

FROM THE PUBLISHERS OF TEXAS HIGHWAYS MAGAZINE

TEXAS STATE ★ ★ *Travel Guide*

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Texas Department of Transportation

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Pictured: Scott Catalena of Catalena Hatters. This family owned & operated business crafts custom hats in Historic Downtown Bryan.

DESTINATION

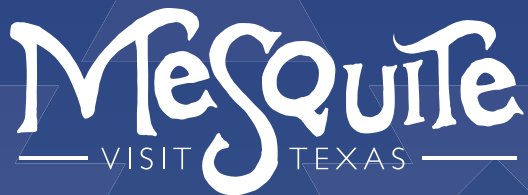
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legends are ever evolving while
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SADDLE UP FOR THE UNEXPECTED!

In Mesquite, the Lone Star Spirit ain't just surviving – it's thriving!

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VisitMesquiteTX.com





Shafter Bend Recreation Area
in Marble Falls

Welcome to Texas!

From the mountains of Big Bend to the forests of the Piney Woods, and from the Gulf Coast waves to the Hill Country rivers, Texas offers diverse landscapes to explore. With 254 counties and 268,597 square miles, it's best visited by car. Whether you're drawn to history, culture, or acclaimed restaurants, the state has something for every traveler.

The 2025 *Texas State Travel Guide* features over 2,500 attractions in nearly 500 cities, plus a bucket list of 25 True Texas Adventures. Explore historical sites, small towns, wildflower trails, iconic eats, and remote state parks. Gas up, hit the road, and be inspired!

—The *Texas Highways* Team

WE WANT TO
HEAR FROM YOU!



We value the insight of Texas travel enthusiasts. **Please take a moment to complete a brief survey about your travel interests and how you use the *Texas State Travel Guide*.** Rest assured, your responses will be kept completely confidential.



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THE CITY  THAT PLAYS

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NOTE: We want you to experience the best that Texas has to offer. Please understand that changes often occur with attractions. To ensure your visit to the Lone Star State will be great, please contact the local chamber of commerce, convention and visitors bureau, and/or attraction before your trip to verify the attraction will be open when you visit. Contact attractions directly for days and hours of operation, or visit texashighways.com/travelguide.



ABOUT THE COVERS

The **2025 Texas State Travel Guide** and **Texas Official Travel Map** covers pay tribute to Texas' state flower—the bluebonnet. In 1901, the Texas Legislature designated *Lupinus subcarnosus* as the state flower. About 70 years of debate ensued, until 1971, when the statute was amended to encompass all the state's bluebonnet species, including this *Lupinus texensis* photographed in Cedar Hill State Park near Dallas. The photos are the work of photographer Sean Fitzgerald. More of his work can be viewed on texashighways.com.

Texas State Travel Guide is published by the Texas Department of Transportation Travel Information Division, 6230 E. Stassney Lane, Austin, TX 78744. It encourages travel to and within the state by listing cities with publicly accessible sites of scenic, historical, and recreational interest.

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about travel destinations in Texas:

Office of the Governor, Economic Development and Tourism
traveltexas.com

Texas Parks & Wildlife Department
tpwd.texas.gov

Texas Historical Commission
thc.texas.gov

Texas Commission on the Arts
www.arts.texas.gov

Texas Highways magazine
texashighways.com

Texas Department of Agriculture
gotexan.org

Texas Music Office
gov.texas.gov/music

Texas Department of Transportation
txdot.gov

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dps.texas.gov

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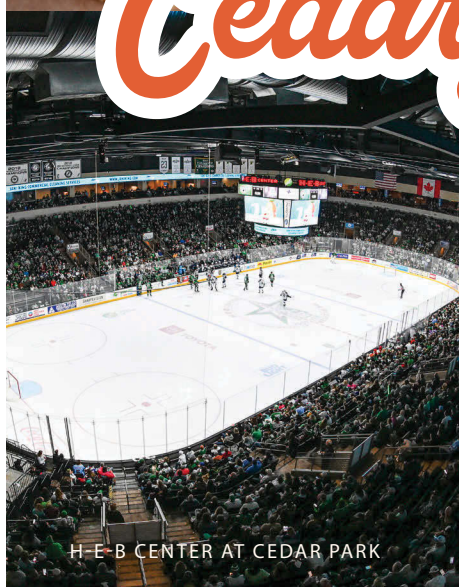


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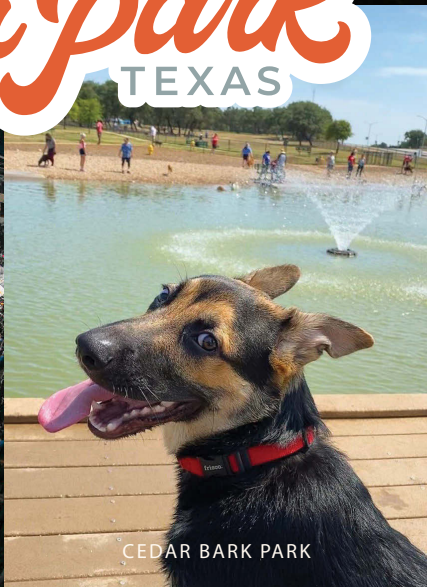


HAUTE SPOT

VISIT Cedar Park TEXAS



H-E-B CENTER AT CEDAR PARK



CEDAR BARK PARK

FUN FACT:

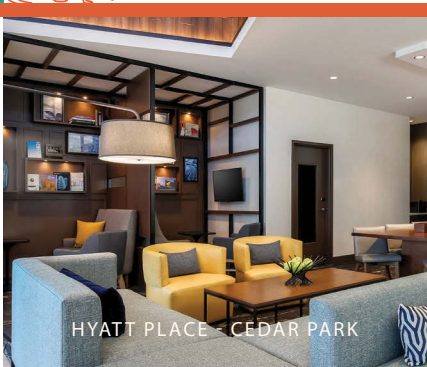
Cedar Park, Texas was founded in 1887. It came by its name simply because it had a park and was home to an abundance of mountain cedar trees.

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 MORE INFO



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VISITCORPUSCHRISTI.COM



CORPUS CHRISTI

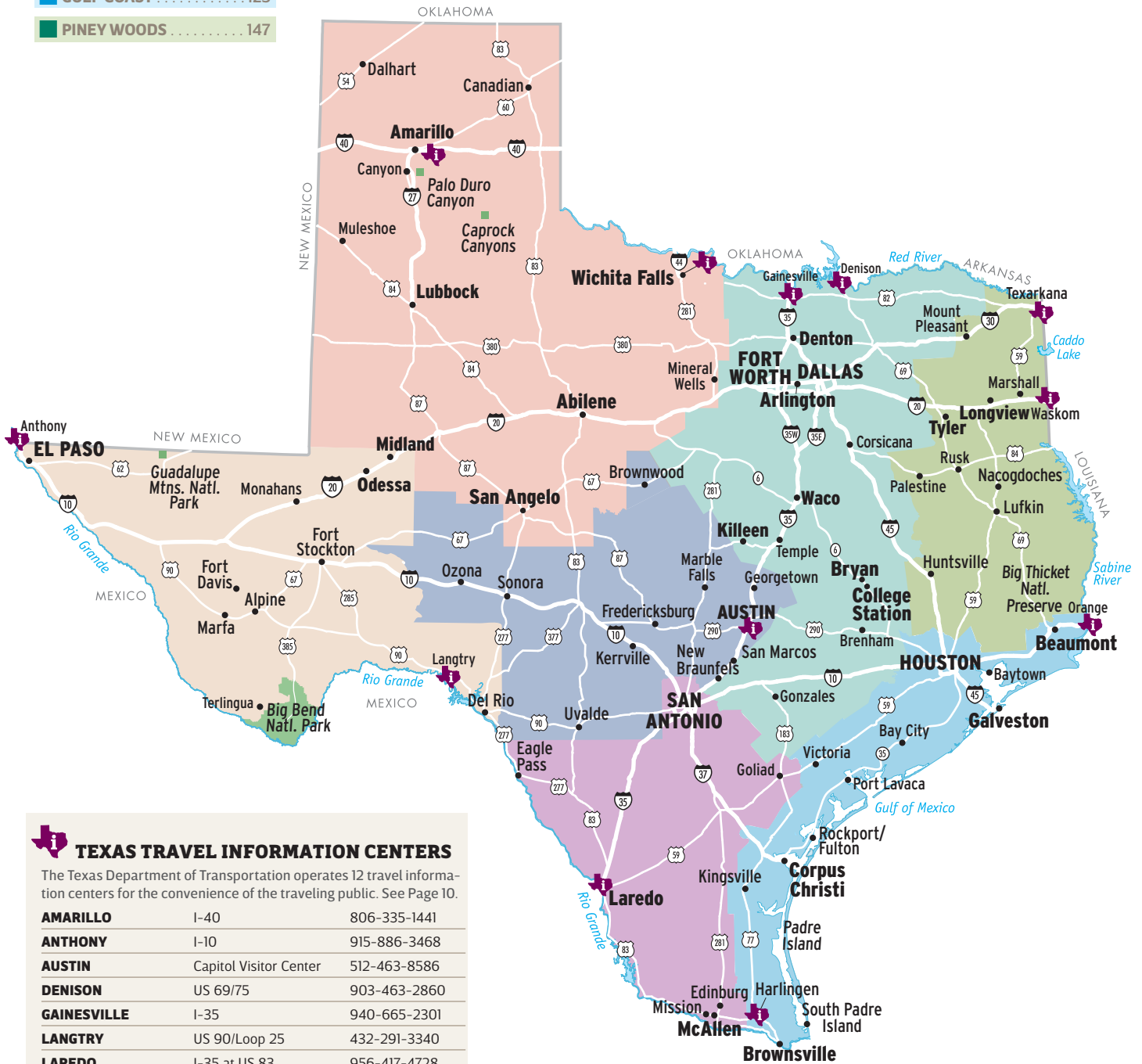
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TRAVELING ACROSS TEXAS

These examples of mileage across the state will help determine distances:

El Paso to Orange	834 miles	El Paso to Big Bend	329 miles
Amarillo to Brownsville	765 miles	Houston to San Antonio	197 miles
San Antonio to		Dallas to Texarkana	178 miles
South Padre Island	286 miles	Amarillo to Lubbock	119 miles
Fort Worth to San Antonio	262 miles	Austin to San Antonio	79 miles
Dallas to Houston	238 miles	Dallas to Fort Worth	30 miles



TEXAS TRAVEL INFORMATION CENTERS

The Texas Department of Transportation operates 12 travel information centers for the convenience of the traveling public. See Page 10.

AMARILLO	I-40	806-335-1441
ANTHONY	I-10	915-886-3468
AUSTIN	Capitol Visitor Center	512-463-8586
DENISON	US 69/75	903-463-2860
GAINESVILLE	I-35	940-665-2301
LANGTRY	US 90/Loop 25	432-291-3340
LAREDO	I-35 at US 83	956-417-4728
ORANGE	I-10	409-883-9416
TEXARKANA	I-30	903-794-2114
VALLEY (Harlingen)	US 77 at US 83	956-428-4477
WASKOM	I-20	903-687-2547
WICHITA FALLS	I-44/US 287, Exit 1C	940-723-7931

Travel Information



Texarkana Travel Information Center

TEXAS TRAVEL INFORMATION CENTERS

The Texas Department of Transportation operates 12 travel information centers for the convenience of the traveling public. Professional travel counselors welcome visitors and provide a wealth of information and suggestions to make every Texas trip safe and pleasant.

Travel counselors supply comprehensive statewide travel publications, plus detailed brochures about points of interest, attractions, and recreational areas. The centers also host safety awareness events and other special events throughout the year.

The centers are open **8 a.m.–5 p.m. daily** and 8 a.m.–6 p.m. Memorial Day weekend through Labor Day. The Capitol Visitor Center hours are 9 a.m.–5 p.m. Monday through Saturday and noon–5 p.m. Sunday year-round. *All centers are closed on New Year's Day, Easter Sunday, Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Eve, and Christmas Day.*

For 24-hour highway condition information, call **800-452-9292** or visit **drivetexas.org**.



DRIVETEXAS™—This is the Texas Department of Transportation's highway conditions information service. Visit drivetexas.org to view an interactive highway map displaying construction areas, closures, weather-related hazards, and other conditions along your route. The website also has options allowing you to see a live traffic feed, view traffic cameras in select regions, and find safety rest areas and Texas Travel Information Centers. The site is both desktop- and mobile-friendly.

Travelers may also call 800-452-9292 for 24-hour automated information or to speak with a professional travel counselor for highway conditions, safety information, and expert tourism recommendations from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. Central Standard Time seven days a week.

HIGHWAY REST AREAS—Texas pioneered the concept of miniature parks along roadways—an idea that has been adopted na-

tionally. Today, safety rest areas with restrooms, picnic areas, and scenic turnouts give travelers a break from driving so they can return to the road refreshed and more alert. Remaining in a rest area for more than 24 hours or erecting any kind of structure is prohibited by law.

SPEED LIMITS—Pay careful attention to speed limit signs in Texas as posted speeds may vary drastically on highways because of their individual operating characteristics. As of September 2023, TxDOT also can temporarily change speed limits for a portion of road or highway for reasons such as inclement weather or construction. It's the driver's responsibility to adjust to conditions, such as rain and fog.

TOLL ROADS—Many toll roads are cashless or all-electronic, meaning they do not have staffed booths to take tolls. Some toll roads require automobiles to have toll tags, and some may have a pay-by-mail option. If a vehicle

without a valid toll tag uses a toll road, a picture is taken of the license plate, and the bill is mailed to the address associated with the plate. The bill may contain an administrative charge in addition to the toll fee. Rental car drivers should check with the rental company regarding the handling of toll fees. On the occasion that a toll plaza is staffed, signs will direct travelers to lanes with the option to stop and pay.

TRAFFIC SIGNS—More than 500,000 signs across the state mark speed limits, caution areas, stops, and directions. Passing is illegal when there is a continuous yellow stripe on the driver's side of the center line. Center lines are yellow dashed stripes. White dashed stripes separate dual lanes of traffic in the same direction. Painted or reflective pavement arrows often show approved directions or turns. Arrows pointing toward you or red reflectors indicate you are driving the wrong way on a freeway ramp or one-way street.

AUTO SAFETY BELTS AND CHILD SEATS—All people in a passenger vehicle, regardless of age or seating position, are required to wear a seat belt. Children up to 8 years old, unless taller than 4 feet 9 inches, must ride in child safety seats. Fines may be levied for failure to use safety belts and child safety seats.

AUTO INSURANCE—A motor vehicle may not legally be operated in Texas unless a policy of liability insurance is in effect. Evidence of insurance must be furnished when requested by a law enforcement officer.

DON'T MESS WITH TEXAS—Since 1986, the Don't mess with Texas® campaign has been reminding motorists to keep our highways litter-free. Don't mess with Texas is a registered service mark and trademark owned by the Texas Department of Transportation. dontmesswithtexas.org

CLIMATE—Texas is a large and diverse state; climate conditions can vary from one region to another. The state's terrain includes arid desert mountains, high plains, limestone hills, rich farmland, grasslands, marshes, and deep forests. The state enjoys generally mild winters, though snow and ice can occur, especially in the Panhandle. The summers are generally hot. In July, the average daytime high statewide is almost 97 degrees. Average annual rainfall varies from less than 10 inches in far West Texas to more than 50 inches in parts of East Texas.

PASSENGER TRAIN

Amtrak, the nation's passenger train service, offers three lines that run through Texas. For information and reservations, call 800-USA-RAIL (800-872-7245) or visit amtrak.com.

BUS LINES

These bus companies have scheduled service to and within the state:

Greyhound Bus Lines greyhound.com

Valley Transit Co. valleytransitcompany.com



ACCOMMODATIONS—Consider making your stay in Texas even more memorable by selecting one of the state's many unique lodging options.

You can opt for a room in a historic hotel like The Gage in Marathon or stay in the former Pearl Brewhouse at Hotel Emma in San Antonio. Consider staying in a cabin on the rim of Palo Duro Canyon State Park or near the water at Sea Rim State Park, but you will want to plan far in advance for a week-end stay. You might even decide to make your whole vacation into a stay at dude or nature ranches. Perhaps a few nights of luxury at the Gaylord Texan Resort in Grapevine or The Woodlands Resort might be preferred.

Read about other interesting places to stay, including treehouses, glamping sites, and stargazing or wildflower stays, in *Texas Highways* magazine or at texashighways.com/lodging. If you're looking for a campground stay, visit texashighways.com/camping or traveltexas.com/where-to-stay/campgrounds.

Additional accommodations are found through traveltexas.com/where-to-stay. Scroll down and click on Hotels, Resorts and B&Bs; Stay at a Texas Ranch; or Texas Campgrounds to explore the choices. Then enter the name of the city where you plan to stay to find available options.

You also can call Texas Travel Information Center travel counselors at 800-452-9292 from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. CST daily for suggestions.

AIRPORT INFORMATION

Rick Husband Amarillo International Airport
fly-ama.com

Austin-Bergstrom International Airport
austintexas.gov/airport

Corpus Christi International Airport
corpuschristiairport.com

Dallas/Fort Worth International Airport
dfwairport.com

Dallas Love Field dallas-lovefield.com

El Paso International Airport
elpasointernationalairport.com

Valley International Airport (Harlingen)
flythevalley.com

Houston-George Bush Intercontinental Airport
fly2houston.com/iah

Houston-William P. Hobby Airport
fly2houston.com/hou

Lubbock Preston Smith International Airport
flylbb.com

Midland International Air & Space Port
flymaf.com

San Antonio International Airport
sanantonio.gov/sat

Waco Regional Airport
waco-texas.com/departments/airport

MEXICO

If you are planning to cross into Mexico during your stay in Texas, consider a stop at a Texas Travel Information Center or a Texas border city's chamber of commerce or convention and visitors bureau for useful tips. Information for crossing into Mexico can be obtained from a Mexican consulate or by going to visitmexico.com. For information regarding the process to enter or reenter the United States, visit cbp.gov/travel. Before going, learn as much as possible about Mexico and use common sense during the trip. Visit the U.S. Department of State, travel.state.gov, to see any applicable Travel Alerts and Tips for Traveling Abroad.

WARNING: Possession/importation of any type of firearm, weapon, or ammunition is a felony in Mexico without permission from Mexican authorities and may require special permits from the Secretaría de la Defensa Nacional or Secretaría de Economía.

More Resources

Brewster County Tourism Council
visitbigbend.com

Explore RGV exploregv.com

North East Texas Tourism Council
visitnortheasttexas.com

Red River Valley Tourism Association
redrivervalley.info

Texas Association of Campground Owners
817-426-9395 • texascampgrounds.com

Texas Association of Convention & Visitor Bureaus
940-999-1002 • tacvb.org

Texas Bed & Breakfast Association
979-836-5951 • texasbb.org

Texas Coastal Bend Regional Tourism Council
501-258-9640 • txcoastalbend.org

Texas Hotel & Lodging Association
800-856-4328 • texaslodging.com

Texas Travel Alliance
512-328-8842 • texastravelalliance.org

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ILLUSTRATIONS BY JAMES YATES



Whether you're a born-and-bred Texan or just got here as fast as you could, there are a host of things you need to do and see in our great state before calling yourself **A TRUE TEXAN.**

From visiting awe-inspiring landscapes, to tasting dishes that range from comfort to culinary-forward, to experiencing iconic attractions that define the state, here are **25 ADVENTURES TO CHECK OFF** before you don your cowboy hat and ride off into the sunset—with plenty of great memories under your belt.

BROWNSVILLE

YOUR BEST MEMORIES ARE WAITING TO BE MADE



BOCA CHICA BEACH



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Brownsville

   visitbrownsvilletx.com

IT TX M



What-a-Stop

Order a Whataburger No. 1—beef patty, lettuce, tomato, diced onions, pickles, and mustard; a patty melt; or a honey butter chicken biscuit, and eat it while cruising down the highway on a road trip. (Bonus points if you wash your meal down with a Dr Pepper.)



Stand in two states at once in Texarkana

Stand in two places at once in Texarkana, a town that's half in Texas and half in Arkansas. Home to the only post office that's housed in two states—and a colorful sign out front ideal for photos—Texarkana makes it easy to walk the line, literally. Located in a complex that was built in 1932 and also includes the federal courthouse, this working post office even has two separate zip codes. ourtexarkana.com

Experience the Fort Worth Stockyards

Don your Wranglers and cowboy boots: It's time for a cattle drive! The quintessential experience at the Fort Worth Stockyards National Historic District is the Fort Worth Herd cattle drive, where authentic cowhands drive a herd of Texas longhorns down the brick streets of Exchange Avenue daily at 11:30 a.m. and 4 p.m. The cattle drive, which is free to watch, celebrates "the diversity of the American cowboy, the Old West, and the livestock that had such an impact on our economy," says Kristin Jaworski, herd trail boss. For even more cattle, don't miss the Fort Worth Herd Experience, a free hourlong program where folks can watch pros groom and saddle horses and demonstrate roping and branding, at 1:30 p.m. on Fridays, Saturdays, and Sundays. While you're in the Stockyards, catch a show at the renowned Billy Bob's Texas or grab a seat at Booger Red's Saloon. fortworthstockyards.org

Stroll the River Walk

One of the most popular tourist destinations in Texas, the 15-mile River Walk, or Paseo del Rio, that meanders through downtown San Antonio and beyond is known as the "American Venice." Beyond walking the wide promenade, visitors can board a riverboat cruise, peruse cowboy hats and other souvenirs, and sit and relax while sipping a margarita or eating a meal. For a quieter section of the River Walk, head north to Museum Reach, where it connects with the old Pearl Brewery, Brackenridge Park, and the San Antonio Museum of Art. Or head south, where the River Walk was extended for 8 miles in 2013 and links with the San Antonio Missions in a section called Mission Reach. thesanantonioriverwalk.com



The San Antonio River Walk



TRADITIONS

ANCHOR HERE

VISIT THE TRUE TEXAS COAST

Just off the Texas coast sits a unique beach town marked with salty vibes and sun-soaked memories. It's a place where family traditions unfold naturally, and beauty lies both in island views and the unhurried moments between adventures. One visit and you'll find why generations of Texans have anchored their traditions in Port Aransas.



PORT ARANSAS
the island life

HISTORY & EDUCATIONAL

BY ROBYN ROSS



All Aboard the Texas State Railroad

The Texas State Railroad carries passengers on a leisurely round trip between the East Texas towns of Palestine and Rusk. The rail line was built in the early 1900s to transport iron from the Rusk state penitentiary's foundry, but since the 1970s the railroad has carried tourists instead of cargo on the 25-mile journey through the Piney Woods. Visitors can ride in an open-air coach, glass-walled observation dome, or elegant presidential car, all pulled by a restored steam or diesel locomotive. Special rides showcase the flowering dogwood trees in the spring

and feature wine tastings and catered dinners. During the holidays, the train transforms into the magical Polar Express that travels to the North Pole in the 1985 Chris Van Allsburg book (and 2004 movie) of the same name. Staff members read the book to families sipping hot cocoa as the train trundles along, and Santa and his elves gift each child a silver bell. "It's an immersion," says Cassie Ham of Palestine's visitors center. "My little boy is convinced he rode to the North Pole, and I didn't have the heart to tell him it was just Rusk." texasstaterailroad.net



Spend a day orbiting Space Center Houston

Budding astronauts and outer space enthusiasts will soar through this 250,000-square-foot educational complex that features 400-plus space artifacts and exhibits. Guided tours bring visitors to NASA's historic Mission Control, used for the first lunar landing in 1969, and to today's astronaut training facility. From an elevated walkway, they get a bird's-eye view of NASA engineers and astronauts at work.

Visitors can also take a tram to the George W.S. Abbey Rocket Park to see a Saturn V rocket that launched the Apollo spacecraft to the moon. Make time to explore the flight deck and living quarters of a full-scale space shuttle replica.

spacecenter.org

Tour the Capitol

Brush up on Texas history and government in a free half-hour tour of the Capitol building, the largest statehouse in the country. The route includes the rotunda, the underground extension, and the House and Senate chambers, where visitors are often surprised to learn that the lawmakers' desks are original from 1889. tspb.texas.gov/plan/tours/tours.html



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HISTORY & EDUCATIONAL

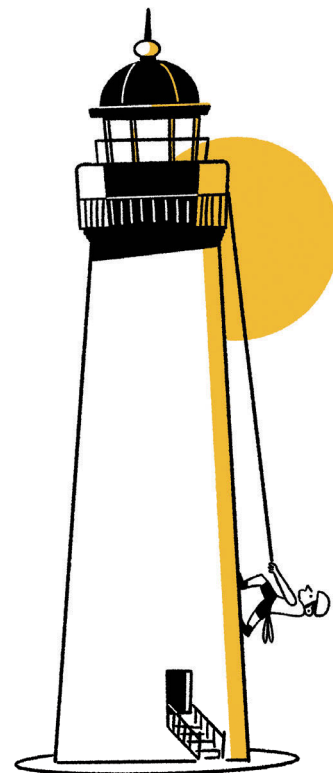
BY ROBYN ROSS

Survey the San Antonio Missions

Founded in 1845—though home to Indigenous people long before that—our state has a multifaceted history. A good place to start learning about it is the 18th-century San Antonio Missions, a National Park Service site and the only UNESCO World Heritage Site in Texas. At the Spanish missions Concepción, San José, San Juan, and Espada along the San Antonio River, you'll learn about colonizers' efforts to convert Indigenous peoples to Catholicism and teach them agricultural skills and the Spanish language. Then head to Mission San Antonio de Valero, also known as the Alamo, to see how Texan revolutionaries repurposed the old structures and reframed them in public memory as a landmark of Texas independence. nps.gov/saan/index.htm; thealamo.org

Admire the Painted Churches

In the late 1800s and early 1900s, Czech and German immigrants built churches in communities they established near Schulenburg and decorated them with vividly painted walls and ceilings and magnificent stained glass. In Sts. Cyril and Methodius Shrine in Dubina, for example, the ceiling is a brilliant blue dotted with 3,000 gold stars. The Schulenburg Chamber of Commerce offers guided tours and sells a map visitors can use to follow their own path. "You think you're in a Central Texas prairie in the middle of nowhere with a very simple plain church, and when you step across the threshold it blossoms into a European experience," chamber director Terri Wagner says. schulenburgchamber.org/painted-churches-tour



Scale the Port Isabel Lighthouse

Built in 1852, the Port Isabel Lighthouse is the only lighthouse in Texas open to the public. Climb the state historic site's 75 steps, including a spiral staircase and two ladders, to the catwalk for a close-up look at the replica of the original lens and a sweeping view of the Laguna Madre and South Padre Island. portisabellighthouse.com

Cruise the Boogie Woogie Highway

Boogie Woogie's roots can be traced to the logging camps of East Texas, where formerly enslaved people played tunes for respite from their toils, accentuating the piano's rhythmic properties to get people dancing. Defined by a walking bass line—a repeating sequence of notes that propels the rhythm forward—the music is perfect for a road trip through the Piney Woods where it originated. In 2012, musicologist John Tennison dubbed a 280-mile stretch of US 59 between Houston and Texarkana the "Boogie Woogie Highway." Travel the route and stop at key landmarks, like The Big Easy Social and Pleasure Club in Houston and Texarkana's Museum of Regional History, home to a piano like one owned by Scott Joplin. boogiewoogiemarshall.com —Michael Corcoran



PHOTO: TIFFANY HOFELDT

DISCOVER
SAN ANGELO

ON THE ROAD AGAIN

DISCOVER SAN ANGELO'S

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ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

BY S. KIRK WALSH



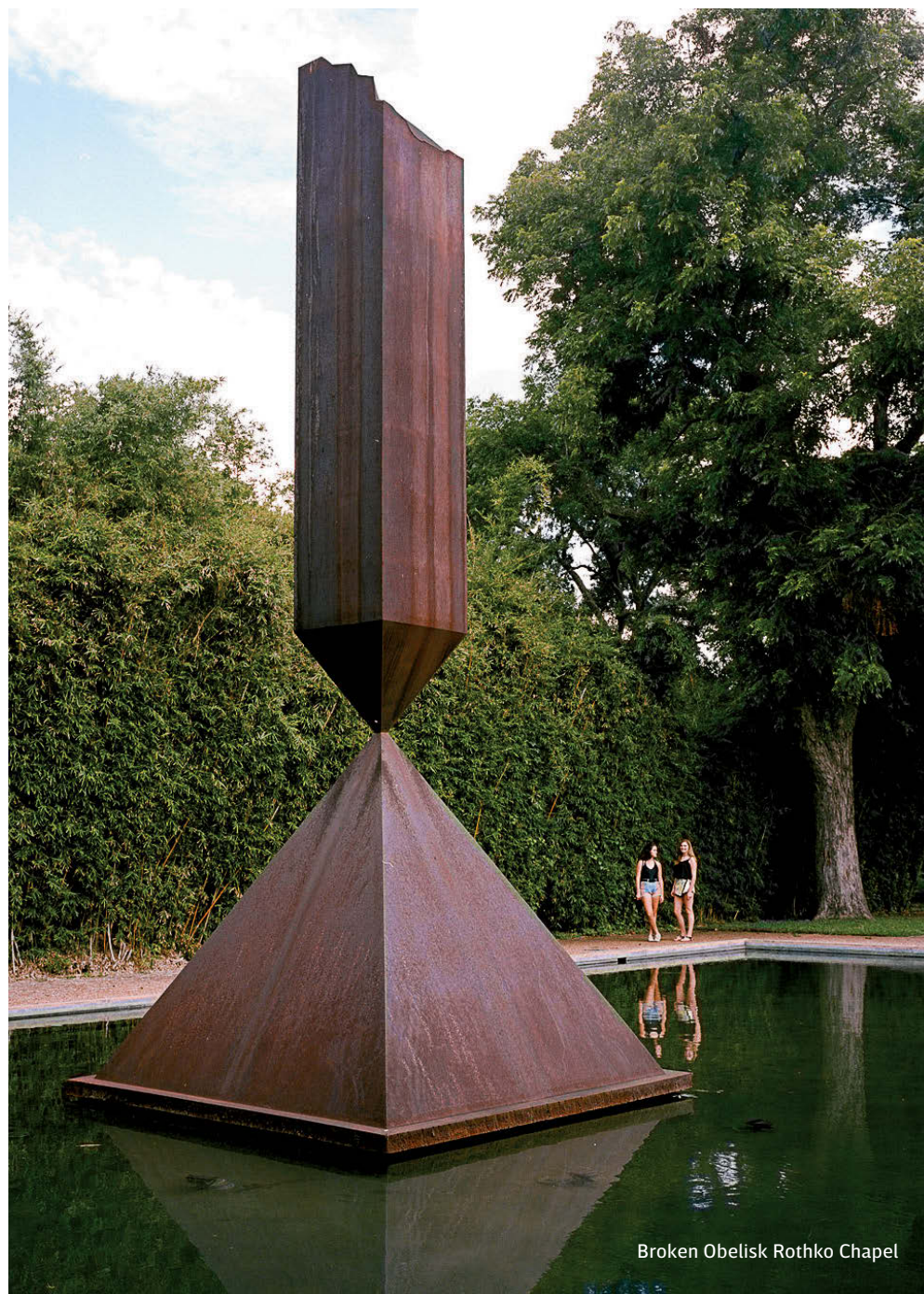
Master the Texas two-step

Our state is rich with dance halls and honky-tonks built in the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

Inside them you'll find people young and old moving to the music. Open since 1878, **Gruene Hall** in New Braunfels is the oldest dance hall in the state and has hosted country icons including George Strait. Gruene Hall offers swing dance lessons, but for those who want to learn the two-step, head to 60-year-old **Broken Spoke** in Austin for \$10 lessons on Wednesday through Saturday evenings. If you want to go big, check out **Billy Bob's Texas** in Fort Worth, which boasts 100,000 square feet for dancing. "There aren't many things people can do and experience pure joy," says veteran two-stepper Kyla Torre of Austin. "Dancing makes everyone happy." gruenetexas.com; brokenspokeaustintx.net; billybobstexas.com

Attend a concert in the Live Music Capital of the World

The streets of Austin are alive with the sound of music. You can hear live music in the capital city every day of the week, and there's something for everyone. Go to an intimate venue like Continental Club or a massive, state-of-the-art arena like the Moody Center, which attracts some of the top acts in the world. Nearly 40 music festivals take place in Austin throughout each calendar year, including South by Southwest in March and Austin City Limits Music Festival in October. And be sure to check out the star-studded schedule of PBS's *Austin City Limits*, the longest-running music program on TV. continentalclub.com; moodycenteratx.com; sxsw.com; aclfestival.com; acltv.com/tapings



Broken Obelisk Rothko Chapel

Peruse Houston's Museum District

Twenty world-class cultural institutions make up 9 square miles of the extraordinary Museum District in Houston and feature impressive exhibits that cover fine arts, natural science, photography, and more. "All of the museums are very welcoming for those new to art or new to a certain kind of art," says Amy Yeatts, executive manager of the Houston Museum District. "The museums want to bring visitors to each genre and are happy to have them be a part of the experience." The museums are arranged in four walkable zones, and they're affordable. More than half of the institutions are free to the public, and the others offer special hours where admission fees are waived. houmuse.org



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FOOD

BY AMY MCCARTHY

TACO WARS

Who reigns supreme in Texas' battle of the tacos?



The al pastor taco from Paprika in Austin

SAN ANTONIO

A fixture of San Antonio's culinary landscape, tacos have been on menus since at least 1889, when the Original Mexican Restaurant began serving Tex-Mex cuisine. In the 130-plus years since, the city has emerged as Texas' preeminent taco destination. In its vast array of styles and preparations, you'll find stellar carnitas, birria de res, and barbacoa—the focus of the annual Barbacoa & Big Red Festival.

KNOWN FOR

The puffy taco, invented at Ray's Drive-Inn in the '50s. Made from a corn tortilla fried until crisp and airy, they're often stuffed with beans, chicken, and carne guisada. The taco even serves as one of the mascots for the minor league baseball team, San Antonio Missions.

ALSO WORTH A VISIT

Vegans often get left out of the Texas taco conversation, but not at Plantaquerra. There, mini tacos in corn tortillas are layered with jackfruit barbacoa and fajita portobello mushrooms.

AUSTIN

This is a scene that's never afraid of experimentation, despite plenty of outstanding taquerías serving top-notch carne asada and al pastor, such as Cuantos Tacos and Paprika ATX. Further afield offerings can be found at restaurants like Nixta Taqueria, which has secured James Beard hardware for its duck carnitas, heritage corn tortillas, and grilled squash drowning in spicy salsa macha.

KNOWN FOR

The breakfast taco. Though it wasn't invented in Austin, the capital city has played a pivotal role in the dish's popularity. South by Southwest tourists help preach the gospel of Veracruz All Natural's migas variety, and the carne guisada at Joe's Bakery & Coffee Shop.

ALSO WORTH A VISIT

Chef Joseph Gomez at Con Todo fuses Austin's taco identity with his own upbringing in the Rio Grande Valley. Try the mesquite-grilled beef sweetbreads or chicharrón cooked in salsa de desayuno.

RGV

According to chef and food writer Adán Medrano, flour tortillas are a defining characteristic of South Texas tacos. "When the Spanish expeditions began, they brought in wheat, and it was reinterpreted by the Indigenous palate," Medrano says. Those tortillas are typically seen on breakfast tacos filled with eggs, chorizo, and regional specialties like weenies.

KNOWN FOR

Barbacoa, or cow's head that is slow-smoked in an in-ground pit over mesquite until tender. Due to local health code, only one RGV restaurant, Vera's Backyard Bar-B-Que in Brownsville, still prepares barbacoa in the traditional style.

ALSO WORTH A VISIT

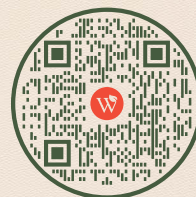
At La Cocinita in McAllen, nixtamalized corn tortillas make an appearance in chef Evin Garcia's octopus al pastor tacos. There are also independent taqueros in McAllen and Brownsville where barbacoa is prepared in the traditional style at home and sold from streetside stands.

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FOOD

BY AMY MCCARTHY

WANT MORE?

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Fill up on fried fare at the State Fair of Texas

A fall tradition since 1886, the State Fair of Texas serves a dizzying array of deep-fried options that are an even bigger draw than Big Tex or the 212-foot-tall Ferris wheel. Sample chicharron nachos festooned with fajita chicken and Hatch chile queso; crackly beignets bursting with shrimp étouffée; and fried pho that boasts rice noodles, herbs, bean sprouts, and ribbons of beef in every tortilla-shrouded bite. Hoisin-laden broth is served on the side like au jus. If that all sounds a little too indulgent (and messy), meander down the Midway until you see the stand for Fletcher's, longtime home of the fair's beloved corny dog. bigtex.com



Attempt to take down the 72-ounce steak at the Big Texan

Located just off what used to be Route 66 in Amarillo, the Big Texan is the embodiment of peak Texas kitsch. But the prevalent longhorn and state flag décor are only part of the appeal. Try to devour an entire 72-ounce steak—that's 4.5 pounds of beef!—as well as shrimp cocktail, two sides, and a buttered roll for a free meal and a chance at gluttonous glory. If you fail, as so many have, you'll have to pony up \$72 for the honor. bigtexan.com

Tipple down the 290 wine trail

Dubbed the "Texas Wine Road," State Highway 290 is now home to more than 30 wineries and vineyards, each with its own approach to winemaking. Visit Crowson in Johnson City for distinctive, minimal-intervention wines like its juicy, High Plains-sourced mourvedre, or head to nearby Calais to learn all about its approach to the varietals of Bordeaux. In Johnson City, Lost Draw Cellars has a stunning new tasting room designed by Michael Hsu with a covered porch, retail store, outdoor bar, and full-service kitchen. Owned by the same folks as the venerated William Chris Vineyards, its focus is exploring Texas terroir through Hill Country-grown grapes, such as Lost Draw's single-vineyard Alta Loma syrah. texashillcountrywineries.org

WILD WACO

WACO
RIVERWALK

SCAN TO DISCOVER
WONDERFULLY WACO



Discover endless wonder in Waco, Texas. Dig deep into history at the Mammoth National Monument, meet our new African penguins at the Cameron Park Zoo, sip on the best tasting bubbles you've ever had at the Dr Pepper Museum, or get a little wacky with our riverwalk wildlife.



NATURE & OUTDOORS

Stargaze at McDonald Observatory

On the high, barren slopes of the Davis Mountains, the McDonald Observatory is a window into the heavens—and not just for astronomers. Visitors can join two-hour tours held in the observatory's amphitheater, and learn about the history, mythology, and science of familiar constellations. (Pro tip: Dress warmly. Desert nights can be chilly.) The Rebecca Gale Telescope Park behind the visitors center offers a closer look at celestial objects. mcdonaldobservatory.org



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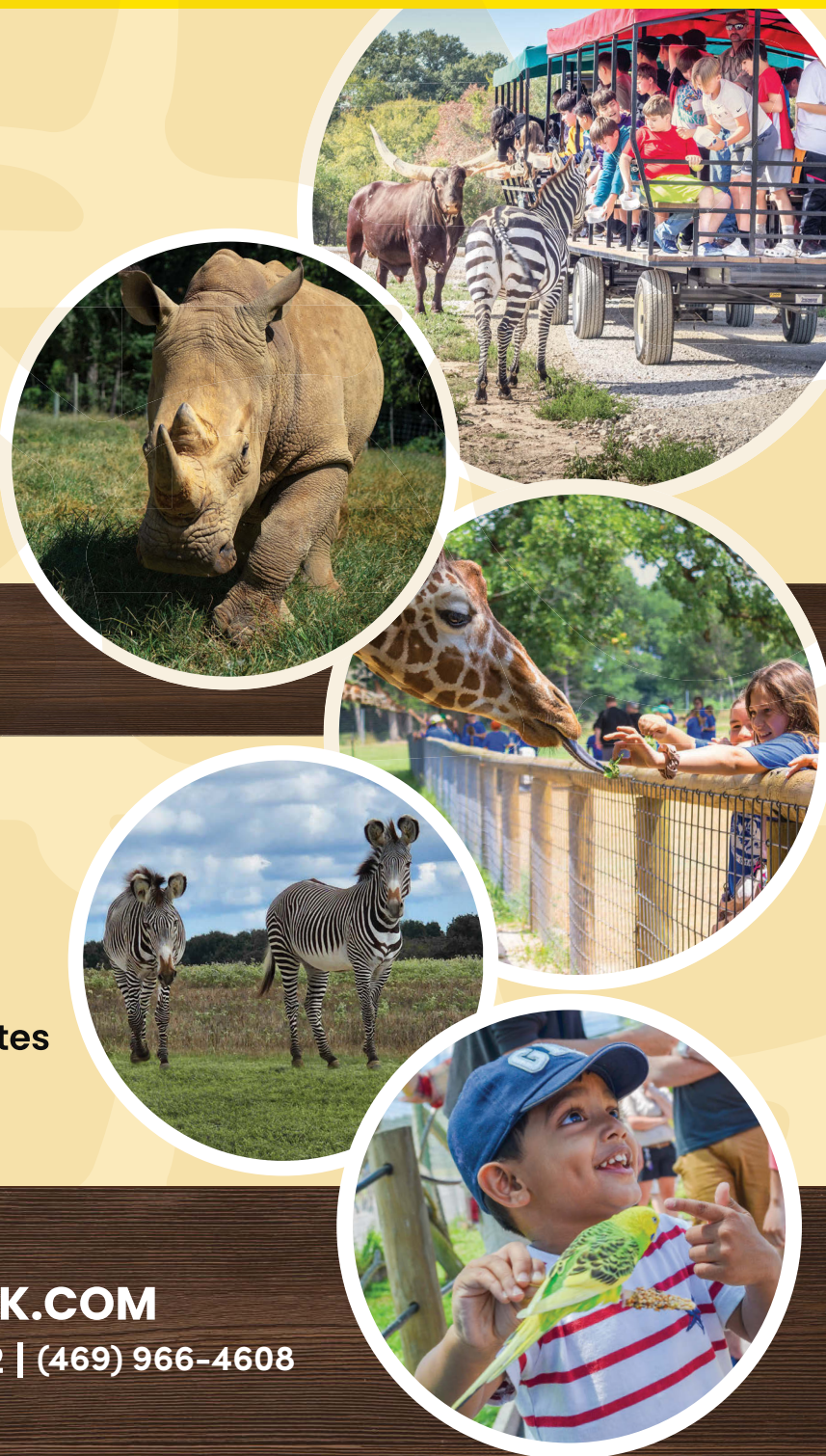
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NATURE & OUTDOORS

BY ASHER ELBEIN, MELISSA GASKILL, AND JOE NICK PATOSKI

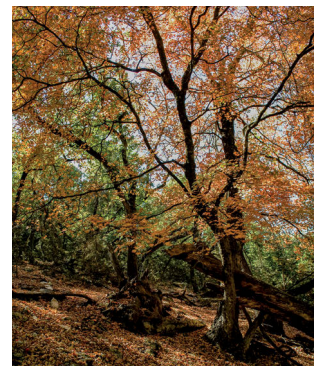


Snap a photo in a field of wildflowers

Drive any of the state's 79,000-plus miles of highways and you'll find swaths of wildflowers every spring. But the colorful blooms don't get there by accident—30,000 pounds of flower seed are sown across the state annually. Top wildflower destinations include the Hill Country and the plains of the Upper Coast, but lesser-known spots like West and South Texas and the High Plains don't disappoint. Stop in state parks, historic cemeteries, and preserves—anywhere nature is allowed to run unfettered. wildflower.org/texas

Peep fall foliage at Lost Maples

You don't have to leave the state for autumnal color. Tucked away in a Sabinal River canyon, Lost Maples State Natural Area's titular trees—a stand of Uvalde bigtooth maples—put on a fiery show every fall. There are year-round opportunities for swimming, hiking, and wildlife watching. Check Texas Parks and Wildlife's fall foliage color report or try your luck and book a day pass during the month of November. tpwd.texas.gov/state-parks/lost-maples/foliage-reports



Hike Palo Duro Canyon

The second-largest canyon in the United States, Palo Duro Canyon State Park is a dream for anyone in love with the outdoors. Clocking in at 120 miles long and 800 feet deep, the canyon—part of the Caprock Escarpment near Amarillo—has 15,000 acres of trails to hike, bike, and explore on horseback. The Lighthouse Trail, perhaps the best known of the canyon's trails, is just under 6 miles long and takes about two hours to hike. Dogs are welcome on leash, but be sure to pack plenty of water and be prepared for extreme heat or rain. palodurocanyon.com



The Hezekiah Haskell House

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AustinTexas.gov/HistoricATXParks



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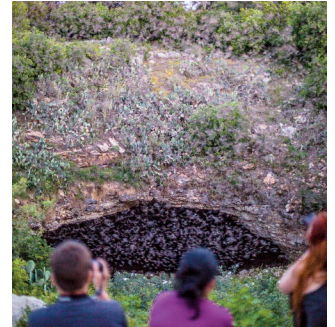
NATURE & OUTDOORS

BY ASHER ELBEIN, MELISSA GASKILL, AND JOE NICK PATOSKI



Swim at Balmorhea

The blue jewel of the West Texas desert, the 1.3-acre pool at Balmorhea State Park is the world's largest spring-fed swimming pool. Built during the New Deal Era, the pool is 25 feet at its deepest and contains (on a good year) 3.5 million gallons of clear water fed by San Solomon Springs. With a temperature that hovers between 72 to 76 degrees year-round, it's the ultimate desert swimming experience. The pool is open daily with a park entry fee, but reservations are required. And be warned: There are no lifeguards on duty. tpwd.texas.gov/state-parks/balmorhea



Witness millions of bats take flight

Every year from May to October, Mexican free-tailed bats emerge in huge numbers from their roosts to hunt agricultural pests and delight viewers. The most famous flight in the state is the nightly emergence of 1.5 million bats from under Austin's **Ann Richards Bridge**. Other sites have even more: Fredericksburg's **Old Tunnel State Park**, which is accessible with a ticket, hosts around 3 million, while the biggest emergence in the state is from **Bracken Cave Preserve** near San Antonio, home to a staggering 15 million bats. To see them, check with Bat Conservation International, the cave's managers, for a reservation.

austinbats.org;

tpwd.texas.gov/state-parks/old-tunnel; batcon.org

Soak in the hot springs in Big Bend

A rugged 2-mile gravel road and short trail end at a 105-degree hot spring on the bank of the Rio Grande in Big Bend National Park. In 1909, the water's therapeutic reputation lured Mississippi native J.O. Langford here, and his bath-house foundation still provides a perch for modern-day soakers. nps.gov/bibe/planyourvisit/soakinthesprings.htm



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PRAIRIES & LAKES





Kreische Brewery

Hidden Hamlet

A weekend getaway in the community of La Grange

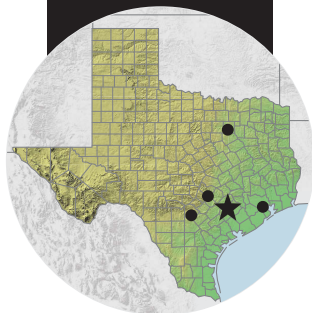
By Katey P. Outka

Austin
1 hour

San Antonio
1.5 hours

Houston
2 hours

Dallas
3.5 hours



Ask most Texans about La Grange and they'll probably say one of two things: "I've driven past there," or "Like the ZZ Top song?" Yes, La Grange's claim to fame is the Chicken Ranch, the famed brothel with "a lotta nice girls," as the ZZ Top song goes—the same brothel that inspired the movie *The Best Little Whorehouse in Texas*. But the town has a rich history beyond the Chicken Ranch. Its growth was fueled by an influx of Czech and German immigrants in the mid-1800s. Many of their descendants still reside in the area. The Fayette County Courthouse looms over the town square, which is lined with restaurants and boutiques perfect for picking up tchotchkes. Over the past decade, La Grange's new businesses have proven the small town is more than just a place to pass through on a drive between Austin and Houston. It's well worth stopping a night or two to experience what the community has to offer.

