

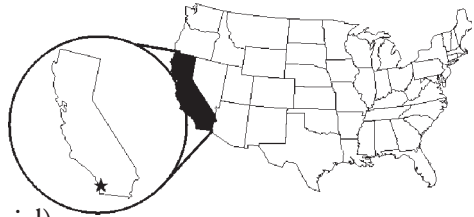
SAN DIEGO, CALIFORNIA



Population Rank: U.S. # 7
California # 2

Proportions: 2:3 (usage)

Adopted: 16 October 1934 (official)



DESIGN: San Diego's flag is a vertical tribar of equal red, white, and gold stripes. On the center stripe is the city's seal, about one-third of the stripe's height in diameter. The seal is positioned slightly above center; below it, centered and curved to match the seal's outer edge, is 1542.

The seal is elaborate. A white band, edged on both sides in gold, surrounds the seal. Beginning at 8 o'clock and extending to 4 o'clock, **• THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO • STATE OF CALIFORNIA •** runs clockwise in gold. In the remaining space on the band below, on a white heraldic ribbon edged in gold, is the city's motto, **SEMPER**

VIGILANS (“Always Vigilant”) also in gold. The shield is slightly curved on both sides on the top edge, and indented slightly on either side near the top. Its field is gold, with a wavy blue bar across its center. At the top is a black Spanish caravel with red sails, flag, and pennon facing the hoist. In the base is an orange tree, in natural colors with fruit, with a black winged wheel on either side. The supporters are the Pillars of Hercules, entwined with gold ribbons, each pillar resting on a green dolphin with red eyes and fins, facing the shield’s edges, their red tails linked below the shield. In the crest is a blue Carmelite belfry, from which hangs a gold bell.

SYMBOLISM: The explorer Juan Rodríguez Cabrillo discovered San Diego, the first California port entered by a Spanish ship, in 1542. Red and gold recall the Spanish flag, and red and white are also found in the United States flag. The gold is a reminder of the precious metal that transformed California from a wilderness to a prosperous state.

HOW SELECTED: The Native Sons of the Golden West, the hereditary organization also responsible for the adoption of the California state flag in 1911, developed the city flag and presented it to the city council.

DESIGNER: Uncertain. The designer is not specifically named, but the ordinance of adoption mentions Albert V. Mayrhofer as presenting the flag to the council. Whether he is the designer or just the representative of his organization is not certain.

MORE ABOUT THE FLAG: The detail on the seal does not permit any lettering to be seen on the ribbons entwined about the Pillars of Hercules and, in fact, there is no official reference to such lettering. However, the pillars as depicted on the flags of Spain typically have **PLUS** on the dexter ribbon and **ULTRA** on the sinister, together meaning “More Beyond”. Since the ribbons are gold, one supposes that the lettering would be in red (the reverse of the pillars on the Spanish arms). None of the available examples of the seal, all small, show any lettering on the ribbons.