

Most of the OST travelers came from northern New Mexico.

They left for California in the Fall. They came back to Santa Fé in the Spring, with herds of horses and mules.

The Southwestern cultural mixing started on the Old Spanish Trail. The peoples included Indians, Spanish and Anglos, among others.

THE INDIANS

The three branches of the OST went along old Indian routes, used by Pueblo, Utes, Navajos, Paiutes, Apaches, and California tribes. Utes often served as guides. Ute elders still ask, "*Why do you call these Ute trails the Old Spanish Trail?*"

The Utes controlled much of Colorado and Utah at the time of the trading activity.

They asked for and got many good horses as tribute from traders crossing their lands.

THE SPANISH

They are called "Spanish" even though they traveled as Mexican citizens. Spanish colonizers came to NM in 1598 when it was northern New Spain. Some retain their ancient Spanish customs and dialect even today.

THE ANGLOS

Frontiersmen from Canada and the United States came into Taos and Santa Fé in the early 1800s.

Many of them married Hispanic women and became Mexican citizens.



IMPORTANT ANIMALS

Churro Sheep

Rugged Spanish churro sheep (*churras* in Spain) thrived in this rough country.

They turned the grasses into wool. Their wool made durable rugs and blankets.

Churros soon became the Navajos' and Pueblos' source of wool, which they and the Spanish wove into beautiful designs.

Some of the rams have four horns. Other rams and the ewes have only two horns. The wool comes in several different colors.



The Old Spanish Trail

connected

Santa Fé to Los Angeles

1829-1848



Trade goods from N. New Mexico started the trade process:

Fresada, Sarapes (blankets, shawls)
Colchas (quilts or bedspreads)

Traders brought back:

Mulas (mules), Caballos (horses)
Imports



Before the OST, most trade went through Chihuahua and Mexico City.

The OST traders found a profitable way to sell goods made in New Mexico. They shortened the supply line to 1/4 the distance and cut transport costs.

IMPORTANT ANIMALS

Mules and Horses

Mules and horses carried all the trade goods and people to California, through high valleys, mountains, and deserts. Apparently only one small group used a wagon to carry household goods.

Each mule carried 200-400 lbs of woolen dry goods.

Each day, the *atajo* (caravan) traveled 12-15 miles (*una jornada*).



TRAIL FOOD

For the horses and mules:
fresh grass and clean water.

For the 30-100 men:
clean water, berries,
frijoles, chili colorado,
corn flour, jerky, now and then
venison or turkey.

3 BRANCHES

You can start North or Northwest from Santa Fé to get to Los Angeles. Armijo's first route went through Navajo country. Later travelers took a northerly loop for better water and forage supplies, on the Main Branch or the scenic North Branch.



Want More Information?

Check: www.oldspanishtrail.org.

Read:

- Quintana. 1991. *Pobladores*.
- Poling-Kempes. 1997. *Valley of Shining Stone*.
- Hafen & Hafen. 1993. *Old Spanish Trail; Santa Fé to Los Angeles*.
- Crampton & Madsen. 1994. *In Search of the Spanish Trail*.

WHO TRAVELED THE TRAIL?

*Not a single diary
of the regular annual merchant caravans
of 1831 to 1848 has been found.*

--Hafen and Hafen.

Among the known travelers, you *may* find
your family names.

Armijo	Espinosa
Rowland	Wilson
Baca	Frémont
Salazar	Wolfskill
Carson (Kit)	Martín+Martinez
Slover	Workman
Chacón	Quintana
Trujillo	Young
Charlefoix	Robidoux
	Vigil

Tough people and clever traders!

Equipment for the *Mula de Carga*:

1. *Aparejo* a square pad of stuffed leather that sits like an open book on the mule's back. A broad grass cinch holds it on.
2. *Jerga* a saddle cloth, laid over a *Salea* or raw sheep skin.
3. *Carga* the load, balanced over the *aparejo*.
4. *Cuerda* or *soga* the rope that goes over all the load, tied tight around the packs and under the belly.
5. *Petate* a square mat that goes over the top to protect from rain.

Loading a mule in the morning
took about 3 minutes.

When a mule was loaded and taut,
the *cargador* cried out *Adios!*
The packer answered *Vaya!*
then, to the mule, *Anda!*

The mule would stroll off to join the
others, waiting until all 50-200 mules
were ready to hit the trail.