PHOTO: BRANDON JAKOBETT

STAY

Flophouze

Airbnbs dot La Grange's historic square, but if you're looking for a boutique hotel, the neighboring community of Round Top (famous for the biannual antiques fair) has plenty to pick from. One standout is the Flophouze, a complex of converted shipping containers featuring a pool and views of the Hill Country. Each lodging is beautifully furnished, with a kitchen and bathroom. Stays start at \$175/night.

SEE

Kreische Brewery

In 1849, German immigrant Heinrich Ludwig Kreische purchased 172 acres on what residents call "The Bluff," a neighborhood just outside city limits. Kreische found fresh spring water under his family home and opened the brewery. After his death in 1882, the brewery closed, but visitors can tour the ruins and learn about Texas brewing history.

EAT & DRINK

Weikel's Bakery

Eating a kolache is basically a requirement for those visiting La Grange. And not the meat-filled ones—those are called klobasniki. You'll want the real thing from Weikel's Bakery. For an authentic Texas Czech experience, opt for apricot or poppy seed (or better yet, treat yourself to a variety six-pack). Weikel's also serves homemade noodles and made-to-order sandwiches.

Reba's Deli And Pizzeria

The pizzeria, opened in 1999 by former New Yorker Joe Schroeder and named after his youngest daughter, also serves flatbreads, hot sandwiches, salads, homemade fudge, and hand-dipped Blue Bell ice cream. The family-friendly spot stands just a few blocks from the town square.

La Grange Brewing Company

Visitors can take a drive out to the brewery, located on Blissful Folly Farm, to taste local beers, wines, meads, and

ciders brewed on-site. Visitors can learn about sustainable brewing techniques and pet goats. Tasting tours are offered on Saturdays and cost \$30/person.

Bodega Wine Market

The cozy, cute little spot on the town square offers wine as well as craft beer; a variety of cheese boards; and a full menu featuring flatbreads, soups, and sandwiches. Open weekdays until 7 p.m., it's a great spot to start your evening before heading over to Mac's Daqs, a daiquiri bar on the opposite side of the town square, or Jay Dee's, a sports bar.

LEARN

Texas Czech Heritage and Culture Museum

Texas is home to more Czech Americans than any other state; La Grange's museum demonstrates that fact through cultural artifacts and memorabilia. The museum houses the Texas Czech Village—several buildings with historical significance to the Texas Czech community.

M-K-T Depot Museum

Located in a yellow-and-green train depot built in 1897, the M-K-T Depot Museum pays tribute to the history of local railroads. The original building, located on the same site near the present-day town square, was open for only 10 years before it burned down. Visitors can see memorabilia and artifacts relating to the Missouri-Kansas-Texas railroad, as well as a couple of historical train cars.

EVENTS

Culture? Czech!

The Texas Czech Heritage and Cultural Center hosts May Fest, an annual celebration of all things Czech. The slavnost, or festival, kicks off with a tribute to Czech immigrants who settled in Texas. It's followed by a fried chicken lunch and live music all afternoon. Visitors can enjoy a kolache table, a classic car show, a country store, and more activities celebrating the Czech community. ★



BASTROP STATE PARK

Showcasing a unique mix of pine and oak woodlands, this park is a stunning testament to the resilience of Texas nature. Explore miles of scenic trails perfect for hiking or biking and enjoy the park's diverse wildlife and serene surroundings. Connected to its sister park, Buescher State Park, by both scenic trails and a historic park road, it offers extended outdoor adventures through the beautiful Lost Pines region. Spend the night under a cathedral of towering pines at a cozy campsite or in one of the charming historic cabins.

"Visiting Bastrop State Park for the first time was a fantastic experience. I loved seeing the towering Lost Pines, the historic stone cabins, and going hiking to the scenic overlook. The campsites are nice and shady, with an accessible paved trail nearby, perfect for family visits." — Erin Freiboth, TPWD staffer since 2018

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For more information, directions, and amenities, get your free mobile guide to all 80-plus state parks: texasstateparks.org/app

RV INFO

The Suncatcher RV Park on US 77 is located on a quiet slice of country land a five-minute drive from the heart of La Grange. The park offers showers, restrooms, and Wi-Fi. suncatcherrvpark.com



PRAIRIES & LAKES

ADDISON

POP. 17,310

Visit Addison: 972-450-7038; visitaddison.com

With the energy and vibrancy of a big city, this compact 4.4-square-mile urban enclave is home to 200-plus restaurants, 22 hotels, upscale living, and world-class special events, such as Taste Addison, Addison Kaboom Town!, and Addison Oktoberfest.

MARY KAY MUSEUM—Explore the history of Mary Kay Ash and Mary Kay Cosmetics. Free. 16251 Dallas Parkway. 972-687-5720

ALLEN

POP. 111,551

Visit Allen, Texas: 777 Watters Creek Blvd., Suite 102. 214-509-4670; visitallentexas.com

Allen offers great concerts and events along with just about every spectator sport imaginable. The city is also known for its outdoors—1,196 acres of parkland, more than 80-plus miles of hike-and-bike trails, 60 parks, and seven recreation facilities, including a municipal golf course, natatorium, and a large outdoor skate park.

ALLEN STATION PARK—The park offers multiple recreation opportunities, including a walking trail. 301 E. Exchange Parkway. 214-509-4700

Edge at Allen Station Park—Enjoy the skate park, BMX course, and in-line hockey/skate rinks. Free. 201 St. Mary Drive. 214-509-4760

Hydrous Wake Park—This is a cable water-skiing/wakeboarding facility. 580 N. Cedar Drive. 214-390-3088

CELEBRATION PARK—The park features a water spray-ground and the “kidMania” disabled-accessible playground. 701 Angel Parkway. 214-509-4700

CREDIT UNION OF TEXAS EVENT CENTER—The Allen Americans Hockey Club and Dallas Sidekicks Soccer Club play here. 200 E. Stacy Road, No. 1350. 972-678-4646

EXIT4 ESCAPE ROOMS—You are placed inside a room and have 60 minutes to solve a task using the clues and puzzles hidden throughout. Admission charge. 190 E. Stacy Road. 214-991-3995

THE DINOSAUR COMPANY—It offers a wide range of tours and workshops for any age. Admission charge. 420 Century Parkway. 469-273-1388

ANDERSON

POP. 200

Navasota Grimes County Chamber of Commerce: 117 S. LaSalle St. 936-825-6600; navasotagrimeschamber.com

This town was established on the La Bahia Road, a centuries-old Native American trail. It is an area of scenic hills dotted with historic structures.

FANTHROP INN STATE HISTORIC SITE—The restored, historic inn, once a stagecoach stop, offers a sense of a traveler’s life in the 1850s. 579 S. Main St. 936-873-2633 or 512-475-2260

GRIMES COUNTY COURTHOUSE—This restored Edwardian-Victorian structure is made of hand-formed red bricks and native stone. 270 FM 149 West. 936-873-4400

ARLINGTON

POP. 394,602

Arlington Convention and Visitors Bureau: 1717 E. Randol Mill Road, Suite No. 101. 800-433-5374; arlington.org

Welcome to a “World of Wonderful!” between Dallas and Fort Worth and just 10 minutes from DFW International Airport. Arlington has a multitude of things to do and see. Check out Downtown Arlington with its local restaurants, nightlife, and live music. You’ll be surprised by the unexpectedness of Arlington.

ARLINGTON MUSEUM OF ART—Galleries feature exhibits from world-renowned and local artists. 1200 Ballpark Way. 817-275-4600

AT&T STADIUM—Tour the world-class stadium where the Dallas Cowboys play. 1 AT&T Way. 817-892-4000 or 817-892-8687

FIELDER HOUSE—A 1914 Prairie-style home shows local history and traveling exhibits. Admission charge. 1616 W. Abram St. 817-460-4001

THE GALLERY AT UTA—It exhibits art and architecture in the University of Texas at Arlington Fine Arts Building. Free. 502 S. Cooper St. 817-272-3110

GLOBE LIFE FIELD—MLB’s Texas Rangers play home games here April–September. Get a tour or catch a game. 734 Stadium Drive. 817-533-1972

INTERNATIONAL BOWLING MUSEUM AND HALL OF FAME—This interactive museum features exhibits on the history and future of the sport. 621 Six Flags Drive. 817-385-8215

LAKE ARLINGTON—Parks offer boating and picnicking. 6300 W. Arkansas Lane. 817-451-6860

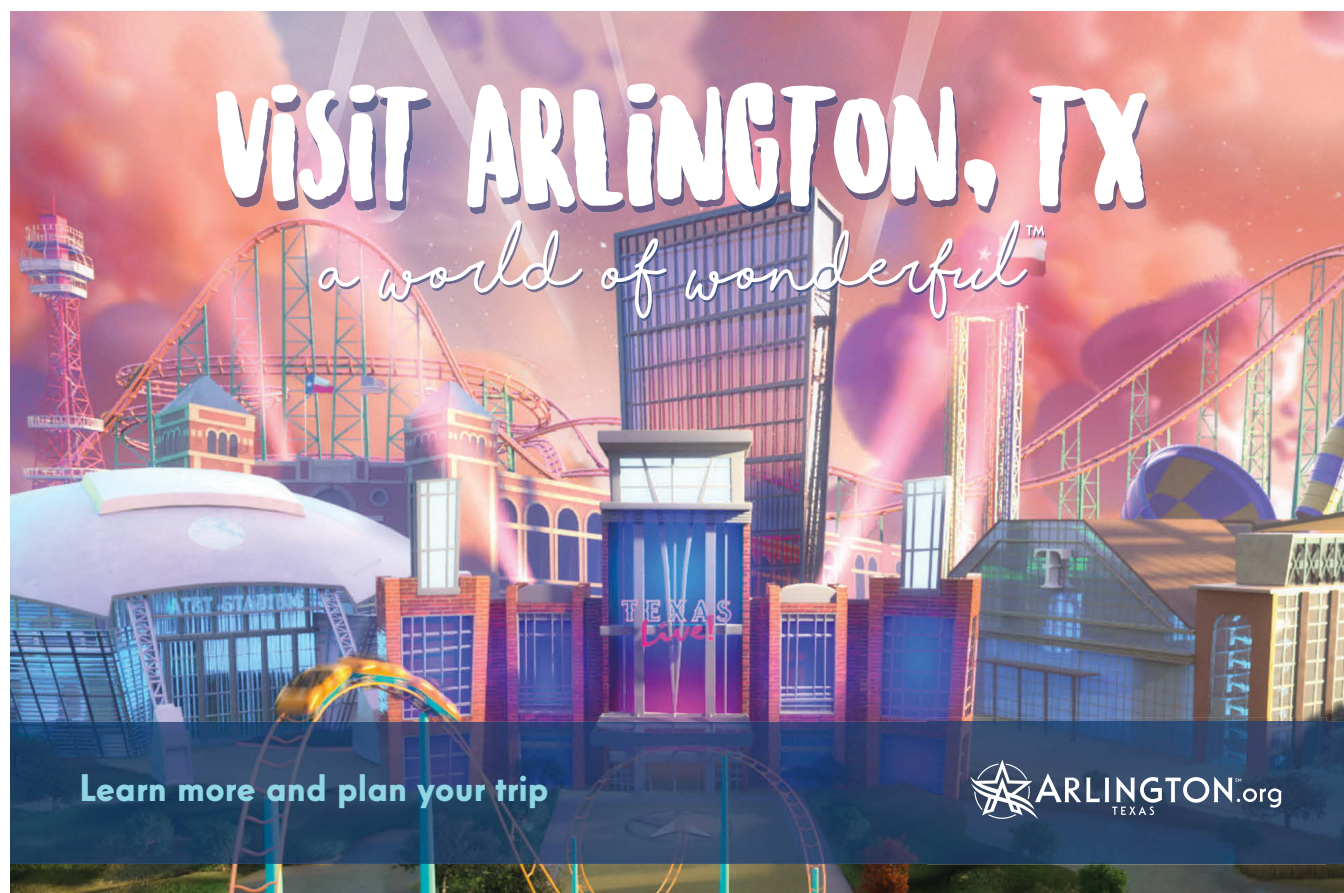
RIVER LEGACY PARK—The park features paved hike-and-bike trails, a playground, and a canoe launch. The River Legacy Living Science Center is adjacent. 703 NW Green Oaks Blvd. 817-860-6752

SIX FLAGS HURRICANE HARBOR—Enjoy tube chutes, waterslides, a lazy river, a wave pool, and a surfing area. Admission charge. 1800 E. Lamar Blvd. 817-265-3356 or 817-640-8900

SIX FLAGS OVER TEXAS—The park features world-famous roller coasters and thrill rides. Parking fee. 2201 Road to Six Flags. 817-640-8900

TOP O’ HILL TERRACE—It was once a restaurant and tea garden with an illicit casino beneath. 3001 W. Division St. 817-987-1716

UTA PLANETARIUM—It offers a 60-foot dome screen for live stargazing and other programs. 700 Planetarium Place. 817-272-1183



ATHENS

POP. 13,007

Visit Athens Dept. of Tourism: 201 W. Corsicana St. 903-681-1286; visitathenstexas.com

An hour southeast of Dallas, Athens is where history meets modern attractions. According to Texas historian Frank X. Tolbert, the hamburger originated here and is celebrated during the Black-Eyed Pea Jamboree in September. The Athens Old Fiddlers Reunion is hosted each April.

ATHENS SCUBA PARK—The clear waters are popular for recreational diving. Admission charge. 500 N. Murchison St. 903-675-5762

CEDAR CREEK RESERVOIR—It offers camping, picnicking, fishing, swimming, marinas, and boating. Off SH 31. 903-432-2814

CLEVELAND ARMORY BLACK BEAUTY RANCH—Animal sanctuary is open for prescheduled, guided tours. See website for tour info. 12526 CR 3806. 903-469-3811

EAST TEXAS ARBORETUM & BOTANICAL SOCIETY—It has walking trails, a bluebird trail, a museum, a veterans memorial, and water gardens. 1601 Patterson Road. 903-675-5630

HENDERSON COUNTY FAIR PARK—Rodeo and livestock events are held every weekend. 3356 SH 31 East. 903-670-3324

LAKE ATHENS—This reservoir has boat ramps, a restaurant, a marina, camping, swimming, and fishing. 5401 Marina Drive. Off FM 2495. 903-804-8501 or 903-675-7275

NEW YORK TEXAS ZIPLINE ADVENTURES—Nine zip lines offer 30-plus miles of views from the treetops. Reservations required. 7290 CR 4328, Larue. 903-681-3791

PURTIS CREEK STATE PARK—The park features shaded campsites, exceptional bass fishing, a no-wake lake, hiking, biking, and picnic sites. Admission charge. 14225 FM 316 North, Eustace. 903-425-2332

TEXAS FRESHWATER FISHERIES CENTER—It is undergoing renovations and expected to reopen in spring 2025. Admission charge. 5550 FM 2495. 903-676-2277

WINERY—Tara Vineyard and Winery. See TEXAS BEVERAGE TOUR section.

BASTROP

POP. 11,189

Historic Downtown Bastrop, Bastrop Main Street Program: 1311 Chestnut St. 512-332-8980; visitbastrop.com

Quaint, historic downtown Bastrop offers lots of places to eat, shop, and play. The Colorado River provides opportunities for fishing, paddling, and tubing. There are numerous live entertainment venues and a moonshine distillery. The June Hill Pape Riverwalk is in Fisherman's Park.

BASTROP MUSEUM AND VISITOR CENTER—Tells the story of Bastrop from its beginnings in 1832 through World War II. 904 Main St. 512-303-0057 or 512-303-0904

BASTROP OPERA HOUSE—The historic 1889 theater offers vaudeville, melodramas, musicals, and comedies. 711 Spring St. 512-200-3826

BASTROP STATE PARK—It has CCC cabins, a swimming pool, nature watching, hiking, fishing, and road biking. Scenic Park Road 1 leads to Buescher State Park. Admission charge. 100 Park Road 1A. 512-321-2101

CAPITAL OF TEXAS ZOO—It's home to more than 500 wild animals. Admission charge. 376 A Jenkins Road, Cedar Creek. 512-657-2682



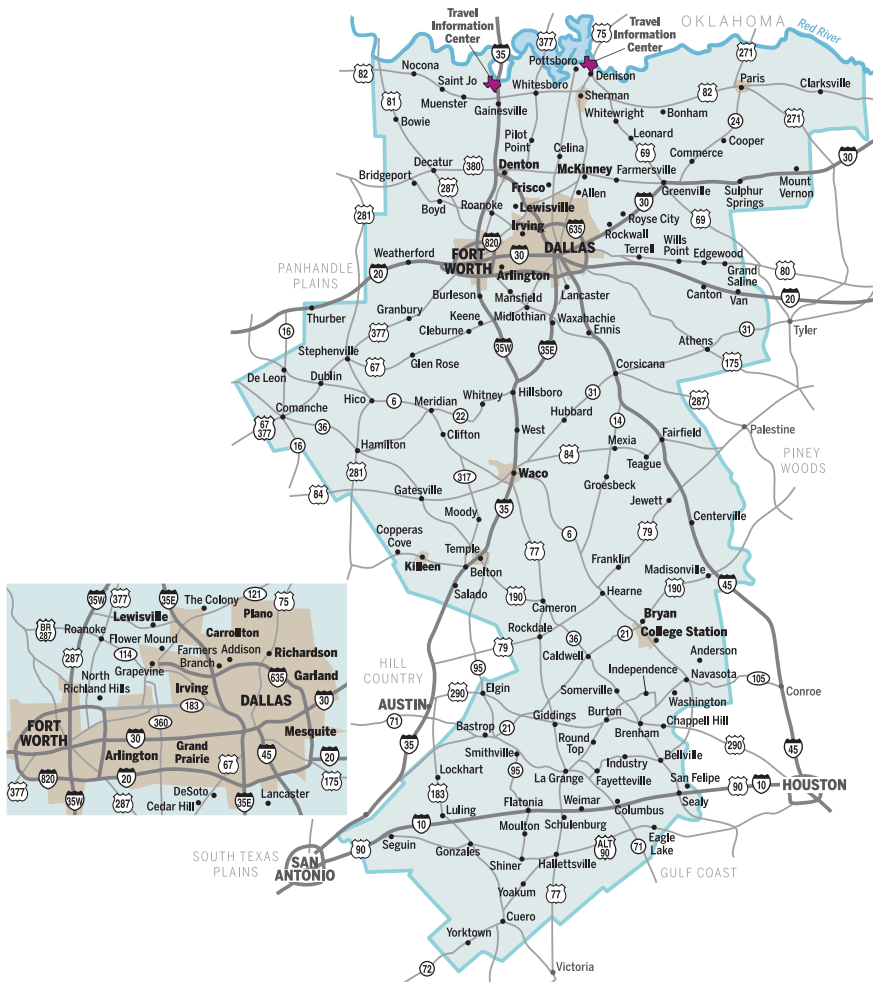
Sam Bell Maxey House

HISTORIC SITES

The area stretching from the Oklahoma border to east of San Antonio contains the state's richest collection of heritage-based attractions, including many of the Texas Historical Commission's state historic sites.

The 1868 Sam Bell Maxey House in Paris tells the story of the Maxey family in a changing nation from Reconstruction era Texas through World War I. The nearby Sam Rayburn House in Bonham commemorates one of the most influential politicians in the 20th century. Just up the road, the Eisenhower Birthplace in Denison is where the 34th U.S. president and World War II commander, Dwight David "Ike" Eisenhower, was born in 1890. Acton features a statue of Davy Crockett's second wife, Elizabeth, who died in 1860. Confederate Reunion Grounds in Mexia hosted Civil War veterans for reunions from 1889 to 1946. Fanthorp Inn in Anderson features a restored stagecoach stop and inn providing a realistic look into travelers' experiences in the 1850s. Nearby, Washington-on-the-Brazos celebrates where the Texas Declaration of Independence was signed on March 2, 1836. The site also contains the Star of the Republic Museum and Barrington Plantation. San Felipe de Austin in San Felipe preserves the location where Stephen F. Austin established his colony in 1823, the first Anglo-American settlement and provisional capital of Texas. Monument Hill and Kreische Brewery in La Grange honor the victims of the 1842 Dawson Massacre amid the ruins of German immigrant Heinrich Kreische's 1860s brewery.

Find other Texas Historical Commission historic sites across the state: texashistoricsites.com.





FIELD GUIDE *to* BASTROP COUNTY

ISSUE
No 50



Rockin' Out

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Whether you're enjoying the easy life at one of our restful retreats or jammin' to live music in town, there's always somewhere to relax or rock out* in Bastrop County, Texas. Come stay a weekend with us and get away without having to go far away.

*PLEASE DO NOT PERFORM CONCERTS IN THE HYATT LOST PINES LOBBY

DINOSAUR PARK—Educational facility features life-size dinosaur exhibits, a fossil dig, and playground. Admission charge. 893 Union Chapel Road, Cedar Creek. 512-321-6262

EL CAMINO REAL PADDLING TRAIL—It's a slow-moving 6-mile trail. Put-in is at Fisherman's Park. 512-389-4800

LAKE BASTROP—Two LCRA parks—South Shore and North Shore—offer swimming, fishing, camping, and boating. North Shore: 603 FM 1441. South Shore: 375 South Shore Road. 512-473-3200

LCRA MCKINNEY ROUGHS NATURE PARK—It has walking and equestrian trails, a Natural Science Center, and a challenge course. Admission charge. 1884 SH 71 West, Cedar Creek. 512-303-5073

LOST PINES ART CENTER—The center hosts two galleries, classes, events, and shops. 1204 Chestnut St. 512-321-8055

TEXAS REPTILE ZOO—The zoo has more than 150 reptiles in replicated natural environments. Admission charge. On FM 20. 512-766-6030

ZIP LOST PINES—Enjoy a fun, dynamic, and educational zip tour over McKinney Roughs. 1760 SH 71 West, Cedar Creek. 512-761-2323

BELLVILLE

POP. 4,209

Bellville Chamber of Commerce and Visitor Center: 742 W. Main St. 979-865-3407; discoverbellville.com or bellville.com

The historic courthouse square offers dining, a wine bar, and shops. Enjoy various day trips or book one of 15-plus lodging/B&B options. Events include Texas Select from Forged in Fire, Saengerfest, Austin County Fair and PRCA Rodeo, Pickin' and Grinnin' Bluegrass Festival, and Small Town Christmas.

1890's BLACKSMITH SHOP (PHENIX KNIVES)—Take a tour or forge your own souvenir knife in an 1891 blacksmith shop. Free. 305 E. Main St. 713-724-6813

AUSTIN COUNTY JAIL MUSEUM—Exhibits tell stories of early Texas and its law enforcement. 36 S. Bell St. 713-385-7141 or 979-877-5642

FATHER OF TEXAS BUST—Take a quick selfie with a bust of Stephen F. Austin on the north side of town at SH 36 and FM 159. Free. 826 W. Main St. 979-865-3407

NEWMAN'S CASTLE—Tour this castle with its moat, drawbridge, bell tower, and chapel. Admission charge. Tickets at 504 E. Main St. 979-865-9804

BELTON

POP. 24,327

Belton Area Chamber of Commerce & Visitor Center: 412 E. Central Ave. 254-939-3551; seebelton.com

Bordered by woodlands and two major lakes, Belton offers natural beauty alongside historic landmarks, shopping, eateries, and entertainment. Events include the 4th of July Celebration; PRCA Rodeo; Schoepf's Texas Music Series; Central Texas State Fair; Belton's Bacon, Blues, and Brews Festival; and Christmas on the Chisholm Trail.

BELL COUNTY COURTHOUSE—The historic Renaissance Revival-style courthouse was built in 1884. 101 E. Central Ave. 254-939-3521

BELL COUNTY MUSEUM—It collects and preserves the historical heritage of the Bell County area. Free. 201 N. Main St. 254-933-5243

BELTON LAKE—The lake offers parks, fishing, camping, boating, water sports, and even scuba diving. Off FM 439. 254-742-3050

COCHRAN, BLAIR & POTTS MUSEUM—Texas' oldest family-owned department store has a museum with store memorabilia. 221 E. Central Ave. 254-939-3333

STILLHOUSE HOLLOW LAKE—Parks have boat ramps, fishing, and swimming. Camp at Dana Peak and Union Grove parks. 3740 FM 1670. 254-939-2461

SUMMER FUN WATER PARK—It includes two 300-foot waterslides, a lazy river, and a Texas-size pool. Admission charge. 1410 Waco Road. 254-939-0366

THE GIN AT NOLAN CREEK—The historic site now houses a Mexican restaurant, steakhouse, sports bar, frozen yogurt shop, and cigar lounge. 219 S. East St. 254-613-4446

BONHAM

POP. 10,746

Bonham Visitors Center: 327 N. Main St. 903-583-9830; visitbonham.com

Bonham is conveniently located 60 miles north of the DFW Metroplex. The centerpiece of its nostalgic downtown square is the newly restored courthouse. Enjoy museums, shopping, dining, live music, and outdoor adventures. It has seven area lakes and many places to camp, boat, fish, and explore.

BONHAM STATE PARK—It offers hiking, boating, canoeing, swimming, fishing, and camping. Admission charge. 1363 State Park 24. 903-583-5022

FANNIN COUNTY MUSEUM OF HISTORY—The restored Texas and Pacific Railroad Depot holds pioneer, local, and regional history exhibits. Admission charge. 1 N. Main St. 903-583-8042

FORT INGLISH VILLAGE—It features a replica log blockhouse and stockade, plus three restored log cabins with pioneer furnishings. 902 W. Sam Rayburn Drive. 903-227-5015

LAKE BONHAM—Picnic and camp at the park on the south shore of this lake. 7506 Lake Bonham Drive. Off FM 273. 903-583-7555

NORTH TEXAS SAFARI PARK—Enjoy a drive-thru experience from the comfort of your vehicle. Admission charge. 2920 US 82 West. 903-718-0305

SAM RAYBURN HOUSE STATE HISTORIC SITE—The site tells the story of Sam Rayburn, who served 24 terms as a U.S. representative. Admission charge. 890 W. SH 56. 903-583-5558

SAM RAYBURN MUSEUM—This facility details Sam Rayburn's life and career. 800 W. Sam Rayburn Drive. 903-583-2455

WINERY—Neighbors Place Winery. See TEXAS BEVERAGE TOUR section.

BOWIE

POP. 5,738

Bowie Chamber of Commerce and Visitors Center: 101 E. Pecan St. 940-872-1173; bowietxchamber.org

Bowie maintains an old-fashioned feel with local businesses offering antiques, cafés, and bed-and-breakfast accommodations. Events include Second Monday Trade Days, Jim Bowie Days Rodeo and Festival, Chicken and Bread Days Heritage Festival, and Fantasy of Lights Christmas Festival and Lighted Parade.

BOWIE PUBLIC LIBRARY—It features an extensive genealogy section and displays local memorabilia. 301 Walnut St. 940-872-2681

CHISHOLM TRAIL MEMORIAL PARK—Nine life-size, steel longhorns and two roving cowboys recall the early cattle drives. 703 US 81. 940-872-1173

LAKE AMON G. CARTER—Enjoy swimming, boating, picnicking, and camping at lakeside parks. About 6 miles south of Bowie via FM 1125. 940-872-1114

WORLD'S LARGEST BOWIE KNIFE—The World's Largest Bowie Knife measures an astounding 20 feet long with a 14-foot, 5-inch steel blade. Free. 1555 E. Wise St. 940-872-6246 or 940-872-1173

BRENHAM

POP. 18,469

Visit Brenham & Washington County Visitor Center: 115 W. Main St. 979-337-7580; visitbrenhamtexas.com

Brenham is home to some 19 murals (and growing) decorating the walls of its Downtown National Register District. In March and April, the visitor center provides a free "Bluebonnet Trails" map outlining scenic driving routes. Brenham features shopping, dining, and entertainment. The area offers more than 80 lodging options.

ANTIQUE CAROUSEL—C.W. Parker carousel has Charles W. Dare horses. Admission charge. 910 N. Park St. 979-337-7580 or 979-337-7250



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- ✓ GRAB LUNCH AT ROAD HOUSE
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PRAIRIES & LAKES

BLUE BELL CREAMERIES—See how Blue Bell Ice Cream is made. 1101 S. Blue Bell Road. 979-836-7977 or 800-327-8135

BRENHAM HERITAGE MUSEUM—Visit the newly renovated museum featuring family-friendly interactive exhibits. Admission charge. 105 S. Market St. 979-830-8445

BREWERY AND WINERIES—Brazos Valley Brewing Company, Chapelton Vineyards, and Saddlehorn Winery. See TEXAS BEVERAGE TOUR section.

CHAPPELL HILL LAVENDER FARM—See CHAPPELL HILL.

DOWNTOWN BRENHAM NATIONAL REGISTER DISTRICT—Several blocks feature shops, art galleries, wine bars, and a cigar bar. Enjoy live music and professional theater on the Simon Theatre stage. 979-337-7580

TOUBIN PARK—The park features an early 1800s cistern, plus local history storyboards. Free. 208 S. Park St. 979-337-7200

BRIDGEPORT

POP. 6,321

Bridgeport Visitor Center: 812 A Halsell St. 940-683-2076; bridgeportchamber.org

The downtown of this Main Street City features shops in historic buildings along Halsell Street. Events include Butterfield Stage Days Festival and PRCA rodeo and the Coal Miners Heritage Festival.

BRIDGEPORT FALLS PADDLING TRAIL—The low-water weir dam creates a pleasant 5.8-mile loop. Free. Off FM 2123.

BRIDGEPORT HERITAGE MUSEUM—The museum features exhibits on the lake, local history, and the Butterfield Stage Overland Mail Route. 812 Halsell St., No. B. 940-683-2076

CENTER FOR ANIMAL RESEARCH AND EDUCATION—This 20-acre sanctuary is home to more than 40 exotic

species. Visit the website to schedule a tour. 245 CR 3422. 940-683-8115

LAKE BRIDGEPORT—This impoundment offers swimming, fishing, campsites, picnic areas, and boat ramps. Four miles west of Bridgeport off US 380; also accessible from Decatur. 817-335-2491

LBJ NATIONAL GRASSLANDS—Hike, bike, ride horses, fish, camp, view birds and wildlife, hunt, and go boating. North and northeast of Bridgeport along US 380. 940-627-5475

NORTHWEST OHV PARK—Take on more than 300 acres of trails. 279 George Mitchell Parkway. 940-683-3480 or 940-683-3685

BRYAN

POP. 87,792

Destination Bryan: 979-721-9506; destinationbryan.com

Bryan is home to numerous restaurants, breweries, boutiques, live music and event venues, and art galleries. Historic Downtown Bryan offers shopping and dining in restored buildings. Events include First Fridays, the Brazos Valley Fair & Rodeo, and cultural events throughout the year. Lake Bryan provides outdoor recreation.

AGGIELAND SAFARI—Interact with more than 100 species of wildlife. Admission charge. 18075 FM 974. 979-599-5440

BOONVILLE HERITAGE PARK—The park's historic buildings are the last preserved remnant of the town of Boonville, the original county seat. Free. 2421 Boonville Road. 979-402-6326

BRAZOS VALLEY AFRICAN AMERICAN MUSEUM—Exhibits highlight the history and heritage of African Americans in the Brazos Valley. Admission charge. 500 East. Pruitt St. 979-775-3961

BRAZOS VALLEY MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY—Facility presents exhibits on science, culture, and natural history, including a beehive. 3232 Briarcrest Drive. 979-776-2195

BREWERY, DISTILLERY, AND WINERY—Blackwater Draw Brewing Co., Hush & Whisper Distilling Company, and Messina Hof Winery. See TEXAS BEVERAGE TOUR section.

CARNEGIE HISTORY CENTER—Built in 1903, the building houses the Carnegie Center of Brazos Valley History and Genealogy. 111 S. Main St. 979-209-5630

CHILDREN'S MUSEUM OF THE BRAZOS VALLEY—Children can experience the worlds of theater, commerce, medicine and nutrition, media, and the arts. Admission charge. 4114 Lake Atlas Drive, Suite 110. 979-779-5437

HISTORIC DOWNTOWN BRYAN—It's home to a thriving arts scene, top-rated restaurants, signature events, and eclectic boutiques and antiques shops. 105 S. Main St.

LAKE BRYAN—It offers mountain biking, camping, fishing, swimming, and a boat ramp. Admission charge. 8200 Sandy Point Road. 979-775-7800

LAKE WALK—The 5-acre lake has biking and walking trails, restaurants, an observation tower, and a hotel. 3891 S. Traditions Drive. 979-321-7497

THE QUEEN THEATRE—The historic, iconic building is now a single-screen film house and performance venue. 110 S. Main St. 979-721-9978

TACO TRAIL—The trail features authentic taquerias, Mexican restaurants, and nontraditional and fusion taco offerings. Sign up for a digital passport. 200 S. Main St.

TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY—See COLLEGE STATION.

BURLESON

POP. 53,381

Burleson Area Chamber of Commerce: 124 S. Main St., Suite 228. 817-295-6121; burlesonareachamber.com

When the railway was built from Fort Worth toward Alvarado, it needed a source of water for its locomotives. Old Town Burleson is a historically restored area with restaurants and shopping.

BURLESON VISITORS CENTER AND MUSEUM—Inside the historic depot, the museum exhibits local history, artifacts, and photographs. 124 W. Ellison St. 817-447-1575

WINERIES—Lost Oak Winery. See TEXAS BEVERAGE TOUR section.

BURTON

POP. 280

Burton Chamber of Commerce: burtontexas.org

Visitors can enjoy a self-guided walking tour and view historic buildings. Shoppers flock to the area during spring and fall antiques shows. Annual events include Texas Ranger Day in March, the Cotton Gin Festival in April, Fourth of July BBQ, Big Star Texas Night in November, and the Christmas Market in December.

MT. ZION CEMETERY AND HISTORICAL CHAPEL—Early settlers are buried here. Donations accepted. Near the FM 1948 and FM 390 intersection. 979-803-0393

PEEKA RANCH ALPACAS—The ranch houses nearly 100 alpacas with opportunities to pet and feed them. 13350 FM 389. 713-857-1461

RAILROAD DEPOT MUSEUM AND VISITOR CENTER—It has railroad memorabilia. Donations accepted. 507 N. Railroad St. 979-803-0393

TEXAS COTTON GIN MUSEUM—See the processing of cotton from wagon to bale. Fee for guided tours. 307 N. Main St. 979-289-3378

CALDWELL

POP. 4,350

Burleson County Chamber of Commerce: 301 N. Main St. 979-567-0000; burlesoncountytexas.com

City of Caldwell: 979-567-3271; caldwelltexas.gov/attractions

The Caldwell-Kraitchar House Museum, housed in an 1891 Victorian cottage-style home, is open for tours by appointment. B&B accommodations are offered in historic buildings. The town has been named the "Kolache Capital of Texas" by the Texas Legislature and hosts a Kolache Festival in September.

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BURLESON COUNTY CZECH HERITAGE MUSEUM—This museum features the history and culture of the Czech people. Donations accepted. 200 E. Fawn St. 979-567-0000

BURLESON COUNTY HISTORICAL MUSEUM—It features items from area pioneers, plus exhibits about Fort Tenoxtitlan. 100 W. Buck St. 979-567-7196 or 979-567-0000

CALDWELL VISITORS CENTER MUSEUM—Exhibits feature area history, including pieces from the old cotton gin and the work of local artists. 103 Presidential Corridor West. 979-567-3271, ext. 700

CAMERON

POP. 5,418

Cameron Chamber of Commerce: 102 E. First St. 254-697-4979; cameron-tx.com

Downtown has been revitalized with the renovation of the Milam County Courthouse. The city is at the heart of the El Camino Real de los Tejas National Trail. Annual events include the July 4 Fireworks Celebration; Steak, Stein and Wine Fest; and Christmas Parade and Basketball Classic.

MILAM COUNTY HISTORICAL MUSEUM—Exhibits include Native American artifacts, cowboy gear, and weapons. 112 W. First St. 254-697-8963 or 254-697-4979

Milam County Jail Museum—Restored county jail includes sheriff's quarters, jail cells, shackles, and a hanging tower. 201 E. Main St. 254-697-8963

OLD TOWN CAMERON RAILROAD MUSEUM—Exhibits include a miniature replica of 1940s downtown Cameron with three miniature trains running within. 110 W. First St. 979-436-5487

CANTON

POP. 4,561

Canton Visitors Bureau: 290 E. Tyler St. 903-567-1849; visitcantontx.com

The city is home to one of the nation's largest flea markets, First Monday Trade Days, each month. Downtown businesses offer shopping, antiques, and eateries. Canton also has a golf course, walking trails, and fishing lakes.

CANTON PLAZA MUSEUM—The museum features a large bell collection, Native American artifacts, a 1938 fire engine, and Civil War-era belongings. 119 N. Buffalo St. 903-567-1849

SPLASH KINGDOM—This water park features a lazy river, sand volleyball, and a kids' play castle. 18814 I-20. 903-567-0044

VAN ZANDT COUNTY VETERANS MEMORIAL PLAZA—A walkway outlines U.S. military history. Plaza includes a museum and gift shop. 1200 S. Trade Days Blvd., Suite 600. 903-567-0657

VAN ZANDT GENEALOGY & HISTORY LIBRARY—It is home to research material on local families and area history. 250 Grove St., Suite 2. 903-567-5012

YESTERLAND FARM—During fall and winter, it offers a pumpkin patch, amusement rides, a corn maze, and Christmas trees. Admission charge. 15410 I-20. 903-567-2255

CARROLLTON

POP. 133,820

Carrollton Information: 1945 E. Jackson Road. 972-466-3000; cityofcarrollton.com

Carrollton boasts 15 miles of hike-and-bike trails. Historic downtown and town square are home to restaurants and antiques and craft shops. The Plaza Arts Center is a historic theater converted to an art gallery and event venue.

A.W. PERRY HOMESTEAD MUSEUM—Furnishings, tools, and adjacent barn offer a look at early Texas. Free. 1509 N. Perry Road. 972-466-6380

ELM FORK NATURE PRESERVE—This wooded preserve offers hiking trails along the Elm Fork of the Trinity River. Free. 2335 Sandy Lake Road. 972-466-3080

CEDAR HILL

POP. 48,341

City of Cedar Hill: Visitor information is available 24 hours a day at 300 S. Houston St. 285 Uptown Blvd. 469-272-2902; visitcedarhilltx.com

Cedar Hill has the highest percentage of preserved open space of any city in that metropolitan area.

CEDAR HILL STATE PARK—This park features campsites, boat ramps for Joe Pool Lake, and biking-hiking trails. Admission charge. 1570 W. FM 1382. 972-291-3900

Penn Farm Agricultural History Center—It depicts farming around the time of World War II. 1570 W. FM 1382. 972-291-3900 or 972-291-5940

DOGWOOD CANYON AUDUBON CENTER—The center offers habitat for a unique combination of flora and fauna, canyon trails, and a visitor center. Free. 1206 W. FM 1382. 469-526-1980

THE LAGOON AT VIRGINIA WEAVER PARK—Enjoy a lazy river, three-turn slide, and play features. Admission charge. 631 Somerset Drive. 972-291-5130

CELINA

POP. 43,126

City of Celina: 142 N. Ohio St. 972-382-2682; lifeincelina.com

What once was a small town with big ideas and an even bigger heart has become the place where people and businesses choose to be. Celina is home to more than 30 events annually, including Cajun Fest and Splash N Blast.

CELINA AREA HERITAGE MUSEUM—The museum includes artifacts dating to the 1930s and World War II, plus rotating exhibits. Donations accepted. 211 W. Pecan St. 972-382-3600 or 972-948-5645

CELINA'S DOWNTOWN SQUARE—It offers dining, shopping, professional services, and green space within walking distance of the Pavilion on the Square. Free. 141 N. Ohio St.

WINERY—Eden Hill Vineyard. See TEXAS BEVERAGE TOUR section.



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CENTERVILLE

POP. 932

Centerville Chamber of Commerce: 903-390-1186; centervilletx.org

Rolling plains and prairies characterize the topography of this town. The historic courthouse on the square has been fully restored, and four jails still stand here.

FORT BOGGY STATE PARK—The park has a lake, nature trails, cabins, and an ADA-compliant pavilion. Visitors can borrow rods, reels, and tackle boxes. Admission charge. 4994 SH 75 South. 903-344-1116

LEON COUNTY COURTHOUSE—This courthouse was built in 1887 of slate bricks handmade near the site. 114 E. St Marys St. 903-536-2331

CHAPPELL HILL

POP. 750 (EST.)

Chappell Hill Chamber of Commerce: 979-337-9910; chappellhilltx.com

The town has more than 25 Recorded Texas Historic Landmarks and 10 sites in the National Register of Historic Places, including the Main Street Historic District. Tours are available. Events include the Bluebonnet Festival of Texas and the Scarecrow Festival.

CHAPPELL HILL HISTORICAL SOCIETY MUSEUM—Exhibits feature the Civil War, early schools, and Polish immigrants. 9220 Poplar St. 979-836-6033

CHAPPELL HILL LAVENDER FARM—Cut your own lavender during the season. Group tours are by appointment. 2250 Dillard Road. 979-251-8114

MASONIC CEMETERY—The cemetery contains grave sites of heroes and family members from the Texas Republic. Near 10500 Old Chappell Hill Road. 979-337-9910

SCENIC DRIVE—Take FM 1155 north to Washington-on-the-Brazos State Historic Site along a historic route used by early settlers.

WASHINGTON-ON-THE-BRAZOS STATE HISTORIC SITE—See WASHINGTON.

CLARKSVILLE

POP. 2,833

Historic Red River County Chamber of Commerce: 101 N. Locust St. 903-427-2645; redrivercoc.com

This area is rich in historic sites and buildings. Sam Houston Park on FM 410 has markers commemorating the site of Sam Houston's entry into Texas. The area also is known as the eastern "Wild Turkey Capital of Texas."

LENNOX WOODS PRESERVE—A trail traverses a variety of habitats and includes interpretive signs. North of Clarksville, off of FM 2118.

RED RIVER COUNTY COURTHOUSE—The yellow sandstone building features turrets and a clock tower. 400 N. Walnut St. 903-427-2401

RED RIVER COUNTY HALL OF FAME—It features early pioneers and prominent citizens of the 1800s and 1900s inside the Chamber of Commerce building. 101 N. Locust St. 903-427-2645

CLEBURNE

POP. 33,826

Cleburne Chamber of Commerce-Convention & Visitors Bureau: 1511 W. Henderson St. 817-645-2455; visitcleburne.com

From the rich history of the Santa Fe Railroad and the Chisholm Trail, Cleburne brings a delightful escape from everyday life. It features fun attractions, unique shops, and locally owned restaurants. Events include Antique Alley and Yard Sale, Cleburne Wine and Art Festival, Pioneer Days, and Whistle Stop Christmas festivities.

CHISHOLM TRAIL OUTDOOR MUSEUM—It includes a courthouse, a blacksmith shop, a one-room schoolhouse, a stagecoach station, and a Native American museum. 101 Chisholm Trail. 254-998-0261

CLEBURNE STATE PARK—Visitors enjoy fishing, paddling, and hike-and-bike trails. In early spring, bluebonnets blanket open fields. Admission charge. 5800 Park Road 21. 817-645-8215

GONE WITH THE WIND REMEMBERED MUSEUM—It has one of the most extensive collections related to the classic film and book. Admission charge. 305 E. Second St. 817-517-3897

HISTORIC HOMES—The visitor center and website offer a self-guided driving tour. Some are open during Candle-walk Tour of Homes. 1511 W. Henderson St. 817-645-2455

JOHNSON COUNTY COURTHOUSE—A museum inside tells the history of Johnson County. Free. 2 Main St. 817-556-6970

LA MODERNA FIELD—The stadium is home to the Cleburne Railroaders and hosts concerts and events. 1906 Brazzle Blvd. 817-945-8705

LAKE PAT CLEBURNE—The lake offers 1,500 acres of water for swimming areas, boat ramps, and fishing. 2500 Country Club Road. 817-645-0949

LAYLAND MUSEUM OF HISTORY—Exhibits, research materials, and programs focus on home and family life in Texas. 201 N. Caddo St. 817-645-0940

CLIFTON

POP. 3,513

Clifton Chamber of Commerce: 115 N. Ave. D. 254-675-3720; cliftontexas.org

In Central Texas, 30 minutes northwest of Waco, Clifton's authentic charm is hard to resist. As Clifton has been designated the Norwegian Capital of Texas, you can visit historical Norwegian churches or shop downtown boutiques and antiques stores to find a memento. Clifton offers more than 25 places to eat or relax with a cocktail.

BOSQUE ARTS CENTER—The center features art galleries, traveling exhibits, performances, and dinner shows. 215 College Hill Drive. 254-675-3724

BOSQUE MUSEUM—Includes a Paleo-Indian Horn Shelter exhibit, Norwegian artifacts, fossils, and a pioneer collection. Admission charge. 301 S. Ave. Q. 254-675-3845

MEYER OBSERVATORY—A monthly open house lets visitors learn about astronomy and use a 24-inch telescope. 14801 FM 182. 254-326-1027

NORSE SETTLEMENT—The center of Norwegian settlement in Texas hosts cultural events. North on FM 182.

COLLEGE STATION

POP. 124,319

Visit College Station: 1207 Texas Ave. 979-764-2625; visit.cstx.gov

As the Heart of Aggieland and home of Texas A&M University, College Station is an energetic and innovative community filled with endless possibilities, friendly people, and uniquely authentic experiences.

