



Not Just Survival—A Place for the Arts

Imagine you were wandering this plaza 700 years ago. You would smell wood smoke, and hear dogs barking and children laughing. Beyond the 7-foot-tall outer compound wall, green, well-watered fields of corn, beans, squash, and cotton stretched along the canals for miles.

On any typical day, someone here would be grinding corn. Others might be making pots, weaving, or spinning cotton. Artisans carved shell jewelry or fashioned pendants out of rare stones such as turquoise and argillite. Other craftsmen made arrowheads, stone axes, and farm tools.

Casa Grande's wealth and security rested on the food and cotton coming from lush fields. These farmers had to devote considerable time, day after day, to tending their fields and canals. Artifacts found at Casa Grande Ruins reveal that the people who once lived here were highly skilled artisans.

So Far from the Sea

Trade and trips traditionally made to collect sea shells from the Gulf of California and Pacific Ocean account for the beautiful shell jewelry found at Casa Grande Ruins. Artisans made shells into beads, bracelets, and pendants. A flourishing culture allows for craft specialization where highly skilled artisans can create intricately made items.



About 700 years ago