

Photo of the Week: The San Ignacio Mission

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From the early seventeenth century to the early nineteenth century, the Spanish established a great number of Catholic missions throughout what is now northern Mexico and the southwestern United States. These settlements were built to spread the Christian faith among indigenous communities and also served as a vanguard for the expansion of Spanish settlements and mining operations. Some of these sites and colonial structures still remain and are wonderful places to visit, especially in places where they are still essential to local cultural and religious activities.

The San Ignacio mission, located in the town of San Ignacio in Baja California Sur, Mexico, is one of these alluring cultural remnants. It was founded by the Jesuit missionary Juan Bautista de Luyando in 1728, and about 60 years later the Jesuits built an impressive church that is known as one of the most beautiful of all Baja's mission churches for its elaborate facade, engraved stone plaques, and plaster ornamentation. This church is largely in its original condition thanks to a 1976 restoration and is used to this day by the local community for masses, weddings, funerals, and daily worship.

Ecoturismo Kuyimá, a sustainable tour operator managed by a community council consisting 95% of local people, offers tours to San Ignacio and its church.

([Source](#), [source](#))