DISTILLERY—Rio Brazos Distillery. See TEXAS BEVERAGE TOUR section.

GEORGE H.W. BUSH PRESIDENTIAL LIBRARY CENTER—The museum reveals the challenges that shaped Bush's presidency. A section is dedicated to First Lady Barbara Bush. Admission charge. 1000 George Bush Drive West. 979-691-4000

KYLE FIELD FACILITY TOURS—Take a look behind the scenes. Admission charge. 756 Houston St. 979-845-5851

MUSEUM OF THE AMERICAN G.I.—Exhibits feature tanks, uniforms, and artifacts of the American servicemen and women from World War I to the present. 19124 SH 6 South. 979-690-0501

TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY—The Visitors Center in Rudder Tower provides information and maps for campus attractions. 401 Joe Routh Blvd. 979-845-5851

Cushing Memorial Library and Archives—The university's archives repository houses rare books, special collections, and artifacts. 400 Spence St. 979-845-1951

Forsyth Galleries—Collections include English Cameo Glass, art glass, and paintings. 275 Joe Routh Blvd. 979-845-9251

The Gardens at Texas A&M University—The teaching gardens have more than 7 acres for relaxing, exploring, and demonstrations. Free. 556 John Kimbrough Blvd. 979-314-2357

J. Wayne Stark University Center Galleries—Exhibits range from fine arts to architecture, history, and science. Free. 275 Joe Routh Blvd. 979-845-6081

Sam Houston Sanders Corps of Cadets Center—Exhibits honor Texas A&M and the Corps. It includes a library, Hall of Honor, and an information center. 1400 Coke St. 979-862-2862

COLUMBUS

POP. 3,714

Columbus Chamber of Commerce: 425 Spring St., Suite 100. 979-732-8385; columbus-texas.org

Known for its Republic-era history, numerous live oak trees, and carefully restored historic homes, Columbus is a relaxing getaway that has retained its charm and natural beauty while simultaneously embracing modern amenities for today's traveler. Columbus is a little slice of Americana with deep Texas roots. Come see for yourself.

ALLEY LOG CABIN—The cabin is a fully furnished example of the Texas Colonial period. 1230 Bowie St. 979-732-5135

ANTIQUE TOOL MUSEUM—Originally on the site of the Santa Claus Museum, the building was known by locals as "The Little Store." Free. 1230 Bowie St. 979-732-5135

COLORADO COUNTY COURTHOUSE—The Colorado County Courthouse is a Eugene Heiner design from 1891. 400 Spring St. 979-732-2604

COLUMBUS PADDLING TRAIL—This is a 6.5-mile route on the Colorado River. Free. Put-in at the 71 (Business) crossing under the North River Bridge.

DILUE ROSE HARRIS HOUSE MUSEUM—The Greek Revival-style 1860 cottage of "tabby" construction houses period furniture. Admission charge. 602 Washington St. 979-732-5135

LIVE OAK ART CENTER—It offers an art studio and a changing gallery of art exhibits. Donations accepted. 1014 Milam St. 979-732-8398

SANTA CLAUS MUSEUM—More than 5,000 Santas deck the halls in this Christmas lover's dream come true. Admission charge. 604 Washington St. 979-732-8385 or 979-732-5135

STAFFORD BANK AND OPERA HOUSE BUILDING—It's listed in the National Register of Historic Places. Admission charge. 425 Spring St. 979-732-5135

COMANCHE

POP. 4,253

Comanche Chamber of Commerce and Agriculture: 304 S. Austin St. 325-356-3233; comanchechamber.org

Named for the Comanche tribe, this community is rich in Texas history. A walking tour features the courthouse square and the historic business district. Antiques shops, restaurants, and local artisans can be found here. Hunters find deer, quail, dove, and wild turkey in the area.

COMANCHE COUNTY HISTORICAL MUSEUM—A replica frontier store houses Native American and pioneer artifacts. 402 Moorman Road. 325-356-5115

COMANCHE DEPOT—The restored historic depot features a small rail museum and offers visitor information. 304 S. Austin St. 325-356-3233

FLEMING OAK—This historic tree is the last from a large oak grove around which the town developed. It's at the southwest corner of the town square.

OLD CORA—Texas' oldest existing courthouse was relocated to Comanche. 134 W. Central Ave. 325-356-3233

PROCTOR LAKE—It offers parks with boat ramps, fishing, picnicking, and camping. Hunting is available during season. Off SH 16. 254-879-2424

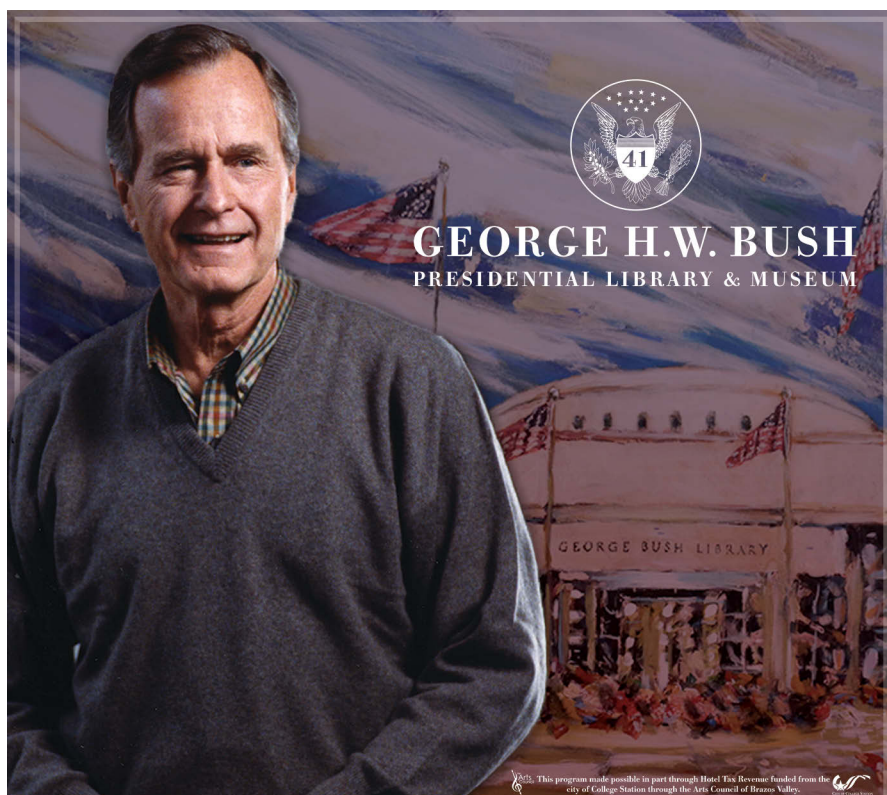
WINERY—Brennan Vineyards. See TEXAS BEVERAGE TOUR section.

COMMERCE

POP. 9,282

Commerce Chamber of Commerce: 1114 Main St. 903-886-3950; commerce-chamber.com

Commerce is recognized as the Bois d'Arc Capital of Texas, and the Bois d'Arc Bash is held annually. Other events include The Bois d'Arc 4th of July Celebration, Bois



1000 George Bush Drive West
College Station, Texas 77845

979-691-4000

Bush41.org



PRAIRIES & LAKES

d'Arc Spring Car Show, and Bois d'Arc Christmas Celebration & Parade. Commerce is the home of Texas A&M University-Commerce.

COOPER LAKE STATE PARK—See COOPER.

NORTHEAST TEXAS CHILDREN'S MUSEUM—The museum features hands-on activities, such as exploring a rainforest, shopping, and flying an airplane. Admission charge. 100 Maple St. 903-886-6055

TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY-COMMERCE PLANETARIUM—The digital projection and sound system immerses the audience in a space environment. 2201 W. Neal St. 903-468-8650

COOPER

POP. 1,982

Delta County Chamber of Commerce:
41 West Side Square. 903-395-4314;
facebook.com/dcchamberofcommerce

Cooper lies between the North and South Sulphur rivers. Just south of the town square is the historic McKinney home, open by appointment. Miller Drug features an old-fashioned soda fountain in operation since 1925. Events include Delta County Fair and Barbecue Cook-off and the Delta County Chiggerfest and 5K Run/Walk.

CLARA FOSTER SLOUGH MUSEUM—The museum features the history of Delta County with artifacts, including railroad items and military memorabilia. 4552 FM 198 West, Enloe. 903-784-8114

COOPER LAKE STATE PARK—Picnic, swim, hike, boat, camp, and fish at the 19,300-acre lake. Admission charge. Doctors Creek Unit: 95 Park Road 8154. 903-395-3100 or 903-945-5256

PATTERSON MEMORIAL DELTA COUNTY MUSEUM—The restored Texas-Midland Railroad Depot houses items and memorabilia related to early settlers. 700 W. Dallas St. 903-395-4314

COPPERAS COVE

POP. 37,964

Copperas Cove Chamber of Commerce: 204 E. Robertson Ave. 254-547-7571; copperascove.com

Known as the "City of Five Hills," Copperas Cove offers a picturesque landscape with rolling hills. It boasts a variety of recreational activities, including parks, hiking trails, and outdoor events. Ogletree Gap Preserve, a historical site, offers insights into the region's pioneer history. Events include Rabbit Fest and Krist Kindl Markt.

FORT CAVAZOS—See KILLEEN.

OGLETREE GAP PRESERVE—It includes the original stage stop at this historical townsit. 1878 Post Office Road. 254-547-7571

TOPSEY EXOTIC RANCH AND DRIVE-THROUGH

SAFARI—More than 50 species of animals roam the park. Admission charge. 945 CR 118. 254-547-3700

CORSICANA

POP. 25,566

The Corsicana Visitor Center: 301 S. Beaton St. 903-654-4850; visitcorsicana.com

A walking tour of historic downtown starts at the visitor center. Throughout town, bronze statues represent the heritage of Corsicana; hear the history on devices by accessing the Bronze Statue Tour. A Sip and Stroll event is held downtown every second Saturday. The Historic Carriage District features homes from 1846 to 1900.

COOK CENTER PLANETARIUM—The center features a domed screen, and it specializes in astronomy and space science presentations. Admission charge. 3100 W. Collin St. 903-875-7596

LAKE HALBERT—The lake has a sandy beach park, camping, playground, pier fishing, and boat dock. 1600 Lake Halbert Road. 903-654-4874

PEARCE MUSEUM—The museum features Civil War artifacts and contemporary Western art. Admission charge. 3100 W. Collin St. 903-875-7642

PIONEER VILLAGE—It focuses on Navarro County from 1838 forward. Admission charge. 912 W. Park Ave. 903-654-4846

Lefty Frizzell Country Music Museum—The museum houses a collection of his furniture, music, and suits from Nudies Western Tailor.

RICHLAND-CHAMBERS RESERVOIR—It has boat ramps; marinas; guided fishing tours; and pontoon, kayak, and paddleboat rentals. Off US 287. 903-654-4850

CUERO

POP. 8,106

Cuero Chamber of Commerce and Agriculture Visitor Center: 210 E. Main St., Suite A. 361-275-2112; cuero.org

More than 50 structures and homes are listed as historic landmarks. Cuero is the Wildflower Capital of Texas, and maps for wildflower viewing are available each April. The city also is on the Great Texas Coastal Birding Trail. Events include Market on Main, Turkeyfest, Christmas in Downtown, and Christmas in the Park with 250 lighted scenes.

CHISHOLM TRAIL HERITAGE MUSEUM—Exhibits depict the ranching heritage and cattle drives of the Guadalupe River Valley. Admission charge. 302 N. Esplanade St. 361-277-2866

CUERO HERITAGE MUSEUM—Exhibits feature local military history, the Turkey Trot, and Coca-Cola. 124 E. Church St. 361-485-8090

Pharmacy and Medical Museum of Texas—A 19th-century drugstore houses pharmaceutical and medical artifacts. Free. 114 E. Main St. 361-485-8090

DEWITT COUNTY COURTHOUSE—This historic landmark was designed in Romanesque style with a belfry. 307 N. Gonzales St. 361-275-0931

DEWITT COUNTY MUSEUM—It features rotating exhibits, period furnishings, and ranch and home articles. 312 E. Broadway St. 361-275-6322

GUADALUPE VALLEY PADDLING TRAIL—Paddle or fish along the 13.8-mile Guadalupe River. Free. Put-ins are on FM 766, SH 72, and FM 236.

The Heart of South Texas



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HISTORIC DOWNTOWN • MUSEUMS • WILDFLOWER CAPITAL

DALLAS

POP. 1,299,544

Visit Dallas: 214-571-1000; visitdallas.com

Dallas is an emerging global city that proudly anchors Texas' Prairies and Lakes region. This diverse and vibrant destination blends future-facing innovation with a rich cultural heritage, highlighted through its thriving arts and culture scene, iconic sports, creative culinary experiences, and maverick, can-do spirit.

AMERICAN AIRLINES CENTER AT VICTORY PARK—It is home to the NHL's Dallas Stars and the NBA's Dallas Mavericks. Tours: 214-747-6287. 2500 Victory Ave. 214-665-4299

BREWRIES AND WINERY—Community Beer Company, Petcolas Brewing Company, Times Ten Cellars. See TEXAS BEVERAGE TOUR section.

CEDAR RIDGE PRESERVE—It offers hiking trails, wildlife viewing, picnic areas, a butterfly garden, a visitor center, and a gift shop. 7171 Mountain Creek Parkway. 972-709-7784

CROW MUSEUM OF ASIAN ART—The collection holds paintings, objects, and architectural pieces from China, Japan, India, and Southeast Asia. Donations accepted. 2010 Flora St. 214-979-6430

DALLAS ARBORETUM AND BOTANICAL GARDEN—It features 66 acres of gardens and two historical mansions with art and furniture. 8525 Garland Road. 214-515-6615

DALLAS CONTEMPORARY MUSEUM—The center features the work of regional artists. 161 Glass St. 214-821-2522

DALLAS COUNTY HISTORICAL PLAZA—It includes the Old Red Courthouse, Kennedy Memorial, and first settler's cabin replica. Market, Elm, Commerce, and Houston streets. 214-571-1000

DALLAS COWBOYS—See AT&T Stadium in ARLINGTON.

DALLAS HOLOCAUST AND HUMAN RIGHTS

MUSEUM—It teaches lessons of the Holocaust and memorializes the victims. Admission charge. 300 N. Houston St. 214-741-7500

DALLAS MUSEUM OF ART—It has art from all cultures spanning 5,000 years of human creativity. Free. 1717 N. Harwood St. 214-922-1200

DALLAS SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA—See MORTON H. MEYERSON SYMPHONY CENTER listing.

DALLAS THEATER CENTER—This architectural gem is home to a permanent repertory company. 2400 Flora St. 214-526-8210 or 214-522-8499

DALLAS WORLD AQUARIUM—It features exotic plants and animals from around the world. Admission charge. 1801 N. Griffin St. 214-720-2224

DALLAS ZOO—At the Dallas Zoo, you can see wildlife from around the world. Admission charge. 650 S. R.L. Thornton Freeway (I-35 E.). 469-554-7500

DEEP ELLUM ENTERTAINMENT DISTRICT—It offers restaurants, shops, galleries, murals, and live music. Bounded by Elm, Commerce, Exposition Avenue, and Good Latimer. 214-984-7300

DEGOLYER ESTATE—See DALLAS ARBORETUM.

FAIR PARK—It is home to art deco structures, cultural, educational, and sports facilities, plus the State Fair of Texas. 3809 Grand Ave. 214-670-8400

African American Museum—It holds artistic, cultural, and historical materials from the African American community. 3536 Grand Ave. 214-565-9026

Hall of State—This art deco-style national landmark celebrates the history of Texas. Free. 3939 Grand Ave. 214-421-4500, ext. 106

Music Hall at Fair Park—The Spanish Baroque-style hall is home to Dallas Summer Musicals performances. 909 First Ave. 214-565-1116

State Fair of Texas—Held in the fall, it includes rides, performances, livestock shows, college football games, and food. Admission charge. 3921 Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd. 214-565-9931

Texas Discovery Gardens—It includes interactive gardens, a butterfly house, and a native plant collection. 3601 Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd. 214-428-7476

FRONTIERS OF FLIGHT MUSEUM—Relive the history of aviation amidst artifacts, scale models, and photographs. Admission charge. 6911 Lemmon Ave. 214-350-1651 or 214-350-3600

GEORGE W. BUSH PRESIDENTIAL LIBRARY AND MUSEUM—On the SMU campus, it highlights the administration of the 43rd president. Admission charge. 2943 SMU Blvd. 214-346-1650

JOHN F. KENNEDY MEMORIAL PLAZA—It is dedicated to the slain president. A historical marker is on Houston Street. 646 Main St. 214-747-6660

KNOX-HENDERSON ENTERTAINMENT DISTRICT—The area is a hot spot for dining, nightlife, art, and antiques. Knox and Henderson streets.

LAKE RAY HUBBARD—The lake includes marinas and parks with fishing and boating. Off I-30. 214-670-8658 or 214-243-1533

LATINO CULTURAL CENTER—The center promotes Latino artists working in arts, film, and literature. Free tours available. 2600 Live Oak St. 214-671-0045

LOWER GREENVILLE—District is home to shops, entertainment venues, bars, and restaurants. Greenville Avenue between Mockingbird Lane and Ross Avenue.

MAIN STREET DISTRICT—This entertainment district has restaurants, clubs, retail, and seasonal concerts. 214-571-1000

MCKINNEY AVENUE TROLLEY—Ride McKinney Avenue's free trolley between Dallas' Arts District and the Uptown neighborhood. 214-855-0006

MEADOWS MUSEUM—This museum houses a significant collection of Spanish art. Admission charge for events. 5900 Bishop Blvd. 214-768-2516

MORTON H. MEYERSON SYMPHONY CENTER—It's home to the Dallas Symphony Orchestra. Admission charge for events. Tours are available. 2301 Flora St. 214-849-4376

MOUNTAIN CREEK LAKE—This lake offers a boat ramp and fishing. In southwest Dallas near Grand Prairie. 214-670-8740

NASHER SCULPTURE CENTER—This urban oasis includes a contemporary art collection and 2-acre sculpture garden. Admission charge. 2001 Flora St. 214-242-5100

OLD CITY PARK—This village of historic homes and buildings offers tours, events, and reenactments. Admission charge. 1515 S. Harwood St. 214-421-5141

PALACE OF WAX/RIPLEY'S BELIEVE IT OR NOT!—See GRAND PRAIRIE.

PEROT MUSEUM OF NATURE AND SCIENCE—Permanent collections feature sports, the weather, and gems and minerals. Admission charge. 2201 N. Field St. 214-428-5555

PIONEER PLAZA—A bronze monument depicts cowboys driving 40 Texas longhorn steers. At Young and Griffin streets. 214-953-1184

REUNION TOWER—This 50-story tower has an observation deck and restaurant. 300 Reunion Blvd. East. 214-296-9950

SIX FLAGS HURRICANE HARBOR—See ARLINGTON.

SIX FLAGS OVER TEXAS—See ARLINGTON.

THE SIXTH FLOOR MUSEUM—The former Texas School Book Depository has exhibits on the life, death, and legacy of President John F. Kennedy. 411 Elm St. 214-747-6660

SOUTH DALLAS CULTURAL CENTER—This facility features the African American experience with a theater, visual arts gallery, and dance studios. 3400 S. Fitzhugh Ave. 214-671-0727

SOUTH FORK RANCH—See PLANO.

THANKS-GIVING SQUARE—The interfaith chapel has a unique spiral design with 73 stained-glass panels inside. 1627 Pacific Ave. 214-969-1977

TRINITY FOREST ADVENTURE PARK—It combines a canopy tour with challenge course and zip line elements. Admission charge. 1800 Dowdy Ferry Road. 214-391-1000

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Crow Museum of Asian Art in Dallas

WEST END HISTORIC DISTRICT—It has restaurants, shops, and nightclubs in restored red-brick warehouses. Lamar, Record, and Market streets.

WHITE ROCK LAKE—The lake has fishing, boat ramps, limited boating, and picnicking. Off SH 78 and Loop 12. 214-670-8740

WILSON HISTORIC DISTRICT—Walk the historic Wilson Block along Swiss Avenue and recall the Victorian era of early Dallas. 214-821-3290

DE LEON POP. 2,309

De Leon Chamber of Commerce: 125 S. Texas St. 254-893-2083; deleontexas.com/chamber/golden.php

De Leon, a farm and ranch community, was the home of the largest fruit farm in Texas and has many pecan orchards. The Peach and Melon Festival is held during the first full week in August each year.

DE LEON AREA HISTORICAL MUSEUM—The museum collects and preserves the history of this portion of Central Texas. Free. 173 N. Texas St. 254-893-2925

TERRILL ANTIQUE CAR MUSEUM—The museum features several rare pre-World War II automobiles. 500 N. Texas St. 254-893-3773 or 254-893-2083

DECATUR POP. 7,206

Decatur Chamber of Commerce: 106 S. Trinity. 940-627-3107; decaturtx.com

The Butterfield Overland Mail Route passed through town in the mid-1800s. Fishing and camping are available on Black Creek Lake in the LBJ National Grasslands.

WISE COUNTY COURTHOUSE—It has been pronounced a perfect architectural example of its type. 101 N. Trinity St. 940-627-5743

DENISON POP. 26,328

Discover Denison: 101 E. Main St. No. 103. 903-647-7976; discoverdenison.com

This city is a gateway to Texas and Lake Texoma. The unique downtown district is an art mecca, including galleries and studios, a winery, a brewery, antiques shops, eateries, and bed-and-breakfasts.

BREWERY, DISTILLERY, AND WINERY—Homestead Winery at Ivanhoe, Ivanhoe Ale Works, and Ironroot Republic Distillery. See TEXAS BEVERAGE TOUR section.

EISENHOWER BIRTHPLACE STATE HISTORIC SITE—The visitor center features like memorabilia and exhibits. Admission charge. 609 S. Lamar Ave. 903-465-8908

EISENHOWER STATE PARK—This park offers boating, fishing, an ATV area, and camping. Admission charge. 50 Park Road 20. 903-465-1956

GRAYSON COUNTY FRONTIER VILLAGE—Rustic buildings include a log schoolhouse, a portable jail, and the Frontier Village Museum. 111 RC Vaughan Drive. 903-463-2487

HAGERMAN NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE—See SHERMAN.

LAKE TEXOMA—It has parks, boat ramps, marinas, and a wildlife refuge, plus fishing, picnicking, and camping. Off SH 91. 903-465-4990

PERRIN AIR FORCE BASE HISTORICAL MUSEUM—See POTTSBORO.

RED RIVER RAILROAD MUSEUM—It features historical records, photos, artifacts, and railroad equipment. 124 W. Main St. 903-463-5289

T.V. MUNSON CENTER AND VINEYARDS—T.V. Munson's development of hybrid grape varieties is acclaimed worldwide. 9356 Grayson Drive. 903-463-8621

TEXAS TRAVEL INFORMATION CENTER—Operated by TxDOT. Professional travel counselors provide brochures, travel information, and trip-planning assistance. 6801 US 69/75. 903-463-2860 or 800-452-9292

DENTON POP. 150,353

Discover Denton Visitor Center: 111 W. Hickory St. 940-218-1815; discoverdenton.com

Denton has a vibrant entertainment culture, featuring live performing arts venues, music and film festivals, museums, and historical sites. It's home to 41 parks, featuring 4,000 acres of open space, lakes, and trails. There's plenty to do, with unique restaurants and shopping, craft breweries and bars, and a thriving downtown.

ART GALLERIES—The community is supportive of both traditional and nontraditional exhibit spaces. 940-218-1815

Patterson-Appleton Arts Center—The center offers two large galleries, art studio, dance rehearsal hall, and a sculpture garden. Free. 400 E. Hickory St. 940-382-2787

BREWERIES—Denton County Brewing Company. See TEXAS BEVERAGE TOUR section.

DENTON COUNTY COURTHOUSE-ON-THE-SQUARE MUSEUM—Lectures, exhibits, and community organized events are scheduled throughout the year. Free. 110 W. Hickory St. 940-349-2850

DENTON COUNTY HISTORICAL PARK—It offers a chance to discover the Denton of the past. 317 W. Mulberry St. 940-349-2865 or 940-349-2850

Bayless-Selby House Museum—The 1898 Queen Anne-style home features hand-painted china and other exhibits. Free. 317 W. Mulberry St. 940-349-2865

Quakertown House—Photos and artifacts share the stories of African American communities in Denton County. Free. 317 W. Mulberry St. 940-349-2850

DENTON FIREFIGHTERS MUSEUM—The museum houses firefighting memorabilia dating from the 1800s. 332 E. Hickory St. 940-349-8840

DOWNTOWN SQUARE—The social, artistic, and cultural hub has shops, restaurants, bars, and events. 940-349-8259 or 940-382-9693

GOWNS OF THE FIRST LADIES OF TEXAS—It features inaugural gowns worn by the wives of presidents of the Republic of Texas and state governors. 1600 N. Bell Ave. 940-898-3644 or 940-898-3751

LITTLE CHAPEL IN THE WOODS—This small chapel, by Texas architect O'Neil Ford at Texas Woman's University, includes 10 stained glass windows. 415 Chapel Drive. 940-898-3516

OAK-HICKORY HISTORIC DISTRICT—See fine examples of Victorian cottages. West Hickory and Oak streets between Denton and Welch.

RAY ROBERTS LAKE STATE PARK ISLE DU BOIS UNIT AND JOHNSON BRANCH UNIT—See PILOT POINT.

SKY THEATER AT THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTH TEXAS—This domed theater can reproduce tonight's sky or one from millions of years ago. Admission charge. 1704 W. Mulberry St. 940-369-8213

DESOTO

POP. 55,968

DeSoto Area Chamber of Commerce and Visitor Center: 2021 N. Hampton Road, Suite 145. 972-838-0895; desotoareachamber.org

In the southwestern corner of Dallas County, this DFW metroplex city has a small town feel. A network of area parks and trails includes the 3.4-mile Roy Orr Trail.

DESOTO BMX—This racing facility hosts several championships annually, plus BMX events on Fridays and Saturdays. 500 E. Centre Park Blvd. 214-864-5653

DUBLIN

POP. 3,435

Dublin Chamber of Commerce: 110 S. Patrick St., Suite B. 254-300-6263; dublintxchamber.com

The town's name is said to come from a practice by early settlers who "doubled in" their wagons to defend against attacks, or possibly it was named after the capital of Ireland. Hunters take deer, duck, dove, and quail in season.

BEN HOGAN MUSEUM—It chronicles the life and career of professional golf great Ben Hogan. 121 E. Blackjack St. 254-445-4466

DUBLIN HISTORICAL MUSEUM—Artifacts and historical items reflect small town life. 116 W. Blackjack St. 254-445-4550

DUBLIN RODEO HERITAGE MUSEUM—This museum recalls the community's rodeo history. 118 W. Blackjack St. 254-445-0200

DUBLIN VETERANS MEMORIAL—Markers honor the men and women who served from the Civil War through modern times. 206 W. Blackjack St. 254-445-3422

W.M. WRIGHT HISTORICAL PARK—Site includes a gristmill built of native stone and a log cabin built by early settlers. 104 S. Park St. 254-445-4550

EAGLE LAKE

POP. 3,453

Eagle Lake Chamber of Commerce: 303 E. Main St. 979-234-2780; visiteaglelake.com

Eagle Lake has a wildlife walking trail, exercise area, and tennis and pickleball courts located inside Veterans Park on Booth Drive. Historic downtown has several business and restaurants all in walking distance of the park. The town has museums, historical markers, and birding at the nearby Attwater Prairie Chicken Refuge.

ATTWATER PRAIRIE CHICKEN NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE—It offers a 5-mile auto tour and two hiking trails. Guided tours are available. 1206 APC-NWR Road. 979-234-3021

EAGLE LAKE DEPOT MUSEUM—Exhibits and artifacts interpret the railroad's importance for the city and region. 322 E. Main St. 979-234-2780

PRAIRIE EDGE MUSEUM—The museum features exhibits of natural history and cultural traditions of Colorado County. 408 E. Main St. 979-234-7442

EDGEWOOD

POP. 1,689

edgewoodtexas.org

HERITAGE PARK MUSEUM OF EAST TEXAS—The museum represents early Texas rural life with docents demonstrating pioneer skills. Admission charge. On FM 859. 903-896-1940

ELGIN

POP. 11,359

Greater Elgin Chamber of Commerce: 114 Central Ave. 512-285-4515; elgintxchamber.com

Elgin hot sausage is the specialty of this community, and the Texas Legislature has named the city the Sausage Capital of Texas. This Main Street City's downtown includes refurbished historic buildings.

THE ELGIN DEPOT MUSEUM—It includes an exhibit on the town's history and development. Donations accepted. 14 Depot St. 512-285-2000

NOFSINGER HOME—The two-story structure, with original woodwork and fixtures, currently houses city offices. 310 N. Main St. 512-229-3227 or 512-281-5724

ENNIS

POP. 22,890

Ennis Welcome Center: 201 NW Main St. 972-878-4748; visitennistexas.com

This Main Street City offers unique shopping, live theater, lakes, parks, a drive-in theater, and a historic downtown district. It's the Official Bluebonnet City of Texas. Events include Ennis Bluebonnet Trails Festival, The National Polka Festival, Cinco De Mayo celebration, Blues on Main, Freedom Fest, Autumn Daze, and Christmas celebration.

BARDWELL LAKE—Parks offer boat access, fishing, camping, and picnicking. About 4 miles southwest of Ennis. 972-875-5711

BIG O SPEEDWAY—Saturday nights, mid-March through October, are fast-paced with plenty of exciting dirt track car racing events. Admission charge. 3118 FM 85.

RAILROAD AND CULTURAL HERITAGE MUSEUM—This museum houses memorabilia from the days when Ennis was a railroad hub. Admission charge. 105 NE Main St. 972-875-1901

TEXAS MOTORPLEX—NHRA racetrack hosts professional and amateur drag racing all year. 7500 W. US 287. 972-878-2641 or 800-668-6775

FAIRFIELD

POP. 2,901

Fairfield Chamber of Commerce: 900 W. Commerce St. 903-389-5792; fairfieldtexaschamber.com

The county courthouse is a historic landmark built in Classical Revival style. The old Civil War reunion ground hosts the annual Freestone County Fair and Rodeo in June. Other events include Show of Wheels, Christmas on the Square, and Market Days. Look for peach orchard stands along the roadways May through July.

FREESTONE COUNTY MUSEUM—The museum features artifacts from the county's beginnings and has historic buildings on the grounds. Admission charge. 302 E. Main St. 903-389-3738

FARMERS BRANCH

POP. 36,286

City of Farmers Branch: 13000 William Dodson Parkway. 972-919-2509 or 972-919-2610; discoverfarmersbranch.com

Farmers Branch is perfect for experiencing the charm of a small town while being surrounded by a history-rich, nature-inspiring, food-loving oasis, just 15 minutes north of Downtown Dallas. Discover this vibrant community, with year-round entertainment, miles of trails, diverse restaurants, and easy access to the metroplex.

BREWERY—ODD Muse Brewing Company. See TEXAS BEVERAGE TOUR.

FROG POND WATER PARK—The water park features an activity pool, lazy river, lagoon pool, and waterslides.



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PRAIRIES & LAKES

Concessions are available. Admission charge. 14032 Heartside Place. 972-919-8721

HISTORICAL PARK—The park has a depot, a school, a Victorian cottage, a church, and a museum store. 2540 Farmers Branch Lane. 972-406-0184

JOHN F. BURKE NATURE PRESERVE—It features a boardwalk, granite trail, fishing spots, wildlife viewing points, and rest areas. Free. 1111 Valley View Lane.

FARMERSVILLE

POP. 4,015

Farmersville Visitor's Center: 201 S. Main St. 972-782-6533; farmersvilletx.com

The Main Street City has restored turn-of-the-century buildings with shopping and dining. The Victorian-style Bain-Honaker House hosts tours by appointment. The historic 1930s Onion Shed is now a center for community events. Events include Audie Murphy Day, the Old Time Saturday Celebration, and the Farmers and Fleas Market.

AUDIE MURPHY EXHIBIT AT THE RIKE MEMORIAL LIBRARY—It displays service medals, photos, and memorabilia from one of World War II's most decorated soldiers. 203 Orange St. 972-782-6681

CHAPARRAL TRAIL—Enjoy hiking and biking on this paved railroad trail with scenic views and wildlife. 154 S. Main St. 972-782-6151

FREEDOM PLAZA—It includes the Audie L. Murphy Memorial, the veterans memorial, and a historical marker. McKinney Street at Washington Street. 972-782-6151

MURAL—*Soil Conservation in Collin County* by Texas artist Jerry Bywaters was commissioned during the Great Depression. 213 McKinney St. 972-782-7172

FAYETTEVILLE

POP. 244

Greater Fayetteville Chamber of Commerce: 979-378-2800; greaterfayettevillechamber.org

Surrounded by picturesque rolling hills dotted with small farms, Fayetteville was originally platted in 1850 and developed between the 1880s and 1920s. The townsite is listed in the National Register of Historic Places. It's a charming place for visitors to come shop, eat, stay over, and attend various events.

ARTS FOR RURAL TEXAS ROSS GALLERY—The Ross Gallery hosts student shows, emerging and accomplished artist programs, and cultural events. 114 N. Live Oak St. 979-378-2113

FAYETTEVILLE AREA HERITAGE MUSEUM—Items reflect the area's Czech, German, and African American heritage. 119 W. Washington St. 979-249-6249

FLATONIA

POP. 1,353

Flatonia Chamber of Commerce: 208 E. North Main St. 361-865-3920; flatoniachamber.com

The town has preserved many of its rock and brick buildings from its early rail days, and the downtown commercial district is listed in the National Register of Historic Places. The town's rich cultural history reflects the roots of its early settlers. Events draw visitors throughout the year, including the Czhlispiet.

E.A. ARNIM ARCHIVES AND MUSEUM—It showcases artifacts and photographs from the town's early history, a veterans museum, and a country life collection. 101 E. North Main St. 361-865-3455

FLATONIA RAIL MUSEUM—It features train and railroad artifacts. A nearby railroad switching tower and caboose are open by appointment. 104 E. South Main St. 517-927-2727

FLATONIA RAILROAD PHOTO PAVILION—Offers a vantage point to watch trains. Events are the first Saturday of April and November. 422 W. Main St. North. 713-471-8068

PAINTED CHURCHES TOUR—Maps can be purchased at the Flatonia Chamber of Commerce. See SCHULENBURG.

ST. MARY'S CATHOLIC CHURCH—One of the "painted churches," it features art nouveau-style paintings and mock architectural details. The adjacent cemetery holds a Veterans Day service. 821 FM 1295, Praha. 361-596-4674

FLOWER MOUND

POP. 78,486

Town of Flower Mound: 2121 Cross Timbers Road. 972-874-6000; flower-mound.com

Recreation enthusiasts find a variety of outdoor opportunities here, including parks, camping at Twin Coves Park, more than 60 miles of multipurpose trails, and Grapevine Lake.

FLOWER MOUND PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH—It began as a log cabin, which was replaced with the current structure in 1901. 1501 Flower Mound Road. 972-539-7184

THE FLOWER MOUND—Early settlers named this landmark for the wildflowers that grow there. 2450 Flower Mound Road.

HISTORIC CEMETERIES—These two cemeteries contain markers from the Civil War through Vietnam.

Flower Mound Cemetery—For information, call Mulkey-Mason Funeral Home. 1501 Flower Mound Road. 972-849-4072

Shiloh Cemetery—6500 Cross Timbers Road. 214-972-8535 or 972-874-6000

TWIN COVES PARK—It has camping, picnicking, a boat ramp, a marina, swimming, and fishing. Admission charge. 5001 Wichita Trail. 972-874-6399

FORT WORTH

POP. 956,709

Fort Worth Convention & Visitors Bureau: 111 W. Fourth St., Suite 200. 817-336-8791 or 800-433-5747; fortworth.com

Fort Worth visitor information centers: iFort Worth Information Center in Sundance Square, 508 Main St., or in Stockyards National Historic District, 130 E. Exchange Ave.

Fort Worth brands itself as the "City of Cowboys and Culture," featuring world-class museums, art galleries, live theater, concerts, opera, ballet, and a year-round rodeo. Events include the Fort Worth Stock Show and Rodeo, Main Street Fort Worth Arts Festival, Mayfest, Frontier Fort Days, and the Lone Star Film Festival.

AMERICAN AIRLINES C.R. SMITH MUSEUM—Interactive displays and hands-on exhibits depict the operation of an airline, past and present. 4601 SH 360. 682-278-9085

AMON CARTER MUSEUM OF AMERICAN ART—It features a vast array of Western and American art. Free. 3501 Camp Bowie Blvd. 817-738-1933

BASS PERFORMANCE HALL—In Sundance Square, it's home to the city's symphony, ballet, and opera companies. Tours are available. 525 Commerce St. 817-212-4300 or 817-212-4280

BENBROOK LAKE—Parks offer camping, RV sites, boat ramps, swimming, and fishing. 7001 Lakeside Drive. 817-292-2400

BREWERIES AND DISTILLERY—Rahr & Sons Brewing Company and Firestone & Robertson Distillery. See TEXAS BEVERAGE TOUR section.

BUREAU OF ENGRAVING AND PRINTING-WESTERN CURRENCY FACILITY—See the production process. 9000 Blue Mound Road (FM 156). 817-231-4000 or 866-865-1194

EAGLE MOUNTAIN LAKE—The lake offers picnicking, camping, fishing, marinas, and boat ramps. Off FM 1220. 817-237-8585, ext. 4702

FORT WORTH AVIATION MUSEUM—This museum hosts exhibits, 29 airplanes, and more. Admission charge. 3300 Ross Ave. 855-733-8627

FORT WORTH BOTANIC GARDEN—This facility displays living plants in both formal and natural settings. Admission charge. 3220 Botanic Garden Blvd. 817-392-5510

Japanese Garden—It includes a pagoda, a teahouse, and a meditation garden. Admission charge. 3400 Japanese Garden Blvd. 817-392-5464



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Lake Ray Hubbard east of Dallas

FORT WORTH MUSEUM OF SCIENCE AND HISTORY—It includes a children's museum, Omni Theater, and a planetarium. Wheelchair accessible. Admission charge. 1600 Gendy St. 817-255-9300

FORT WORTH NATURE CENTER AND REFUGE—This refuge offers trails, an interpretive center, and a bison herd. Admission charge. 9601 Fossil Ridge Road. 817-392-7410

FORT WORTH ZOO—Natural-habitat exhibits are home to hundreds of animal species. Admission charge. 1989 Colonial Parkway. 817-759-7555

GRAPEVINE VINTAGE RAILROAD—See GRAPEVINE.

KIMBELL ART MUSEUM—The collection highlights old masters' works. The museum features changing exhibitions. 3333 Camp Bowie Blvd. 817-332-8451

LAKE WORTH—The lake has parks, marinas, picnicking, and boating. It's noted for vistas along Meandering Drive. Off SH 199. 817-392-7148

LOG CABIN VILLAGE—It features authentic pioneer homes. Admission charge. 2100 Log Cabin Village Lane. 817-392-5881

MODERN ART MUSEUM OF FORT WORTH—The collection includes paintings and sculptures by contemporary artists, as well as traveling exhibits. 3200 Darnell St. 817-738-9215

NATIONAL COWGIRL MUSEUM AND HALL OF FAME—It includes permanent exhibits, traveling collections, a theater, a store, and a hall of fame. Admission charge. 1720 Gendy St. 817-336-4475

SID RICHARDSON MUSEUM—The museum features paintings by Frederic Remington and Charles M. Russell. Guided tours are available. Free. 309 Main St. 817-332-6554

SIX FLAGS OVER TEXAS—See ARLINGTON.

STOCKYARDS NATIONAL HISTORIC DISTRICT—The district captures the feel of the Old West with Western-style stores and restaurants. It has a visitor center and historic walking tours. 2501 Rodeo Drive. 800-433-5747

Billy Bob's Texas—The world's largest honky-tonk has a rodeo area, concerts, games, and food. Admission charge. 2520 Rodeo Plaza. 817-624-7117

Cowtown Coliseum—Professional cowboys and cowgirls compete year-round in the Stockyards Championship Rodeo. Admission charge. 121 E. Exchange Ave. 817-625-1025

Fort Worth Herd—See Texas Longhorn cattle in the world's only twice-daily cattle drive. 2501 Rodeo Plaza. 817-336-4373

John Wayne: An American Experience—The 10,000-square-foot museum is dedicated to the life and legacy of John Wayne. 2501 Rodeo Plaza. 682-224-0956

Stockyards Museum—The museum features memorabilia from early stockyard days. Donations accepted. 131 E. Exchange Ave., No. 113. 817-625-5082

Stockyards Station—It includes restaurants, shops, and galleries, plus a historical walking tour. 140 E. Exchange Ave. 817-625-9715

SUNDANCE SQUARE DOWNTOWN ENTERTAINMENT DISTRICT—It features theaters, dining, art galleries, museums, and nightlife. Bounded by Second, Fifth, Jones, and Throckmorton streets. 817-222-1111

TANDY LEATHER MUSEUM & GALLERY—This museum showcases leatherwork artists and chronicles the development of this craft. Free. 1900 SE Loop 820. 817-872-3200

TEXAS COWBOY HALL OF FAME—This museum honors distinguished Texas cowboys and cowgirls. Admission charge. 2515 Rodeo Plaza. 817-626-7131

TEXAS MOTOR SPEEDWAY—The track hosts Indy-style and NASCAR racing. Tours are available. 817-215-8565. Admission charge. 3545 Lone Star Circle. 817-215-8500

VINTAGE FLYING MUSEUM—It houses aircraft and artifacts from World Wars I and II. Admission charge. 505 NW 38th St. 817-624-1935

WATER GARDENS—There are three pools: aerating, quiet, and active. 1502 Commerce St. 817-392-7111

FRANKLIN POP. 1,728

Franklin Area Chamber of Commerce and Visitor Information Center: 351 Cooks Lane. 979-828-3276; franklinchamber.net

The Robertson County Courthouse is listed in the National Register of Historic Places. The New Baden Jamboree is held on the first Saturday each month.

FRANKLIN CARNEGIE LIBRARY & INFORMATION CENTER—It is one of the few Carnegie libraries in Texas still used for its original purpose. 315 E. Decherd St. 979-828-4331

FRANKLIN CEMETERY—It's the burial site of Civil War and Spanish-American War veterans, plus notable Texas musicians. FM 46 South at Henry Prairie Road. 979-828-3276

FRISCO POP. 219,587

Visit Frisco: 6801 Gaylord Parkway, Suite 401. 972-292-5250 or 877-463-7472; visitfrisco.com

Located just 30 minutes north of Dallas, Frisco is home to sports, shopping, family fun, and a growing arts and culture scene.

COMERICA CENTER—It is the official practice facility of the NHL's Dallas Stars and home to the NBA G League Texas Legends. 2601 Avenue of the Stars. 214-387-5600

DR PEPPER BALLPARK—The stadium is home to the Frisco RoughRiders. 7300 Roughriders Trail. 972-731-9200

FORD CENTER AT THE STAR—It's the Dallas Cowboys World Headquarters. Entertainment district has restaurants, shops, and a hotel. Tours available. 1 Cowboys Way. 972-497-4060

FRISCO DISCOVERY CENTER—This facility houses an arts, sciences, and cultural center. 8004 N. Dallas Parkway. 972-292-6651

National Videogame Museum—Learn about the evolution of the video-game industry. Admission charge. 8004 N. Dallas Parkway. 972-668-8400

Sci-Tech Discovery Center—Kids enjoy science, math, and technology exhibits. Admission charge. 8004 N. Dallas Parkway. 469-896-2188

FRISCO HERITAGE CENTER—The living history village depicts the area's rich history. Admission charge. 6455 Page St. 972-292-5111

KIDZANIA—It is a dynamic city that provides immersive learning experiences. Admission charge. 2601 Preston Road, Suite 3011. 214-618-0248

MUSEUM OF THE AMERICAN RAILROAD—It offers historic locomotives and rail cars, memorabilia, and a model train exhibit. Admission charge. 8004 N. Dallas Parkway. 214-428-0101

TEXAS SCULPTURE GARDEN—It features contemporary Texas sculptures. Free. 6801 Gaylord Parkway. 972-377-1100

TOYOTA STADIUM—This facility is home to FC Dallas, a major soccer league team. 9200 World Cup Way. 214-705-6700

National Soccer Hall of Fame—It houses 400-plus artifacts. Admission charge. 9200 World Cup Way, Suite 600. 469-365-0043



PRAIRIES & LAKES

GAINESVILLE

POP. 17,912

Gainesville Area Chamber of Commerce: 311 S. Weaver St. 940-665-2831; gainesvillecof.com

This historic city offers residential charm, expanding manufacturers, and endless agriculture.

FRANK BUCK ZOO—The facility features animals in naturalistic settings from four geographic regions. 1000 W. California St. 940-668-4539

HISTORIC HOMES—Find Victorian homes on Church, Denton, and Lindsay streets, plus a firehouse and historic churches. A list of sites is available from the chamber.

KINNE'S JEWELERS MUSEUM—The museum on the mezzanine of the jewelry store features treasures. 210 East. California St. 940-665-3931

LAVENDER RIDGE FARMS—Lavender is available for pick your own. 2391 CR 178. 940-665-6938

MEDAL OF HONOR PARK—The park commemorates medal of honor recipients. Free. West California and South Culberson streets. 940-580-1828 or 940-665-2831

MORTON MUSEUM OF COOKE COUNTY—Housed in a former city hall, fire station, and jail, this museum features changing historical exhibits. 210 S. Dixon St. 940-668-8900

MOSS LAKE—This Gainesville city lake offers a boat ramp, fishing, and primitive camping. About 12 miles northwest of Gainesville via FM 1201. 940-668-4540

SCENIC DRIVES—FM 678, FM 372, and FM 902 east and south through the rolling hills of the Cross Timbers region offer panoramic views.

TEXAS TRAVEL INFORMATION CENTER—It's operated by TxDOT. Professional travel counselors provide travel information, brochures, and trip-planning assistance. 4901 I-35 North. 940-665-2301 or 800-452-9292

GARLAND

POP. 240,854

Visit Garland: 211 N. Fifth St. 972-205-2749 or 888-879-0264; visitgarlandtx.com

The renovated Downtown Square hosts vibrant live music and events year-round. Art thrives at the Granville Arts Center and Plaza Theatre. Explore the scenic Spring Creek Forest Preserve or Rowlett Creek Bike Trails. Skate at The Jon Comer Skatepark or relax by Lake Ray Hubbard. Enjoy dining, shopping, and craft breweries.

