

# ¡Ay, Susanita!

Anonymous Hispanic Gold Rush Song  
Adapted by: Los Californios and Calicanto



Su - sa - ni - ta se pa - sea - ba en un bu - que de va - por, y llo -  
Po - co tiem - po San Fran - cis - co po - co tiem - po Ma - zat - lán y

## Chorus



ra - ba por - su\_a - man - te y llo - ra - ba por su\_a - mor ¡Ay! Su - sa - ni - ta, no  
vol - ve - ré muy ri - co con di - ne - ro pa' gas - tar.



llo - res pa - ra mi, por - que voy a Ca - li - for - nia a traer o - ro pa - ra ti.

1. Susanita se paseaba en un buque de vapor,  
*Little Susan used to ride in a steamboat,*  
y lloraba por su amante, y lloraba por su amor.  
*and would cry for her lover and would cry for her love.*

Chorus: ¡Ay! Susanita, no llores para mi, porque voy a California a traer oro para ti.  
*Oh! Little Susan, don't you cry for me, 'cause I'm going to California to bring gold for you.*

2. Poco tiempo San Francisco, poco tiempo Mazatlán,  
*A short time in San Francisco, a short time in Mazatlan,*  
y volveré muy rico con dinero pa' [para] gastar.  
*and I will return very rich with money to spend.*

NOTES: This song was recited to Sarah Kerr, of the musical group Los Californios, by a Californio descendant at a reeactment ceremony at the San Pasqual Battlefield. A variant of the song is mentioned in John Donald Robb's "Folk Music of New Mexico" (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1980, 4th printing). The authorship has been lost over time; the words to Oh! Susanna!, a popular song by Stephen Foster, were changed by a passenger aboard a 49'er passenger ship. With its new lyrics, it became the theme song for the Gold Rush. The words were changed yet again by Mexican residents of California, becoming "¡Ay, Susanita!" The most experienced Mexican miners who came to California were from Sonora, the home region of many of the Anza Expedition families. Considering that the period from the Juan Bautista de Anza Expedition (1775-1776) to the Yankee discovery of gold in California (1849) was less than 75 years, many of the children of the expedition lived to witness the vast changes brought to California by the Gold Rush.