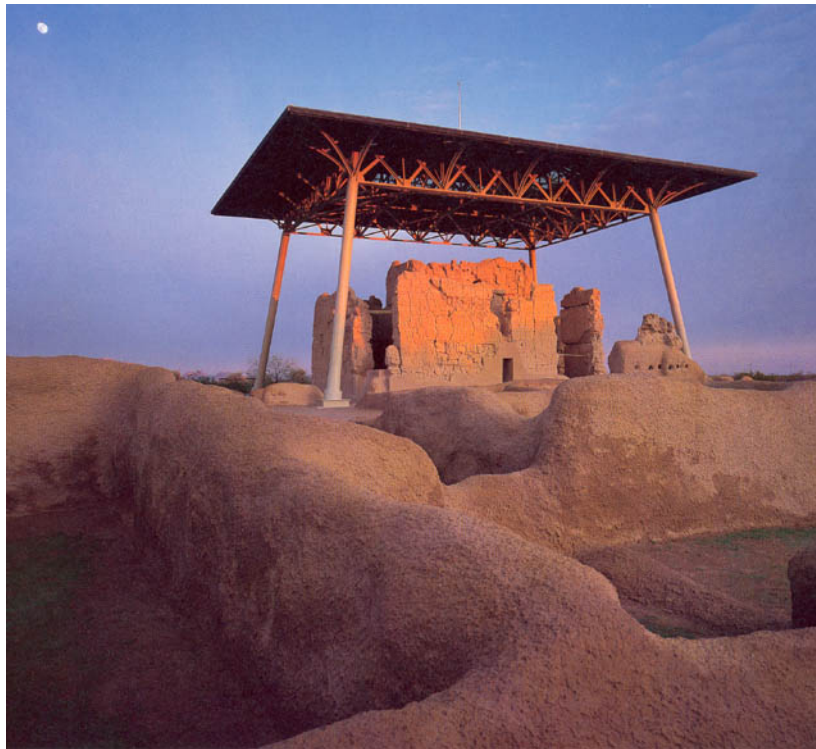


Hohokam Irrigation: Travel Information

Unfortunately, not much is left in the way of remnants of Hohokam people. However, there are some rather striking remains such as the Casa Grande Ruins National Monument near Casa Grande and the Pueblo Grande Museum in Phoenix, both of which have Hohokam buildings and relics. In Mesa, there is "Park of the Canals" which boasts large hand-dug canals that were originally made by the Hohokam, and latter deepened by the Mormon settlers.

Casa Grande Ruins National Monument

This national monument, located south of Phoenix, contains the ruins of Casa Grande or "Great House," a large and enigmatic prehistoric structure. Casa Grande Ruins, the nation's first archeological preserve, protects the Casa Grande (see Photograph 1) and other archeological sites within its boundaries. While there are no prehistoric irrigation systems in the park, the museum presents excellent background information on the Hohokam canals which diverted water from the nearby Gila River. It is also speculated that one of the functions of Casa Grande was to provide an overlook from which the Hohokam could observe the status of their canals.



Photograph 1. The Great House.

The park is located in Coolidge, Arizona, a one-hour drive from either Phoenix or Tucson. From Interstate 10 take the Coolidge exit and follow the signs to the park entrance off Arizona Route 87/287.

Pueblo Grande Museum and Archeological Park

This museum and park is located at a 1,500 year-old Hohokam ruin in modern-day Phoenix. On the 102-acre park grounds, visitors can explore the ruin of an 800-year-old platform mound possibly used by the Hohokam for religious ceremonies or as an administrative center (Like Casa Grande, it may also have been used as an irrigation

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observation post.). An excavated ball court, and two full-scale reproductions of prehistoric Hohokam homes can be viewed along the trail which leads from the museum. Two large prehistoric canals are still preserved in "Park of the Four Waters", located in the southern portion of the Pueblo Grande Archeological Park. The canals measure 26 and 18 meters in width and approximately 6.1 meters in depth. Canal System 2, the large system that heads on the Salt River at Pueblo Grande, was probably capable of irrigating over 10,000 acres of land.

The museum is located in Phoenix at 4619 E. Washington Street (on the southeast corner of 44th Street and Washington). It is located north of Sky Harbor Airport and just off SR143 (Hohokam Highway).

Park of the Canals

In 1878, Mesa was founded by Mormon pioneers. Upon exploration, they discovered the Hohokam's abandoned canals, parts of which they used to develop their own irrigation system. Evidence of the canals can be seen today at the 31-acre "Park of the Canals." This is one of the only areas where the remains of the prehistoric canals can be easily observed. Their size and scope is amazing (see Photograph 2), and a stop here is well worthwhile. In addition to the canal remains, the parks boasts a desert botanical garden featuring vegetation from four different desert regions. Additionally, a large playground area is available for children.



Photograph 2. Remains of a prehistoric Hohokam irrigation canal at "Park of the Canals", in Mesa, Arizona.

This city park is located at 1710 N. Horne in Mesa.