BREWERY—Lakewood Brewing Company. See TEXAS BEVERAGE TOUR section.

GRANVILLE ARTS CENTER—As Downtown Garland's arts hub, it hosts symphonies (October-March), musicals, ballets, plays, concerts, and events. Admission charge. 300 N. Fifth St. 972-205-2780

HAWAIIAN WATERS GARLAND—The water park delivers thrills for older kids with towering rides and chills for kids with splash areas and a lazy river. Admission charge. 4550 N. Garland Ave. 972-905-6916

LAKE RAY HUBBARD—See DALLAS.

LANDMARK MUSEUM—It displays local artifacts, old newspapers, farm tools, quilts, and clothing. Free. 393 N. Sixth St. 972-205-2996

ROWLETT CREEK PRESERVE—It has a 16-mile stacked loop system with 14 single-track loops. Bikers go clockwise and hikers counterclockwise. Free. 2525 Castle Drive. 469-546-5052

SPRING CREEK FOREST PRESERVE—The preserve—part of the Spring Creek Greenbelt—spans 100 acres and was recently added to the Old-Growth Forest Network for its ancient forests. Free. 1770 Holford Road. 972-205-2750

GATESVILLE

POP. 16,198

Gatesville Chamber of Commerce: 2307 SH 36 South. 254-865-2617; gatesvilletx.info

Gatesville has the world's largest known spur collection, and the Texas Legislature designated it as the Spur Capital of Texas. Camping is available near downtown. See first-run movies at The Last Drive-In Picture Show. Find information and historic exhibits in the restored Cotton Belt depot.

6S RIVER RANCH—The ranch offers hunting, fishing, horseback riding, hiking, ranch tours, quad rentals, and overnight stays. 1469 Old Georgetown Road. 512-983-3530

BUENA VISTA WILDLIFE SAFARI & RV PARK—Drive-through wildlife safari features 20 animal species from several continents in natural environments. 1830 S. US 281, Evant. 254-791-5441

CORYELL COUNTY COURTHOUSE—This handcarved limestone building is a fine example of architecture. 620 E. Main St. 254-865-5911

CORYELL MUSEUM AND HISTORICAL CENTER—It features more than 6,000 spurs, Western memorabilia, antiques, and an unusual double-wall log jail. 718 Main St. 254-865-5007

DRAGONSTONE RANCH—Schedule a private tour or animal experiences. 2591 CR 137, King. 254-499-2003

PEARL COMMUNITY CENTER—The center hosts the Pearl Bluegrass Jam & Stage Show on the second Saturday each month. 6301 FM 183, Pearl. 254-223-0621

GIDDINGS

POP. 5,129

Giddings Area Chamber of Commerce: 183 E. Hempstead St. 979-542-3455; giddingstx.com

Giddings was founded in 1871 when the Texas & Houston Central Railroad came through, and it became the county seat in 1874. The Wends, or Wendish, were among the first

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settlers. Events include the Lee County Fair, a July 4 celebration, Freedom Music Fest, Texas Wendish Fest, and Texas Word Wrangler Book Festival.

9/11 MEMORIAL—It includes pieces of metal beams from the New York Twin Towers. Free. 151 W. Independence St. 979-542-3455

BUSINESSES OF GIDDINGS MURAL—The artwork, by a local artist, depicts Giddings' businesses, townsfolk, and 11 hidden items. Outside at 279 E. Austin St. 979-542-3455

DIME BOX HERITAGE MUSEUM—Artifacts recall the multicultural immigrants who settled in the community. FM 141 at Cushing Street, Dime Box. 979-540-8603

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH—The sanctuary has been in use since 1886. A historical marker is outside. Free. 192 S. Grimes. 979-542-9020

GIDDINGS PUBLIC LIBRARY AND CULTURAL CENTER—Collections include Native American artifacts and baseball memorabilia. 276 N. Orange St. 979-542-2716

LEE COUNTY COURTHOUSE—The restored octagonal red-brick courthouse is built in Richardsonian Romanesque style. 200 S. Main St. 979-542-3178

LEE COUNTY MUSEUM—In the Schubert-Fletcher home, the museum features county history. 183 E. Hempstead St. 979-542-3455

SERBIN COMMUNITY—This community, settled by German Wends, is on FM 2239. It includes one of the painted churches. 979-542-3455

Texas Wendish Heritage Museum—It depicts the life of Wends who came to Texas. Outside, find a log cabin, partial dogtrot house, and farming equipment. Admission charge. 1011 CR 212. 979-366-2441

STUERMER STORE—It's a restored old-time saloon with a soda fountain. 100 US 290, Ledbetter. 979-249-5642

VETERANS HONOR PARK & MEMORIAL—The site includes several military tanks on display, a playground, picnic seating, and ball fields. Free. 198 N. Montgomery Ave. 979-542-3455

GLEN ROSE

POP. 2,817

Glen Rose Convention and Visitors Bureau: 100 NE Barnard St. 254-897-3081; exploreglenrose.org

Glen Rose sits on a picturesque spot on the Paluxy River. It is the Bluegrass Capital of Texas and Dinosaur Capital of Texas—highlighted at Dinosaur Valley State Park and Dinosaur World. The city has many petrified-wood buildings from the 1920s and '30s. Squaw Valley Golf Course is a highly ranked municipal course.

BARNARD'S MILL AND ART MUSEUM—This landmark, one of the first structures in the city, houses paintings, bronzes, and primitive artifacts. 307 SW Barnard St. 254-897-7494 or 972-965-4455

COUNTRY WOODS INN—It features birds and wildlife on 40 acres, plus trails leading along the river among rustic cabins and lodgings. 420 Grand Ave. 817-279-3002 or 325-998-8632

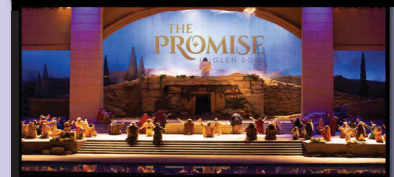
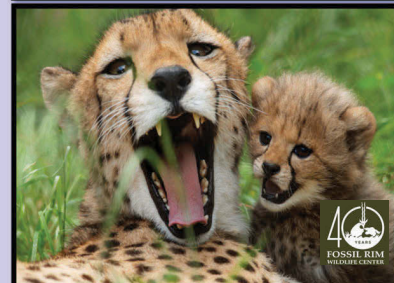
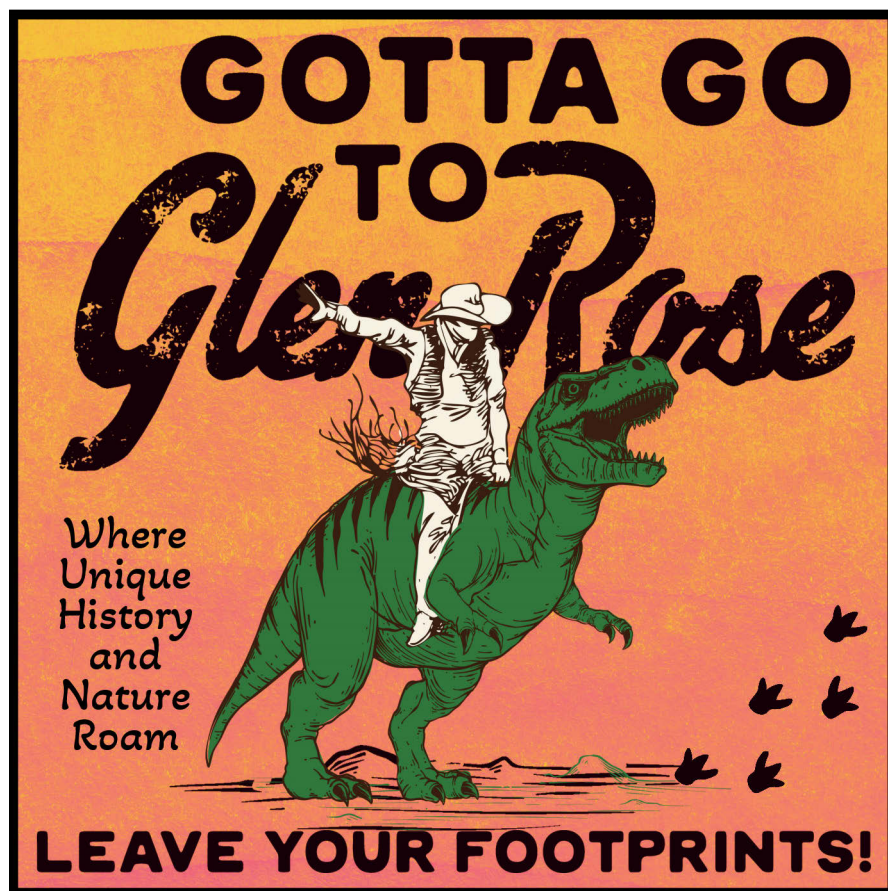
CREATION EVIDENCE MUSEUM OF TEXAS—It includes artifacts from Native Americans and Israel, plus a 25-foot Noah's Ark replica, fossils, and scrolls. Admission charge. 3102 FM 205. 254-897-3200

DINOSAUR VALLEY STATE PARK—Explore dinosaur tracks, hike, bike, horseback ride, fish, swim, and camp. Eagle Eye Ranch offers a guided horseback ride (fee). Admission charge. 1629 Park Road 59. 254-897-4588

DINOSAUR WORLD TEXAS—Life-size dinosaur models and animatronic dinosaurs inhabit a park-like setting. Admission charge. 1058 Park Road 59. 254-898-1526

FOSSIL RIM WILDLIFE CENTER—The center features endangered animals, and it includes a petting pasture, a café, a store, a trail, and a learning center. Admission charge. 2299 CR 2008. 254-897-2960

INN ON THE RIVER—The Recorded Texas Historic Landmark provides accommodations and Paluxy River views. 205 SW Barnard St. 254-897-2929



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PRAIRIES & LAKES



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ROUGH CREEK LODGE & RESORT—The ranch has daily tours, horseback riding, catch-and-release fishing, and upland bird hunts. Reservations recommended. 5165 CR 2013. 800-864-4705 or 254-918-2525

SOMERVELL COUNTY HISTORICAL MUSEUM—This museum features local history, as well as fossils and relics. 101 SW Vernon St. 254-898-0640

SQUAW CREEK LAKE—This lake offers fishing, boating, swimming, and picnicking. 2300 Coates Road. 817-573-7053 or 817-279-1657

THE PROMISE—This musical drama reenacts the life of Jesus of Nazareth. 5000 Texas Drive. 254-897-3926

WHEELER BRANCH RESERVOIR—It offers fishing, swimming, picnicking, and scuba diving, plus a beach. 2099 CR 301. 254-898-2805 or 254-897-4141

GONZALES

POP. 7,196

The Gonzales Chamber of Commerce & Agriculture: 304 St. Louis St. 830-672-6532; gonzalestexas.com

Originally laid out by the Mexican government, this town boasts streets named after saints, with markers showing its original design. Gonzales is called the "Lexington of Texas" for its pivotal role in the first skirmish of the Texas Revolution and commemorates the event with the annual Come and Take It Celebration in October.

GONZALES COUNTY JAIL MUSEUM—Serving as a jail from 1887 to 1975, the museum now has restored cells, a dungeon, gallows, and jailer's quarters. 414 St. Lawrence St. 830-203-2304

GONZALES MEMORIAL MUSEUM—The museum houses the cannon that sparked the first Texas Revolution battle, Mexican relics, and Texan artifacts. 414 Smith St. 830-203-2304

The Eggleston House—This is a restored log house built in 1848 and furnished with antiques to depict Texas pioneer life. 1256 Saint Louis St. 830-672-6350

HISTORIC DRIVING TOUR—Self-guided driving tours include homes, landmarks, and other historic buildings. 304 St. Louis St. 830-203-2304

HISTORIC SITES—Independence Square and Texas Heroes Square downtown boast monuments and historic structures. Find Battle of Gonzales markers southwest on SH 97 near Cost and the earthworks of an independence-era fort near the US 90A/US 183 intersection.

PADDLING TRAILS—The Independence Paddling Trail offers a scenic 2.6-mile loop route accessible by the US 183 bridge at the Guadalupe River. The Come and Take It Paddling Trail is an 11-mile course on the Guadalupe for more experienced paddlers beginning in Lake Wood Park. 830-672-3192

PALMETTO STATE PARK—This riparian area offers birding, canoeing, trails, camping, and boardwalks. Admission charge. 78 Park Road II South. 830-672-3266

PIONEER VILLAGE LIVING HISTORY CENTER—The village houses a collection of 1800s and early 1900s-era houses and buildings from Gonzales County. Admission charge. 2122 N. Saint Joseph St. 830-203-2304

ROBERT LEE BROTHERS JR. MEMORIAL LIBRARY—The facility showcases the Dubose Collection of firearms and war memorabilia. Also, explore the Vickie Bushong Collection of original documents from the Texas Revolution era. 301 Saint Joseph St. 830-203-2304

SCENIC DRIVE—Park Road II through Palmetto State Park offers scenic vistas.

GRANBURY

POP. 12,391

Visit Granbury: 201 E. Pearl St., Suite A101. 817-573-5548; visitgranbury.com

Granbury celebrates year-round with more than 40 public events. Also enjoy the Historic Granbury Square, Lake Granbury, Brazos Drive-In, Granbury Opera House, wineries, breweries, distilleries, museums, and live music venues. Stay in a hotel, inn, B&B, guest house, tree house, loft, or cabin.

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ACTON STATE HISTORIC SITE—It includes the gravesite of Elizabeth Crockett, the second wife of Davy Crockett. Free. Off FM 167. 512-463-7948

BREWERY AND DISTILLERY—Revolver Brewing and Sledge Distillery. See TEXAS BEVERAGE TOUR section.

BRIDGE STREET HISTORY CENTER MUSEUM—This is a collection of the oral histories of the people of Granbury and Hood County. Free. 319 E. Bridge St. 817-579-1874

CAPTAIN KIRK'S TIKI CRUISES—Enjoy a family, afternoon, or sunset Caribbean-themed tiki cruise on Lake Granbury. Admission charge. 919 E. Pearl St. 833-845-4278

GRANBURY BOARDWALK—It extends into Lake Granbury. Visitors can enjoy views on the lake. 817-573-5548

GRANBURY DOLL HOUSE MUSEUM—It has more than 6,000 dolls from 1868 to the present. 421 E. Bridge St. 817-894-5194

GRANBURY GHOSTS AND LEGENDS TOUR—It was voted one of the best ghost tours in the U.S. by Frommer's. Admission charge. 213 N. Crockett St. 817-559-0849 or 817-964-6524

GRANBURY MEMORIAL LANE—The park includes a statue of a lone firefighter and memorials depicting all military branches, plus a firetruck playground. Free. 561 N. Travis St. 817-243-1779

GRANBURY OPERA HOUSE—Granbury Theatre Company puts on a year-round Broadway on the Brazos season with hit musicals and stage plays in the renovated 1886 building. Admission charge. 133 E. Pearl St. 817-579-0952

GRANBURY SEGWAY TOURS—Cruise through a unique tour of Granbury's sights and landmarks with an experienced guide leading the way. 401 N. Park St. 817-991-0990

GRANBURY STATE HISTORICAL CEMETERY—Gen. Hiram Granbury, outlaw Jesse James, and Ashley Crockett (Davy Crockett's grandson) are buried here. 801 N. Houston St. 817-573-7275

GRANBURY WINE TOURS—The four-hour tour typically visits three vineyards and wineries with multiple wine tastings and a light meal. Admission charge. 201 E. Pearl St. 817-727-5585

HISTORIC GRANBURY SQUARE—The square includes shops, restaurants, entertainment, and the historic Hood County Courthouse. Pearl Street at FM 51.

HISTORIC RAILROAD DEPOT—This restored depot is representative of early 20th-century rural Texas train stations. 109 E. Ewell St. 817-573-5548

HISTORICAL WALKING AND DRIVING TOUR—The self-guided tour features legends and tales of Granbury and Hood County. The visitor center has a pamphlet. 817-573-5548

HOOD COUNTY JAIL MUSEUM—Built in 1885, the historic jail museum depicts the county's history from the days of settlement. Admission charge. 208 N. Crockett St. 817-573-5135

LAKE GRANBURY—Enjoy Lake Granbury from the sand at City Beach Park. Rent lake toys, or just hang out at the pavilion or boardwalk. Free. 505 E. Pearl St. 817-573-3212

GRAND PRAIRIE POP. 201,843

Tourist Information Center and Trunk Stop Gift Shop: 2170 N. Belt Line Road. 972-595-5400 or 800-288-8386; visitgrandprairietx.com

Grand Prairie is known as a family-friendly destination with a variety of sporting events, arts, music, hotels, shopping, and top-ranked golf courses. The historic Uptown Theater offers live performances. Events include the downtown Farmers Market and Prairie Lights.

EPIC WATERS—Year-round water park includes slides, an outdoor wave pool, a lazy river, and boogie boarding. 2970 Epic Place. 972-337-3131

GRAND PRAIRIE PREMIUM OUTLETS—It has more than 100 major-brand shops. 2950 I-20 West. 972-602-8383

JOE POOL LAKE—The lake offers fishing, boating, swimming, and water-skiing. Parks have a marina, camping, and cabins. South of I-20. 972-237-4120

JOE POOL LAKE AND WALNUT CREEK PADDLING TRAIL—This 4.9-mile trail is for paddlers of all levels. Launches at Loyd Park. Equipment rentals are available. 3401 Ragland Road.

LONE STAR PARK AT GRAND PRAIRIE—The park features world-class horse racing. It also offers a simulcast racing viewing area. 1000 Lone Star Parkway. 972-263-7223

MAJOR LEAGUE CRICKET-TEXAS SUPER KINGS—The professional Texas Super Kings play at Grand Prairie Stadium. Admission charge. 1600 Lone Star Parkway.

RIPLEY'S BELIEVE IT OR NOT!, LOUIS TUSSAUD'S PALACE OF WAX, RIPLEY'S ENCHANTED MIRROR MAZE, AND RIPLEY'S 7D MOVING THEATER—It has lifelike wax figures, oddities, Mirror Maze, Impossible LaseRace, and moving theater. Admission charge. 601 E. Palace Parkway. 972-263-2391

"SHARING TRADITIONS IN TIME" ZODIAC CLOCK—View the Asian zodiac as it relates to the time of day and the elements of wood, fire, earth, metal, and water. 2615 W. Pioneer Parkway. 972-975-5100

TRADERS VILLAGE—This open-air weekend market has special events, rides, and games. 2602 Mayfield Road. 972-647-2331

GRAND SALINE POP. 3,219

Grand Saline Chamber of Commerce: 203 NE Pacific St. 903-962-7147; facebook.com/p/Grand-Saline-Tx-Chamber-of-Commerce-100064392861427

This city grew from a primitive salt works. The salt dome under the city is about 1.5 miles across and about 16,000 feet thick.

CANTON GRAND SAFARI—It offers a hands-on experience with rare and exotic animals. 9515 FM 1255. 903-962-5630

DEPOT LIBRARY/CIVIC CENTER—The restored rail depot has antique furniture and a porcelain doll collection. 201 E. Pacific St. 903-962-5516

GRAND SALINE MUSEUM/SALT PALACE—The salt-block structure has local history exhibits, plus salt-related and mining items. Donations accepted. 100 W. Garland St. (US 80). 903-962-5631

GRAPEVINE POP. 51,226

Grapevine Convention and Visitors Bureau Headquarters and Museum Complex: 636 S. Main St. 817-410-3189 or 800-457-6338; grapevinetexasusa.com

Stroll Historic Main Street's locally owned shops and cafés, art galleries, and winery tasting rooms. Tee off at championship courses, explore Lake Grapevine, enjoy family-friendly attractions, and catch live music every day. Annual events include GrapeFest, the Christmas Capital of Texas, and Main Street Fest.

A TOUCH OF PARIS ART STUDIO & PRIVATE EVENTS—This venue showcases the oil paintings of French artist Dominique Galleron. 202 W. Wall St. 817-689-3882

CORKY'S GAMING BISTRO—Enjoy escape rooms, axe throwing, Crazy Darts, and classic games. 3520 Grapevine Mills Blvd. North. 817-532-5000

COTTON BELT RAILROAD HISTORIC DISTRICT—The original depot site is home to art galleries, a glass-blowing studio, a blacksmith, and bronze foundry. 701 S. Main St. 817-410-3189

Grapevine Glassblowing Studio - Vetro Art Gallery—Witness the fiery art of glassblowing firsthand. 701 S. Main St., Suite 103. 817-251-1668

Grapevine Historical Museum—Explore the lives of early residents through exhibits about agriculture, industry, and family life. 206 W. Hudgins St. 817-410-3526

Grapevine Vintage Railroad—Get swept back in time inside authentic luxury 1920s coaches. The railroad also has themed excursions and specialty trains. Admission charge. 707 S. Main St. 817-410-3189

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A City With Heart



Texas Czech Heritage
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Settlement to City Museums—The museums include the Keeling House Museum, the Donald Schoolhouse, and the Grapevine Cotton Ginner's Museum. 206 W. Hudgins St. 817-410-3526

GRAPEVINE BOTANICAL GARDENS AT HERITAGE PARK—Enjoy the natural beauty and tranquil surroundings of nature. 411 Ball St. 817-410-3450

GRAPEVINE ESCAPE—Named one of the top 100 escape rooms in the country, it offers a fun adventure. 160 N. Main St. 817-601-5663

GRAPEVINE FOOD TOURS—A variety of tours offer tastings from local restaurants and shops along with historical information about Grapevine. 324 S. Main St., Suite 322.

GRAPEVINE GLOCKENSPIEL—This unique 127-foot-tall clock tower depicts a confrontation between two would-be train robbers who emerge several times daily (weather permitting). 636 S. Main St. 800-457-6338

GRAPEVINE LAKE—Boat, fish, windsurf, and hike or bike 9 miles of trails in this 8,000-acre playground. On the north edge of Grapevine. 817-410-3122

GRAPEVINE VISITOR INFORMATION CENTER & OBSERVATION TOWER—Ride 150 feet in the air to view points of interest in Grapevine and the Dallas-Fort Worth Metroplex. Admission charge. 815 S. Main St. 817-410-3185

GRAPEVINE WINE TOURS—Tour includes sampling vintages from three of Grapevine's most acclaimed wineries, each with its unique history and charm. 636 S. Main St. 817-259-9463

GREAT WOLF LODGE—Day passes are available to the largest indoor water park in the area. 100 Great Wolf Drive. 817-488-6510

HISTORIC MAIN STREET DISTRICT—This preserved historic area is home to winery tasting rooms, attractions, shops, live entertainment, restaurants, and galleries. 636 S. Main St. 817-410-3185

HISTORIC NASH FARM—The farm offers tours, programs, and special events to teach about 19th-century farm life. Free. 626 Ball St. 817-410-3185

LEGOLAND DISCOVERY CENTER—See area landmark depictions, play with interactive exhibits, and learn building secrets. Admission charge. 3000 Grapevine Mills Parkway. 972-539-9386

MEOW WOLF: THE REAL UNREAL—It's a portal to explore vibrant, fantastical worlds through interactive exhibits and captivating storytelling. Admission charge. 3000 Grapevine Mills Parkway, Suite 253.

PALACE ARTS CENTER—The restored art deco venue features live performances, classic movies, and visual arts exhibits. 300 S. Main St. 817-410-3541 or 817-410-3100

PEPPA PIG WORLD OF PLAY—This indoor play center features colorful playscapes, interactive activities, and instantly recognizable locations. Admission charge. 3000 Grapevine Mills Parkway, 302A. 214-285-9110

RTOWN ART GALLERY—Explore unique pieces and meet the creative minds behind them at monthly artist receptions. 314 S. Main St. 682-404-8806

SEA LIFE GRAPEVINE AQUARIUM—Immerse yourself in the wonders of the ocean. Admission charge. 3000 Grapevine Mills Parkway. 866-444-3050

TEXAS STAR DINNER THEATER—Enjoy a weekend murder mystery dinner—solve a crime while savoring a three-course meal. Admission charge. 816 S. Main St. 817-310-5588

TOWER & GRAND GALLERIES—These galleries are home to various traveling and fine art exhibits throughout the year. 636 S. Main St. 817-410-3185

WHOAZONE—This inflatable obstacle course floats on the water at Meadowmere Park. 3000 Meadowmere Lane. 866-946-2966

GREENVILLE

POP. 31,060

Greenville Convention and Visitors Bureau: 2821 Washington St. 903-457-3126; travelgreenvilletx.com

Pick up a copy of the Downtown Historical Walking Tour at the Greenville Municipal Building, and discover historic architecture, The Bankhead Highway, and landmarks. Downtown has multiple music venues, an award-winning winery, and vibrant public art. The Clymer Meadow Preserve showcases remnants of Blackland Prairie in Texas.

AUDIE MURPHY/AMERICAN COTTON MUSEUM—The museum chronicles the area's cotton industry and famous locals. Admission charge. 600 I-30. 903-450-4502

LAKE TAWAKONI—The lake offers marinas and parks with boat ramps, fishing, picnicking, and camping. About 16 miles southeast of Greenville.

SPLASH KINGDOM WATER PARK—It features thrilling waterslides, a lazy river, a children's area, and a large wave pool. Admission charge. 6501 I-30. 903-455-4040

WINERY—Landon Winery. See TEXAS BEVERAGE TOUR section.

GROESBECK

POP. 3,622

Groesbeck Chamber of Commerce: 254-729-3894; groesbeckchamber.com

FORT PARKER MEMORIAL CEMETERY—A large monument and graves commemorate settlers massacred in 1836. Two miles north on FM 1245.

FORT PARKER STATE PARK—See MEXIA.

LAKE LIMESTONE—Parks offer fishing, boat ramps, primitive camping, and picnicking. Off FM 937. Also accessible from Centerville. 903-529-2141

LIMESTONE COUNTY HISTORICAL MUSEUM—It features artifacts and area history, including Old Fort Parker memorabilia. Admission charge. 210 W. Navasota St.

OLD FORT PARKER—It has pioneer memorabilia, a log blockhouse, a stockade, and a two-story log cabin. A self-guided tour is available. Admission charge. 866 Park Road 35. 254-729-5253 or 254-747-1144

OLD SPRINGFIELD—A historical marker on SH 14 near the entrance to Old Fort Parker details the history of this village. Five miles north on SH 14.

HALLETTSVILLE

POP. 2,733

Hallettsville Chamber of Commerce and Agriculture: 1614 N. Texana St. 361-798-2662; hallettsville.com

A bison sculpture in the city park commemorates the old Hallet Oak. Events include the State Championship Domino and Domino "42" Tournaments, State Championship Fiddler's Frolics, and the annual Kolache Fest.

LAVACA COUNTY COURTHOUSE—This renovated courthouse was modeled after the one in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. 109 N. LaGrange St. 361-798-2301

LAVACA HISTORICAL MUSEUM—It features historical artifacts, restored structures, photos, and furnishings, plus an Old-Timers Baseball Hall of Fame. 1205 N. Texana St. 361-798-4113

SPLASHWAY WATERPARK—The park has tubes, slides, wave pools, splash pads, and the dueling Splash Blaster coasters. Admission charge. 5211 Main St., Sheridan. 979-234-7718

TEXAS CHAMPIONSHIP DOMINO HALL OF FAME AND TEXAS FIDDLERS HALL OF FAME—Inside the Knights of Columbus Hall, it highlights the history of dominoes and Texas fiddler memorabilia. 321 US 77 South. 361-798-2311

VIETNAM VETERANS MEMORIAL—An AH-1 Cobra helicopter, flags, and a plaque commemorate Lavaca County men who died in the conflict. 1614 N. Texana St. 361-798-2662

HAMILTON

POP. 2,887

Hamilton Chamber of Commerce: 103 1/2 N. Rice St. 254-386-3216; hamiltontexaschamberofcommerce.com

Courthouse square has a variety of shops, restaurants, and historic homes. Dove Fest celebrates the start of hunting season.

HAMILTON COUNTY COURTHOUSE—The renovated building houses historic documents, pictures, and artifacts. 102 N. Rice St. 254-386-1200

HAMILTON COUNTY HISTORICAL MUSEUM—Local artifacts and memorabilia are on the first floor of the old jail. Cells are on the second floor. 113 W. Henry St. 254-688-0165

HEARNE

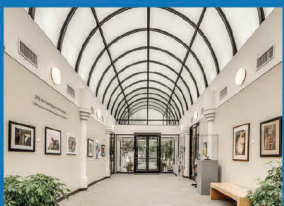
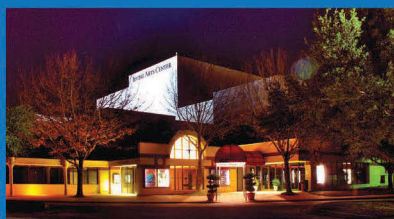
POP. 4,538

Hearne Chamber of Commerce: 304 Market St. 979-595-8150; hearnetxchamber.com

Known as "The Crossroads of Texas," this city lies at the intersection of US 79, US 190, and SH 6, as well as the



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state's major east-west and north-south rail lines. The Providence and Wildcat truss bridges were moved in the 1940s to span the Little Brazos River and have been preserved for use by passenger vehicles.

CAMP HEARNE—Artifacts and an exhibit on life in the World War II POW camp are in a replica army barracks. 12424 Camp Hearne Road. 979-314-7012

HEARNE DEPOT MUSEUM—This restored depot houses antique furnishings, local history, and railroad memorabilia. 139 W. Ninth St. 979-383-4105

HICO

POP. 1,384

hicotxchamber.org or visithicotexas.com

Downtown features antiques stores, an artist studio, and restaurants. The historic home of photographer Frank Rufus Wiseman houses a chocolate company and antiques. One of the oldest Old Settler's Reunions is held in July. Hico also hosts Texas' largest steak cookoff in May.

BILLY THE KID MUSEUM—According to Hico legend, Ollie L. "Brushy Bill" Roberts was really Billy the Kid. The museum features related memorabilia. 114 N. Pecan St. 254-796-2523

HILLSBORO

POP. 8,548

Hillsboro Chamber of Commerce:

115 N. Covington St. 254-582-2481 or 800-445-5726; hillsborochamber.org

Hillsboro is the gateway to Lake Whitney and the home of Hill College. The town has many restored Victorian homes, and the historic square and downtown offer antiques shops. It is a Main Street city.

AQUILLA LAKE—This is an Army Corps of Engineers lake. About 10 miles southwest of Hillsboro via I-35 and FM 310. 254-622-3332

HILL COUNTY CELL BLOCK MUSEUM—It includes Hill Country history, rotating exhibits, Willie Nelson memorabilia, and Native American artifacts. (May be closed for renovations. Call ahead.) 120 N. Waco St. 254-582-8912

HILL COUNTY COURTHOUSE—The Second Empire architectural style building was restored after a 1993 fire. The grounds has war memorials. 1 N. Waco St.

LAKE WHITNEY STATE PARK—See WHITNEY.

ROADSIDE AMERICA MUSEUM—Visit a privately owned collection of '40s and '50s advertising memorabilia, classic cars, and nostalgic Americana. 212 E. Elm St. 972-291-2958

TEXAS HERITAGE MUSEUM—The museum explores Texas and its people during wartime. Free. 112 Lamar Drive. 254-659-7750

TEXAS THROUGH TIME FOSSIL MUSEUM—The museum offers free tours of the prehistoric fossil collection comprising reptiles, amphibians, sharks, ammonites, dinosaurs, mammals, and petrified wood. 110 N. Waco St. 254-262-3466

HUBBARD

POP. 1,420

Hubbard Chamber of Commerce: 101 NE Second St. 254-576-2521; hubbardcity.com

During the early 1900s, the city was noted for its hot mineral wells and bathhouses. The wells are still here, along with five city lakes and Victorian-style homes.

HUBBARD MUSEUM—It has local memorabilia and a Tris Speaker exhibit. 304 NW Sixth St. 254-576-2527

NAVARRO MILLS LAKE—Parks have boat ramps, fishing, camping, and picnicking. Northeast of Hubbard off SH 31. 254-578-1431

INDEPENDENCE

POP. 406 (EST.)

Independence Visitor Center: 10270 T.S. Saul Road. 979-251-9227; independencetx.com

The town square was laid out for the Washington County courthouse, but Brenham won a heated county-seat election by two votes. See buildings associated with early Texas history on FM 50, a few miles north of Brenham.



Heard Natural Science Museum
and Wildlife Sanctuary
in McKinney

ANTIQUE ROSE EMPORIUM—Gardens specialize in older classes of roses, many brought to the area by settlers. 10000 FM 50. 979-836-5548

OLD BAYLOR PARK/RUINS OF OLD BAYLOR UNIVERSITY—The site includes the ruins, John P. Coles' house, a trail featuring area history, and picnic area. Old Baylor College Road. 979-251-9227

OLD INDEPENDENCE CEMETERY—Notables buried here include Sam Houston Jr. and veterans of U.S. wars from the American Revolution through World War II. 8675 Coles Road.

SAM HOUSTON HOMESITE—The house is in the National Register of Historic Places. On FM 390, one block east of FM 50.

SCENIC DRIVE—FM 390 east and west of Independence offers attractive scenery and vistas. It is very colorful during spring bluebonnet season.

TEXAS BAPTIST HISTORICAL CENTER—The present church and museum house artifacts dating to before the Civil War. 10405 FM 50. 979-836-5117

WASHINGTON-ON-THE-BRAZOS STATE HISTORIC SITE—See WASHINGTON.

INDUSTRY

POP. 277

City of Industry: 979-357-2190; industrytexas.com

Industry was designated as the "Oldest German Town in Texas" by the Texas Legislature. Ernst Memorial Park features the restored Republic of Texas post office and town store. Other historical sites include the Welcome Hall and the Old Methodist Church.

HISTORIC INDUSTRY GIN—This cotton gin operated for 117 years. Today, the property is home to City Hall and a park. 725 Main St. 281-224-5511

KNOLLE DOCTOR OFFICE—See original instruments and medical artifacts used by an early town physician. 9021 FM 109 North. 979-357-2772

LINDEMANN STORE MUSEUM—The museum features original fixtures and items sold during the store's 177 years in operation. 2227 Main St. 979-357-2772

LINDEMANN-OTT HOUSE—This historic home was originally a bakery and later a store. It exhibits four generations of family artifacts. 2207 Main St. 979-357-2772

IRVING

POP. 254,715

Visit Irving: 500 W. Las Colinas Blvd. 972-252-7476; irvingtexas.com

Enjoy the tunes of a world-renowned musician at the Toyota Music Factory. Cruise the Mandalay Canal on a Venetian gondola. Get lost in art and history, including the Ruth Paine House Museum (open by appointment only) that tells a side story to the assassination of President Kennedy. All of this with top-notch accommodations.

GONDOLA ADVENTURES—Create lasting memories on a cruise through Lake Carolyn on one of the world's most beautiful gondolas. Admission charge. 357 W. Fork. 855-466-3652

IRVING ARCHIVES AND MUSEUM—It takes guests through fascinating exhibits that tell Irving's story and features a Smithsonian Spark!Lab. Admission charge. 801 W. Irving Blvd. 972-721-3700 or 972-721-3714

IRVING ARTS CENTER—The arts complex features theaters, galleries, and a sculpture garden. 3333 N. MacArthur Blvd. 972-252-7558 or 972-252-2787

MUSTANGS OF LAS COLINAS & MUSEUM EXHIBIT—Nine larger-than-life bronze mustangs gallop across a granite prairie stream. 5221 N. O'Connor Road, Suite 110 E. 214-766-1550

RUTH PAINE HOUSE MUSEUM—Lee Harvey Oswald stayed in this now-museum on the eve of JFK's assassination. Admission charge. 801 W. Irving Blvd. 972-721-4750

JEWETT

POP. 808

Jewett Area Chamber of Commerce: 111 N. Robinson Ave. 903-626-4202; jewetttexas.org

The town was recognized as The Sculpture Capital of Texas by the Texas Legislature for works in public areas and galleries. The city park features sports courts, a playground, a picnic area, and a paved walking trail. Events include the Fall Frolic in October, Flea Festival in April, and Jewett Flea Market each month.

JEWETT HISTORICAL MUSEUM—This museum features items from the early years of Jewett, plus World War II memorabilia. 103 N. Robinson St. 903-626-5353

LEON COUNTY ART TRAIL—The trail features 30 sculptures that change annually and some that are permanently displayed at Eagle Scout Park. US 79 and Price Street. 903-390-8786 or 903-626-4416

KEENE

POP. 6,728

Keene Chamber of Commerce: 110 S. Old Betsy Road. 817-556-2995; keenechamber.org

The town is home to Southwestern Adventist University.

DINOSAUR SCIENCE MUSEUM & RESEARCH CENTER—The museum houses one of the largest dinosaur fossil collections in the United States. 113 W. Magnolia St. 817-202-6336

THE HOPPS MUSEUM—The museum features items from the town's early years and a Biblical sanctuary exhibit. Donations accepted. 100 Hillcrest Drive. 817-202-6755

KILLEEN

POP. 159,172

Killeen Civic and Conference Center and Convention & Visitors Bureau: 3601 S. W.S. Young Drive. 254-501-3888; visitkilleen.com

Near Fort Cavazos, Killeen offers dining, shopping, and entertainment, from rodeos to stage shows. Vive Les Arts



PRAIRIES & LAKES

Theatre presents community shows. The Killen Area Heritage Association sponsors historic exhibits at City Hall. They also offer tours of the former Bethel Primitive Baptist Church, which has original handmade furnishings.

MAYBORN SCIENCE THEATER—It features a digital planetarium and laser shows on a 60-foot dome. Admission charge. 6200 W. Central Texas Expressway, Building 152. 254-526-1768 or 254-526-1799

NOVEMBER 5TH MEMORIAL—This stone gazebo has 13 bronze sculptures honoring those who died during the Fort Hood shooting in 2009. 3601 S. W.S. Young Drive. 254-501-3888

LA GRANGE

POP. 4,449

La Grange Visitors Bureau: 254 N. Jefferson St. 979-968-3017; visitlagrangetx.com

Downtown includes more than 30 historic buildings, along with the 1891 Romanesque Revival courthouse. Antique and cabin-style B&Bs are available. The town is known for bakeries specializing in kolaches. Golfers play at the nine-hole Frisch Aufl, and the Bugle Boy presents live music in World War II army barracks.

FAYETTE HERITAGE MUSEUM AND ARCHIVES—It features historical photographs, genealogy files, newspapers, and maps. 855 S. Jefferson St. 979-968-6418

JERSEY BARNYARD—Tour this century-old dairy farm. Activities include cow milking, hayrides, and a petting barnyard. 3117 SH 159. 979-249-3406

LAKE FAYETTE—The lake offers fishing. Oak Thicket and Park Prairie parks have camping and lake access. Off SH 159. 979-249-3504 or 979-249-3344

MONUMENT HILL AND KREISCHE BREWERY STATE HISTORIC SITES—Monument marks the tomb of men from the 1842 Dawson and Mier expeditions who died. 414 State Loop 92. 979-968-5658

Kreische Brewery State Historic Site—German immigrant Heinrich Kreische started one of the state's first commercial breweries here. A nature trail connects the

monument site to the brewery site. Donations accepted. 414 State Loop 92. 979-968-5658

N.W. FAISON HOUSE AND MUSEUM—It is a landmark as one of a few residences solely owned by an African American freedwoman, Louisiana Brown. 822 S. Jefferson St. 713-628-9065

SCENIC DRIVES—Follow US 77 southwest to FM 2436 to Hostyn. Stop by the Queen of the Holy Rosary Catholic Church to see the Hostyn Grotto. The first Texas highway roadside park is 10 miles west on SH 71; it includes a scenic overlook.

TEXAS CZECH HERITAGE AND CULTURAL CENTER—This site includes a replica of a Czech village, walking trails, and a gift shop. 250 W. Fair Grounds Road. 888-785-4500 or 979-968-9399

TEXAS HEROES MUSEUM—The museum traces the military history of Fayette County residents. 171 S. Main St. 361-210-7318

TEXAS QUILT MUSEUM—The museum features changing exhibits with a variety of quilts from antique to contemporary and avant-garde. Admission charge. 140 W. Colorado St. 979-968-3104

WINERY—Rohan Meadery. See TEXAS BEVERAGE TOUR section.

LANCASTER

POP. 40,449

Lancaster Visitors Center: 103 N. Dallas Ave. 972-218-1324; lancaster-tx.com/85

Lancaster retains the feel of a small town with many historic Victorian homes. It's home to Cedar Valley College and the University of North Texas-Dallas. During the Civil War, a factory here produced the Colt .44 Dragoon revolver; the city library has factory memorabilia. Play at the 18-hole Country View Golf Club.

BEAR CREEK NATURE PARK—The park offers fishing, hiking, equestrian trails, and a butterfly garden. 1000 Bear Creek Road. 972-218-3700

COMMEMORATIVE AIR FORCE, DALLAS-FORT WORTH WING—At Lancaster Airport, this CAF wing features warbirds and a World War II artifacts collection, including a Japanese Zero. 650 Ferris Road.

LEONARD

POP. 2,055

City of Leonard: 903-587-3334; leonardchamber.com or cityoffleonard.net

Surrounding the city are two historic thickets: Wildcat Thicket to the south and Bois D'arc Thicket to the north.

LEONARD HISTORICAL MUSEUM—The museum features an extensive collection of artifacts from the city's past. 106 S. Connett St. 903-587-2216

LEWISVILLE

POP. 131,215

Lewisville Visitor Information Center: 247 W. Main St. 972-219-3401; visitlewisville.com

The city hugs the south shore of Lewisville Lake, and a city park offers fishing, boating, birding, and RV camping. Lewisville is surrounded by several challenging golf courses, including Tour 18 and The Tribute. Festivals include ColorPalooza and Western Days. Old Town Lewisville has dining, bars, entertainment, shopping, and art.

DISTILLERY—Bendt Distilling Co. See TEXAS BEVERAGE TOUR section.

LEWISVILLE GRAND THEATER—This arts facility in the Old Town district hosts live music, theater performances, and art exhibits. 100 N. Charles St. 972-219-8446

LEWISVILLE LAKE—Parks and marinas offer fishing, boating, swimming, picnicking, and camping. Off I-35E. 972-219-3401

LEWISVILLE LAKE ENVIRONMENTAL LEARNING AREA—The nature preserve has hiking, kayaking, fishing, birding, a pioneer homestead, and primitive camping. 201 E. Jones St. 972-219-3550 or 469-635-5483

OLD TOWN—The historic district has shops, themed restaurants, community theater, outdoor public art, and events. A park has a splash pad, gardens, and an outdoor stage. 155 W. Main St. 972-219-3401

LOCKHART

POP. 14,985

Lockhart Chamber of Commerce: 702 S. Commerce St. 512-398-2818; lockhartchamber.com or visitlockharttx.com

The Texas Legislature named Lockhart the Barbecue Capital of Texas, and the city's four barbecue establishments are popular. The town is an in-demand filming location. Events include the Chisholm Trail Roundup, Tolbert Chili Championship, Old Settler's Music Festival in Tilmon, Evening With the Authors, and A Dickens Christmas.

CALDWELL COUNTY COURTHOUSE—The three-story 1894 courthouse is built of sandstone, displaying fine workmanship and elaborate architectural detail. 110 S. Main St. 512-398-1808

CALDWELL COUNTY MUSEUM—This red-brick former jail has county history exhibits and the original cells. Admission charge. 315 E. Market St. 512-398-5796

DR. EUGENE CLARK LIBRARY—The library features stained-glass windows, ornate fixtures, and a stage. 217 S. Main St. 512-398-3223

LOCKHART STATE PARK—It has a swimming pool, park store, campground, miles of trails, fishing, and a nine-hole golf course. Admission charge. 2012 State Park Road. 512-398-3479

LULING

POP. 5,545

Luling Visitors Center: 421 E. Davis St. 830-875-3214; lulingcc.org

Visitors can see active oil wells around the town, some in such incongruous spots as church lawns, residential back yards, and city parks. The famous Watermelon Thump Festival is held here in June.

DISTILLERY—AFT Distillery. See TEXAS BEVERAGE TOUR section.



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THE LULING FOUNDATION—The farm demonstrates good agricultural practices. 523 S. Mulberry St. 830-875-2438

LULING OIL MUSEUM—This quaint museum preserves the heritage of the area's oil industry. 421 E. Davis St. 830-875-1922

PALMETTO STATE PARK— See GONZALES.

PUMP JACK TOUR—Many of the almost 200 oil-well pump jacks are decorated. The chamber has a self-guided tour map. 421 E. Davis St. 830-875-3214

SCENIC DRIVE—Take Park Road 11 through Palmetto State Park.

TEXAS BBQ TRAIL—Find great Texas barbecue on this tour of Luling, Lockhart, Elgin, and Taylor. 421 E. Davis St. 830-875-3214

ZEDLER MILL MUSEUM AND PARK—A museum, historical site, and park offer a tour, pavilion, and boat rentals. The mill also marks the end of a 6-mile paddling trail. On Laurel Avenue. 830-875-5515

MADISONVILLE

POP. 4,564

Madisonville Convention & Tourism: 113 W. Trinity St. 936-348-9333; madisonvilletexas.us

Madisonville is designated as the Mushroom Capital of Texas and hosts the Texas Mushroom Festival in October. The Madisonville Sidewalk Cattlemen's Association hosts a steak dinner dance and a barbecue cookoff in May. Lake Madison Park offers some of the best fishing around, a walking trail, and a splash pad.

MADISON COUNTY MUSEUM—The refurbished bank building houses a history museum with rotating exhibits and area artifacts. 201 N. Madison St. 936-348-5230

THE SKYDIVING COMPANY—Tandem skydiving lets you experience the incredible rush of skydiving. 2207 Airport Lane. 844-759-3483

MANSFIELD

POP. 76,724

City of Mansfield: 1164 Matlock Road. 817-728-3390; visitmansfieldtexas.com

South of DFW, Mansfield is a hub for arts, history, and athletics, including the Farr Best Theater, Man House Museum, and FieldhouseUSA. The town has 900 acres of parkland and top-notch sports facilities. Events include the Juneteenth Celebration, Mansfield Rocks, Music Alley, Veterans Day Parade, and Hometown Holidays.

