

The First Thanksgiving, Texas-Style

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Was Texas the real site of the first Thanksgiving? According to many **historians**, the first Thanksgiving celebration in the United States took place in 1598 near El Paso. An expedition led by Spanish explorer **Don Juan de Oñate** journeyed from Mexico and, after months of arduous travel, arrived at the Rio Grande near what is now **San Elizario**. The exploration party and the indigenous people celebrated their accomplishment with a feast and Catholic ceremonies - 23 years before the Pilgrims held their famous dinner at Plymouth Rock.

The Texas **House** and **Senate** each commemorated this historical milestone in 1990, and Gov. Rick Perry has **recognized** April 30 as the official day of the First Thanksgiving. For 20 years, the El Paso Mission Trail Association has conducted an annual historical reenactment of the event, and their work was **honored** by the Texas House in 2006.