info@adobehometour.com)

**Media Contact:** Gretchen Pelletier

619-733-4977; [gretchen.pelletier@yahoo.com](mailto:gretchen.pelletier@yahoo.com)

The Adobe Home Tour benefits the **Escondido History Center**.



Mexican Colonial hacienda accents... reclaimed wood ceiling beams... cooling outdoor courtyards and breezeways... lush, low-water gardens... stone, brick and kiva-style fireplaces... Many of the features of California's oldest ranchos and haciendas are in high demand today, including handmade adobe bricks (see Facts of Note, next page), a practical art that is enjoying a revival across the Southwest.

The Sixth Annual Adobe Home Tour features three Escondido and two Poway homes that celebrate the enduring appeal of ancient building methods and materials restored for 21<sup>st</sup> century lifestyles, as well as inspiration for gardeners looking for practical ideas that don't sacrifice color or greenery. Bandy Canyon Ranch will also open its gates to tour attendees as a bonus.

Escondido and its surrounding neighborhoods have a rich history of adobe home construction, and the area is believed to have the highest concentration of adobe homes and structures anywhere in the country outside of New Mexico. But true adobe construction is an almost-lost art here.



“There are so many misconceptions about adobe,” says Ben Loescher from Adobe is Not Software (AiNS), “from some folks who believe it to be illegal, to thermal performance, etc. Opportunities like the Adobe Home Tour offer a kind of public exposure that is wonderful both for new work and those seeking to conserve existing buildings.” AiNS offers periodic classes, workshops and lectures in Southern California covering adobe-related topics.

## San Diego's Adobe Back Story



The first adobe homes constructed in Escondido date to the era of California's expansive Mexican land grants. In 1834, Juan Bautista Alvarado built several adobe homes and ranch structures in his rancho, Rincon Del Diablo. In time, the land would be subdivided into smaller farms. More historical information is available at [adobehometour.com](http://adobehometour.com).

The Escondido area has a rich inventory of adobe structures, largely due to the proliferation of builders like the Weir Brothers and George Patterson, who specialized in adobe construction, and various other contractors and builders who learned the art of adobe construction and built independently. San Diego's North County area has a collection of adobe homes that will remain architecturally unique. As the years progress and building styles change, the beauty of the adobe homes remains unchanged and continues to add to the historical value of the area.

The state of California made significant changes to earthquake-related building codes in the early 1980s that cooled the adobe building boom, and as a result very few true adobe homes have been built. (Adobe façade is still prevalent.) Most adobe homeowners laugh at the idea of adobe home having seismic issues as the construction and building principals used by the builders in the area produced rock-solid structures.



The adobe builders were building environmentally friendly 'green' homes well before the current trend, as most of the homes were built with the bricks made on site with a formula required at the time, using some asphalt stabilizers for waterproofing and some cement for strength. The thermal properties of adobe (16-inch-thick walls) mean less energy use for heating and cooling.



The Adobe Home Tour was launched in 2011 to draw attention to these unique and beautiful homes by making them available for public viewing. For those interested in architecture, history or just beautiful homes, the tour offers a rare opportunity to personally experience this unique style.

More information on the history of adobe homes in San Diego is available upon request.

## Adobe Revival

Although adobe homes may never be built on a large scale again in California – due to changes in structural permitting and high cost of heavy labor – there is a revival of interest in these bricks, with homeowners purchasing (when they can find a source) and even making their own bricks for facades, low garden walls and non-structural uses. Workshops, classes and lectures are offered by Adobeisnotsoftware (AiNS), founded in Los Angeles in 2009 to:

- Inform, enable and advance adobe construction in California.
- Educate the public in the building and conservation of adobe structures.
- Reform California building regulation and remove ill-informed barriers to adobe construction
- Encourage research about the seismic and thermal behavior of adobe construction
- Foster dialogue and connect practitioners
- Encourage collaboration with advocates for other building technologies and pursue common goals



Further information: [www.adobeisnotsoftware.com](http://www.adobeisnotsoftware.com).

## Attending the Sixth Annual Adobe Home Tour

Starting January 1, 2017, visitors may purchase tickets online with PayPal or download a form to pay by mail. Once purchased, visitors will be provided with the addresses of the starting-place homes, where they'll receive a program with details of each of the residences and directions.

- Online purchase: \$25 (<http://adobehometour.com>) by PayPal or credit card
- Group sales of 5 or more: \$20/ea. – see website for group sales information

This is a self-guided tour. Visitors park in each of the neighborhoods, and at the height of the day may require a short walk. These are private homes and may not be easily accessed by wheelchairs or walkers.