FARR BEST THEATER—Opened in 1917, the theater is a gem of Mansfield history. 109 N. Main St. 817-728-3338

HAWAIIAN FALLS WATERPARK—Cool off in the wave pool and the Kona Kooler river, or take a ride on five large waterslides. 490 Heritage Parkway South. 817-853-0050

MAN HOUSE MUSEUM—The restored Man House Museum offers visitors a glimpse into the life of Mansfield residents in the mid-19th century. 604 W. Broad St. 817-728-3324

MANSFIELD HISTORICAL MUSEUM & HERITAGE CENTER—This facility displays artifacts and exhibits on the early development of the area. 102 N. Main St. 817-473-4250

OLIVER NATURE PARK—Wildflowers fill the prairies in the spring, and the wooded areas stay cool enough for moss to thrive in summer. Free. 1650 Matlock Road. 817-728-3379 or 817-728-3680

MCKINNEY

POP. 211,397

Visit McKinney: 200 W. Virginia. 972-547-2058 or 888-649-8499; visitmckinney.com

McKinney boasts one of the oldest and largest historic districts with a downtown square containing boutiques and specialty shops, wineries, art galleries, a comedy club, a vintage arcade, and restaurants. Explore the wildlife sanctuary or attend a festival. Third Monday Trade Days is the weekend before the third Monday each month.

BREWERIES—Franconia Brewing Company and Tapps Brewery. See TEXAS BEVERAGE TOUR section.

COLLIN COUNTY FARM MUSEUM—This facility features indoor historical exhibits, as well as a park with a show barn, an arena, and picnic areas. 7117 County Road 166. 972-548-4792

COLLIN COUNTY HISTORY MUSEUM—The museum is home to rotating exhibits and is open for research and genealogy. Admission charge. 300 E. Virginia St. 972-542-9457

HEARD NATURAL SCIENCE MUSEUM AND WILDLIFE SANCTUARY—The center is filled with natural history exhibits and offers live animal exhibits, a native plant garden, and educational programs. 1 Nature Place. 972-562-5566

HEARD-CRAIG HOUSE—The 1900 home is furnished with antiques, heirlooms, and artwork. The grounds include a carriage house, gazebo, and garden. Admission charge. 205 W. Hunt St. 972-569-6909

HERITAGE VILLAGE AT CHESTNUT SQUARE—This collection of historic structures includes a general store, schoolhouse, and chapel. Gift shop. 315 S. Chestnut St. 972-562-8790

LAKE LAVON—Parks offer fishing, boating, swimming, picnicking, and camping. East of Allen and McKinney. 972-442-3141

PECAN GROVE CEMETERY—The historic cemetery holds the remains of settlers and veterans from the Texas Revolution through the Vietnam War. Off SH 5. 972-542-4029

MERIDIAN

POP. 1,415

Meridian Chamber of Commerce: 111 N. Main St. 254-435-2966; meridian-chamber.com

Meridian maintains small town charm, which is evident on the historic square with its Renaissance Revival-style courthouse. Bed-and-breakfast accommodations are available in historic buildings. The annual National Championship Barbecue Cook-Off is in October.

MERIDIAN STATE PARK—The park offers fishing, hiking, birding, camping, picnicking, and bicycling on park roads. Admission charge. 173 Park Road No. 7, Meridian. 254-435-2536

WINERY—Red Caboose Winery and Vineyards. See TEXAS BEVERAGE TOUR section.

MESQUITE

POP. 147,899

Mesquite Convention and Visitors Bureau: 757 N. Galloway. 800-541-2355 or 972-204-4927; visitmesquitetx.com

Entertainment options include rodeo, football, the arts, and historic sites. Downtown hosts an April to November marketplace, Saturday pop-up shops, mom-and-pop restaurants, shops, and events. Enjoy disc golf courses, the Mesquite Golf Club, parks, hiking/walking trails, lakes, and pools. Events include the Summer Sizzle Festival.

DEVIL'S BOWL SPEEDWAY—This half-mile racetrack features sprint cars, modifieds, and stock cars. Admission charge. 1711 Lawson Road. 972-222-2421

FLORENCE RANCH HOMESTEAD—The landmark features rural Texas architecture and early pioneer ranching. Gift shop. 1424 Barnes Bridge Road. 972-204-4933

KIDS EMPIRE—Children can play their way through a maze and build structures. 3636 Gus Thomasson Road. 972-803-8711

MESQUITE ARTS CENTER—This facility hosts a variety of music, theater, and visual art events. 1527 N. Galloway Ave. 972-216-8132

MESQUITE CHAMPIONSHIP RODEO AT MESQUITE ARENA—Established in 1958, this indoor rodeo is a popular destination. 1818 Rodeo Drive. 972-285-8777

OPAL LAWRENCE HISTORICAL PARK—This Texas Prairie vernacular-style farmstead is listed in the National Register of Historic Places. 701-711 E. Kearney St. 972-216-6468

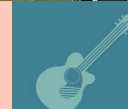
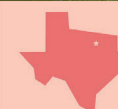
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MEXIA

POP. 6,868

Mexia Area Chamber of Commerce:
214 N. Sherman St. mexiachamber.com

The town was named for Mexican Gen. José Antonio Mexia, whose family donated the townsite. Events include a rodeo in June and the Boomin' on the Fourth Celebration in July.

CONFEDERATE REUNION GROUNDS STATE HISTORIC SITE—It is a gathering place for living-history events and a place to picnic, fish, and canoe. Admission charge. 1738 FM 2705. 254-472-0959

FORT PARKER STATE PARK—The park offers a fishing pier, hike-and-bike trails, nature center, camping, spring wildflowers, and rental canoes and kayaks. Admission charge. 194 Park Road 28. 254-562-5751

LAKE MEXIA—The lake has recreational areas offering boating, swimming, picnicking, camping, and fishing. Off US 84. 254-562-5922

OLD FORT PARKER—See GROESBECK.

TEHUACANA HILLS—The former administration building of the 1852 Tehuacana Academy remains. Westminster Street at College Avenue, Tehuacana.

MIDLOTHIAN

POP. 38,635

Midlothian Chamber of Commerce: 513 S. Ninth St. 972-723-8600; midlothianchamber.org

This city bills itself as the "Cement Capital of Texas" and the "Steel Capital of Texas" because of the number of steel manufacturers in the area.

LARKIN NEWTON CABIN—In Heritage Park, the cabin is built from hand-hewn red cedar logs. 234 N. Eighth St. 972-775-7161

MOODY

POP. 1,601

Moody City Hall: 254-853-2314; moodytx.gov

MOTHER NEFF STATE PARK—The park includes a Tonkawa Indian tribe cave, CCC rock tower, spring wildflowers, hiking, camping, and fishing. Admission charge. 1921 Park Road 14. 254-853-2389

MOULTON

POP. 856

Moulton Chamber of Commerce: 361-401-9886; moultontexas.com

The city's Czech-German heritage is still evident. Several historical markers are found in the city, as well as the original Old Moulton townsite before it was moved closer to the railroad. Quaint storefronts are reminiscent of the late 1800s. B&B accommodations are available. The Annual Moulton Town and Country Jamboree is in July.

ORRIN WINTERS CABIN—The reassembled two-room cabin was originally built by one of the town's settlers. In city park on West Veterans Drive. 361-596-4621

ST. JOSEPH'S CATHOLIC CHURCH—This "painted church" is early 20th-century Gothic style with stained-glass windows. 601 N. Pecan St. 361-596-4674

MOUNT VERNON

POP. 2,541

City of Mount Vernon: 109 N. Kaufman St. 903-537-2252; cityofmountvernontexas.com

A Grecian-style 1912 gray limestone courthouse is the center of this Texas Main Street City. More than 70 homes built before World War I are marked with signs designating the original owners. The Cherokee Trace runs along the county's eastern edge, the Choctaw Trail goes through town, and the Bankhead Highway is Main Street.

1894 COTTON BELT DEPOT—The museum features railroad-related items. A small log cabin, syrup press, mill, and blacksmith shop are on the property. Free. 200 S. Kaufman St. 903-537-9300

BANKHEAD HIGHWAY VISITOR CENTER—It is in the home of Henry Clay Thruston, the tallest soldier in the Confederate Army. It has quilting demonstrations. 175 CR 1010. 903-537-4365

Dupree Park Nature Center—This 57-acre nature preserve features hiking trails adjacent to the visitor center. On CR 1010. 903-537-9300 or 903-537-2264

FIRE STATION MUSEUM—Changing exhibits include natural history, violins, toys, and bird eggs. Free. 201 S. Kaufman St. 903-537-9300

FRANKLIN COUNTY GENEALOGY SOCIETY—Exhibits housed in the Parchman-Meredith Store Building detail the county's history. 110 Main St. 903-537-9391

LAKE CYPRESS SPRINGS—The lake offers parks, camping, picnic areas, marinas, boat ramps, and swimming. Take SH 37 South then FM 2723 East. 903-537-4536

MAJORS-PARCHMAN FARMSTEAD—This 1883 Victorian farmhouse has original outbuildings and includes a log cabin. 701 S. Kaufman St. 903-537-9300

MOUNT VERNON MUSIC HALL—This restored church, built in the early 1900s, hosts concerts and other performances. 402 Leftwich St. 903-563-3780

MUENSTER

POP. 1,627

Muenster Chamber of Commerce: 1000 E. Division St., Suite D. 940-759-2227; muensterchamber.com

Muenster's German customs and Texas hospitality blend well, and visitors are always *willkommen*. Be sure to visit the glockenspiel, the German-style clock tower with music and carved wooden dancing figures that appear at the top of each hour (during business hours). Germanfest is celebrated in April and Oktoberfest is in October.

MUENSTER MUSEUM—The museum features antiques and memorabilia related to Muenster and Cooke County. 420 N. Main St. 940-759-4788

NAVASOTA

POP. 8,417

City of Navasota: 200 E. McAlpine St. 936-825-6475; visitnavasota.com or navasotatx.gov

Navasota Grimes County Chamber of Commerce: 117 S. LaSalle St. 936-825-6600; navasotagrimeschamber.com

The area features ornate 19th-century architecture and beautiful parks. Navasota was named the Blues Capital of Texas by the Texas Legislature and was home to noted songster Mance Lipscomb with a statue in Mance Lipscomb Park. Events include Texas Birthday Bash, Sounds of Summer Concert Series, and Home for the Holidays.

HISTORIC CEMETERY—The Oakland Cemetery has been in use since the 1860s. Blues musician Mance Lipscomb is in the Resthaven section. 801 Sixth St. 936-825-6475

HORLOCK ART GALLERY & HISTORY MUSEUM—The Horlock house serves as an exhibit of the Victorian era. It also hosts a Navasota Artist in Residence program. 1215 E. Washington Ave.

LA SALLE MONUMENT—French explorer René-Robert Cavelier, Sieur de la Salle, was murdered near present-day Navasota. On SH 105 downtown.

NAVASOTA MUSIC MURAL—This alley mural depicts Navasota's music history. 200 block of Washington Avenue. 936-825-6475

STATUE OF FRANK HAMER—The statue honors the city marshal, who as a Texas Ranger was responsible for the capture of outlaws Bonnie and Clyde. 200 E. McAlpine St. 936-825-6475

WASHINGTON-ON-THE-BRAZOS STATE HISTORIC SITE—See WASHINGTON.

NOCONA

POP. 3,138

Nocona Chamber of Commerce and Visitors Center: 304 Clay St., No. 3. 940-825-3526; nocona.org

Nocona is nestled in the heart of the North Texas Hill Country. Located along the Chisholm Trail, the picturesque countryside has views of the past, present, and future. It is home to museums, art galleries, a lake, leather goods, and more. Rand McNally named it "One of the Top 5 Most Fun Small Towns in America."

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LAKE NOCONA—It provides an ideal fishing environment for many types of fish and is the state's fourth-best bass lake. Access via FMs 1956 and 3301. 940-825-3282

NOKONA BALL GLOVE FACTORY—Visit the only U.S. factory still making ball gloves and its museum. Admission charge. 917 E. US 82. 800-433-0957

TALES 'N' TRAILS MUSEUM—The museum offers a vibrant and vivid historical picture of the North Central Texas area through its vast collection of artifacts and photographs. Admission charge. 1522 US 82 East. 940-825-5330

NORTH RICHLAND HILLS POP. 70,663

City of North Richland Hills: 4301 City Point Drive. 817-427-6000; nrhtx.com

The city is home to Tarrant County College Northeast and the University of Dallas Tarrant County.

NRH20—The water park features an uphill water-coaster, a wave pool, slides, and an endless river. Admission charge. 9001 Boulevard 26. 817-427-6500

NYTEX SPORTS CENTRE—Home to the Texas Brahmas Hockey Team (CHL Minor League), this facility also offers public ice skating and hockey skills classes. 8851 Ice House Drive. 817-336-4423

SMITHFIELD—Historical markers are at the Smithfield Depot, cemetery, Masonic Lodge, and three churches along Main Street and Smithfield Road.

PARIS POP. 24,695

Paris Visitors and Convention Council: 8 W. Plaza. 903-784-2501 or 800-727-4789; paristexas.com

The second-largest Paris in the world became an American town in 1846. The prosperous city was devastated by the "Great Fire" of 1916, destroying many houses and all but two downtown buildings. Today, Paris has the nation's largest collection of buildings circa 1916-1918, with its downtown in the National Register of Historic Places.

IEFFEL TOWER REPLICA—This 65-foot-tall replica includes a red cowboy hat at the top and colored lights at night. 2025 S. Collegiate Drive. 903-784-2501

EVERGREEN CEMETERY—It includes graves of early Texas patriots, and many unusual carved monuments. South Church Street at Jefferson Road.

LAKE CROOK—It offers picnic areas, a playground, campsites, fishing, and the annual SDBA Paris Powerboat Grand Prix Drag Boat Races. Off US 271. 903-784-9277

LAMAR COUNTY HISTORICAL MUSEUM—The complex includes the restored Union Station, Heritage Hall, and the Sheb Williams Rural Life Museum. 1015 W. Kaufman St. 903-784-2501

PAT MAYSE LAKE—Several parks have boat ramps, fishing, picnicking, and camping. About 13 miles north of Paris off US 271. 903-732-3020

PLAZA GALLERY—In the chamber and visitors center, it features the work of talented local artists. 8 W. Plaza. 903-737-9699 or 903-784-2501

SAM BELL MAXEY HOUSE STATE HISTORIC SITE—Built in 1868, it showcases original family furnishings, clothing, and treasured letters. Daily guided tours are Wednesday through Sunday. Admission charge. 812 S. Church St. 903-785-5716

VALLEY OF THE CADDO MUSEUM & CULTURAL CENTER INC.—Explore history and culture through displays on archeology, astronomy, education, and art. 1115 Bonham St. 903-905-4099

PILOT POINT POP. 4,886

Pilot Point Visitor Information: 102 E. Main St. 940-686-2165; visitpilotpoint.org or cityofpilotpoint.org

The historic square, with its preserved buildings, is home to antiques shops and cafés. The Farmers & Merchants Bank Building, of Richardsonian and Romanesque architecture, was used in the 1968 film *Bonnie and Clyde*.

BLACK MUSTANG RANCH—The ranch offers guided horseback riding for intermediate to advanced riders. Admission charge. 1511 FM 1192. 817-915-8455

CLIFTON AND NADENE IRICK MUSEUM—It has rotating exhibits on Pilot Point history, Lake Ray Roberts, and Denton County. Free. 201 S. Jefferson St.

DISTILLERY—Western Son Distillery. See TEXAS BEVERAGE TOUR section.

PECAN CREEK STRAWBERRY FARM—Pick your own strawberries in April and May. Free. 12141 Foutch Road. 940-305-4325

RAY ROBERTS LAKE STATE PARK—The park includes campsites, boat ramps, a marina, pavilions, a lodge, mountain-bike trails, camping, fishing, and the greenbelt. Admission charge.

Isle du Bois Unit—The full-service park has a six-lane boat ramp. It also offers equestrian and walk-in campsites, swimming, and a lighted fishing pier. 100 PW 4137. 940-686-2148

Johnson Branch Unit—Fish, sail, swim, water-ski, camp, hike, and bike. 100 PW 4153, Valley View. 940-637-2294

Ray Roberts Greenbelt Corridor—It offers 20 miles of hiking, equestrian, and paddling trails. Trailheads are at FM 455, FM 428, and US 380. 940-686-2148

Sanger Marina Unit—This is a full-service marina. 1399 Marina Circle, Sanger. 940-458-7343

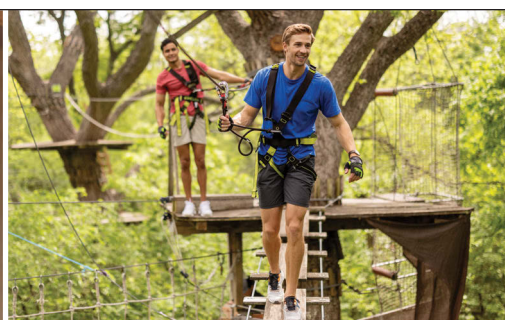
SHARKAROSA WILDLIFE RANCH—The 126-acre educational facility offers field trips, private tours, and a tram ride. Admission charge. 11670 Massey Road. 940-686-4600

TEXAS TULIPS—Stroll through fields of tulips or pick some to take home. Admission charge. 10656 FM 2931. 940-290-4075

PLANO POP. 289,547

Visit Plano: 7600 Windrose Ave., Suite G110. 800-817-5266 or 972-941-5891; visitplano.com

Plano's location just north of Dallas offers easy access to the area's professional sports, performing arts, museums, and the world-famous Southfork Ranch. But Plano is also a destination in its own right, with over 55 hotels, more than 1,000 restaurants, world-class shopping, a lively arts and nightlife scene, and abundant natural beauty.



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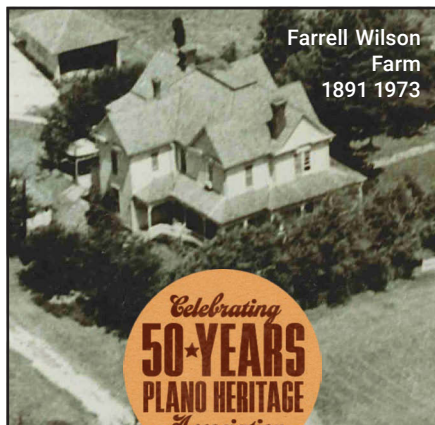
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CRAYOLA EXPERIENCE—It offers hours of interactive, creative play with hands-on attractions. Admission charge. 6121 W. Park Blvd., Suite A100. 469-642-2901

DOWNTOWN PLANO ARTS DISTRICT—Visit the Inter-urban Railway Museum, antiques shops, and boutiques. Catch a performance at McCall Plaza, the Courtyard Theater, or the Cox Building Playhouse. 1021 E. 15th St. 972-922-1292

GO APE ZIP LINE & TREETOP ADVENTURE—Zip lines, Tarzan swings, and suspended obstacles provide a fun challenge in Oak Point Park & Nature Preserve. Admission charge. 5901 Los Rios Blvd. 800-971-8271

HERITAGE FARMSTEAD MUSEUM—Step back into the late 1800s and early 1900s at this living history museum. Admission charge. 1900 W. 15th St. 972-881-0140

SOUTHFORK RANCH—See memorabilia from the *Dallas* TV series or take a guided trail ride. Admission charge. 3700 Hogge Drive, Parker. 972-442-7800

POTTSBORO

POP. 2,756

Pottsboro Visitor Center: 615 FM 120 East. 903-786-6371; pottsborochamber.com

In the heart of Grayson County, Pottsboro boasts a rich history intertwined with the legendary Shawnee-Preston Trail. Today, it stands as a beacon of small town charm, offering a warm welcome to visitors, particularly those drawn to Lake Texoma. As a quintessential lake town, Pottsboro offers tranquility and adventure.

HAGERMAN NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE—See SHERMAN.

PERRIN AIR FORCE BASE HISTORICAL MUSEUM—Air-craft displays, memorabilia, and exhibits highlight the history of this base. Donations accepted. 436 McCullum Ave. 903-786-8741

RICHARDSON

POP. 118,802

Richardson Convention & Visitor Bureau: 411 W. Arapaho Road, Suite 105. 972-744-4034 or 888-690-7287; richardsontexas.org

Richardson hosts award-winning music/art festivals each year and is home to a state-of-the-art performing arts facility. The Dallas Area Rapid Transit Light Rail stops in Richardson, giving visitors easy access to other DFW metroplex attractions.

CHARLES W. EISEMANN CENTER FOR PERFORMING ARTS—It holds performances and special events, plus a public art gallery on the west wall of the mezzanine. 2351 Performance Drive. 972-744-4600

UT DALLAS HISTORY OF AVIATION COLLECTION—This facility contains items and collections pertaining to aviation history. Free. 800 W. Campbell Road. 972-883-2570

WINEBURGH PHILATELIC RESEARCH LIBRARY—The library includes "The Language of Philately" display, stamps, books, and journals. Free. 800 W. Campbell Road. 972-883-2570

ROANOKE

POP. 9,943

Roanoke Visitor Center and Museum: 114 N. Oak St. 817-491-6090; roanoketexas.com

Listed in the National Register of Historic Places, the town also has been dubbed the Unique Dining Capital of Texas by the Texas Legislature. It's home to more than 40 restaurants, including the original world-famous Babe's Chicken Dinner House.

HAWAIIAN FALLS WATERPARK—The family water park offers slides, raft rides, a water playground, a wave pool, and a lazy river. 290 W. Byron Nelson Blvd. 817-853-0099

HISTORIC WALKING TOUR—A self-guided tour features historic sites along Oak Street. A brochure is available at the visitor center. 817-491-6090

ROANOKE VISITOR CENTER AND MUSEUM—This restored 1886 historic structure once housed the Silver Spur Saloon and now holds a visitor center and a museum of regional artifacts. 114 N. Oak St. 817-491-6090

ROCKDALE

POP. 5,529

City of Rockdale: rockdaletourism.com

Rockdale was established as a railroad town in 1874. Today, the I&GN Depot serves as Rockdale's weekend visitor center, and the Rockdale Chamber of Commerce is the weekday visitor center. Events include Rockdale's Fall Music Festival, Fair & Rodeo, and Holiday Float Parade. Enjoy the city's proud history and hometown hospitality.

OLD CITY CEMETERY—Recently awarded a historical marker, the cemetery includes the graves of 12 Civil War Confederate Soldiers. East First Avenue at Oak Street.

ROCKDALE CHAMBER HISTORIC COFFIELD HOUSE & VISITOR CENTER—The fossilized wood building has a historic marker, weekday visitor center, and Saturday farmers market. 1203 W. Cameron Ave. 512-446-2030

ROCKDALE I&GN RAILROAD DEPOT MUSEUM—The depot includes artifacts, a model railroad, a dining car, and a replica blacksmith shop. 11 N. Main St. 512-446-2020

ROCKWALL

POP. 51,461

Rockwall Visitor Center: 697 E. I-30. 972-771-5733; visitrockwall.com or rockwallchamber.org

Rockwall has scenic, rolling hills and sits on the shores of Lake Ray Hubbard. A golf course is near the lake.

LAKE RAY HUBBARD—See DALLAS.

ROCKWALL COUNTY HISTORICAL MUSEUM—This museum is in the oldest house in Rockwall. Antique farm equipment and a windmill are outside. 901 E. Washington St. 972-722-1507

WINERY—San Martiño Winery & Vineyards. See TEXAS BEVERAGE TOUR section.

ROUND TOP

POP. 91

Round Top Area Chamber of Commerce & Round Top Visitor Center: 103 Henkel Circle. 979-505-1200; explorroundtop.com

Round Top is on the Texas Independence Trail, El Camino Real, and in the Texas Settlement Region. Events include the Round Top Music Festival, antiques shows, and Shakespeare at Winedale.

BETHLEHEM LUTHERAN CHURCH—Stone construction and simple lines show German architectural influence. The unique pipe organ is made of hand-shaped cedar. 412 S. White St. 979-249-3686

HENKEL SQUARE MARKET—Homes circa 1820-70 host shops, galleries, eateries, and a visitor center. 201 N. Live Oak St. 979-249-5840

ROUND TOP FESTIVAL INSTITUTE—In June and July, students join distinguished artists and teachers in orchestral, chamber, and solo performances. 248 Jaster Road. 979-249-3129

WINEDALE HISTORICAL COMPLEX—This cluster of buildings preserves Texas history through architecture, furnishings, and decorative arts. 3738 FM 2714. 979-278-3530

Shakespeare at Winedale—It presents Shakespeare plays in repertory during July and August. 3738 FM 2714. 512-471-4726

ROYSE CITY

POP. 19,782

Royse City Chamber of Commerce: 102 W. Old Greenville Road. 972-636-5000; roysecitychamber.com

Visit the historic district. Pastures and grain fields can still be seen in the surrounding countryside. The Well on Main Street offers outdoor entertainment and live music every weekend. FunFest is celebrated in October.

FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH—Erected in 1904, it's a frame structure with three prominent entry towers and decorative shingling. 305 N. Josephine St. 972-636-5000

MILITARY HERITAGE COLLECTION OF NORTH TEXAS—The collection tells U.S. military history. Arrange

to ride on or drive a fully restored tank (reservations required). Free. 20798 CR 590, Nevada. 469-434-0396

OLD JAIL PARK—See a historic two-cell “calaboose,” or jail. 217 E. Main St.

ZANER ROBISON HISTORICAL MUSEUM—It depicts life on the prairie from early settlers through the 1960s. Call ahead for tours. Free. 124 Arch St. 972-635-7438

SAINT JO

POP. 924

Saint Jo Chamber of Commerce: 109 S. Broad St. 940-995-2337; saintjochamber.com

GILBERT'S FENTON ART GLASS AND COLLECTIBLES MUSEUM—Features nearly 30,000 pieces of glass and collectibles. Gift shop. 812 US 82 West. 940-995-2776

HISTORIC CHISHOLM TRAIL SQUARE—Buildings dating from 1873 surround a plaza and gazebo.

HOWELL-SICKLES STUDIO & MAIN STREET GALLERY—It exhibits the work of cowgirl artist Donna Howell-Sickles and other well-known Texas artists. 108 S. Main St. 940-995-2786

INTERNATIONAL ARTILLERY MUSEUM—The largest private collection of military ordnance in the United States is displayed. 201 S. Main St. 940-395-9309

SCENIC DRIVE—Hilltop views of the North Texas Hill Country and Red River Valley are found along the winding FM 677 and FM 2382 north of Saint Jo.

STONEWALL SALOON MUSEUM—Step into a restored 1873 saloon with authentic photos and relics. 100 Main St. 940-872-0269

WINERY—Arché and Blue Ostrich Winery & Vineyard. See TEXAS BEVERAGE TOUR section.

SALADO

POP. 2,403

Salado Visitor Center: 423 S. Main St. 254-947-8634; visitsaladotexas.com

Nestled among the rolling hills of Central Texas, Salado has always been one of a kind. Try your hand at blowing glass, create your own pottery by hand, or converse with world-renowned painters and sculptors. Browse specialty boutiques featuring clothing, jewelry, and home décor. Enjoy local wineries, a brewery, and world-class dining.

BREWERY AND WINERY—Barrow Brewing Company and Salado Winery Company. See TEXAS BEVERAGE TOUR section.

HISTORIC CEMETERIES—Tours of the cemeteries can be arranged through the Salado Historical Society.

Salado Cemetery—Established in 1856 on a 2.5-acre site, the cemetery includes distinguished Texans. Baines Street.

West Salado Cemetery—This African American cemetery dates to the 1870s. West Village Road.

HISTORIC INNS—Experience the history of Salado in sites listed in the National Register of Historic Places and as Recorded Texas Historic Landmarks.

Inn on the Creek—It was originally constructed in 1882 and doubled in size in 1985-86. 602 Center Circle. 254-947-5554

Stagecoach Inn—This restored restaurant and inn was built in 1860 and a site on the Chisholm Trail. 416 S. Main St. 254-947-5111

The Salado Inn and Village Venue—The historical Norton-Orgain House has overnight accommodations, local businesses, and an event venue. 7 N. Main St. 888-808-0460 or 512-627-9619

HISTORICAL TOURS—Tours of Salado's historical sites are available as self-guided or with a local guide. Contact the Salado Visitor's Center. 254-947-8634

SALADO CULTURAL ARTS DISTRICT—Visit the galleries, exhibits, artists, and culture within the Village of Salado. 254-947-8634

SALADO GLASSWORKS—Experience the art of glass-blowing at this working studio. 2 Peddler's Alley. 254-947-0339

SALADO MUSEUM & COLLEGE PARK—This historical landmark preserves the pioneer history of Salado, including Texas' first coeducational college. 423 S. Main St. 254-947-5232

SALADO SCULPTURE GARDEN—Enjoy more than 20 sculptures in a natural setting. 113 Salado Plaza Drive. 254-394-3838

TABLEROCK AMPHITHEATER—This outdoor venue hosts plays and musicals throughout the year, including *Salado Legends*, *Fright Trail*, and *A Christmas Carol*. 409 Table Rock Road. 254-421-3903

SAN FELIPE

POP. 713

Sealy Convention and Visitors Bureau: 309 Main St., Sealy. 979-877-3237; discoversealy.com

Known as the “Birthplace of Anglo-American Settlement in Texas,” Stephen F. Austin settled his first group of Texas colonists here in 1823. It was the site of meetings that led to Texas' Declaration of Independence.

SAN FELIPE DE AUSTIN STATE HISTORIC SITE—The historic site has unique objects, archeological artifacts, multimedia displays, and outdoor tours. Admission charge. 220 Second St. 979-885-2181

STEPHEN F. AUSTIN STATE PARK—The park offers camping, birding, wildlife viewing, fishing, and hiking and biking along 5 miles of trails. Admission charge. Park Road 38. 979-885-3613

SCHULENBURG

POP. 2,718

Schulenburg Chamber of Commerce: 618 N. Main St. 979-743-4514 or 866-504-5294; schulenburgchamber.org

In 2005, the Texas State Legislature named Schulenburg the Official Home of the Painted Churches. Schulenburg is also home to many historical buildings and markers.

PAINTED CHURCHES TOUR—Schulenburg is surrounded by several beautiful examples of the historic Painted Churches. 618 N. Main St. 979-743-4514

SCHULENBURG HISTORICAL MUSEUM—Exhibits depict life in the early days of this rural German-Czech community. 631 N. Main St. 979-743-2403

STANZEL MODEL AIRCRAFT MUSEUM—Brothers Victor and Joe Stanzel's dreams of flying turned into a successful toy business. 311 Baumgarten St. 979-743-6559

TEXAS POLKA MUSIC MUSEUM—It highlights the history and legacy of polka and folk music brought to Texas. 712 Lyons Ave. 979-743-4752

SEALY

POP. 6,956

Sealy Convention and Visitors Bureau: 309 Main St. 979-877-3237; discoversealy.com

The historic downtown has eateries and shops in the old brick buildings. A self-guided driving tour features historical homes, businesses, churches, and the original Sealy Mattress Factory. A number of farms raising horses of all sizes, including miniature horses, offer tours.

HERITAGE PARK/SANTA FE PARK MUSEUM—It has artifacts from the early days of Sealy and Austin County. The complex includes an old jail. Admission charge. 211 E. Main St. 832-492-4244 or 979-885-3222

SCENIC DRIVE—SH 36 North from I-10, Exit 720, is part of the Central Texas Bluebonnet Trail, which is full of blooms in the spring.

SEGUIN

POP. 33,408

Seguin Visitor Center: 200 S. Austin St. 830-401-5000; visitseguin.com

Seguin, named for Tejano Texian freedom fighter Juan Seguin, is one of the oldest towns in Texas, founded only 16 months after the Texas Revolution began. Just 30 miles east of San Antonio, the city offers deep-rooted Texas history, the World's Largest Pecan, tree-lined river bottoms, and a quaint, historic downtown experience.



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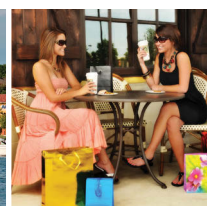
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PRAIRIES & LAKES

DOWNTOWN HISTORIC DISTRICT—The 26-square-block downtown historic district features notable early 1900s architecture, statues, and the art deco courthouse.

HERITAGE VILLAGE—It holds the state's oldest Protestant church, a log cabin, jail, German adobe house, and Victorian doll house. 415 S. River St. 830-379-6382

HISTORIC MAGNOLIA HOTEL BED & BREAKFAST—It was originally built in 1840 by Seguin co-founder and Texas Ranger James Campbell. 207 S. Crockett St. 512-571-2706

JUAN SEGUIN BURIAL SITE—An inscription recounts Seguin's life. 789 S. Saunders St.

MAGNOLIA HOTEL—History and ghost tours are offered almost every Saturday. 203 S. Crockett St. 512-571-2706

PECAN MUSEUM OF TEXAS—Peruse pecan artwork, farming tools and equipment, and some of Kenneth and Zelda Pape's famous nutcrackers. 390 Cordova Road. 830-379-0933

SEBASTOPOL HOUSE HISTORIC SITE—The Greek Revival mansion and "limecrete" structure has exhibits on construction technology and Wilson Pottery. Free. 704 Zorn St. 830-379-4833

SEGUIN GUADALUPE COUNTY HERITAGE MUSEUM—It holds Guadalupe County history, local artifacts, and photo exhibits. Admission charge. 114 N. River St. 830-372-0965

TRUE WOMEN TOUR—Contact the Tourist Information Center for information on sites from Janice Woods Win-dle's popular novel. 830-379-6382

WALNUT SPRINGS MEMORIAL ROSE GARDEN—Field-stone walls lined with roses mark the stagecoach route down to the crossing on Walnut Branch. 317 W. Court St. 830-401-2480 or 830-401-5000

WORLD'S LARGEST PECAN—The 16-foot-long by 8-foot-wide creation resides at the Big Red Barn. 390 Cordova Road.

ZDT'S AMUSEMENT PARK—The park includes rides, climbing walls, games, and water activities. Admission charge. 301 W. Kingsbury St. 830-386-0151

SHERMAN

POP. 45,264

Sherman Visitor Center: 100 N. Travis St., Suite D. 903-892-7230; shermantx.org

The city is home to Austin College. Sherman's cultural offerings include the Sherman Symphony Orchestra and the Sherman Community Players live theater troupe. Live music abounds, especially during summer, with the Hot Summer Nights free concert series. Kelly Square offers shopping in restored turn-of-the-century buildings.

BREWERY—903 Brewers. See TEXAS BEVERAGE TOUR section.

HAGERMAN NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE—Wildlife guides, bird lists, and a self-guided driving tour are available at the visitor center. 6465 Refuge Road. 903-786-2826

HARBER WILDLIFE MUSEUM—The museum displays examples of big-game animals hunted around the world and African artifacts. Admission charge. 4703 Texoma Parkway. 903-771-1134

THE SHERMAN MUSEUM—Pictures and artifacts tell Grayson County history. Free. 301 S. Walnut St. 903-893-7623

SHINER

POP. 2,173

Shiner Chamber of Commerce: 817 N. Ave. E. 361-594-4180; shinertx.com or shinerhalfmoon.com

With a bustling brewery, Spoetzl Brewery & Distillery; beautiful city parks; a wonderful, curated museum; and places to eat and stay; Shiner's a great day trip or weekend trip for all ages.

EDWIN WOLTERS MEMORIAL MUSEUM—The museum has natural history and memorabilia of early Shiner history. 306 S. Ave. I. 361-594-3774

GASLIGHT THEATRE—The 1895 opera house reopened in 1975 as a dinner theater. Three plays are offered each year. 207 E. Seventh St. 361-594-2079

K. SPOETZL BREWERY, DISTILLERY, & BBQ COMPANY—Home of Shiner beers, this is the oldest independent brewery in Texas. 603 E. Brewery St. (SH 95). 361-594-3852

STS. CYRIL AND METHODIUS CATHOLIC CHURCH—This eye-catching landmark has six stained-glass windows and a mural of Christ in the Garden of Gethsemane. 306 S. Ave. F. 361-594-3836

SMITHVILLE

POP. 4,130

Smithville Area Chamber of Commerce: 106 NE First St. 512-237-2313; smithvilletx.org or visitsmithville.org

"Smitty," once the largest Gingerbread Man in the World, is located near the chamber office. Come take a picture, then go inside for a free Visit Smithville sticker. Events include Smithville Jamboree, Wicked Wine Festival/Spooky Sip and Shop, Film and Music Festival, Airing of the Quilts, Festival of Lights, and Cinco de Mayo Fiesta.

BUESCHER STATE PARK—Enjoy camping, fishing, hiking, rental canoes, and cabins. A 12-mile road connects with Bastrop State Park. Admission charge. 100 Park Road 1E. 512-237-2241

DISTILLERY—Bone Spirits. See TEXAS BEVERAGE TOUR listing.

JAMES H. LONG RAILROAD PARK AND MUSEUM—The museum depicts area railroad history. The park has picnic areas and a playground. Admission charge. 106 NE First St. 512-237-2313

RIVERBEND PARK—The Lower Colorado River Authority park has camping, a fishing pier, picnic areas, a disc golf course, and a playground. Free. 107 SH 71. 512-237-3282

SMITHVILLE VETERANS' MEMORIAL AND SPLASH PARK—The memorial honors veterans, and the splash



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park area reflects freedom and youthful energy. 311 NW Second St. 512-237-3282

SOMERVILLE

POP. 1,364

Burleson County Chamber of Commerce:
301 N. Main St., Caldwell. 979-567-0000;
burlesoncountytexas.com

This city is a gateway to Somerville Lake, where multiple parks offer outdoor activities. Big Creek and Yegua Creek parks have a half-mile-long nature trail. The Kolache Festival is in September.

LAKE SOMERVILLE STATE PARK AND TRAILWAY—Hike, bike, camp, and fish. A 13-mile Trailway System connects the two units. Both have wheelchair-accessible trails. Admission charge.

Birch Creek—The unit is known for its group-trailer area, fishing, and lake access. 14222 Park Road 57. 979-535-7763

Nails Creek—This unit offers a shallow swimming area, canoes for rent, and equestrian trails. 6280 FM 180, Ledbetter. 979-289-2392

SOMERVILLE LAKE—This Army Corps of Engineers lake offers parks, marinas, boat ramps, and camping. 1560 Thornberry Drive. 979-596-1622

STEPHENVILLE

POP. 21,641

Stephenville Tourism and Visitors Bureau: 298 W. Washington St. 254-552-1222; visitstephenville.com

Stephenville is home to Tarleton State University, which features the Southwest Regional Dairy Center, the TSU Planetarium, and the Clyde H. Wells Fine Arts Center and Gallery. Events include the Antique Tractor Show, Moo-La Fest, Cowboy Capital Pro Rodeo, Sundown on the Square, and By-Gone Days on the Bosque.

HISTORICAL HOUSE MUSEUM COMPLEX—Grounds hold a dozen buildings, including a Victorian home with period furnishings, carriage house, log cabin, and church. Free. 525 E. Washington St. 254-965-5880

SULPHUR SPRINGS

POP. 16,408

Sulphur Springs Tourism Information:
1220 Cessna Drive. 903-885-5614 or 888-300-6623; visitsulphurspringstexas.org

The Romanesque Revival-style Hopkins County Courthouse is on the downtown square. Visit the "see-through" public restrooms on the square, built with one-way mirrors. Events include a farmers market, Celebration Market, the Hopkins County Dairy Festival, Lone Star Heritage Quilt Show, and the Hopkins County Fall Festival.

COOPER LAKE STATE PARK—With two sites on Cooper Lake, the park is popular for stargazing, fishing, horseback riding, and camping. South Sulphur Unit: 1690 FM 3505. 903-945-5256

HOPKINS COUNTY MUSEUM AND HERITAGE PARK—This complex is home to historical houses, shops, and mills that were moved to the site. Admission charge. 416 N. Jackson St. 903-885-2387

LAKE SULPHUR SPRINGS—This is a city reservoir with boat ramps and fishing. Access 2 miles northwest of town off of SH 19. 903-885-7541

MUSIC BOX GALLERY—The library houses a collection of ornate music boxes. Donations accepted. 611 N. Davis St. 903-885-4926

SOUTHWEST DAIRY MUSEUM—The museum tells the story of the dairy industry. 1210 Houston St. 903-439-6455

TEAGUE

POP. 3,455

City of Teague: 105 S. Fourth St. 254-739-2547 or 254-739-2061; cityofteaguetexas.com

This city dates to the establishment of machine and car shops by the Trinity & Brazos Valley Railway.

BURLINGTON-ROCK ISLAND RAILROAD MUSEUM—The two-story depot features railroad relics and county historical items. Admission charge. 208 S. Third Ave. 903-388-0587

TEMPLE

POP. 89,458

Discover Temple: 100 W. Adams Ave., Suite 306. 254-298-5900; discovertemple.com

Nestled off I-35, Temple offers a unique experience. It's an hour from Austin, about half an hour from Waco, and minutes from Belton. The ever-growing and revitalized downtown district is full of locally owned restaurants and shops. Events include music festivals, an annual air show, farmers markets, and holiday-themed affairs.

BELTON LAKE—See BELTON.

CULTURAL ACTIVITIES CENTER—The venue hosts professional touring shows and concerts, staged productions, gallery exhibits, classes and workshops, and a summer arts camp. Free. 3011 N. Third St. 254-773-9926

CZECH HERITAGE MUSEUM AND GENEALOGY CENTER—Journey into the culture of the people of Moravia and the Czech lands who settled in Central Texas. Admission charge. 119 W. French Ave. 812-327-1766

DOWNTOWN DISTRICT—The district is home to locally owned shops, craft brews, restaurants, pubs' and live entertainment. Free. Downtown Temple. 254-298-5900

LIONS JUNCTION FAMILY WATER PARK—The water park has waterslides, an aqua climb wall, a swimming pool, a lazy river, concessions, and picnic pavilions. Admission charge. 5000 S. Fifth St. 254-298-5920

MILLER SPRINGS NATURE CENTER—It has 25 acres of wetlands, a natural creek bed, birdwatching, picnicking, camping, fishing, and 20 miles of hiking trails. Free. 1473 FM 2271, Belton. 254-933-5860

MOODY DEPOT MUSEUM—The historic depot houses a model railroad club with dozens of working model trains on elaborate track systems. Free. 403 W. Ave. B. 254-749-0700

RAILROAD AND HERITAGE MUSEUM—Located in the historic 1911 Santa Fe Depot, the museum features exhib-

its exploring railroad and local history. Admission charge. 315 W. Ave. B. 254-298-5172 or 254-298-5450

TEMPLE CHILDREN'S MUSEUM—The museum sparks curiosity through hands-on learning with a focus on interaction between parents and children. Admission charge. 11 N. Fourth St. 254-500-7617

TERRELL

POP. 20,050

Terrell Visitor Information: 1314 W. Moore Ave. 972-563-5703 or 972-524-5703; discoverterrell.com

Terrell is home to many historical murals and a historic downtown area. In addition there are more than 20 historical markers and many historic homes, churches, and buildings. In April, the Terrell Jubilee brings in visitors from across the state. Spend a day with the Discover Terrell GeoTour and No. 1 British Flying Training School.

DISCOVER TERRELL GEOTOUR—Learn the town history with a scavenger hunt. A geocaching app is available. Free. 1314 W. Moore Ave. 972-757-8120

HAM ORCHARDS—Come pick your own blackberries with live music on Saturdays May 15 through Aug. 15. Free. 11939 County Road 309. 972-524-2028

MIDLAND RAIL CAR—See the private railroad car and memorabilia of Col. E.H.R. "Ned" Green, president of the Texas Midland Railroad. On Lions Club Lane. 972-524-6082

NO. 1 BRITISH FLYING TRAINING SCHOOL MUSEUM—It commemorates the joint efforts of the British and U.S. governments in training pilots here during World War II. 119 Silent Wings Blvd. 972-551-1122

R.A. TERRELL HOME—This landmark was one of the first homes in town. The interior is not accessible. 200 Bowser Circle. 972-524-3341

TERRELL HERITAGE MUSEUM—This local history museum is housed in the original Carnegie Building. 207 N. Frances St. 972-551-6600

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PRAIRIES & LAKES

TEXAS ZOOFARI PARK—The 900-acre drive-thru wildlife safari park features hundreds of free-roaming animals to see up close. Admission charge. 9773 FM 429, Kaufman. 469-966-4608

THE COLONY

POP. 45,367

Visit The Colony: 6900 Main St. 972-624-5253 or 877-264-4386; visitthecolonytx.com

Just north of Dallas, find a uniquely tranquil getaway complemented by urban comforts. The Colony offers a variety of world-class restaurants, lively attractions, and outdoor excursions. Special events are available year-round, including the annual Bow-Wow Luau and American Heroes: A Salute to Veterans.

BARNEY SMITH'S TOILET SEAT ART MUSEUM

View the life's work of Barney Smith, creator of over 1,400 eclectic toilet seat art pieces. Free. 5959 Grove Lane. 469-401-6764

BREWERY—Windmills. See TEXAS BEVERAGE TOUR section.

BRIDGES CEMETERY—The oldest legible grave dates to 1855. 6425 Morning Star Drive. 972-625-1106

DFW SURF—Explore Lewisville Lake with guided paddleboard adventures and surfing classes. Admission charge. 20400 Hackberry Creek Park Road. 972-427-4082

FIRESIDE SURF—Surf, or learn to surf, with expert coaches in a safe, controlled environment. Admission charge. 5772 Grandscape Blvd. 833-579-7873

GRANDSCAPE ENTERTAINMENT DISTRICT—The indoor-outdoor entertainment, shopping, and dining destination is home to traveling exhibits, free outdoor concerts, and family festivals. Free. 5752 Grandscape Blvd. 972-668-2222

GRANDSCAPE WHEEL—Take in 360-degree views of the scenic North Texas skyline inside a climate-controlled gondola. Admission charge. 5740 Grandscape Blvd. 972-410-0298

HAWAIIAN WATERS—The park has tube chutes, winding rivers, speed slides, and a jungle-themed water playground. Admission charge. 4400 Paige Road. 972-905-9925

STEWART CREEK PARK AND HIDDEN COVE PARK

AND MARINA—Enjoy camping, boating, fishing, swimming, and water-skiing on Lewisville Lake. Stewart Creek Park: 3700 Sparks Road; and Hidden Cove Park: 20400 Hackberry Creek Park Road. 972-624-2248

THE COLONY SHORELINE TRAIL—Enjoy a 3.5-mile nature trail made of natural crushed rock along Lewisville Lake. Free. 3700 Sparks Road and 4401 Standridge Drive. 972-625-1106

TRIBUTE SHORELINE TRAIL—A 3.11-mile nature trail secluded in a nature preserve on a peninsula of Lewisville Lake. Free. 1001 Lebanon Road. 972-625-1106

THURBER

POP. 8 (EST.)

thurbertexas.com

This "ghost town" was a community of more than 10,000 residents at one time, and it was the most important mine site in Texas for 30 years, before its decline. Six original buildings are still standing, as well as a 128-foot-tall smokestack.

W.K. GORDON CENTER FOR INDUSTRIAL HISTORY OF TEXAS

See exhibits and artifacts from the industries that shaped Thurber's rise and fall. 65258 I-20, Mingus. 254-968-1886

VAN

POP. 2,816

City of Van: 310 Chestnut St. 903-963-7216; vantx.com

Van is a community rich in history. Seven historical markers are within the city limits. Golfers can find a place to play nearby at the Garden Valley Golf Resort.

