Your Personal Tour: Creating a Locality Guide

How to compile a go-to locality guide for your research, including information to gather, formatting and organization.

What is a Locality Guide?

A go-to quick reference guide with a variety of resources and information relevant to genealogical research in a specific place.

To create one requires careful compilation (and organization) of information and resources relevant to the location of your research, including history, maps, websites, repositories, and more.

Locality Guide: Jalisco, México

Quick Facts

- Indigenous tribes include: Chichimecas, Caxcanes, Cocas, Tecuexes, Coras, Cuyotecos, Guachichiles, Guamares, Huicholes, Otomíes, Purépecha (Tarascan), Tepehuanes[1]
- During colonial period was part of Nueva Galicia
- Civil records are kept at the municipal level
- Catholic Church records are divided by diocese and parishes

Records	Dates	Repository/Record Holder
Catholic church records (baptism, confirmation, marriage, burial, etc.)	1539-1979	Available on FamilySearch; original record holders vary, including Archdiocese of Guadalajara and individual parishes
Civil registration	1857-2000	Available on FamilySearch; original record holders are civil registration offices (by municipality)
Census (Government)	1895, 1930	1930 available on FamilySearch; 1895 in Archivo General de la Nación (AGN)
Census (Church)	1630-1972	Available on FamilySearch (unindexed); original record holders vary, including Archdiocese of Guadalajara, Archive of Archdiocese of Michoacán(Archdiocese of Morelia)

Why Create a Locality Guide

- Find all THE records: when facing a difficult research question, it is critical to know where to look for the *specific* records that may provide answers
- Find ALL the records: to uncover an ancestor's stories and create a biographical narrative, a variety of records is needed
- Reasonably exhaustive search: to meet the genealogical proof standard, you must conduct a "reasonably exhaustive search for all relevant records"
- Understand the place, understand the people
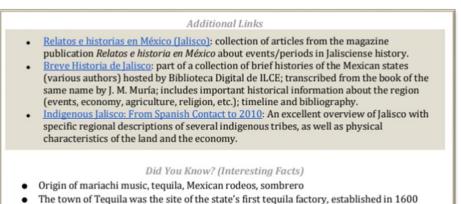
What to include

Quick facts

- What information might you want to return to regularly and/or have on hand in a moment?
  - Establish/formation date
  - Name changes
  - Unique record-keeping practices (e.g., town vs. county)
  - Seat of government
  - State land/federal land state
  - Indigenous tribes, etc.)
  - Begin dates for vital record registration
- Links to relevant FamilySearch Wiki pages and/or sections of Cyndi's List

Background & History

This section should include a brief summary of major historical events, particularly those that may have affected the existence of records and/or how you ancestors may have appeared in them. Remember to cite your sources for the information.

- Founding/established date
- Types of industry and/or agriculture
- Wars and military
- Migration
- Relevant laws (land, civil registration)

- Indigenous history (interactions, important events, tribes)
- Important cultural events
- Natural disasters

Include links to websites and/or names of books or articles with historical information.

Additional Links

- Relatos e historias en México (Jalisco): collection of articles from the magazine publication *Relatos e historia en México* about events/periods in Jalisciense history.
- Breve Historia de Jalisco: part of a collection of brief histories of the Mexican states (various authors) hosted by Biblioteca Digital de ILCE; transcribed from the book of the same name by J. M. Muría; includes important historical information about the region (events, economy, agriculture, religion, etc.); timeline and bibliography.
- Indigenous Jalisco: From Spanish Contact to 2010: An excellent overview of Jalisco with specific regional descriptions of several indigenous tribes, as well as physical characteristics of the land and the economy.

Did You Know? (Interesting Facts)

- Origin of mariachi music, tequila, Mexican rodeos, sombrero
- The town of Tequila was the site of the state's first tequila factory, established in 1600
- Lake Chapala is Mexico's largest lake (430 square miles)

Geography

- Maps (political, landowner, topographical, historical)
- Boundary/jurisdictional changes
- Bordering states/counties/countries
- Gazetteers for place names

Include (and continue to compile) links to websites with relevant map collections, including those with large collections (Library of Congress, David Rumsey Map Collection, Old Maps Online, Perry Castañeda Library), as well as regional or local repositories (e.g., historical societies, county recorder)

Maps and Gazetteers

- ❖ *Diccionario geográfico, histórico y biográfico de los Estados Unidos Mexicanos*: Gazetteer of México by Antonio García Cubas, digitized by Universidad Autónoma de Nuevo León; organized into multiple 'tomes' (Tomo I = A-B, Tomo II = C, Tomo III = D-LL, Tomo IV = M-R, Tomo V = RR=Z).
- ❖ Mapoteca of Biblioteca Pública del Estado de Jalisco: searchable database of 809 maps from 18th, 19th and 20th centuries; some digitized
- ❖ Old Maps Online: several high resolution digitized maps, searchable based on present-day map of region; can view as overlay of present-day map (several of Jalisco)

Additional Links

- El Lugar y la Región en la Cartografía Colonial el Caso de Guadalajara y la Nueva Galicia: by Irma Beatriz García Rojas, examines the geopolitical and geocultural context in which maps of Nueva Galicia were made; several maps and sources
- La Audiencia de la Nueva Galicia durante sus primeras etapas: Describes in detail the complicated jurisdiction of the Audiencia de Nueva Galicia.

Records

Include descriptions for each record type including: where to find original records, information about the record-keeping process (government entity, changes to laws, etc.), online availability (e.g., FamilySearch film numbers), as well as record losses.

- Vital records
- Land records
- Court/probate
- Newspapers (*hint: [Chronicling America](#) includes list of historical newspapers by location*)

- Military
- Census
- Church
- Public/notarial

Repositories & Publications

A list of repositories (which may increase availability of online resources over time), as well as published works relevant to the region is helpful to have in one place. Consider including:
- Location, hours and phone of repositories
- Tips and rules for repositories
- Links to online catalogs/inventories
- Bibliography of published works (if applicable, links to Google Books, WorldCat, Hathi Trust, Internet Archive)
- Names of historical and genealogical societies

Organization & Design Options
- Choose the scope (town, county, state, country)
- Ensure the guide can grow and change

Word document
- Use tables to organize
- Leverage Word format styles for sections
- Create a Table of Contents

Excel document
- Use multiple sheets
- Color code
- Create databases/lists that can be sorted

Other organization software (e.g., Evernote)
- If comfortable with other organization tools, consider how to use for a locality guide
- Example: Evernote is like an electronic notebook with many features
- Example: use Google Drive folders to organize PDFs, materials

Other Resources

Diane Elder, "Locality Research," *Research Like a Pro: A Genealogist's Guide* (Utah: Family Locket Books, 2018), 33-43.

Lisa Lisson, "How to Create Your Own Location Guides for Genealogy Research," video, uploaded 5 July 2022; *YouTube: Genealogy Research Tips* (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lyGELnuRpk4 : accessed 28 February 2024).