VAN AREA OIL AND HISTORICAL MUSEUM—Displays include oil-related memorabilia and area history. 190 Redwood St. 903-216-1765

WACO

POP. 147,434

Waco Welcome Center: 323 S. Sixth St. 254-750-8696; destinationwaco.org

Just 90 miles from Dallas and Austin, Waco is a diverse, bustling city with a university, two colleges, more than 40 hotels, and 300-plus restaurants. It's a popular destination for fans of hometown celebrities Chip and Joanna Gaines. Events include Spring at the Silos and Heart O' Texas Fair & Rodeo.

ARMSTRONG BROWNING LIBRARY—It holds works and memorabilia of Robert and Elizabeth Barrett Browning, sculptures, and Renaissance paintings. Free. 710 Speight Ave. 254-710-3566

THE ART CENTER OF WACO—The center preserves diverse visual arts. 701 S. Eighth St. 254-752-4371

BILL AND EVA WILLIAMS BEAR HABITAT—It's home to Baylor University's North American Black Bear mascots. Free. Fifth Street and M.P. Daniel Esplanade at Baylor University.

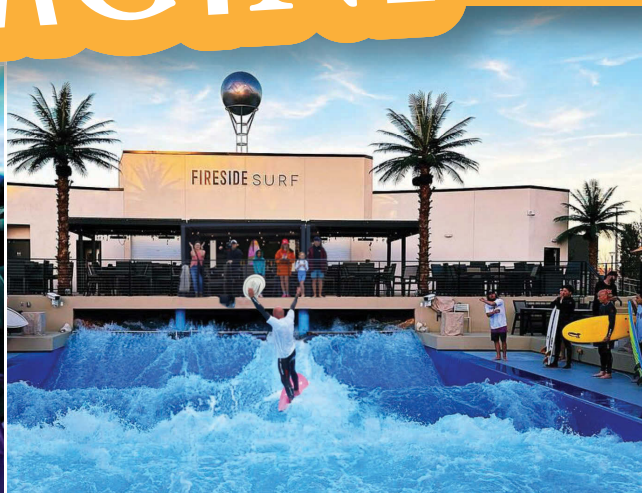
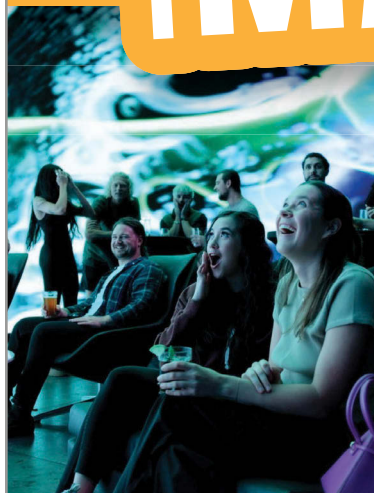
BRAZOS BLUFFS RANCH—The 350-acre ranch offers horseback riding, lodging, fishing, and other outdoor activities. Admission charge. 7007 Gholson Road. 254-722-9182

BREWRIES, DISTILLERY, AND WINERIES—Balcones Distilling, Bare Arms Brewing, Brotherwell Brewing, Country Spring Vineyards, Southern Roots Brewing Company, and Valley Mills Vineyards. See TEXAS BEVERAGE TOUR section.

CAMERON PARK—The park features a disc golf course and National Recreation Trail system. Free. 2601 Sturgis Road. 254-750-5980

CAMERON PARK ZOO—This is an AZA-accredited natural habitat zoo. Admission charge. 1701 N. Fourth St. 254-750-8400

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DORIS MILLER MEMORIAL—It honors the first Black American to receive the Navy Cross for bravery. Free. Elm Avenue at Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard.

DR PEPPER MUSEUM—It has a restored soda fountain, memorabilia, and interactive displays. Admission charge. 300 S. Fifth St. 254-757-1024

EARLE-HARRISON HOUSE & PAPE GARDENS—The antebellum Greek Revival-style structure has a detached kitchen, gardens, and a double gazebo. Admission charge. 1901 N. Fifth St. 254-753-5160

HAWAIIAN FALLS WATERPARK-WACO—Cool off seasonally with high-speed water rides, a lazy river, and a wave pool. Admission charge. 900 Lake Shore Drive. 254-892-0222

HISTORIC HOMES—Southern mansions are open for tours on a rotating basis: McCulloch House (407 Columbus St.), Earle-Napier-Kinnard House (814 S. Fourth St.), and East Terrace (100 Mill St.). Admission charge. 254-753-5166

HOMESTEAD CRAFT VILLAGE—Step back in time as you tour the craft village, shop, and dine. Free. 608 Dry Creek Road. 254-754-9600

LAKE BRAZOS—This city of Waco lake is on the Brazos River downtown. Brazos Park East offers lake access and picnicking. 254-750-5740

LAKE WACO—Parks, marinas, and boat ramps offer swimming, fishing, picnicking, and camping. Northwest edge of Waco. 254-756-5359

LAKE WACO WETLANDS—The site has nature trails, birdwatching, and photography. 1752 Eichelberger Cross-ing. 254-848-9654

LEE LOCKWOOD LIBRARY AND MUSEUM—It has exhibits on Freemasonry, books, and Masonic artifacts. 2801 W. Waco Drive. 254-754-3942

MAGNOLIA MARKET AT THE SILOS—Owned by TV stars Chip and Joanna Gaines, the site includes food trucks, a bakery, and shops. Free. 601 Webster Ave. 254-235-0603

MARTIN MUSEUM OF ART—On the Baylor campus, the museum has permanent and temporary exhibitions. Free. 60 Baylor Ave. 254-710-6371

MASONIC GRAND LODGE—The museum showcases the history of Freemasonry and Masons. Free. 715 Columbus Ave. 254-753-7395

MAYBORN MUSEUM COMPLEX—The natural science and history museum includes a children's museum, a historic village, and traveling exhibits. Admission charge. 1300 S. University Parks Drive. 254-710-1110

MCLANE STADIUM—This Baylor University stadium has guided tours for a behind-the-scenes look. 1001 S. M.L.K. Jr. Blvd. 254-710-1000

SCULPTURE ZOO—It features 28 animal-based art-works. Along the Waco Riverwalk between Indian Springs Park and Cameron Park.

TEXAS RANGER HALL OF FAME AND MUSEUM—This museum is dedicated to the history and lore of the legendary Texas Rangers. Admission charge. 100 Texas Ranger Trail. 254-750-8631

TEXAS SPORTS HALL OF FAME—Memorabilia highlight nationally known Texas sports figures. Admission charge. 1108 S. University Parks Drive. 254-756-1633

THE WACO TROLLEY—Choose from brew, mural, history, or highlights tours. Admission charge. Beginning locations vary with tour choice.

TOURS—

Brazos Tours—Tours include shopping, history, and several *Fixer Upper* homes. Admission charge. 113 S. University Parks Drive. 254-870-1412

Waco Tours—Explore hidden gems that make Waco unique. Admission charge. 215 S. University Parks Drive, Suite 104. 254-300-8725

Waco Wine Tours—It provides luxury guided tours of Waco area wineries and vineyards. Admission charge. Downtown Waco. 254-360-9463

WACO HIPPODROME THEATRE—Constructed in 1914, the theater now offers first-run and classic films, live music, and theater acts. Admission charge. 724 Austin Ave. 254-296-9000

WACO MAMMOTH NATIONAL MONUMENT—Visit the largest find of a nursery herd of Columbian mammoths. Admission charge. 6220 Steinbeck Bend Drive. 254-750-7946

WACO SURF—It has surfing, wakeboarding, a waterslide, a lazy river, and rental cabins. Admission charge. 5347 Old Mexia Road. 254-447-1194

WACO SUSPENSION BRIDGE—The pedestrian bridge was once the only span across the Brazos River on the Chisholm Trail. Large bronze sculptures depicting a long-horn cattle drive are nearby. University Parks Drive.

WASHINGTON

POP. 265 (EST.)

Visit Brenham: 979-337-7580;
visitbrenhamtexas.com

The town achieved prominence during the Texas Revolution in 1836 as the site of the signing of the Texas Declaration of Independence and the drafting of the Constitution of the Republic of Texas. The little village today lies just off SH 105 between Brenham and Navasota.

WASHINGTON-ON-THE-BRAZOS STATE HISTORIC SITE

The site includes a replica of the building where the Texas Declaration of Independence was signed, a visitor center, and trails. 23400 Park Road 12. 936-878-2214

Barrington Plantation State Historic Site—

Interpreters in period clothing recreate daily farm life. Admission charge. 23400 Park Road 12. 936-878-2214

Star of the Republic Museum—

The museum presents the history of the Texas Republic through exhibits, publications, and media presentations. Admission charge. 23200 Park Road 12. 936-878-2461

WAXAHACHIE

POP. 45,476

Waxahachie Convention and Visitors Bureau:
2000 Civic Center Lane. 469-309-4040;
waxahachiecvb.com

Waxahachie has an abundance of Victorian-style homes with "gingerbread" trim, and several movies have been made featuring its old buildings and homes. For a map of these sites, visit the Ellis County Museum.

CHAUTAUQUA AUDITORIUM—This building held Chautauqua Assemblies until 1930. The restored structure is still in use. 400 S. Grand Ave.

ELLIS COUNTY COURTHOUSE—Italian artisans carved the exterior stone of this elaborate 1895 red sandstone and granite structure. 101 W. Main St.

ELLIS COUNTY MUSEUM—Historical artifacts and household furnishings depict the history of the area. 201 S. College St. 972-937-0681

LAKE WAXAHACHIE—The lake offers boat ramps, fishing, and swimming. Off FM 877. 469-309-4271

NICHOLAS P. SIMS LIBRARY—The 1904 structure of Roman Doric architecture has gold leaf and Carrara marble inside. 515 W. Main St. 972-937-2671

SCARBOROUGH RENAISSANCE FESTIVAL—The springtime Renaissance festival features arts, crafts, foods, and medieval-style fun. Admission charge. 2511 FM 66. 972-938-3247


WEATHERFORD

POP. 36,251

Weatherford Chamber of Commerce:
401 Fort Worth Highway. 817-596-3801;
weatherford-chamber.com

The southwest area of town boasts many Victorian-style residences from the late 1800s. The city is known as the "Cutting Horse Capital of the World," and Parker County is the Peach Capital of Texas. Events include the Parker County Peach Festival and Weatherford's First Monday. The chamber has maps of driving and walking tours.

CHANDOR GARDENS—Created by renowned artist Douglas G. Chandor, the gardens reflect Chinese and



WACO'S UNDERWATER AIRSHOW

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CAMERON PARK
ZOO
WACO, TEXAS



PRAIRIES & LAKES

English styles. Admission charge. 711 W. Lee Ave. 817-613-1700

DOSS HERITAGE & CULTURE CENTER—The center includes displays about early Native Americans, life on the frontier, and the Mary Martin and Larry Hagman Gallery. Free. 1400 Texas Drive. 817-599-6168

MUSEUM OF THE AMERICAS—Extensive exhibits feature late 19th- and 20th-century artifacts, folk art, and Indigenous crafts. Free. 216 Fort Worth Highway. 817-341-8668

OLIVER LOVING'S GRAVE—Loving died from a wound during a trail drive. His grave in the Old City Greenwood Cemetery has a state historical marker. 400 E. Water St.

PARKER COUNTY COURTHOUSE—Dedicated in 1886, the Victorian building was constructed of local limestone. 1 Courthouse Square.

PETER PAN STATUE—A bronze statue honoring Weatherford native Mary Martin's role on Broadway stands in front of the Weatherford Public Library, which contains Martin memorabilia. 1014 Charles St.

WEATHERFORD LAKE—The lake offers a marina and boat ramps, boating, fishing, and picnicking. East of Weatherford via US 80/180. 817-598-4000

WEIMAR

POP. 2,092

Weimar Area Chamber of Commerce: 100 W. Grange. 979-725-9511; weimartexas.net

Texas Historic Markers are at St. Michael's Catholic Church, the town library in the old train depot, the Masonic Lodge on Jackson Square, and in front of the Weimar Post Office. The Weimar Gedenke German Festival is celebrated in May.

WEIMAR HERITAGE SOCIETY MUSEUM—Displays include turn-of-the-century business memorabilia. Free. 125 E. Main St. 979-725-8203 or 979-725-8478

WEST

POP. 2,575

West Chamber of Commerce: 209 E. Oak St., Suite A. 254-826-3188; westchamberofcommerce.com

Czech traditions can be seen in the food, arts and crafts, and the love of polka music. The Texas Legislature recognized West as the Czech Heritage Capital of Texas and home of the official Kolache of the Texas Legislature. Westfest is held Labor Day Weekend.

HISTORY OF WEST MUSEUM—Learn about the first area settlers and impact of Czech culture. Free. 112 E. Oak St. 254-755-6762

WHITESBORO

POP. 4,291

Whitesboro Chamber of Commerce: 2535 US 82 East. 903-564-3331; whitesborotx.com

Whitesboro is a gateway to recreational activities at Lake Texoma and Lake Ray Roberts. There are historical markers in the area, and hotel accommodations are available. The historical downtown offers dining and shopping. The annual Peanut Festival is the third Saturday in October.

CROSS TIMBERS HIKING TRAIL—The 14-mile trail begins at the Juniper Point recreation area. Wilderness campsites are available. Adjacent to Lake Texoma.

WHITESBORO WATER WELL—It served as a watering stop along the Butterfield Stage Line. A historical marker is at the site. Downtown on Main Street.

WHITWRIGHT

POP. 1,814

Whitwright Chamber of Commerce: 113 W. Grand St. 903-364-2000; whitwright.org

Whitwright's historic downtown offers shopping, dining, and entertainment opportunities. Annual events include

the Wine and Roses Tour in May and the Grand Street Fall Festival in November.

SKYDIVE SPACELAND DALLAS—Freefall from 13,500 feet with licensed tandem-jump instructors. Admission charge. 1039 Private Road 438. 903-364-5103

WHITWRIGHT HISTORICAL MUSEUM & NATURE PARK—The museum focuses on how locals lived. Nature park has stroll-through gardens. 202 S. Bond St.

WHITNEY

POP. 2,063

Whitney Chamber of Commerce: 5516 FM 933. 254-694-2540; lakewhitneychamber.com

This community is a gateway to popular lakes Aquilla and Whitney. It is one of the leading water sport and lake resort areas of Texas. The area has many RV parks, equestrian trails, three golf courses, and full-service marinas.

LAKE WHITNEY—Marinas and parks offer boat ramps, fishing, swimming, and scuba diving. West of Whitney. 254-622-3332

LAKE WHITNEY STATE PARK—Enjoy boating, fishing, scuba diving, swimming, camping, hiking, biking, and birding. Admission charge. 433 FM 1244. 254-694-3793

WILLS POINT

POP. 3,747

Wills Point Chamber of Commerce: 307 N. Fourth St. 903-873-3111; willspointchamber.com

Wills Point is a gateway to Lake Tawakoni. Downtown features boutiques, antiques, and restaurants in historic buildings. The Rose Monument is at North Fourth and East North Commerce streets. Wills Point is the Bluebird Capital of Texas. Events include the annual Boo on the Bricks and Christmas on the Bricks.

LAKE TAWAKONI STATE PARK—The park offers hike-and-bike trails, a boat ramp, birdwatching, and camping. Admission charge. 10822 FM 2475. 903-560-7123

OLD CABOOSE—In Ollie Webb Park, the restored caboose matches those used by the old Texas & Pacific Railroad. 114 W. South Commerce St. 903-873-4568

VETERANS' MEMORIAL PARK—This tribute to local service members includes memorials and military equipment. 505 Houston St. 903-873-3111

WILLS CABIN/BRUCE PARK—Sights include a preserved 1848 log cabin, old wagon, and farm implements. On Third Street at US 80. 903-873-4568

YOAKUM

POP. 5,891

Yoakum Area Chamber of Commerce: 105 Huck St. 361-293-2309; yoakumareachamber.com

Yoakum once called itself the "Green Wrap" tomato capital of the world and still commemorates this heritage with the Tom Tom Festival the first weekend in June. Other events include the Downtown Street Dance, Sip and Shop in November, and Christmas on Grand in December.

CARL & MARY WELHAUSEN LIBRARY—This Recorded Texas Historic Landmark once housed the municipal power plant. 810 Front St. 361-293-5001

HERITAGE MUSEUM—See railroad artifacts and displays showing leather industry history. 312 Simpson St. 361-293-7022

YORKTOWN

POP. 1,789

Yorktown Chamber of Commerce: 141 S. Riedel St. 361-564-2661; yorktowntx.com

The area is known for amazing wildflower displays, birding, and hunting. The Western Days Festival is in October.

YORKTOWN HISTORICAL MUSEUM—Two historic buildings house arrowheads, an antique doll collection, and displays on area history. 144 W. Main St. 361-550-9136



A BUCOLIC LANDSCAPE RICH
WITH CULTURAL AND NATURAL
ATTRACTIONS REFLECTS TEXAS'
RURAL HERITAGE

HILL COUNTRY





Music Central

Go honky tonkin' on a weekend getaway to Brady

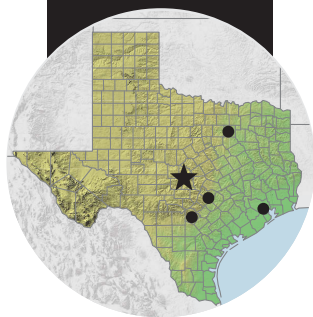
By John Lomax III

Austin
2.5 hours

San Antonio
2.5 hours

Dallas
4 hours

Houston
5 hours



A short drive from our state's geographic center, Brady is named for the creek that runs through the area. It was previously home to members of the Apache and Comanche tribes. In the 1870s, Henry and Nancy Fulcher donated the land for the city; the town was chosen as the McCulloch County seat soon after. An imposing courthouse was built from local sandstone in 1878. By 1930, Brady was home to 4,000 citizens and boasted a three-story hotel, a movie theater, a newspaper, a school, and several churches. Today, the town touts its central location and a plethora of annual events: two country music festivals in March and August; a big July Jubilee for Independence Day; and late summer's World Championship BBQ Goat Cook Off, held since 1974. The town is known for its hunting spots, largemouth bass fishing at Brady Lake, and four prime camping locations for serene lakeside stays. Brady also houses two museums, a gun range, a golf course, an antiques store, and a small city-run water park to stave off the summer heat.

STAY

The Rusty Goat and Heart of Texas House

Brady offers pleasing alternatives to chain hotels with lodgings like the Rusty Goat (\$135/night) and the Heart of Texas House (\$170/night). Both rentals, available to book on Airbnb, have a yard with scenic country views. The Rusty Goat has a hot tub and collection of chickens, and the Heart of Texas House borders a park and sports a basketball court.

TruCountry Inn

Country singer Heather Myles transformed the former Hotel Brady into this inn with rooms named for country stars. Built in 1923, the building has contained a grocery store, housed Brady's first switchboard, and was used as a hideout by Bonnie and Clyde between crime sprees. Amenities include a bar and grill and game room, and the Bluebonnet Ballroom venue. Rooms start at \$60/night.

LEARN

Heart of Texas Country Music Museum

The Heart of Texas Country Music Museum displays 100 outfits and lots of other memorabilia from artists, including Patsy Cline, Ernest Tubb, and Ray Price. Owner Tracy Pitcox, who also runs Heart of Texas Records, acquired Jim Reeves' first and only tour bus and now features it in front of the museum. Visitors can tour the bus and museum for free.

Heart of Texas Historical Museum

Housed in the former county jail, the museum has displays and a historic homes map that facilitates a self-guided tour around town. The control tower from nearby World War II-era Curtis Field stands behind the museum. Enter to view the Striegler Collection of over 500 model airplane engines.

RV INFO

The Heart of Texas RV Park is located in the southern part of town with quick access to Mac's Bar-B-Que and the country music museum. The site offers free Wi-Fi, full hookups, and a selection of extended-stay guesthouses for RV-less visitors. 979-533-5700; heartoftexasrvpark.com

EAT & DRINK

Boondocks

The seafood mainstay is a local favorite. Founded in 2010 by Shane and Ruby Swenson, the restaurant offers classics like fried catfish baskets with hush puppies, as well as occasional shrimp and seafood boils. Try Mexico City Café for breakfast favorites or Medina's for breakfast burritos.

Wines of Dotson-Cervantes

Drive 10 miles to this winery's 30-acre vineyard in Voca. Former NFL lineman Alphonse Dotson and his wife, Martha Cervantes, started growing grapes in 1997. A decade later they began producing red, white, and dessert wines, which they serve at the nearby tasting room.

SEE

Downtown Square

The three-story Romanesque courthouse anchors this town square. The Palace Theater, restored in 2017, joins the local shops and cafés rejuvenating the area. An 83-foot-by-30-foot mural, "Lone Star Rider" by West Texas artist Calina Johnson, adorns a wall near the square.

SHOP

D&J's Good Ole Days Antiques & Oddities

This shop provides hours of enchantment with its expertly organized assortment of relics and curiosities. The showroom totals 20,000 square feet over two locations and features off-the-wall items like a prosthetic eyeball, a stuffed alligator, and a collection of doll heads. Locals DeAnn and Joe Evridge opened the shop in 2010.

EVENT

Country Strong

Tracy Pitcox is the force behind the Country Music Museum and the town's two annual country music festivals, the Heart of Texas Country Music Festival in March and the Heart of Texas Honky Tonk Festival in August. hillbillyhits.com. ★



South Llano River State Park

SOUTH LLANO RIVER STATE PARK

A hidden gem in the Hill Country, this park is known for its clear, spring-fed river and abundant wildlife. Enjoy tubing, swimming, and fishing in the refreshing waters, or explore the park's extensive network of trails for hiking and biking. The park is also a sanctuary for birdwatchers, with vibrant birdlife seen throughout the year. Watch the night sky while camping under this International Dark Sky Park, renowned for its stargazing.

"We love to visit South Llano River State Park because there is so much to do. We love to go birdwatching, cool off in the river, and hike on the amazing trails at the park." —Nancy Martinez, park host volunteer

MORE HILL COUNTRY STATE PARKS

BLANCO STATE PARK
COLORADO BEND STATE PARK
DEVIL'S SINKHOLE STATE NATURAL AREA
ENCHANTED ROCK STATE NATURAL AREA
GARNER STATE PARK
GOVERNMENT CANYON STATE NATURAL AREA
GUADALUPE RIVER STATE PARK
HILL COUNTRY STATE NATURAL AREA
KICKAPOO CAVERN STATE PARK
INKS LAKE STATE PARK
LAKE BROWNWOOD STATE PARK
LYNDON B. JOHNSON STATE PARK & HISTORIC SITE
LONGHORN CAVERN STATE PARK
LOST MAPLES STATE NATURAL AREA
MCKINNEY FALLS STATE PARK
OLD TUNNEL STATE PARK
PEDERNALES FALLS STATE PARK

For more information, directions, and amenities, get your free mobile guide to all 80-plus state parks: texasstateparks.org/app



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**BLANTON
MUSEUM
OF ART**

Blanton Museum of Art / The University of Texas at Austin / 512.471.5482 / blantonmuseum.org



**BULLOCK
MUSEUM**

**Austin
TEXAS**

**THE STORY OF
TEXAS.COM**

Your support makes the Bullock Museum's educational mission possible. Additional support for educational programming provided by the Texas State History Museum Foundation.

AUSTIN

POP. 974,447

Austin Visitor Center: 602 E. Fourth St. 512-478-0098; visitaustin.org

Austin is more than just Texas' capital city. The Live Music Capital of the World has unique entertainment districts, stunning outdoor experiences, an award-winning culinary scene, and hundreds of live music venues. Austin's renowned events include SXSW, Austin City Limits Music Festival, and Formula 1 United States Grand Prix.

ACL LIVE AT THE MOODY THEATER—Home to the iconic PBS program *Austin City Limits*, the venue also hosts musical acts and tours. 310 W. Willie Nelson Blvd. 512-404-1300

ANN RICHARDS CONGRESS AVENUE BRIDGE—From March to October at sunset, spectators watch the bats' mass exodus from the bridge. 305 S. Congress Ave. 512-327-9721

ASIAN AMERICAN RESOURCE CENTER—The center offers education, events, and exhibits. 8401 Cameron Road. 512-974-1700

AUSTIN FC-Q2 STADIUM—Soccer fans can cheer on the Austin FC. 10414 McKalla Place.

AUSTIN NATURE AND SCIENCE CENTER—Educational exhibits feature science, natural history, botany, and native Texas animals. Free. 2389 Stratford Drive. 512-974-3888

BARTON SPRINGS POOL—The historic, spring-fed pool maintains a 68-70 degree temperature year-round. 2201 William Barton Drive. 512-974-6300

BLANTON MUSEUM OF ART—Programs include guided tours, artist talks, and live music. Admission charge. 200 E. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd. 512-471-7324 or 512-471-5482

BREWERIES, DISTILLERIES, AND WINERY—Sip some of Austin's best spirits and tour the facilities at these breweries, distilleries, and wineries: Banner Distilling Co., Fast Friends Brewing Co., Fierce Whiskers Distillery, Jester King Brewery, Torr Na Lochs Vineyard & Winery. See TEXAS BEVERAGE TOUR section.

BULLOCK TEXAS STATE HISTORY MUSEUM—The museum traces Texas history from before European exploration to the early 1970s. Admission charge. 1800 N. Congress Ave. 512-936-8746

CAPITAL CRUISES—Excursions are on Lady Bird Lake and Lake Austin. Admission charge. 208 Barton Springs Road. 512-480-9264

CIRCUIT OF THE AMERICAS—COTA offers racing events, guided tours, and concerts. 9201 Circuit of the Americas Blvd. 512-655-6600 or 512-655-6304

THE CONTEMPORARY AUSTIN—This contemporary art museum features two architecturally distinct locations, the Jones Center downtown and Laguna Gloria in West Austin. Admission charge. 512-453-5312 or 512-458-8191

DEEP EDDY POOL—This historic, spring-fed oasis is the oldest swimming pool in Texas and is open year-round. 401 Deep Eddy Ave. 512-472-8546

ELISABET NEY MUSEUM—The castle-like studio of the famed sculptress houses some of her work. 304 E. 44th St. 512-974-1625

FRENCH LEGATION STATE HISTORIC SITE—This house and diplomatic outpost was built for France's diplomat in the Republic of Texas. Admission charge. 802 San Marcos St. 512-463-7948

GEORGE WASHINGTON CARVER MUSEUM, CULTURAL AND GENEALOGY CENTER—This museum and center celebrates African American history, culture, and arts. Free. 1165 E. Angelina St. 512-974-4926

GOVERNOR'S MANSION—Tour the official residence of Texas governors. Advance reservations required. Free. 1010 Colorado St. 512-305-8524

HAMILTON POOL NATURE PRESERVE—See DRIPPING SPRINGS.

LADY BIRD JOHNSON WILDFLOWER CENTER—The center includes an interactive family garden, arboretum, exhibits, and trails. Admission charge. 4801 La Crosse Ave. 512-232-0100



**In Bandera,
Nothing changes
But the Date**

We are more than
Stetsons and Boots...
We are tradition.

We invite you
to share
our tradition.

Come See How.



BANDERA

POP. 837

Bandera County Convention and Visitors Bureau:
126 SH 16 South. 830-796-3045;
banderacowboycapital.com

This authentic Western town is recognized as the Cowboy Capital of the World. Rodeos occur weekly Memorial Day weekend through August. Western reenactments and Cowboys on Main are most Saturdays. Live music occurs nightly. Find dude and guest ranches, horseback riding, hiking, camping, swimming, hunting, and a golf course.

BANDERA NATURAL HISTORY & ART MUSEUM—The museum includes life-size dinosaur reproductions and animal mount collections, plus a New Spain art collection. Admission charge. 267 Old San Antonio Road. 830-796-3045

DUDE RANCHES—Bandera has plenty of dude and guest ranches—from rustic to resort-style—offering a range of cowboy activities. 830-796-3045

FRONTIER TIMES MUSEUM—It has Old West relics, Western art, antiques, and Native American artifacts. Admission charge. 510 13th St. 830-796-3864

HILL COUNTRY STATE NATURAL AREA—The park offers primitive camping, mountain biking, hiking, and horseback riding. Admission charge. 10600 Bandera Creek Road. 830-796-4413

HISTORICAL TOURS—Contact the visitors bureau for information on self-guided walking and driving tours. Several area ranches offer day visits. 830-796-3045

MEDINA LAKE—It has boat ramps, fishing, and camping. About 23 miles southeast of Bandera. 830-796-3045

SCENIC DRIVES—SH 173 North winds through scenic vistas to Camp Verde and Kerrville. SH 173 South rolls to the southern edge of the Hill Country and enters the South Texas Plains. SH 46 East explores steep-shouldered scenery through the town of Pipe Creek to Boerne. FM 470 West features dramatic hills and green valleys threaded by sparkling creeks. SH 16 North to Medina and SH 337 from Medina to Vanderpool, offer scenic views of the Texas Rolling Hill Country. 830-796-3045

BLANCO

POP. 1,883

Blanco Chamber of Commerce: 830-833-5101;
blancochamber.com

Antiques stores, boutiques, and restaurants occupy historic buildings in the square. Blanco is surrounded by lavender farms, bed-and-breakfasts, and locally owned accommodations. The area is popular with campers, anglers, and hunters. Events include Blanco Market Days and Christmas Market Days.

BLANCO STATE PARK—This park offers swimming, tubing, fishing, canoeing, and camping. Admission charge. 101 Park Road 23. 830-833-4333

BREWERY AND DISTILLERIES—Andalusia Whiskey, Milam & Greene Whiskey, and Real Ale Brewing Company. See TEXAS BEVERAGE TOUR section.

BUGGY BARN MUSEUM—The collection includes more than 200 unique buggies, carriages, and wagons. 1915 US 281 North. 830-833-5708

OLD BLANCO COUNTY COURTHOUSE—The courthouse was built in 1885 and now serves as the official visitor center. Free. 300 Main St. 830-833-2211 or 830-833-5101

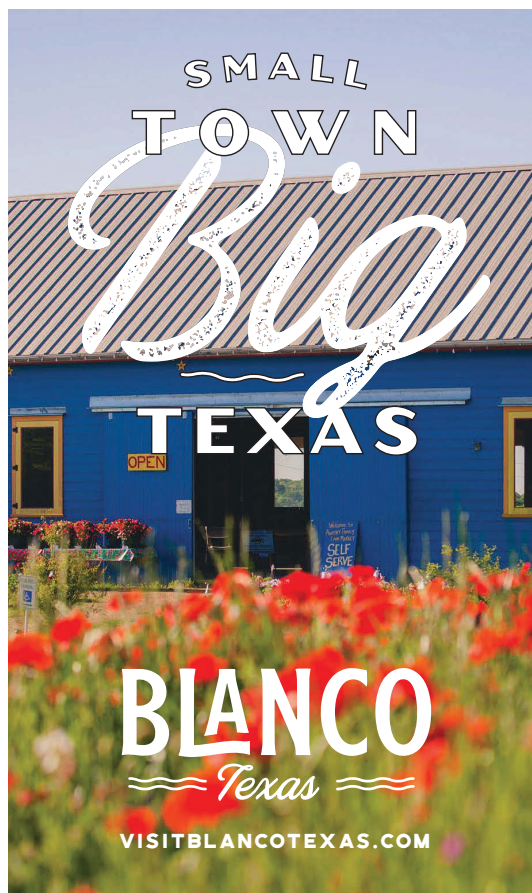
SCENIC DRIVE—RM 32, 2 miles south of Blanco, from US 281 offers views of the Hill Country. Heading toward San Marcos, it follows a ridge called the Devil's Backbone.

BOERNE

POP. 22,022

Boerne Visitor Center: 282 N. Main St.
888-842-8080; visitboerne.org

The town is rich with German heritage, including year-round festivals, events, and parades. It has an award-winning downtown historic district that includes elevated shopping, dining, and public art. Hit the trail and explore around town or venture out to a variety of nearby parks and attractions.





Buggy Barn Museum in Blanco

THE AGRICULTURAL MUSEUM AND ARTS CENTER—

The museum showcases antique farm equipment, horse-drawn implements, and household articles. It also hosts events. Call for weekday tours. 102 City Park Road. 210-445-1080

BOERNE CITY LAKE PARK—The park includes a boat ramp, a fishing pier, a volleyball court, and a seasonal floating water park. No motorized watercraft. 1 City Lake Road. 830-248-1635

BREWRIES AND WINERY—Dodging Duck Brewhaus, Free Roam Brewing Company, Sister Creek Vineyards, and Tusculum Brewing Co. See TEXAS BEVERAGE TOUR section.

CASCADE CAVERNS—Take a guided one-hour tour. 226 Cascade Caverns Road. 830-755-8080

CAVE WITHOUT A NAME—This National Natural Landmark is a living cavern. Tour six major rooms. 325 Kreutzberg Road. 830-537-4212

CIBOLO CENTER FOR CONSERVATION—Enjoy walking trails, birding, and a weekly farmers market at Herff Farm. 140 City Park Road. 830-249-4616

HILL COUNTRY MILE—This is Boerne's historic downtown shopping and arts district. Main Street.

OLD JAIL MUSEUM—The Kendall County Historic Jail Museum houses Kendall County artifacts and history. 208 E. San Antonio St. 210-421-3700

TOURS—

Art al Fresco—The temporary and permanent outdoor sculpture collection is on display. An audio tour is available. 830-248-1617

Historical Tours—Pick up self-guided tour information at the visitor center or enjoy Boerne Walking Tours.

BRACKETTVILLE

POP. 1,331

Kinney County Chamber of Commerce:
830-563-0514; kinneycounty.org

This site was established as a supply village for adjacent Fort Clark. It is now a resort development and a trade center. Buildings of historical interest include St. Mary

Magdalene Catholic Church and the Masonic Lodge Building, which was the original county courthouse.

FORT CLARK GUARDHOUSE MUSEUM—The museum highlights the fort's history, including Black Seminole Indian Scout and Buffalo Soldier artifacts. Admission charge. 830-563-2493

KICKAPOO CAVERN STATE PARK—The park offers hiking, mountain biking, cave exploration, camping, birding, and evening bat flights (in season). Admission charge. 20939 RR 674. 830-563-2342

SCENIC DRIVES—RM 674 and RM 334 lead north into scenic landscapes of the Hill Country. View the West Nueces River winding among steep cliffs and hills.

SEMINOLE INDIAN SCOUT CEMETERY—This is the burial site of more than 100 Seminole scouts who helped protect the Texas frontier. South on RM 3348.

BRADY

POP. 5,005

Visit Brady: 406 S. Bridge St. 325-597-3491;
visitbrady.com or bradytx.com

Brady sits as the geographic center—the true heart—of Texas. With its majestic historical courthouse, green fields, and seasonal wildflowers, Brady is a spectacular site to visit, linger, and relax. It is home to hunting and other outdoor recreation. Bird watchers, photographers, and nature lovers will enjoy McCulloch County.

HEART OF TEXAS COUNTRY MUSIC MUSEUM—It honors more than 100 country musicians with displays, including costumes and instruments. 1701 S. Bridge St. 325-597-1895

HEART OF TEXAS HISTORICAL MUSEUM—The museum has McCulloch County artifacts, military memorabilia, and a model airplane engine collection. 117 N. High St. 325-597-0526

HISTORIC DOWNTOWN SQUARE—The square features antiques stores, charming boutiques, dining options, and other attractions. Free. Commerce Street. 325-597-3491

BROWNWOOD

POP. 18,709

Brownwood Chamber of Commerce: 325-646-9535; visitbrownwood.com

Brownwood features a historic downtown shopping and cultural district, camp facilities, and hunting. It is home to Howard Payne University. "Conan the Barbarian" author Robert Howard lies in Historic Greenleaf Cemetery. Events include the Lone Star Fair and Expo and Christmas Under the Stars.

BROWN COUNTY MUSEUM OF HISTORY—The museum features Brown County history with exhibits and artifacts. Admission charge. 212 N. Broadway St. 325-641-1926

BROWNWOOD PUBLIC LIBRARY—HISTORY AND GENEALOGY LIBRARY—Items include census data, maps, land warrants, Daughters of the American Revolution genealogy, and Black history. 213 S. Broadway St. 325-646-6006

CAMP BOWIE MEMORIAL PARK—The small park features vintage military equipment, a cannon, and armor. At Burnett Road and Morris Shepherd Drive.

LAKE BROWNWOOD—The lake offers parks, boat docks, swimming, fishing, and boating. About 10 miles north of Brownwood off SH 279. 325-643-2609

LAKE BROWNWOOD STATE PARK—Hike the trails, cool off in the lake, and explore structures constructed by the Civilian Conservation Corps. Admission charge. 200 State Highway Park Road 15. 325-784-5223

MARTIN AND FRANCES LEHNIS RAILROAD MUSEUM—It includes model trains, railroad equipment, and photographs. Admission charge. 700 E. Adams St. 325-643-6376

BUCHANAN DAM

POP. 1,508

Lake Buchanan/Inks Lake Chamber of Commerce: 19611 E. SH 29. 512-793-2803;
buchanan-inks.com

Buchanan Dam is the largest multiarch dam in the world. An observation deck is located at the Visitor Center. Lake Buchanan is a great place to go fishing.



Garner State Park in Concan

INKS LAKE—It offers fishing, boating, swimming, and marinas. Access from Inks Lake State Park. 512-473-3200

LAKE BUCHANAN—Several parks offer fishing, boating, and camping. The lake has boat ramps and marinas. On SH 29. 512-473-3200

LCRA BLACK ROCK PARK—The park offers swimming, fishing, boating, and camping. Admission charge. On SH 261. 512-369-4774

LONGHORN CAVERN STATE PARK—See BURNET.

WINERY—Fall Creek Vineyards at Tow. See TEXAS BEVERAGE TOUR section.

BUDA POP. 16,086

Stagecoach House and Visitor Center: 880 Main St. 512-295-7170; discoverbudatx.com

Buda, south of Austin, is billed as the Outdoor Capital of Texas. The 52-acre Buda Sportsplex park has a lengthy trail system, fishing pond, and playground. Annual events include the Buda County Fair and Wiener Dog Races; Red, White and Buda; and Budafest.

HISTORIC DOWNTOWN DISTRICT—Main Street has shops, restaurants, and businesses in historic buildings, including the Carrington House and the 1898 mercantile store.

Historic Stagecoach Park—The park features an ADA-compliant trail system, an 1880 Stagecoach House, a fishing pond, an amphitheater, a memorial garden, and informational kiosks. 880 Main St. 512-295-7170

BULVERDE POP. 6,494

Bulverde Spring Branch Area Chamber of Commerce: 121 Bulverde Crossing, Suite 115. 830-438-4285; bulverdespringbranchchamber.com

Bulverde is known as a "Gateway to the Hill Country" due to its access 30 miles north on SH 281 from San Antonio. Many travel there to take bluebonnet pictures each year.

THE OLD VILLAGE OF BULVERDE—Quaint historic buildings house studios. A former courthouse was turned into a lodge. Off FM 1863 and SH 281 North.

TEJAS RODEO COMPANY AND STEAKHOUSE/ SALOON—Enjoy a live rodeo every Saturday March through November. 401 Obst Road. 830-980-2226

BURNET POP. 6,710

Burnet Chamber of Commerce: 101 N. Pierce St., Suite 1. 512-756-4297; burnetchamber.org

Burnet grew around frontier Fort Croghan. Antique shopping is available around town. Camping facilities and excellent fishing are available on the nearby Highland Lakes. The town was designated the Bluebonnet Capital of Texas, and the annual Bluebonnet Festival is in April.

AUSTIN STEAM TRAIN ASSOCIATION—See CEDAR PARK.

BURNET COUNTY PARK—This 5-acre park has a boat ramp and access to the east side of Lake Buchanan. Access via SH 29 West, RM 2341 North.

CANYON OF THE EAGLES—The nature park features a lodge, miles of hiking trails, and the Eagle Eye Observatory. 16942 RM 2341. 512-334-2070 or 800-977-0081

FORT CROGHAN MUSEUM—The frontier fort has buildings, exhibits, and relics. 703 Buchanan Drive. 512-525-4025 or 512-756-8281

HIGHLAND LAKES COMMEMORATIVE AIR FORCE MUSEUM—It features WWII fighter planes, photographs, and memorabilia. Admission charge. At Burnet Municipal Airport. 512-756-2226

HILL COUNTRY MOTORHEADS VINTAGE MOTORCYCLE MUSEUM—It showcases more than 80 bikes of many brands from around the world. 2001 W. SH 29. 512-553-4078

INKS LAKE STATE PARK—The park offers camping, fishing, swimming, skiing, paddleboating, and hiking. Admission charge. 3630 Park Road 4 West. 512-793-2223

LCRA BLACK ROCK PARK—See BUCHANAN DAM.

LONGHORN CAVERN STATE PARK—Guided cave tours include a 1.1-mile walking tour and an off-trail wild tour. Admission charge. 6211 Park Road 4 South. 512-715-9000

SCENIC DRIVES—SH 29 west and RM 2341 northwest offer a scenic route to Spider Mountain. RM 2342 offers excellent landscape views, especially at the turnout near the confluence of the Llano and Colorado rivers.

VANISHING TEXAS RIVER CRUISE—It offers bald-eagle viewing (November through March), scenic fall foliage, and winery tours. Admission charge. 443 Waterway Lane. 512-756-6986

WINERY—Perissos Vineyards and Winery. See TEXAS BEVERAGE TOUR section.

CANYON LAKE AREA POP. 31,124

Canyon Lake Chamber of Commerce: 3934 FM 2673. 830-964-2223; canyonlakechamber.com

Known as The Water Recreation Capital of Texas, this popular area developed after Canyon Lake was created. The area includes Cranes Mill, Hancock, Sattler, and Startzville. The lake and the Guadalupe River offer fishing, boating, tubing, and other water-related activities.

CANYON LAKE—This Army Corps of Engineers reservoir offers camping, fishing, boat ramps, and marinas. Near Startzville and Sattler. 830-964-3341

HERITAGE MUSEUM OF THE TEXAS HILL COUNTRY—The museum features Native Americans, area pioneers, and the dam. Admission charge. 4831 FM 2673. 830-899-4542

RIVER OUTFITTERS—Several rental outfits are available for floating or paddling on the Guadalupe River. Contact the chamber for information. 830-964-2223

CASTROVILLE POP. 3,077

Steinbach Hüs Visitors Center: 100 Karm St. 830-538-9838; steinbachhaus.org or visitcastrovilletx.com

For history enthusiasts, Castroville, "The Little Alsace of Texas," is a must-visit gem with European architecture and Texas charm. Established in the 1840s by settlers from Germany and the Alsace region of France, the town boasts 95 homes and structures dating from 1844 to 1920. Journey through time with a historic walking tour.

THE BIRY HAUS—The Castroville Colonies Living History Center recreates life in a classic example of a settlement house. 309 Paris St.

CASTROVILLE REGIONAL PARK—Enjoy 14 hiking and nature trails, birding, butterflies, fishing, swimming, and playgrounds. 816 Alsace St. 830-931-0033

HISTORIC WALKING TOUR & LIVING HISTORY TRAIL—Explore these 95 beautifully preserved homes and structures that date back to 1844. As you stroll through town, you'll encounter the town's unique blend of Alsatian and Texan heritage. The action starts at the Steinbach Haus.

LANDMARK INN STATE HISTORIC SITE—The site offers daily tours of exhibits, historic structures, and the grist-mill. Admission charge. 402 E. Florence St. 830-931-2133

ST. LOUIS CATHOLIC CHURCH—Built between 1868 and 1879, it has the original altar and pews, plus stained glass windows. 1306 Angelo St.

STEINBACH HÜS—The Alsatian house was built between 1618 and 1648 then dismantled and rebuilt in Castroville between 1998 and 2002. Free. 100 Karm St. 830-538-9838

CEDAR PARK

POP. 77,642

Cedar Park Tourism: 450 Cypress Creek Road, Building 1. 512-401-5060; visitcedarparktexas.com

Cedar Park is a diverse, growing city bordering Austin. Take a vintage train ride through the Hill Country, relax with a local craft brew, shop 'til you drop, or enjoy live performances. If you prefer the outdoors, spend time strolling through the beautiful parks, play some golf, or head to the lake for water adventures and zip lining.

AUSTIN STEAM TRAIN ASSOCIATION—It offers round-trip train rides from Cedar Park to Burnet or Bertram, plus special events. Admission charge. 401 E. Whitestone Blvd., Suite C-100. 512-915-2340

BALCONES CANYONLANDS NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE—See MARBLE FALLS.

BREWERIES AND WINERY—Whitestone Brewery. See TEXAS BEVERAGE TOUR section.

BRUSHY CREEK LAKE PARK—The park has hike-and-bike trails, playgrounds, wildlife observation areas, fishing piers, and a 38-acre lake. 3300 Brushy Creek Road. 512-401-5516

CEDAR PARK SCULPTURE GARDEN—The garden showcases sculptures from Texas-based artists along landscaped walking trails. 1435 Main St. 512-401-5500

H-E-B CENTER—It hosts more than 150 annual events, including Austin Spurs basketball, Texas Stars hockey, live music, and family-friendly performances. Admission charge. 2100 Avenue of the Stars. 512-600-5000

LAKE TRAVIS WATERLOO ADVENTURES—The floating water park has a challenge course and private island getaway. Admission charge. 14529 Pocohontas Trail, Suite A. 512-401-5070

LAKE TRAVIS ZIPLINE ADVENTURE—Zip across Lake Travis on Texas' longest zip line. Reservations required. Admission charge. 14529 Pocohontas Trail, Leander. 512-614-1996

LAKELINE PARK—The 200-acre park has trails, a playground, an amphitheater, a kayak launch, a fishing pier, pavilions, and multipurpose fields. Free. 1510 Alexis Drive. 512-401-5500

SPLASH SHACK—Year-round indoor water park has a water play structure and slides. Admission charge. 1801 Clover Lane. 512-820-3636

VETERANS MEMORIAL PARK—Commemorates the military branches with bronze sculptures and a granite obelisk. 2525 New Hope Drive. 512-401-5500

COMFORT

POP. 3,018

Comfort Chamber of Commerce: 630 Front St. (SH 27). 830-995-3131; comfortchamber.com

At the center of the Texas Hill Country lies the charming town of Comfort. Visitors will find antiques stores, boutiques, art and pottery galleries, venues with alcoholic drinks and live music, and unique shops that blend with the town's historic feel. Events include July 4th Parade & BBQ and Christmas in Comfort Arts & Crafts Festival.

CARTOON SALOON—Stop by and take a selfie with a one-of-a-kind replica of an Old West tavern. 508 FM 473. 830-995-3131

COMFORT HERITAGE FOUNDATION & MUSEUM—View local historical documents and artifacts. 640 High St. 830-995-2641

FLATROCK RANCH MOUNTAIN BIKING—Enjoy trails, camping, organized races and rides, and panoramic views. Flat Rock Creek Road. 210-213-3006

HISTORIC HOTELS AND GUESTHOUSES—Call the office for details. 630 Front St. 830-995-3131

HISTORIC WALKING TOUR—Enjoy a self-guided walking tour of historic buildings in downtown Comfort. Materials available at the chamber. 630 Front St. 830-995-3131

JAMES KIEL RIVER BEND PARK—This is a tranquil spot for swimming, picnicking, and birding. 118 River Bend Road. 830-537-3470

OLD TUNNEL STATE PARK—See FREDERICKSBURG.

TREUE DER UNION MONUMENT—This memorial honors local Union sympathizers who lost their lives by Confederate forces in the Civil War Battle of the Nueces. 348 High St.

WINERIES—Bending Branch Winery and Singing Water Vineyards. See TEXAS BEVERAGE TOUR section.

CONCAN

POP. 275 (EST.)

Texas Hill Country River Region: 21170 SH 127. 830-232-4310; visitvaldecountry.com

The town was supposedly named for conquan, also known as "coon can," a card game. Located in the scenic Frio River Canyon, this is an area of numerous dude ranches and resort camps.

FRIO BAT CAVE—A large population of Mexican free-tailed bats emerge in the evening. Off FM 2690. 888-502-9387

GARNER STATE PARK—Swim in the Frio River, shoot its rapids on inner tubes, rent paddle boats, hike nature trails, and stay the night. Admission charge. 234 RR 1050. 830-232-6132

SCENIC DRIVES—Explore the Frio River Canyon along US 83, FM 1050, and SH 127. All routes offer exceptional scenery.

DEVINE

POP. 4,501

Greater Devine Chamber of Commerce: 200 E. Hondo Ave. devinechamber.org

Devine is located in the Medina Valley. It has a municipal golf course and public tennis courts.

BIGFOOT WALLACE MUSEUM—The museum honors this frontiersman and Texas Ranger. 13788 FM 472. 830-480-9753

STROUD BLACKSMITH SHOP—It's been in continuous operation since 1903. It has a Texas historical marker. 103 Herring St.

DRIPPING SPRINGS

POP. 7,057

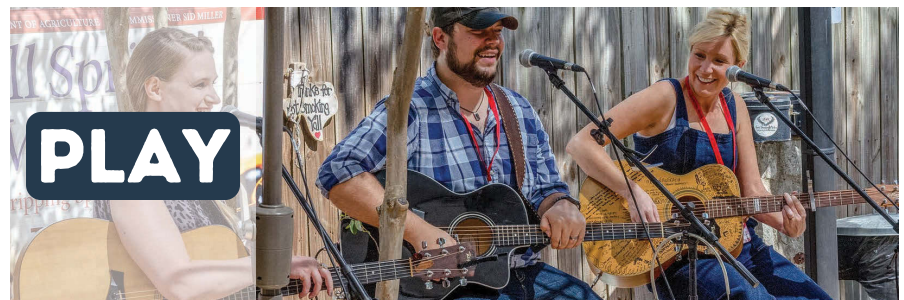
Dripping Springs Visitors Bureau: 509 Mercer St. 512-858-4740; destinationdrippingsprings.com

The community has many family-friendly attractions as well as an olive orchard, wineries, distilleries, and breweries. Historical Mercer Street offers shopping and live entertainment. Events include Founders Day Festival, Fair and Rodeo, Dripping with Taste, Wedding Capital of Texas Showcase, and Songwriters' Festival.

BREWRIES, DISTILLERIES, AND WINERIES—12 Fox Beer Company, Acopon Brewing, Bell Springs Winery, Desert Door Texas Sotol, Dripping Springs Distilling, Duchman Family Winery, Hawk's Shadow Estate, Solaro Estate Winery, Treaty Oak Distilling, Vista Brewing, and Westcave Cellars Winery. See TEXAS BEVERAGE TOUR section.

DR. POUND HISTORICAL FARMSTEAD MUSEUM—The museum features life on a Central Texas pioneer farmstead. 419-B Founders Park Road. 512-858-2030

HAMILTON POOL NATURE PRESERVE—It includes a 45-foot waterfall, nature study, and guided nature tours. Reservations required. 24300 Hamilton Pool Road. 512-264-2740





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MILTON REIMERS RANCH PARK—The park offers swimming, rock climbing, mountain biking, equestrian trails, and fishing. Admission charge. 23610 Hamilton Pool Road. 512-264-1923

TEXAS HILL COUNTRY OLIVE COMPANY—Guided tours of the mill and orchard are available. The location includes a tasting room and bistro. 2530 W. Fitzhugh Road. 512-607-6512

WESTCAVE OUTDOOR DISCOVERY CENTER—The preserve offers guided tours and natural science programs. 24814 Hamilton Pool Road. 830-825-3442

FREDERICKSBURG

POP. 11,257

Fredericksburg Convention and Visitor Bureau's Visitor Information Center: 302 E. Austin St. 830-997-6523; visitfredericksburgtx.com

This popular destination is noted for its peaches and wine. Visitors find shopping, gourmet cuisine, award-winning wineries, museums, art galleries, live Texas music, outdoor recreation, German heritage, and a plethora of events. Lady Bird Johnson Municipal Park features RV sites, a golf course, and trails.

BED-AND-BREAKFASTS—Hundreds of homes and buildings are B&Bs or guesthouses. The CVB has listings. 302 E. Austin St.

BREWERY—Altstadt Brewery. See TEXAS BEVERAGE TOUR section.

ENCHANTED ROCK STATE NATURAL AREA—It's popular for rock climbing, birding, stargazing, hiking, and tent camping. Admission charge. 16710 RR 965. 830-685-3636

FORT MARTIN SCOTT—Take a self-guided tour of the first federal frontier fort in Texas. Free. 1606 E. Main St. 830-997-7521

GILLESPIE COUNTY COUNTRY SCHOOLS DRIVING TRAIL—View 12 historic country schools. Maps are available at the CVB's visitor center. Free. 302 E. Austin St. 830-685-3321

LUCKENBACH TEXAS—Made popular worldwide by a song, the town has live music daily and dances most weekends. 412 Luckenbach Town Loop.

NATIONAL MUSEUM OF THE PACIFIC WAR—This world-class Smithsonian Affiliate museum tells the story of the Pacific War during World War II. Admission charge. 311 E. Austin St. 830-997-8600

OLD TUNNEL STATE PARK—View bats nightly May through October. This day-use park also offers birding, nature walks, and stargazing. 10619 Old San Antonio Road. 866-978-2287

PIONEER MEMORIAL LIBRARY—It includes books brought by early German settlers and local artwork. 115 W. Main St. 830-997-6513

PIONEER MUSEUM—Glimpse the daily lives of the German pioneers with a self-guided tour. Admission charge. 325 W. Main St. 830-990-8441

SUNDAY HOUSES—Several of the houses have historical medallions. Some are open for occasional tours, and others serve as bed-and-breakfasts.

TEXAS RANGERS HERITAGE CENTER—Grounds host the Ranger Ring of Honor, the Open-Air Pavilion, LoneStar Amphitheater, and Rangers Tower. 1618 E. Main St. 830-990-1192

VEREINS KIRCHE—The eight-sided reconstructed structure holds artifacts, paintings, and photos. Admission charge. 100 W. Main St. 830-990-8441

WILDSEED FARMS—This working wildflower farm has walking trails, a nursery, a vineyard, and events. 100 Legacy Drive. 830-990-1393

WINERIES—There are more than 50 wineries and tasting rooms located in Fredericksburg and Gillespie County. See TEXAS BEVERAGE TOUR section.

GEORGETOWN

POP. 86,507

Georgetown Visitor Center: 103 W. Seventh St.
800-436-8696; visitgeorgetown.com

Downtown Georgetown boasts some of the finest Victorian architecture in the state. Delight in unique dining experiences, charming boutiques, wine bars, and live theater. Nearly 9 miles of scenic hike and bike trails wind along the North and San Gabriel Rivers. Check the website for information on exciting annual festivals.

GEORGETOWN ART CENTER—The center hosts solo exhibitions, group shows, and events. Free. 816 S. Main St. 512-930-2583

HISTORIC DOWNTOWN—Georgetown has four National Register Historic Districts. Get tour information at the Visitor Center.

INNER SPACE CAVERN—This is Texas' most accessible cavern. Admission charge. 4200 S. I-35. 512-931-2283

LAKE GEORGETOWN—The lake offers picnicking, boat ramps, and camping. 500 Lake Overlook Drive. 512-930-5253

PALACE THEATER—This former movie house hosts live productions year-round. 810 S. Austin Ave. 512-869-7469

SWEET EATS FRUIT FARM—The farm offers seasonal fruit picking, festivals, and baby animal feeding. Admission charge. 14400 E. SH 29. 512-766-3276

VETERANS MEMORIAL PLAZA—The plaza honors Williamson County residents who gave their lives in war. 2 Texas Drive.

WILLIAMSON MUSEUM—Explore the county's heritage through changing interactive exhibits. 716 S. Austin Ave. 512-943-1670

GOLDTHWAITE

POP. 1,742

Goldthwaite Area Chamber of Commerce:
1219 Fisher St. 325-648-3619;
goldthwaiteareachamber.com

Goldthwaite is noted for year-round fishing at nearby Colorado River and Pecan Bayou, as well as seasonal hunting. The Regency Suspension Bridge across the Colorado is one of the few swinging bridges in use in the state. The historic Old Jail building is on the courthouse square.

LEGACY PLAZA—It includes the Texas Botanical Gardens, welcome center, educational programs, and tours. US 183 and Second Street. 325-648-2750

MILLS COUNTY MUSEUM—The museum features replicas of pioneer rooms, local history, and photographs. 1119 Fisher St. 325-451-0181

HONDO

POP. 8,636

Hondo Area Chamber of Commerce: 1113 17th St.
830-426-3037; hondochamber.org

The restored Raye Theater features first-run movies and is available for tours. Events include the Cowboy Country Roundup in spring, Hondo Army Air Field Fly-In in May, and Wild Game Festival in October.

SOUTH TEXAS MAIZE—Visitors enjoy a corn maze, hayrides, games, and farm activities. Admission charge. 911 US 90 East. 830-741-3968

HUTTO

POP. 36,655

Hutto Visitor Information: 401A W. Front St.
512-759-4029; huttotx.gov/101

Hutto is known for its mascot, the hippo. According to legend, a circus train stopped at the depot and a hippopotamus escaped. More than 3,000 painted-concrete hippos are displayed throughout the community. Hutto Lake Park includes a boat dock, a birdwatching platform, fishing sites, and a trail.

HUTTO COMMERCIAL HISTORIC DISTRICT—Twelve downtown buildings are examples of the Late Victorian Italianate style and the early 20th-century Commercial Style. Around Main Street and US 79.

INGRAM

POP. 1,836

West Kerr County Chamber of Commerce:
3186 Junction Highway. 830-367-4322; wkcc.com

This area is surrounded by summer camps and vacation homes along the Guadalupe River.

HILL COUNTRY ARTS FOUNDATION—The campus has a gallery, indoor and outdoor theaters, studios, and a gift shop. 120 Point Theatre Road South. 830-367-5121

Stonehenge II—This replica is 60% as tall as the original and 90% of the circumference. Also see replicas of Easter Island statues.

OLD INGRAM—Buildings in the old section of town house art galleries, antiques shops, boutiques, and restaurants. On a loop off SH 39 and SH 27.

JOHNSON CITY

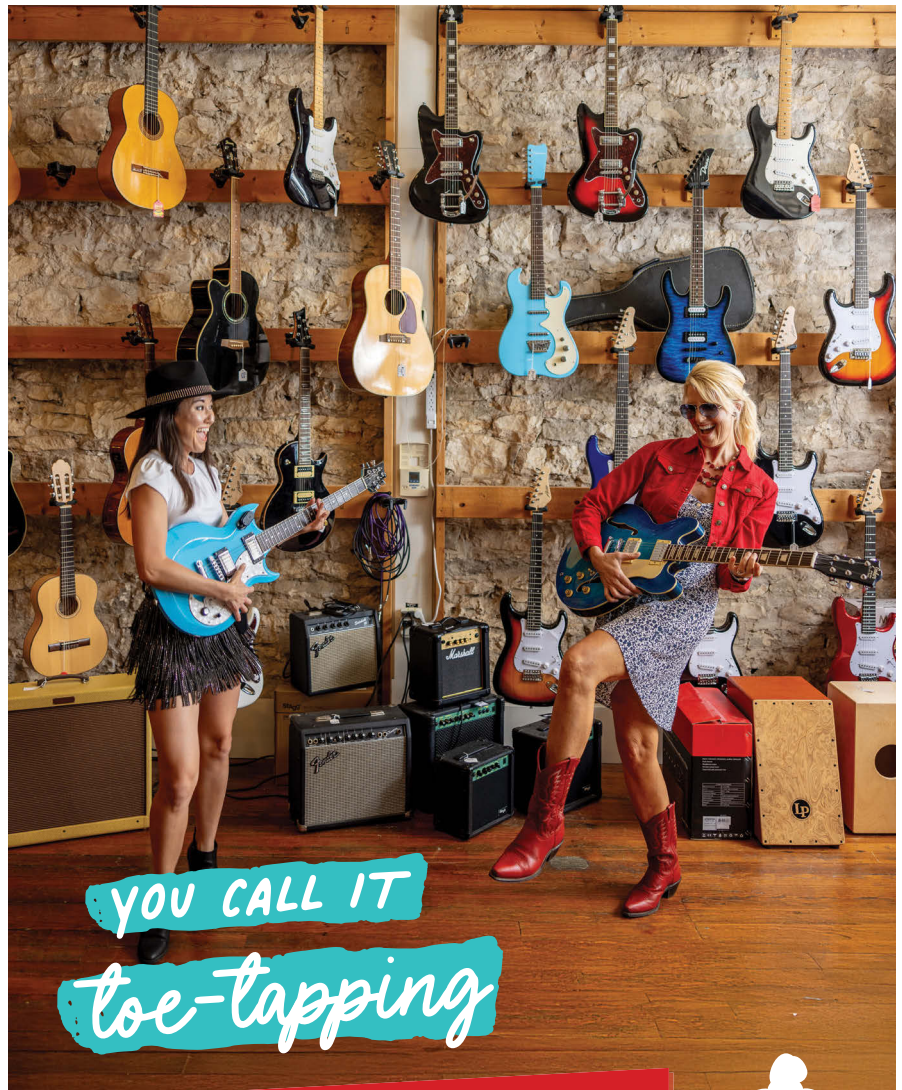
POP. 1,826

Johnson City Visitors Center: 100 E. Main St.
830-868-7684; lbjcountry.com

Johnson City is in the heart of the Hill Country wine region. Several world-class artists call this town home, and many more have works in local galleries. Events include Market Days, Last Saturday Art Walk, Blanco County Youth Stock Show, We Got Yer Goat Cook-off, and Lights Spectacular "Hill Country Style."

EXOTIC RESORT ZOO—See animals from around the world on a guided tram tour. Admission charge. 235 Zoo Trail. 830-868-4357

LYNDON B. JOHNSON NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK—The main headquarters features a visitor center, exhibits, and films. LBJ's boyhood home and the Johnson Settlement are nearby. Two blocks south of US 290. 830-868-7128, ext. 231 or 830-868-7128, ext. 244



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LYNDON B. JOHNSON STATE PARK AND HISTORIC SITE—See STONEWALL.

PEDERNALES FALLS STATE PARK—The park features fishing, swimming, tubing, camping, birding, horseback riding, and hiking. Admission charge. 2585 Park Road 6026. 830-868-7304

PEDERNALES RIVER NATURE PARK—This LCRA park offers picnicking, fishing, and river access. Swimming is not allowed. Free. 404 US 281 North. 512-473-3366

SCIENCE MILL—This science center offers an interactive learning environment for all ages. Admission charge. 101 S. Ladybird Lane. 844-263-6405

TEXAS VINTAGE MOTORCYCLE MUSEUM—The museum features vintage motorcycles from the '50s, '60s, and '70s. 100 N. Nugent Ave. 832-326-3299

WINERY—Carter Creek Winery Resort & Spa. See WIN-ERIES listing.

JUNCTION POP. 2,519

Junction Texas Tourism: 730 Main St. 325-446-2622; junctiontexas.com

Kimble County is popular for outdoor activities and has more flowing streams than any other Texas county. Camping, year-round fishing, paddling, birding, hunting, and motorcycle touring are popular. Schreiner Park offers free overnight camping.

KIMBLE COUNTY HISTORICAL MUSEUM—The facility has early settler and military artifacts. 130 Hospital Drive. 325-446-4219

O.C. FISHER MUSEUM—Memorabilia of former congressman O.C. Fisher is displayed in the Kimble County Library. 208 N. 10th St. 325-446-2342

SCENIC DRIVES—Drive US 377 southwest as it follows the South Llano River. An exceptional overlook is about 22 miles south at a highway rest area.

SOUTH LLANO RIVER STATE PARK—Visitors may hike, bike, birdwatch on the trails, wildlife watch, picnic, camp, swim, tube, fish, paddle, or stargaze. Admission charge. 1927 Park Road 73. 325-446-3994

KERRVILLE POP. 24,752

Kerrville Convention and Visitors Bureau: 2108 Sidney Baker St. 830-792-3535; kerrvillecrafted.com

From artisans and craftsmen to brewers and craft cuisine, the entrepreneurial spirit that founded this Hill Country town still shapes visitor discoveries today. Feel inspired as you stroll the historic downtown, shop at local boutiques, or pedal through rolling hills. You're invited to craft your own experience in Kerrville.

DISTILLERIES AND WINERIES—Hill Country Spirits, Rivenburgh Wine, and Turtle Creek Vineyards. See TEXAS BEVERAGE TOUR section.

HILL COUNTRY ARTS FOUNDATION—See INGRAM.

JAMES AVERY VISITOR CENTER—The visitor center tells the story of the jewelry business James Avery started in his mother-in-law's garage. 145 Avery Road N. 830-353-4001

KERR ARTS AND CULTURAL CENTER—It hosts the Texas Furniture Makers Show, Gourd Show, art exhibits, and a gift shop that features local artists' works. Free. 228 Earl Garrett St. 830-895-2911

KERRVILLE-SCHREINER PARK—The park offers camping, shelters, RV hookups, fishing, swimming, nature study, and hiking. Admission charge. 2385 Bandera Highway (SH 173). 830-257-5392

MUSEUM OF WESTERN ART—The West comes alive in the artworks displayed here. Admission charge. 1550 Bandera Highway. 830-896-2553

RIVERSIDE NATURE CENTER—The center includes an arboretum, walking paths, a wildflower meadow, and butterfly gardens. 150 Francisco Lemos St. 830-257-4837

SCENIC DRIVES—This area is popular with motorcyclists. Take SH 16 to Medina; FM 337 to Vanderpool, Leakey, and Camp Wood; FM 335 through Barksdale; or drive FM 336 from Leakey. Follow SH 41 to Mountain Home, then SH 27 through Ingram, or FM 1340 through Hunt to Kerrville.



Kerr Arts and Cultural Center
in Kerrville

SCHREINER MANSION—The former home holds artifacts and antiques. Admission charge. 226 Earl Garrett St. 830-895-5222

STONEHENGE II—See INGRAM.

"THE COMING KING" SCULPTURE PRAYER GARDEN—An 80-foot-tall steel cross and garden stands on a hill above I-10. Free. 520 Benson Drive. 830-928-7774

Y.O. RANCH HEADQUARTERS—The ranch offers wildlife tours, horseback riding, swimming, hunting, and lodging. 1736 Y.O. Ranch Road. 830-640-3222 or 844-835-3222

KINGSLAND POP. 7,028

Kingsland/Lake LBJ Chamber of Commerce:
325-388-6211; kingslandchamber.org

Kingsland is popular with campers and water-sports enthusiasts. Visitors also enjoy golf, birding, fishing, nature hikes, swimming, thrift-vintage shopping, and wineries. The annual AquaBoom celebration commemorates Independence Day.

INKS LAKE STATE PARK—See BUCHANAN DAM.

LAKE LBJ—Marinas and boat ramps offer access to fishing and boating. Accessible from FM 1431 and FM 2900. 512-473-3200

NIGHTGALE ARCHAEOLOGICAL CENTER—It offers artifacts, field excavations, and an interpretive trail. 1010 Circle Drive. 512-473-3366

KYLE POP. 57,470

Kyle Area Chamber of Commerce & Visitors Bureau: 401 Center St. 512-268-4220; kylechamber.org

When you're looking for something sweet, there's nowhere better than the Pie Capital of Texas. The sweet and savory confection is celebrated on your plate and in the town's lively annual festival. You can also ride horses and hot air balloons, taste Texas wines, tour a historic train depot, and visit the home of a literary legend.

CLAIBORNE KYLE LOG HOUSE—It's a restored four-pen, linear dog-trot house. 2400 Old Stagecoach Road. 512-644-7669

HISTORIC TRAIN DEPOT AND HERITAGE CENTER—Watch documentary videos and take a tour of the fully restored building and caboose. 100 N. Front St.

LAKE KYLE—Enjoy catch-and-release fishing, a play-scape, washer pits, and a walking trail. Free. 700 Lehman Road. 512-262-3939

LAGO VISTA POP. 9,692

North Lake Travis Chamber of Commerce:
512-267-7952; northlaketravischamber.org

There is year-round golfing, tennis, boat and jet-ski rentals, fishing excursions, and kayaking. It is a gateway to the Balcones Canyonlands National Wildlife Refuge.

Events include the La Primavera Lago Vista Bicycle Race, Jonestown Cajun Cook-Off, and Friends of Balcones Canyonlands Songbird Festival.

SCENIC DRIVE—Traveling on FM 1431 offers exceptional Hill Country scenery, especially in the spring when blue-bonnets and other wildflowers abound.

LAMPASAS POP. 7,694

Lampasas County Chamber of Commerce:
205 S. US 281. 512-556-5172; lampasaschamber.org

W.M. Brook Park offers a river walk along Sulphur Creek. One-of-a-kind murals scattered throughout downtown and surrounding areas depict the county's heritage. A historical driving tour is available.

ARTEMIS RANCH AND RETREAT—The outdoor adventure ranch and wildlife preserve offers wildlife experiences, nature and adventure tours, and outdoor activities. 13291 FM 580, Lometa. 512-893-7777

COLORADO BEND STATE PARK—See SAN SABA.

COOPER SPRING NATURE PARK—The park offers a series of trails on about 16 acres. Free. 100 N. Hackberry St.

HANCOCK SPRINGS POOL—It's the only sulfur springs pool open to the public. US 281 South at EE Ohnmeiss Drive. 512-556-6831 or 512-556-4048

HANNA SPRINGS SCULPTURE GARDEN—At Campbell Park, the grounds showcase permanent and revolving outdoor sculptures. Free. 501 E. North Ave.



Shafter Bend Recreation Area
in Marble Falls

HISTORIC DOWNTOWN—Courtyard Square is anchored by the historic Lampasas County Courthouse. This area is a National Register Historic District.

LAMPASAS COUNTY MUSEUM—The museum depicts county history with antiques, a mural, and a landscape diorama. Free. 303 S. Western Ave. 512-556-2224

SETERFITT GHOST TOWN—On the Oliver Ranch, all that remains of the town are the hotel, livery stables, and a cemetery. 3778 FM 581 W., Lometa. 254-547-7571

WINERY—Perissos Vineyard and Winery. See TEXAS BEVERAGE TOUR section.

LEAKEY

POP. 327

Frio Canyon Chamber of Commerce:
830-410-2016; friocanyonchamber.com

This community (pronounced LAY-key) is in a scenic area of the rugged Edwards Plateau. Elevations range from 1,500 to 2,400 feet with deep, dramatic canyons cut by the Frio and Nueces rivers. During spring and summer, visitors enjoy tubing the Frio River. Autumn leaves provide colorful displays.

GARNER STATE PARK—See CONCAN.

REAL COUNTY HISTORICAL MUSEUM—Items displayed in period rooms depict the area's history. Admission charge. North of the courthouse. 830-232-5330

SCENIC DRIVES—FM 337 and SH 39 offer spectacular scenery. Head north on FM 187 to the Lost Maples State Natural Area. US 83 north skirts the Frio River and a road-side park about 12 miles north has a spectacular view.

LLANO

POP. 3,482

Llano Chamber of Commerce & Visitor Center:
100 Train Station Drive. 325-247-5354;
llanochamber.org

The historic Lantex Theater still shows first-run movies, and hosts the Llano Country Opry. Llano is known as the Deer Capital of Texas, and a Hunter Appreciation Event is held in November. Visitors also come for fishing, rock-hounding, and gold panning. Parks offer camping, RV hookups, swimming, boat ramps, and hiking.

ENCHANTED ROCK STATE NATURAL AREA—See FREDERICKSBURG.

HISTORIC RAILYARD DISTRICT—It has a railroad museum and visitor center, dining, bed-and-breakfasts, antiques stores, and entertainment. 100 Train Station Drive. 325-247-5354

LLANO COUNTY MUSEUM—Historical displays are housed in a refurbished drug store. 310 Bessemer Ave. (SH 16). 325-247-3026

LLANO FINE ARTS GUILD INC.—View works by local artists. 503 Bessemer Ave. (SH 16). 325-247-4839

MARBLE FALLS

POP. 7,423

Marble Falls Visitor Center: 100 Ave. G.
830-693-4449; visitmarblefalls.org

Marble Falls is a popular destination for boating, water sports, and other outdoor activities. It boasts cultural experiences from live music and art walks to places to shop and eat. In the spring, catch views of wildflowers, and pick up a Bluebonnet Trail Guide at the visitor center.

BALCONES CANYONLANDS NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE—The refuge preserves nesting habitats for the golden-cheeked warbler and black-capped vireo. Take FM 1869 to observation deck; Warbler Vista is on RM 1431. 512-339-9432

BELÓVED GALLERY—Belóved Gallery provides guided tours free of charge but require a reservation. 206 Ave. H, Suite 101. 830-271-0114

BREWERY—Save the World Brewing Company. See TEXAS BEVERAGE TOUR section.

CADILLAC DANCE HALL—Open every last Saturday of the month, the Cadillac Dance Hall hosts Eddie Shell and the Not Guilties. Admission charge. 1375 FM 1855. 830-385-4745

DOWNTOWN MARBLE FALLS—The historic district features local shopping, wineries, breweries, and restaurants. 215 Main St. 830-693-4449

THE FALLS ON THE COLORADO MUSEUM—It preserves the heritage of Marble Falls and the surrounding area. 2001 Broadway St. 830-798-2157

HIDDEN FALLS ADVENTURE PARK—The park has over 2,000 acres for those seeking off-road adventuring. Admission charge. 7030 E. FM 1431. 830-798-9820

HIGHLAND ARTS GUILD & GALLERY—The guild works to encourage artists of all ages and abilities through classes, demonstrations, workshops, and exhibits. Free. 318 Main St. 830-693-7324

INKS LAKE STATE PARK—See BUCHANAN DAM.

JUST YAKIN KAYAK & SUP RENTALS—It provides hourly rentals on Lake Marble Falls and daily rentals of single and tandem kayaks and stand-up paddleboards to both Lake Marble Falls and the surrounding lakes. Admission charge. 325-668-2536

KRAUSE SPRINGS—The site includes a spring-fed swimming pool, picnic area, gardens, hiking, and RV and tent camping. Admission charge. 404 Krause Spring Road, Spicewood. 830-693-4181

LAKE MARBLE FALLS—It is one of the Highland Lakes. City parks offer access for fishing, boating, and swimming. 512-473-3200

LOPEZ HILL—The hacienda-style house walls are decorated with substantial multicolored mosaics inspired by Vincent van Gogh. Admission charge. 12649 SH 71, Spicewood. 830-613-8523

MULESHOE BEND RECREATION AREA—It has miles of multiuse trails and is one of the best places to see blue-bonnets in season. Admission charge. 2820 County Road 414. 512-473-3366

MUSEO BENINI—The museum shares the evolution of Benini's work since the late 1950s and includes an outdoor walking sculpture trail. Free. 3440 E. FM 2147. 830-693-2147 or 830-385-1471

SCENIC DRIVES—RM 1431 offers breathtaking scenery over winding curves and hills. RM 2147 along the western shore of Lake Marble Falls and SH 71 are memorable. During wildflower season, stop by the visitor center for directions to the best blooms. 830-693-4449

SCULPTURE ON MAIN—Sculptures on Main is a 24/7 outdoor art exhibit celebrating Texas Hill Country artists. Free. 900 Yett St.

SWEET BERRY FARM—Enjoy hayrides, a petting zoo, hay mazes, and the fall pumpkin patch. 1801 FM 1980. 830-798-1462

VANISHING TEXAS RIVER CRUISE—See BURNET.

MASON

POP. 2,145

Mason County Chamber of Commerce: 108 Fort McKavitt St. 325-347-5758; masontxcoc.com

The area is noted for camping, fishing, and hunting. Blue-bonnets blanket the landscape in spring. Topaz, the state gem, is found in granite outcroppings. The Odeon Theater is the oldest continuously-operating movie theater in Texas. Roundup Rodeo Weekend is held in July.

ECKERT JAMES RIVER BAT CAVE—This is one of the largest Mexican free-tailed bat colonies. Free. James River Road. 325-347-5970

FORT MASON—The fort includes reconstructed officers' quarters and 23 foundations. Free. 204 W. Spruce St. 325-347-5758

M. BEVEN ECKERT MEMORIAL LIBRARY—Highlights include Fred Gipson, author of *Old Yeller*; Eckert James River Bat Cave; and early Mason families. 410 Post Hill. 325-347-5446

MASON COUNTY VETERANS' MEMORIAL—This granite memorial on Courthouse Square honors Mason County veterans.

MASON SQUARE MUSEUM—A former pharmacy houses county history. 130 Fort McKavitt St. 325-347-0507

THE SEAQUIST HOUSE—Tour this 19th-century landmark on the first Saturday of the month. 405 Broad St.

MENARD

POP. 1,351

Menard County Chamber of Commerce: 100 E. San Saba Ave. 325-396-2365; menardchamber.com

This town was established near the ruins of the ancient Spanish mission Santa Cruz de San Saba; a historical marker on FM 2092 recalls the mission's history. An irrigation canal, referred to as "The Ditch," dug for the old mission can be seen in historic downtown.

FORT MCKAVETT STATE HISTORIC SITE—Texas Indian Wars military post tells real stories of early West Texas life. Admission charge. 7066 FM 864. 325-396-2358

MENARDVILLE MUSEUM—Local history exhibits and frontier artifacts are housed in the small vintage railroad depot. 100 Frisco Ave. 325-396-2365

RUINS OF REAL PRESIDIO DE SAN SABA—This Spanish fort was established in 1751 to protect a mission and was abandoned in 1769. 191 Presidio Road. 915-726-0888

NEW BRAUNFELS

POP. 104,707

New Braunfels Visitor Center: I-35 and Seguin Avenue. 830-625-7973; visitnbttx.com

German influence is prominent here. The Guadalupe and Comal rivers provide excellent water recreation. Historic buildings house bed-and-breakfasts. Events include Folkfest, Americana Music Jam, Comal County Fair, the Gruene Music & Wine Fest, and Wurstfest.

ANIMAL WORLD AND SNAKE FARM ZOO—See more than 500 reptiles, plus monkeys, birds, llamas, and Texas longhorns. Admission charge. 5640 I-35 South. 830-402-4603

GRUENE HISTORIC DISTRICT—Restored historic structures hold shops, restaurants, B&Bs, river outfitters, an art gallery, and a winery. West of I-35, Exit 191. 830-629-5077

HISTORIC OLD TOWN—Discover the rich history of New Braunfels by visiting its 3.5-acre plaza. Guided tours are available. Admission charge. 1300 Church Hill Drive. 830-629-2943

LANDA PARK—The park offers spring-fed swimming pools, paddleboats, bicycle and hiking trails, an 18-hole course, miniature putt-putt, and a miniature train. 164 Landa Park Drive. 830-221-4000

MCKENNA CHILDREN'S MUSEUM—Children can interact with art, history, science, technology, and health. Admission charge. 801 W. San Antonio St. 830-606-9525

MUSEUM OF TEXAS HANDMADE FURNITURE—Displays include furniture and artifacts from the 1700s. A log cabin features furnishings and tools. Admission charge. 1370 Church Hill Drive. 830-629-6504

RIVER ACTIVITIES—Outfitters provide rentals, including rafts, kayaks, paddleboards, and tubes to enjoy the Guadalupe and Comal Rivers. 830-625-7973

SCENIC DRIVES—RM 32, the Devil's Backbone, is exceptionally beautiful, as is the River Road from New Braunfels to Sattler along the Guadalupe River.

SCHLITTERBAHN—The "World's Best Water Park" boasts a remarkable variety of river rides, pools, and waterslides. Admission charge. 400 N. Liberty St. 830-625-2351

SOPHIENBURG MUSEUM—Learn the fascinating history of New Braunfels. Admission charge. 401 W. Coll St. 830-629-1572

TEXAS SKI RANCH—It offers wakeboarding and water skiing, paintball, axe-throwing, and a floating water park. Admission charge. 6700 I-35 North. 830-627-2843

OZONA

POP. 2,663

Ozona Chamber of Commerce Visitor Center

Park: At I-10 and SH 163. 325-392-3737; ozona.com

Known as the "Biggest Little Town in the World," Ozona is the only town in Crockett County. This vast ranching and oil area is known for wool and mohair production. Hunters find white-tailed deer, javelina, and upland game birds.

CROCKETT COUNTY INTERPRETIVE TRAIL—The trail includes native plants, an educational Rain Harvest exhibit, and wildlife viewing area. At the Visitor Center at I-10 and SH 163 South.

CROCKETT COUNTY MUSEUM—The museum features an award-winning Native American exhibit, artifacts, and rooms showcasing local culture. 404 11th St. 325-392-2837

ESCONDIDO DRAW RECREATIONAL AREA—It includes a 110-mile trail system for ATVs, OHVs, and dirt bikes. Also birdwatch, camp, hike, and stargaze. RM 406. 325-206-4251

FORT LANCASTER STATE HISTORIC SITE—The site preserves the remnants of a post established in 1855. Admission charge. 629 Fort Lancaster Road, Sheffield. 432-836-4391

HISTORIC TOWN SQUARE—The square is surrounded by historic buildings and has several historical markers. SH 163 and 11th Street. 325-392-3737 or 325-392-2837

Crockett County Courthouse—It was completed in 1902 and has been restored. 907 Ave. D. 325-392-3737 or 325-392-2837

Crockett County Historical Markers—Dozens of historical markers commemorate events throughout the county.

David Crockett Monument—It is a tribute to the legendary frontiersman and Alamo hero. At SH 163 and 11th Street. 325-392-3737 or 325-392-2837

"The Tie That Binds" Sculpture—It memorializes the pioneer families that settled Crockett County. At SH 163 and 11th Street. 325-392-3737 or 325-392-2837

LANCASTER HILL—The picnic area and observation point have a breathtaking view. A historical marker describes the "Government Road." On SH 290.

NATURE RANCHES—Ranches combine an overnight stay with nature exploration, including hiking, stargazing, wildlife watching, and photography. Twistflower Ranch Nature Retreat: 512-516-1750; twistflower ranch.com. X-bar Ranch Nature Retreat: 325-853-2688; xbar ranch.com



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PFLUGERVILLE

POP. 66,556

Pflugerville Tourism PFUN*TX: 100 E. Main St., Suite 200. 512-251-7799; explorepf.com

Explore the hidden gems of the Trail Capital of Texas, boasting over 56 miles of trails adorned with art. With festivals, captivating live performances, and local markets featuring art and cuisine, Pflugerville has something for everyone. Immerse yourself in this city's arts, music, and culinary scene.

CAPITOL CITY BMX—Bicycle racing facility offers weekly clinics and races. 5001 Killingsworth Lane. 512-387-6675

FALLEN WARRIOR MEMORIAL—Statue honors local soldiers who gave their lives for our country. 515 City Park Road.

HERITAGE HOUSE MUSEUM—Artifacts from the Bohls family and period pieces are displayed. Donations accepted. 901 Old Austin Hutto Road. 512-990-6375

LAKE PFLUGERVILLE—The park at this reservoir has a beach, playgrounds, docks, trails, and boat launch. 18216 Weiss Lane. 512-990-6350

TYPHOON TEXAS WATERPARK—The park features slides, a wave pool, and a lazy river. It includes a family adventure park and challenge course. 18500 SH 130 North Service Road. 512-212-7792

ROCKSPRINGS

POP. 866

Edwards County Chamber of Commerce: 109 S. Sweeten St. 830-683-6466;

The town is located in the highest area of the scenic Edwards Plateau.

DEVILS SINKHOLE STATE NATURAL AREA—This National Natural Landmark houses a large colony of Mexican free-tailed bats. Reservations required. Admission charge. 101 N. Sweeten St. 830-683-2287

SCENIC DRIVES—Most highways in the area are scenic routes through the rugged Hill Country, especially RM 674 south and US 377.

ROUND ROCK

POP. 126,697

Round Rock Convention and Visitors Bureau: 231 E. Main St., Suite 150. 512-218-7023; goroundrock.com

Located in Central Texas, just a short 20-minute drive from Austin, Round Rock offers a winning combination of small-town charm and worldly recreation options. These include state-of-the-art sport venues, well-appointed meeting facilities, plus unique shopping, authentic dining, and other exciting outdoor adventures.

CHISHOLM TRAIL CROSSING PARK—Sculptures and plaques depict the city's Chisholm Trail crossing history. The famous round rock is nearby. 500 Chisholm Trail Road.

DELL DIAMOND—The stadium hosts the Round Rock Express, a Texas Rangers affiliate, and Home Run Dugout, hrdugout.com. Admission charge. 3400 E. Palm Valley Blvd. 512-255-2255

DOWNTOWNER ART GALLERY—It holds local art, photography, performances, and art demonstrations. 231 E. Main St., Suite 160. 512-218-7099

HISTORIC DOWNTOWN DISTRICT—Many of the buildings were built in the late 1800s. 512-218-5428

KALAHARI RESORTS & CONVENTIONS—It offers a thrilling indoor theme park, dining, shopping, and a spa. Admission charge. 3001 Kalahari Blvd. 877-525-2427

OLD SETTLERS PARK—The park offers sports fields, event venues, a fishing lake, a disc golf course, trails, and the Rock'N River Family Aquatic Center. 3300 E. Palm Valley Blvd. 512-671-2737

SAN MARCOS

POP. 70,301

San Marcos Convention and Visitor Bureau Tourist Information Center: 617 I-35 North. 512-393-5930; visitsanmarcos.com

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ping center. Immerse yourself in nature and explore some trails. Relax with a cold one brewed in the Hill Country. And of course, stroll around downtown to see colorful murals and even mermaids.

BREWERIES—Middleton Brewing and Roughhouse Brewing. See TEXAS BEVERAGE TOUR section.

COMMEMORATIVE AIR FORCE, CENTRAL TEXAS

WING—Hangar houses airworthy, vintage military warbirds and a military museum. Donations recommended. Free. 1841 Airport Drive, Bldg. 2249. 512-396-1943

LBJ MUSEUM OF SAN MARCOS—The museum focuses on how this U.S. president's early experiences influenced San Marcos and the nation. 131 N. Guadalupe St. 512-353-3300

LONGHORN RACING ACADEMY—Get behind the wheel of the latest exotic supercars—on a real racetrack. Admission charge. 2840 Harris Hill Road. 512-983-4976

THE MEADOWS CENTER—Take a glass-bottom boat, snorkel, or paddling tour of Spring Lake, and visit Discovery Hall. Admission charge. 951 Aquarena Springs Drive. 512-245-9200

SAN MARCOS ART CENTER—Discover unique artwork by local San Marcos artists. Free. 117 N. Guadalupe St., Suite 101. 737-213-4003

SAN MARCOS RIVER RECREATION—The 72 degrees year-round river is great for tubing, kayaking, paddling, swimming, or relaxing. Free. 512-393-5930

SAN MARCOS RIVER WALKWAY—The walkway connects five city parks along the picturesque river. Access is from Juan Veramendi Plaza.

SCENIC DRIVES—RM 12 northwest to RM 32, called the Devil's Backbone, offers exceptional views of the Hill Country and spring wildflowers.

SKYDIVE SPACELAND SAN MARCOS—Experience San Marcos from 14,000 feet in the air. Admission charge. 517 Airfield Road. Fentress. 512-488-2214

WITTLIFF COLLECTIONS—Exhibits include photography, literary archives, Texas music exhibit, and *Lonesome Dove* memorabilia. Free. 601 University Dr. Albert B. Alkek Library, seventh floor. 512-245-2313

WONDER WORLD—It includes a cave, an observation tower, and wildlife petting. Admission charge. 1000 Prospect St. 512-392-6711

SAN SABA POP. 3,127

San Saba Chamber of Commerce: 113 S. High St. 325-372-5141; sansasbachamber.org

The San Saba and Colorado rivers are popular with campers and anglers. During autumn-winter seasons, hunters take white-tailed deer, wild turkey, and native game birds.

COLORADO BEND STATE PARK—The park offers 30 miles of multiuse trails, swimming holes, camping, and Gorman Falls. Admission charge. 1201 Colorado Park Road, Bend. 325-628-3240

SAN SABA COUNTY MUSEUM—The museum depicts the county's rich history from settlement to pecan fame. In Mill Pond Park. 325-372-8807

SAN SABA RIVER NATURE PARK—The park offers paved trails, fishing, wildlife viewing stations, and primitive camping. 1107 E. Wallace St. (US 190).

SONORA POP. 2,386

Sonora Chamber of Commerce: 205 US 277 North. 325-387-2880 or 888-387-2880; sonoratexas.org

Historic downtown has the restored Sutton County Courthouse. Other attractions are within walking distance. Sonora Golf Course has a great nine-hole courses. Hunters take wild turkey, white-tailed deer, and axis deer. Events include The Sonora Outlaw Rodeo & Sutton County Days, Cinco De Mayo Festival, and Will Carver Days.

CAVERNS OF SONORA—It's a beautiful show cave. Camping available. Admission charge. 1711 Private Road 4468. 325-387-3105

EATON HILL NATURE CENTER & PRESERVE—The preserve offers hiking trails and nature viewing, plus geology, prehistory, and wildlife exhibits. Free. 500 City Hill Road. 325-387-2615



The Meadows Center for Water and the Environment in San Marcos

OLD SONORA ICE HOUSE RANCH MUSEUM—It houses artifacts from the area's ranching history. 206 S. Water Ave. 325-387-3754

SPRING BRANCH POP. 233

Bulverde Spring Branch Area Chamber of Commerce: 499 Singing Oaks, Suite 101. 830-438-4285; bulverdespringbranchchamber.com

Recreation abounds in the Bulverde/Spring Branch area, affording residents and visitors opportunities for adventure and fun. State parks and the Guadalupe River are nearby. Hunting is a favorite sport, and fishing and skiing are popular on Canyon Lake.

ANHALT HALL—German Dance Hall, converted from an old barn, holds monthly dances. 2390 Anhalt Road. 830-438-2873

GUADALUPE RIVER STATE PARK—The park offers camping, fishing, tubing, canoeing, swimming, hiking, and a Discovery Center. Admission charge. 3350 Park Road 31. 830-438-2656

HONEY CREEK STATE NATURAL AREA—This area is accessible only by scheduled guided walks on Saturdays. 3350 Park Road 31. 830-438-2656

STONEWALL POP. 451

Stonewall Chamber of Commerce: 250 Peach St. 830-644-2735; stonewalltexas.com

This village west of Austin is located along the Highway 290 Wine Trail and is famous for delicious Gillespie County peaches and the LBJ Ranch. The Peach JAMBoree and Rodeo is in June.

DISTILLERY AND WINERIES—Becker Vineyards, Kuhlman Cellars, Pedernales Cellars, Garrison Brothers Distillery, and Hye Meadow Winery.

LYNDON B. JOHNSON NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK—LBJ Ranch is the ancestral home of the 36th president. Access is by self-guided vehicle tour. Free. Two miles east of Stonewall off US 290. 830-868-7128

LYNDON B. JOHNSON STATE PARK AND HISTORIC SITE—Study history and nature, picnic, fish, swim, and view wildlife. Free. 199 Park Road 52. 830-644-2252

The Sauer-Beckmann Living History Farm—Daily demonstrations by period costumed staff use historical methods and tools. 199 Park Road 52. 830-644-2252

TAYLOR POP. 16,975

Taylor Chamber of Commerce: 1519 N. Main St. 512-352-6364; taylorchamber.org or taylormadetexas.com

The historic downtown offers shopping and dining, and it's a stop on the Heart of Texas BBQ Trail. Murphy Park has a lake, as well as a large egret rookery. Events include Taylor Fest, Taylor Rodeo, Williamson County Fair & Rodeo, Main Street Car Show, Parade of Lights, and activities at the Williamson County Expo Center.

GRANGER LAKE—Parks have hiking trails, boat ramps, fishing, and camping. 3100 Granger Dam Road. 512-859-2668

HISTORIC DOWNTOWN SHOPPING DISTRICT—Shop, eat, and drink. The district includes murals and a Bill Pickett statue. 100 Main St. 512-352-6364

MOODY MUSEUM—The restored birthplace of Texas' youngest governor, Dan Moody, contains many original furnishings. Free. 114 W. Ninth St. 512-352-6364

UTOPIA POP. 225

Utopia Visitor Center: utopiatexas.info

Discover an untouched part of the Texas Hill Country with rugged canyons and cool, beautiful streams. Plan a picnic, fish, swim, or float lazily in the clear water of the Sabinal River. Hike Lost Maples State Natural Area or bike the scenic country roads. The area also is a world-class birding and wildlife viewing destination.

SABINAL CANYON MUSEUM—Exhibits include pioneer farm implements, antique household items, Native American artifacts, fossils and minerals, and World War II memorabilia. Main Street. 210-414-4341

UVALDE POP. 15,430

Uvalde Area Chamber of Commerce & Visitors Center: 830-278-3361; uvalde.org

Uvalde was once the domain of notorious frontier sheriff and outlaw J. King Fisher—a historical marker is at the Pioneer Cemetery. The town is home to Southwest Texas Junior College, Sul Ross State University Uvalde campus, and Rio Grande College.

BRISCOE ART AND ANTIQUE COLLECTION—Art and antiques collected by former Gov. Dolph Briscoe are displayed in the First State Bank. 200 E. Nopal St. 830-278-6231



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VISIT
WIMBERLEY
Essence of the Hill Country

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BRISCOE-GARNER MUSEUM—The museum is dedicated to the lives of Vice President John Nance Garner and Texas Gov. Dolph Briscoe. 333 N. Park St. 830-278-5018

DRIVETANKS.COM—Drive tanks and shoot machine guns, flamethrowers, and artillery. 1946 Private Road 2485. 830-351-8265

FORT INGE—It was built as a U.S. Calvary post in 1849. The park features hiking trails and picnic areas. Admission charge. On FM 140

GARNER STATE PARK—North 31 miles via US 83. See CONCAN.

JANEY SLAUGHTER BRISCOE GRAND OPERA

HOUSE—Performances occur in an original turn-of-the-century setting. Admission charge. 104 W. North St. 830-278-4184

SCENIC DRIVE—Take US 83 north through Concan, past Garner State Park to Leakey. At Leakey, turn west on RM 337 and south on SH 55 or east on RM 337 to Vanderpool (Lost Maples Natural Area) and south on RM 187 to Sabinal.

VANDERPOOL

POP. 120 (EST.)

LOST MAPLES STATE NATURAL AREA—Enjoy camping, hiking, birding, fishing, and swimming. Midweek trips recommended during fall foliage. Admission charge. 37221 RM 187. 830-966-3413

SCENIC DRIVES—FM 337 is a picturesque Hill Country drive. RM 187 to SH 39 climbs to the surface of the Edwards Plateau (2,300 feet).

VOLENTE

POP. 523

Village of Volente: 16100 Wharf Cove. 512-250-2075; villageofvolente-tx.gov

The village offers several miles of shoreline on Lake Travis. It has full-service marinas, B&Bs, weekend rentals, and public boat ramps. The area offers views of the lake and the canyons of the Colorado River. A scenic drive on FM 2769 or Lime Creek Road is favored by motorcyclists and bicyclists.

SHORE CLUB VOLENTE BEACH WATER PARK—The water park offers swimming, sandy beaches, and water rides. Admission charge. 16107 FM 2769. 512-258-5110

WIMBERLEY

POP. 2,890

City of Wimberley Tourism: Visitor Center is at 14100 RM 12. 512-847-2201; visitwimberleytexas.com

This picturesque village sits along Cypress Creek and the Blanco River. It's a true artist enclave featuring live musicians, murals, and sculptures. Activities like two swimming holes, shopping on the square, monthly Market Days, an annual Butterfly Festival, Trail of Lights, and three annual rodeos keep guests entertained year-round.

BLUE HOLE REGIONAL PARK—It has a popular cypress-lined swimming hole fed by Cypress Creek, picnicking, and hike-and-bike trails. Reservations required to swim. Admission charge. 100 Blue Hole Lane. 512-660-9111

EMILYANN THEATRE AND GARDENS—Enjoy a life-size chess/checker board and a musical garden. Events include Shakespeare in the Park and a Trail of Lights. 1101 FM 2325. 512-847-6969

JACOB'S WELL NATURAL AREA—Hike and view wildlife year-round, and enjoy seasonal swimming. Reservations are required for water access. 1699 Mt. Sharp Road. 512-214-4593

SCENIC DRIVES—RM 32, known as the Devil's Backbone, is a winding, razor-backed ridge overlooking Hill Country vistas.

WIMBERLEY GLASSWORKS—Local artists create hand-blown glass objects and provide demonstrations. Free. 6469 RR 12. 512-393-3316

WIMBERLEY ZIPLINE ADVENTURES—Harness up and glide through the air. 376 Winn Valley Drive. 512-847-9990



ADVENTURE, SCENIC HIKES,
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*The West Texas ghost town
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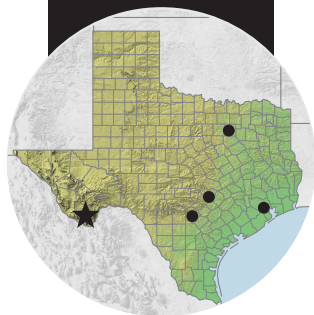
By Carlie Tise

San Antonio
7 hours

Austin
8 hours

Dallas
9 hours

Houston
10 hours



Terlingua, a gritty little town 80 miles south of Alpine on State Highway 118, is home to an array of modern-day escape artists dodging the conventional life of strip malls, tract homes, and Interstate 35 traffic jams. While this dusty ghost town appears desolate at first glance, it comes to life at certain times of the year when marquee events draw visitors from far and wide. Once a bustling quicksilver mining town, its population diminished at the end of World War II. Then in the 1960s-'70s, the town saw a tourism revival and even inspired the album title of late country music outlaw Jerry Jeff Walker's famous ¡Viva Terlingua! Outdoors enthusiasts, bikers, families, and tourists seek out this desert playscape for the reckless abandon it inspires in even the most law-abiding Texans. But if you come to this place gussied up like a cowboy, snapping photos for your Instagram, be warned: The real outlaws will chuckle from the corners of the Starlight Theatre's porch or the cabs of their dirt-encrusted pickups. The townsfolk circumvent the modern world with the dexterity and rigor of those evading the authorities—and invite you to do the same.

STAY

The Perry Mansion

Located on a hill overlooking the former ghost town, The Perry Mansion was originally built by Howard Everett Perry, the owner of Terlingua's Chisos Mining Company. Erected in 1906 and renovated by the Ivey family in 2015, the mansion offers multiple rooms (starting at \$97.50/night) that serve as a historic stay for West Texas travelers.

SEE

Big Bend and Lajitas Stables

Feeling adventurous? A local wrangler guides visitors on multiday overnight camping trips where the majesty of the region can be enjoyed by horseback. From mountain views of Mexico to jutting canyons to crumbling ruins, travelers will get a glimpse of what the region is known and loved for.

Big Bend Ranch State Park

Though Big Bend National Park is just down the road, the equally stunning (and far less crowded) state park is only 16 miles from town. The 311,000-acre Big Bend Ranch is the largest state park in Texas and offers mountain bike trails, hikes, and one of the most scenic drives in Texas—River Road.

Wild Adventure Outfitters

Enjoy the Rio Grande on a river trip from Wild Adventure Outfitters led by the company's seasoned guides. Opened in 2018, Wild Adventure offers personalized explorations in the Big Bend region and has been recognized by conservation group Texan by Nature for its sustainable tourism.

Boquillas Port of Entry

Inside Big Bend National Park is an official crossing where travelers with passports can visit Mexico. Round-trip ferry service across the Rio Grande costs \$5. To reach town, walk about a mile or hire a burro, horse, or pickup truck service. Popular activities include soaking in the hot springs or sipping a michelada

(a drink of beer, tomato juice, and citrus) at Jose Falcon's Restaurant and Bar.

SHOP

Terlingua Community Garden Market

Founded in 2007, the Terlingua Community Garden is run by a group of volunteers who host a weekly market. Located near the Terlingua Cemetery, the market opens on Saturdays from 10 a.m.-1 p.m. Buy locally grown produce and handmade items, including textiles, lip balms, and leather goods.

EAT & DRINK

The Starlight Theatre

Once a movie theater for the town's quicksilver miners, this Tex-Mex style restaurant, music venue, and saloon serves as the community's social hub and watering hole. While you wait for a table, enjoy a ranch water on the porch or peruse the gift shop next door.

The Boathouse

Built in 1981, the building once housed the first outfitter to set up river guide operations in the area. It became a bar in the early 2000s. The business was shuttered in 2016, but owner Greg Hammer reopened the watering hole in 2022, offering folks a laid-back place to grab a cold beer, get on stage for open mic nights, and play a few rounds of a lawn game called pétanque.

EVENT

Spirits of the West

Honor the dead by attending Terlingua's annual Día de los Muertos celebration on Nov. 2 at the historic Terlingua Cemetery. For decades, this local tradition has welcomed folks from around the Big Bend and beyond to gather around the cemetery's ofrendas at sunset and light candles in honor of their loved ones. Attendees paint their faces as traditional calaveras, or skulls, and commune over drinks and food. It's a special day that captures the ethos of Terlingua. ★



Balmorhea State Park

BALMORHEA STATE PARK

Dive into the crystal-clear waters of this West Texas oasis. Home to the world's largest spring-fed swimming pool, this unique park offers swimming, snorkeling, and scuba diving. Stay at the historic San Solomon Springs Courts for a charming overnight experience. With picturesque desert scenery, the park also provides opportunities for camping, stargazing, and picnicking. It's a must-visit destination for relaxation and adventure in the Chihuahuan Desert, perfect for escaping the heat and enjoying nature.

"Working at Balmorhea State Park has been a treasure to me, from viewing the early sunrises, observing the wildlife, learning its rich history, to meeting new visitors that have traveled so far has been rewarding. I am grateful I can share and build memories with my grandkids just like I did with my children in this amazing spring-fed pool!" — Brenda Iniguez, longtime park employee

MORE BIG BEND COUNTRY TEXAS STATE PARKS

BARTON WARNOCK VISITOR CENTER

BIG BEND RANCH STATE PARK

DAVIS MOUNTAINS STATE PARK

DEVILS RIVER STATE NATURAL AREA FRANKLIN MOUNTAINS STATE PARK

FORT LEATON STATE HISTORIC SITE HUECO TANKS STATE PARK & HISTORIC SITE

INDIAN LODGE MONAHANS SANDHILLS STATE PARK

SEMINOLE CANYON STATE PARK

For more information, directions, and amenities, get your free mobile guide to all 80-plus state parks: texasstateparks.org/app

RV INFO

Roadrunner Traveler's RV Park is locally owned and features sites with electricity starting at \$39/night. 23315 FM 170, Terlingua. 432-466-1036; roadrunnertravelers.com



BIG BEND COUNTRY



Hudspeth County Courthouse
in Sierra Blanca

ALPINE

POP. 5,927

Alpine Visitor Center: 106 N. Third St. 432-837-2326; visitalpinetx.com

Alpine is centrally located in a region with easy access to parks and attractions. Find boutiques, art galleries, restaurants, and murals in the historic downtown district. Enjoy the Museum of Big Bend and Hancock Hill trails. Events include Lone Star Cowboy Poetry Gathering, Viva Big Bend, Big Bend Ranch Rodeo, and ARTWALK festival.

HANCOCK HILL HIKING TRAILS—Enjoy miles of hiking trails on this hill behind Sun Ross State University. See if you can find “The Desk,” a quirky local tradition. Free. 700 N. Bird St. Trailhead is at the parking lot at the end of Avenue B on the Sul Ross State University campus. 432-837-2326

HISTORIC AND MURAL WALKING TOURS—Explore the town’s historic buildings and vibrant murals on this popular walking tour. Free. 106 N. Third St. 432-837-2326

HOLLAND HOTEL—This pet-friendly Spanish Revival hotel, built by Trost and Trost, is a Texas Historic Landmark. 209 W. Holland Ave. 432-837-2800

KOKERNOT BASEBALL FIELD—This 1940s ballpark is home to the Alpine Cowboys semiprofessional baseball team. 400 Loop Road

SUL ROSS STATE UNIVERSITY MUSEUM OF THE BIG BEND—The museum features a permanent display on Big Bend history and culture. A new addition is dedicated to art exhibits. Free. 400 N. Harrison St. 432-837-8730

ANTHONY

POP. 3,791

Town of Anthony: 915-886-3944; townofanthony.org

Anthony is at Exit 0 on Interstate 10—the “Gateway to Texas.” In 1598, Don Juan de Oñate’s expedition traveled this road to settle New Mexico.

TRAVEL INFORMATION CENTER—It’s operated by TxDOT. Professional travel counselors provide travel information, brochures, and trip-planning assistance. 8799 S. Desert Blvd. 915-886-3468 or 800-452-9292

WET ‘N’ WILD WATER WORLD—The park has water slides, tube float, a restaurant, and picnic tables. Admission charge. 8804 S. Desert Blvd. 915-886-2222

BALMORHEA

POP. 384

City of Balmorhea: 101 NE Main St. 432-375-2307; cityofbalmorhea.myruralwater.com

The original inhabitants of the area were Mescalero Apaches. The townsite was established in the center of a 10,000-acre tract fed by the San Solomon Springs.

BALMORHEA LAKE—This lake, along the North American Central Flyway, offers opportunities for birding and fishing. 9207 SH 17, Toyahvale. 432-375-1010

BALMORHEA STATE PARK—Dive into the spring-fed swimming pool, and visit a restored wetland for wildlife watching. Admission charge. 9207 SH 17 S., Toyahvale. 432-375-2370

CALERA CHAPEL—The renovated rock and adobe chapel is available for exterior viewing. Two miles west of Balmorhea State Park on FM 3078. 432-448-2430

BIG BEND AREA

POP. 10,822 (EST.)

Brewster County Tourism: US 90 and US 385 South in Marathon. visitbigbend.com

Big Bend National Park Visitor Centers: 432-477-2251; nps.gov/bibe

Alpine, Fort Davis, Lajitas, Marfa, Marathon, Presidio, Sanderson, Study Butte, and Terlingua offer museums, recreation, and entertainment. The area covers 14,671 square miles. Because of the vast distances between towns, be sure the gas tank is filled before traveling.

BIG BEND & LAJITAS STABLES—Take a guided ride in the desert and state park. SH 118 and FM 170, Study Butte. 800-887-4331 or 432-371-3064

BIG BEND NATIONAL PARK—Enjoy hiking, wildlife watching, ranger programs, camping, a restaurant, and Chisos Mountains Basin lodge. Admission charge. Accessible via US 385 and SH 118. 432-477-2251

Fossil Discovery Exhibit—Specimens and vivid artwork illustrate the story of Big Bend’s ancient life.

HALLIE’S HALL OF FAME MUSEUM—The museum displays mementos found on the late Hallie Stillwell’s ranch. 48421 FM 2627. 432-376-2244

RIO GRANDE FLOAT TRIPS—Licensed river outfitters offer float trips. Reservations are required for lengthy trips.

SCENIC DRIVES—El Camino del Rio, Spanish for “The

River Road,” is the local name for FM 170 that stretches from Lajitas northwest to Presidio and beyond. Drivers are cautioned about steep grades, sharp curves, occasional loose livestock, and low-water crossings.

STUDY BUTTE—Today, visitors still see signs of a colorful past of a town built for mercury mining.

TERLINGUA—The occupied ghost town has a country store, some accommodations, restaurants, and the November International Championship Chili cookoffs.

DEL RIO

POP. 34,543

Del Rio Chamber of Commerce Convention and Visitors Bureau: 1915 Veterans Blvd. 830-775-3551; drchamber.com

Del Rio is the perfect combination of outdoor adventure and friendly hospitality. From scenic San Felipe Creek to Lake Amistad, First Friday Art Walks to the Val Verde Winery, and downtown shopping to historical sites, the city is a true treasure to be explored. Share the cultural immersion with its sister city, Ciudad Acuña, Mexico.

AMISTAD NATIONAL RECREATION AREA—Boating, fishing, birding, camping, hiking, swimming, pictographs, and archaeological sites are attractions. Admission charge. 10477 US 90 West. 830-775-7491

DEVILS RIVER STATE NATURAL AREA—Hike, mountain bike, horseback ride, camp, swim, sky gaze, and fish. Paddling trips require a permit. Admission charge. 21715 Dolan Creek Road. 830-395-2133

HISTORIC DOWNTOWN—Pick up a walking tour brochure from the chamber. The historic irrigation canals are still used. 1915 Veterans Blvd. 830-775-3551

PECOS RIVER HIGHWAY BRIDGE OVERLOOK AND PECOS HIGH BRIDGE—The Pecos River High Bridge carries the Union Pacific Railroad across the Pecos River gorge and is the second high-level crossing on this site. Free. The overlook is along U.S. 90, between Comstock and Langtry, in Southwest Texas.

SEMINOLE CANYON STATE PARK AND HISTORIC SITE—See LANGTRY.

WHITEHEAD MEMORIAL MUSEUM—Museum is dedicated to the life and legends of the frontier Southwest. Admission charge. 1308 S. Main St. 830-774-7568

WINERY—Val Verde Winery. See TEXAS BEVERAGE TOUR section.

EL PASO

POP. 677,456

El Paso Visitor Information Centers: Two centers are operated by Destination El Paso—the main center, 915-534-0600, and one in the El Paso International Airport, 915-534-0658. 1 Civic Center Plaza. visitelpaso.com

El Paso is the only Texas city with scenic mountains accompanied by year-round sunshine. Discover a unique history, lively culture, plentiful festivals, and abundant recreational opportunities. Explore thousands of years of history and let your imagination run wild as you soak up the Sun City.

ASCARATE PARK—The park has sports, picnicking, fishing, and other recreational activities. 6900 Delta Drive. 915-273-3501

CAMP COHEN WATER PARK—Camp Cohen is your base camp for an adrenaline packed adventure. Admission charge. 9799 Gateway North Blvd. 915-541-3700

CENTENNIAL MUSEUM AND CHIHUAHUA DESERT GARDENS—Highlights the Chihuahuan Desert, with more than 625 plant species in the garden. Free. 500 W. University Ave. 915-747-5565

CHAMIZAL NATIONAL MEMORIAL—The park commemorates the amicable settlement of a long-standing border dispute. It has a visitor center, plus exhibits and films. 800 S. San Marcial St. 915-532-7273

CHAPOTEO WATER PARK—Fiesta-themed water park immerses guests in light, music, and celebration. Admission charge. 1225 Giles Road. 915-541-3700

CONCORDIA CEMETERY—The historic landmark is divided into five parts, including the actual "Boot Hill." 3700 E. Yandell Drive. 915-842-8200

EL PASO COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY—The society has an extensive collection of photos, archives, and postcards related to area history. Free. 603 W. Yandell Drive. 915-533-3603

EL PASO HOLOCAUST MUSEUM AND STUDY CENTER—This facility depicts pre-Nazi era Europe, life in the camps, resistance efforts, and liberation. Free. 715 N. Oregon St. 915-351-0048

EL PASO MUNICIPAL ROSE GARDEN—Four acres include more than 500 varieties. New rose varieties are planted annually. 3418 Aurora Ave. 915-212-0092

EL PASO MUSEUM OF ARCHAEOLOGY—The facility tells the prehistory of the city and region. Grounds include nature trails and outdoor exhibits. Free. 4301 Transmountain Road. 915-212-0421

EL PASO MUSEUM OF ART—Permanent collection includes European, American, and Mexican colonial art. Free. 1 Arts Festival Plaza. 915-212-0300

EL PASO MUSEUM OF HISTORY—This facility houses artifacts, images, and documents focusing on 400 years of history that shaped El Paso. 510 N. Santa Fe St. 915-212-0320

EL PASO STREETCAR—Ride these vintage El Paso original color scheme streetcars with air conditioning and Wi-Fi. Downtown El Paso. 915-212-3333

EL PASO ZOO—The zoo houses more than 240 species of animals, a restaurant, and a gift shop. Admission charge. 4001 E. Paisano St. 915-212-0966

FORT BLISS MONUMENT AND MUSEUMS—Fort Bliss was established in 1848 for defense and is now a U.S. Army Air Defense Center. 1735 Marshall Road.

1st Armored Division and Fort Bliss Museum—Exhibits and artifacts portray America's air and missile defense history. Building 1735, Marshall Road. 915-568-5412

Buffalo Soldier Memorial—This bronze statue is based on the painting "The Errand of Corporal Ross." Buffalo Soldier Road. At the Buffalo Soldier gate to the fort.

Noncommissioned Officer Heritage and Education Center—Traces the history of the U.S. NCO corps. Free. Biggs Army Airfield, Building 11331, SSG Sims St. 915-744-8609

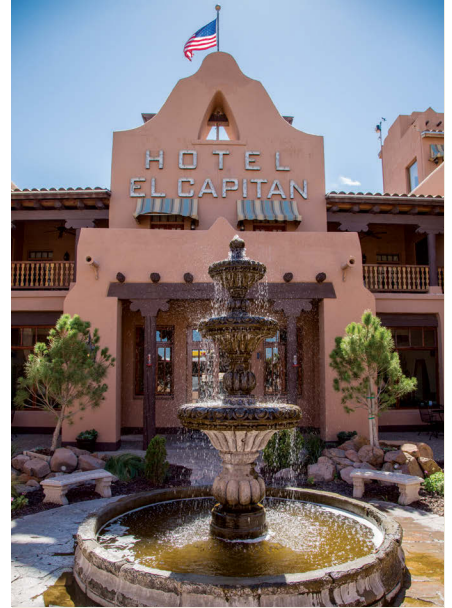
FRANKLIN MOUNTAINS STATE PARK—This is the largest urban state park in the continental United States with 135 miles of multiuse trails that are popular with mountain bikers. Admission charge. 2900 Tom Mays Access Road. 915-444-9100

GARDNER HOTEL & HOSTEL—See what hotels used to be like 100-plus years ago, minus the modern amenities. 311 E. Franklin Ave. 915-532-3661

HISTORIC DOWNTOWN—Download the Visit El Paso app or pick up a brochure from Destination El Paso for this self-guided walking tour. 915-534-0600

San Jacinto Plaza—Historic city square features an iconic alligator sculpture. 114 W. Mills Ave. 915-534-0600

HUECO TANKS STATE PARK & HISTORIC SITE—Park has pictographs, hiking, and bouldering. Tours are avail-



HISTORIC HOTELS

Railroads reached Far West Texas in the early 1880s, and visitors in need of lodging soon followed.

Lavish hotels sprang up throughout the region, many designed by renowned El Paso architect Henry C. Trost, who created hundreds of buildings in the Southwest.

The following restored Trost hotels provide high-end accommodations and services amid the scenery of the Big Bend region. Hotel El Capitan in Van Horn is a Mission Revival-style building opened in 1930. It features charming historic rooms, a rustically elegant lobby, and a regionally themed restaurant. The Hotel Paisano in Marfa opened in 1930 and features Spanish colonial-style architecture with colorful ceramic tile, ornate woodwork, and wrought iron. The Holland Hotel in Alpine opened in 1928 and offers a charming selection of room sizes, furnishings, and décor in the heart of downtown. The 1927 Gage Hotel in Marathon contains authentic Big Bend-inspired décor, including handcrafted rustic doors and wrought-iron candelabra fixtures. In El Paso, the Hotel Paso del Norte, Plaza Hotel Pioneer Park, and Aloft El Paso Downtown in the O.T. Bassett Tower are all recently restored.

Other rehabilitated historic hotels in the Big Bend Country region include Hotel Limpia and Indian Lodge in Fort Davis, Cibolo Creek Ranch near Marfa, and Hotel Indigo El Paso Downtown. Find other hotels in the Big Bend Country region and across the state at texastimetravel.com/hotels.





BIG BEND COUNTRY

able by advance request. Admission charge. 6900 Hueco Tanks Road No. 1. 915-857-1135

INDIAN CLIFFS RANCH—The ranch includes a private zoo, movie sets, a restaurant, and Fort Apache. 3450 S. Fabens Carlsbad Road. 915-544-3200

INTERNATIONAL MUSEUM OF ART—The Turney Mansion houses African, Western heritage, Kolliker, and El Paso Artists' Hall of Fame artworks. Free. 1211 Montana Ave. 915-543-6747

KEYSTONE HERITAGE PARK—The 52-acre park is an archeological site, wetlands, and desert botanical gardens. 4220 Doniphan Drive. 915-584-0563

LA NUBE—Dive into nine themed learning zones to explore, build, test, problem-solve, and play. Admission charge. 201 W. Main Drive. 915-259-8199

LOS PORTALES MUSEUM AND INFORMATION CENTER—Exhibits showcase the historic San Elizario community. 1521 San Elizario Road. 915-851-1682

LOST KINGDOM WATER PARK—This Mayan getaway fuels the imagination while offering exhilaration and rejuvenation. Admission charge. 6001 Hughey Drive B. 915-541-3700

MAGOFFIN HOME STATE HISTORIC SITE—This property offers authentic art and furnishings indicative of the lives of this prominent El Paso family. Admission charge. 1120 Magoffin Ave. 915-533-5147

MCKELLIGON CANYON—It's open to hikers and picnickers, and includes an amphitheater. 1500 McKelligon Canyon Road. 915-534-0600 or 915-566-6441

MISSION TRAIL—These Spanish missions are older than the better-known ones in California. 915-292-8516 or 915-534-0661

Nuestra Señora de la Limpia Concepción del Pueblo de Socorro—The mission was established in 1682 and later was moved closer to Ysleta Mission. 328 S. Nevarez Road. 915-859-7718

Presidio Chapel of San Elizario—The chapel was founded in 1777 and is still in use. 1556 San Elizario Road. 915-851-2333

Ysleta Mission—Established in 1681 for the Tigua Tribe, this is the oldest mission in Texas. 131 S. Zaragoza Road. 915-859-9848

MOUNT CRISTO REY—The summit has a massive monument of Jesus on the cross. It's not recommended to climb except during the October Pilgrimage. 915-534-0600

NATIONAL BORDER PATROL MUSEUM & MEMORIAL LIBRARY—This museum depicts the history of the U.S. Border Patrol. Free. 4315 Woodrow Bean Transmountain Road. 915-759-6060

OASIS WATER PARK—It offers a summer retreat for family fun. 13501 Jason Crandall Drive. 915-541-3700

THE OUTLET SHOPPES AT EL PASO—Features name-brand stores, a dancing water fountain, and a children's play area. 7051 S. Desert Blvd., Canutillo. 915-877-3208

PLAZA THEATRE—The restored atmospheric theater is open for tours and performances. 125 Pioneer Plaza. 915-231-1100 or 915-534-0660

SAN ELIZARIO HISTORIC DISTRICT—It has 17 historic sites, art galleries, museums, walking tours, restaurants, shops, and events. Main Street, San Elizario (21 miles from El Paso). 915-851-0093

SCENIC DRIVES—Scenic Drive traces a winding course on the southern flank of Mount Franklin above downtown El Paso, with a view of Ciudad Juárez across the river. It is reached from Richmond Street on the east and from Rim Road on the west. Loop 375 (Transmountain Road) climbs through mile-high Smugglers Gap with impressive views of rugged mountain-desert scenery. It is accessible from I-10 northwest of the city and from US 54 northeast.

SOUTHWEST UNIVERSITY PARK—The park is home to the El Paso Chihuahuas baseball team and El Paso Loco-motive FC USL soccer team. 1 Ballpark Plaza. 915-533-2273

STANLEE AND GERALD RUBIN CENTER FOR THE VISUAL ARTS—Three galleries exhibit contemporary art. Free. 500 W. University Ave. 915-747-6151

TIGUA INDIAN RESERVATION: YSLETA DEL SUR PUEBLO—The Cultural Center features a museum, a gift shop, and Native American social dancing. 305 Yaya Lane. 915-859-7700

TRAVEL INFORMATION CENTER—I-10 west. See ANTHONY.

"VIVA! EL PASO"—Summer outdoor drama traces El Paso history through four eras. McKelligon Canyon Road. McKelligon Canyon Amphitheater. 915-231-1100 or 915-534-0600

WET 'N' WILD WATER WORLD—See ANTHONY.

FORT DAVIS

POP. 1,024

Fort Davis Chamber of Commerce: 432-426-3015 or 800-524-3015; fortdavis.com

Visitors will find specialty shops, restaurants, and accommodations along with the desert mountain scenery. Events include the Coolest Fourth of July.

CHIHUAHUA DESERT NATURE CENTER—The center has hiking trails, a cactus and succulent greenhouse, mining and geology exhibits, a bird blind, and a gift shop. Admission charge. 43869 SH 118. 432-364-2499

DAVIS MOUNTAINS STATE PARK—Find CCC structures, full hookup sites, and campsites. Hike, mountain bike, and horseback ride. Admission charge. SH 118 North at Park Road 3. 432-426-3337

Indian Lodge—This pueblo-style 1930s adobe lodge is closed for renovations. Admission charge. 16453 Park Road 3. 432-426-3254

FORT DAVIS NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE—The fort includes both ruins and restorations. A museum interprets frontier military life. Admission charge. 101 Lt. Flipper Drive No. 1379. 432-426-3224

THE HOTEL LIMPIA—The historic country inn has turn-of-the-20th-century oak furniture, a second-story veranda, and a glassed-in sun porch. 101 Memorial Square. 800-662-5517

PRUDE RANCH—The ranch offers horseback riding, lodging, and events. Admission charge. 201 Prude Guest Ranch Road. 432-426-3201

SCENIC DRIVE—The 75-mile loop includes roadside parks, Mount Locke, Madera Canyon, and Davis Mountains State Park. Head south on SH 17, take SH 166 west to intersection with SH 118, and then turn southeast back to SH 17 and Fort Davis.

UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS MCDONALD OBSERVATORY—The site offers interpretive astronomy exhibits and programs. 3640 Dark Sky Drive. 432-426-3640

FORT STOCKTON

POP. 8,189

Fort Stockton Visitor Information Center: 1000 E. Railroad Ave. 432-336-2264 or 432-299-1220; visitfortstockton.com or fortstockton.org

Fort Stockton is your gateway to all West Texas has to offer. Stay. Eat. Shop. Play. You can do it all from here. Stop at the Visitor Center for a replica of the Comanche Springs and example of energy sources the region offers.

ANNIE RIGGS MEMORIAL MUSEUM—The former hotel depicts the heritage and development of Fort Stockton and surrounding areas. Admission charge. 301 S. Main St. 432-336-2167

COURTHOUSE SQUARE—The first Catholic Church, first schoolhouse, and Zero Stone are around the Pecos County Courthouse. 103 W. Callaghan St. 432-336-2264

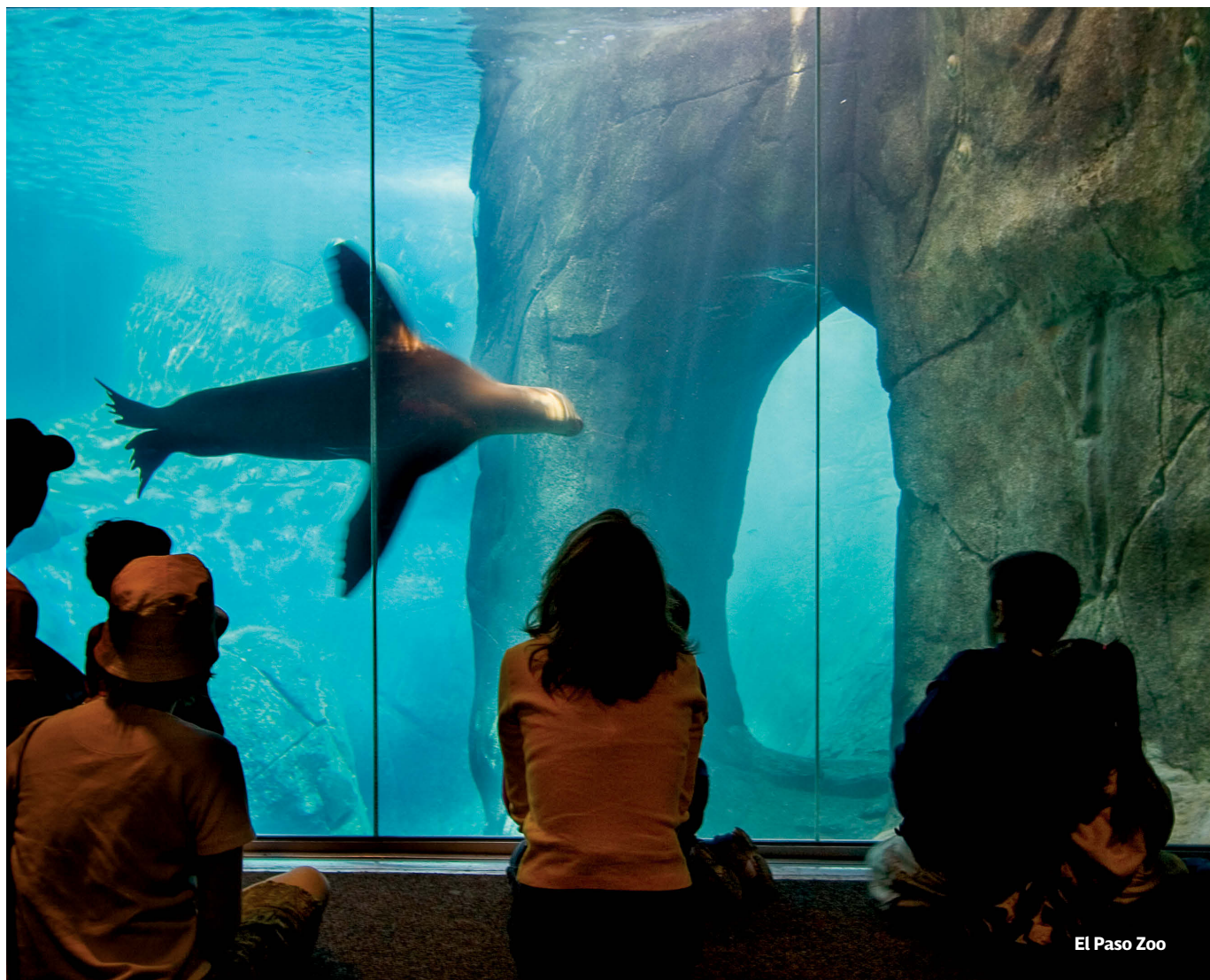
HISTORIC FORT STOCKTON—The fort consists of 35 original and reconstructed buildings. Admission charge. 301 E. Third St. 432-336-2400

OLD FORT CEMETERY—The tombstones demonstrate the hardships among those who settled this harsh country—few lived past 40. Corner of Water and Eighth streets. 432-336-2264

PAISANO PETE—At 22 feet long and 11 feet tall, Pete is a popular photo subject. Business I-10 at Main Street. 432-336-2264 or 432-299-1220

TUNIS CREEK STAGECOACH STOP—This is a former way station on the Butterfield Overland Mail Route. The original structure was moved to a picnic area on I-10, 20 miles east of Fort Stockton.





El Paso Zoo

IRAAN

POP. 1,008

City of Iraan: 432-639-2301; [facebook.com/p/city-of-iraan-100058912560507](https://www.facebook.com/p/city-of-iraan-100058912560507)

At the city park, a historical marker details Discovery Well A No. 1.

FANTASYLAND PARK—The park has gigantic figures of Alley Oop and Dinny from the comic strip. 9261 Alley Oop Lane. 432-639-2301

SCENIC DRIVE—US 190 offers views of rugged terrain.

KERMIT

POP. 5,869

City of Kermit: 112 N. Poplar St. 432-586-2507; kermittexas.us

This was a tiny village until oil was discovered nearby. A county-owned golf course is 7 miles west on SH 302.

MEDALLION HOME—It was moved into town in 1910 and presented to the city in 1967. It is furnished with period pieces. On School Street. 432-586-2507

LAJITAS

POP. 58 (EST.)

Lajitas (La-HEE-tahs) is at the western edge of Big Bend National Park. It features a modern resort with an 18-hole golf course, zip line, swimming pools, spa, restaurant, horseback riding, and other outdoor activities.

BARTON WARNOCK VISITOR CENTER—A bilingual exhibit showcases the Chihuahuan Desert. It's a visitor

center for Big Bend Ranch State Park. Admission charge. 21800 FM 170. 432-424-3327

LANGTRY

POP. 30 (EST.)

Located by the Rio Grande, the town may have been named after a civil engineer named Langtry or English actress Lillie Langtry. Primitive camping is available along the Devils River at Baker's Crossing.

JUDGE ROY BEAN VISITOR CENTER—The site preserves the historic buildings related to Judge Roy Bean and interprets highlights of his career. Professional travel counselors provide travel information, brochures, and trip-planning assistance. 526 State Loop 25. 432-291-3340 or 800-452-9292

SCENIC OVERLOOK—Travelers can pause and picnic in a roadside park by US 90 on the east rim of the Pecos River canyon, about 18 miles east of Langtry.

SEMINOLE CANYON STATE PARK AND HISTORIC SITE—This site offers guided tours to ancient pictographs, trails along the canyon's rim, and spectacular views. Admission charge. 434 Park Road 67, Comstock. 432-292-4464

MARATHON

POP. 419

Marathon Chamber of Commerce: marathon-texas.com

At the junction of US 90 and US 385 South, Marathon's restaurants, cafés, gas stations, grocery store, and lodging make the town a lifeline for visitors on the way to Big

Bend National Park. Enjoy outdoor spaces, star parties at the Marathon Motel and RV Park, and a microbrewery at Brick Vault BBQ and Brewery.

BLACK GAP WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT AREA—The 100,000 acres are devoted to native wildlife. Permit hunting and fishing are allowed at specified times. On RM 2627. 432-376-2216

GAGE HOTEL—Built in 1927, the historic hotel has original pine floors and woodwork, along with a native garden, spa, fitness center, and swimming pool. 102 NW First St. 432-386-4205 or 800-884-4243

POST PARK—The park is popular for picnics and birding. See foundations from Camp Pena Colorado. Five miles south of town on Post Road.

MARFA

POP. 1,725

Marfa Visitor Center: 302 S. Highland Ave. 432-729-4772; visitmarfa.com

Marfa was established as a railroad water stop. In 1955, the El Paisano Hotel served as the base of operations for the filming of "Giant." The Marfa Municipal Golf Course is the highest nine-hole golf course in Texas at 4,882 feet above sea level. Legendary soaring conditions make this an ideal location for glider rides.

BIG BEND RANCH STATE PARK—It has mountain biking, horseback riding, remote backcountry camping, bunk-house lodging, and 4x4 vehicle use. Admission charge. 1900 Saucedo Ranch Road. 432-229-3613



BIG BEND COUNTRY

BLACKWELL SCHOOL NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE —

Built in 1909, this was a segregated school for Marfa's Hispanic population. 501 S. Abbott St.

CHINATI FOUNDATION/LA FUNDACIÓN CHINATI—

This museum is dedicated to large-scale works or large groups of work by a small number of artists. Guided tours only. 1 Cavalry Row. 432-729-4362

DISTILLERY—The Marfa Spirit Co. See TEXAS BEVERAGE TOUR section.

THE HOTEL PAISANO—

This National Historic Landmark was designed by Henry C. Trost. In 1955, it was the base of operations for the film *Giant*. 207 N. Highland St. 432-729-3669

JUDD FOUNDATION—

Artist Donald Judd's living and working spaces are open during daily guided tours. Reservations required. 104 S. Highland Ave. 432-729-4406

MARFA AND PRESIDIO COUNTY MUSEUM—

The museum displays memorabilia from the film *Giant*, a Chihuahuan Desert exhibit, local history, and Frank Duncan photos. 110 W. San Antonio St. 432-729-4772

MARFA MYSTERY LIGHTS VIEWING CENTER—

The center has a viewing deck and information about the Marfa lights, plus local flora and fauna. About 9 miles east of Marfa on US 67/90.

PRESIDIO COUNTY COURTHOUSE—

This elegant domed structure is topped by the Goddess of Justice. The cupola provides a 360-degree view. 300 Highland St. 432-729-4772

MCCAMEY

POP. 1,741

City of McCamey: 207 E. Sixth St. 432-652-3333; mccameycity.com

McCamey Chamber of Commerce Visitors Center: 201 E. Sixth St. 432-652-9300; facebook.com/mccameycocf

Established as an oil boom town in 1925, McCamey's skyline is now highlighted by giant wind turbines. The Wind

Energy Capital of Texas barbecue cookoff and festival is in September.

MCCAMEY VETERANS MEMORIAL—

The Wall of Honor, Eternal Flame, Circle of Honor, and surrounding grounds honor hundreds of veterans. At Sixth Street and Burleson Avenue/US 385.

MENDOZA TRAIL MUSEUM—

Exhibits span the history of McCamey and surrounding area. The site includes the historic Adrian House and the Santa Fe Depot. 602 Santa Fe. 432-652-3192

MIDLAND

POP. 134,444

VisitMidland Information and Travel Center: 1406

W. I-20 (Exit 136). 432-683-3381 or 800-624-6435; visitmidland.com

Midland is approximately midway between Fort Worth and El Paso on I-20 and is a great place to explore or launch a West Texas road trip. Midland International Air & Space Port, between Odessa and Midland, is the eighth-largest airport in Texas and the closest commercial airport to Big Bend National Park.

BUSH FAMILY HOME STATE HISTORIC SITE—

The home features furnishings authentic to 1952-56, plus photographic exhibits and special activities. Admission charge. 1412 W. Ohio Ave. 432-685-1112

HALEY MEMORIAL LIBRARY & HISTORY CENTER —

Includes displays and volumes on all facets of early Western life. Donations accepted. Free. 1805 W. Indiana Ave. 432-682-5785

I-20 WILDLIFE PRESERVE & JENNA WELCH NATURE

STUDY CENTER—It's a 100-acre riparian forest with an 86-acre urban playa lake, walking trails, and wildlife. Free. 2201 S. Midland Drive. 432-853-9453

MIDLAND COUNTY HISTORY MUSEUM—

The museum holds wide-ranging artifacts on county history from pre-historic times to the 20th century. 200 N. Main St. 432-688-8947

MIDLAND DOWNTOWN LIONS CLUB FIRE MUSEUM —

Exhibits include the city's first fire trucks, early firefighting equipment, and history. Free. 1500 W. Wall St. 432-685-7332

MIDLAND ROCKHOUNDS AT MOMENTUM BANK

BALLPARK—The Double A affiliate of the Oakland Athletics play here. Admission charge. 5514 Champions Drive. 432-520-2255

MUSEUM OF THE SOUTHWEST—

This museum inspires discovery and exploration. Events include SeptemberFest and Christmas in the Mansion. Admission charge. 1705 W. Missouri Ave. 432-683-2882

Fredda Turner Durham Children's Museum—

The museum offers a variety of interactive exhibits, plus education-based rotating exhibits. Admission charge. 1705 W. Missouri Ave. 432-683-2882

Marian West and William Blanton Blakemore

Planetarium—The facility hosts dome shows, star talks, and monthly star parties. Inquire about tours and private dome shows. Admission charge. 1705 W. Missouri Ave. 432-683-2882

PERMIAN BASIN PETROLEUM MUSEUM & CHAPARRAL GALLERY—

Enjoy an interactive search for oil, Tom Lovell's murals of the American West, and Jim Hall's seven race cars. Admission charge. 1500 W. I-20 West. 432-683-4403

PERMIAN BASIN VIETNAM VETERANS MEMORIAL —

The pentagonal-shaped memorial honors the Armed Forces and individuals who lost their lives during the conflict. Free. 9900 Wright Drive. 432-685-7356

PLISKA AEROPLANE—

It was the first plane built and flown in Texas. 9506 La Force Blvd. Midland International Air and Space Port. 432-560-2200

SIBLEY NATURE CENTER—

Explore the museum, garden, and trails. Free. 1307 E. Wadley Ave. 432-684-6827

SUSIE'S SOUTH FORTY CONFECTIONS—

Tour the factory for the world-famous toffee and other confections. 401 S. Marienfeld St. 432-570-4040

ODESSA
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432-445-5076

YUCCA THEATRE—The Summer Mumpers melodrama has been performed in the restored Vaudeville house since 1949. 208 N. Colorado St. 432-570-4111

MONAHANS

POP. 7,324

Monahans Chamber of Commerce: 1525 E. Monahans Parkway. 432-943-2187; monahans.org

The city is a financial center for more than 800 square miles of cattle and oil country. Oil wells, drilled at a distance from the downtown area, are slanted to draw oil from beneath it.

MONAHANS SANDHILLS STATE PARK—Travelers surf sand dunes, visit exhibits on dune dynamics and wildlife, and enjoy picnicking and camping. Admission charge. Park Road 41. 432-943-2092

WARD COUNTY MUSEUM AT THE MILLION BARREL—This former oil-storage facility site includes a wide variety of historical artifacts. 1500 E. Sealy Ave. 432-943-8401 or 432-943-2187

Rattlesnake Bomber Base Museum—The museum displays area history and base mementos. 1500 E. Sealy Ave. 432-943-8401

ODESSA

POP. 112,906

Discover Odessa: 700 N. Grant Ave., Suite 200. 432-333-7871; discoverodessa.org

Odessa is midway between Dallas and El Paso. In downtown Odessa, enjoy shopping, dining, and events. The Permian Playhouse offers theatrical performances and educational programs. Annual events include the Sand-Hills Stock Show and Rodeo, Fiesta West Texas, Permian Basin Fair & Exposition, and Starbright Village.

4KIDZ FUN PARK—This indoor family fun center offers activities for all ages. Admission charge. 1421 E. Eighth St. 432-310-5759

ECTOR THEATRE—The Odessa Historic Landmark offers classic films, live theater, concerts, and events. Admission charge. 500 N. Texas St. 432-653-1246

ELLEN NOËL ART MUSEUM OF THE PERMIAN BASIN—Exhibitions include historically significant art, contemporary art, and juried exhibitions of regional art. 4919 E. University Blvd. 432-550-9696

GEORGE H.W. BUSH HOME—This is where former President George H.W. Bush and his family spent their early days in West Texas. Donations accepted. 4919 E. University Blvd. 432-550-9696

THE GLOBE THEATER AT ODESSA COLLEGE—It hosts Shakespearean, national, and local productions. A replica of the cottage of Anne Hathaway, Shakespeare's wife, has antiques and a Shakespearean library. Admission charge. 2308 Shakespeare Road. 432-337-1492

THE HISTORIC WHITE-POOL HOUSE—This two-story brick home reflects lifestyles of the 1880s ranching period and the 1920s oil era. Donations welcome. 112 E. Murphy St. 432-333-4072

ODESSA JACKALOPES HOCKEY—Games take place October through March at Ector County Coliseum. Admission charge. 4201 Andrews Highway. 432-552-7825

ODESSA METEOR CRATER AND MUSEUM—Adjacent to the crater, the museum has exhibits, historical videos, and related items. Donations accepted. 5599 Meteor Crater Road. 432-381-0946

THE PRESIDENTIAL ARCHIVES AND LEADERSHIP LIBRARY—Tells about the leaders who shaped this country. Donations welcome. 4919 E. University Blvd. 432-550-9696

STONEHENGE REPLICA—Horizontally, it is identical; vertically it is 70 percent of the original in England. Donations welcome. 432-552-2020

WORLD'S LARGEST JACKRABBIT—Jack Ben Rabbit is an 8-foot fiberglass statue and a popular photo spot. 802 N. Sam Houston Ave. 432-333-7871

PECOS

POP. 12,916

Pecos Area Chamber of Commerce: 432-445-2406; visitpecos.com

Touted as the "Home of the World's First Rodeo," Pecos held a cowboy contest in 1883 that was the forerunner of

today's popular sport. The annual West of the Pecos Rodeo is in June. Pecos also is known for cantaloupes. Night in Old Pecos & Cantaloupe Festival is in July.

WEST OF THE PECOS MUSEUM AND PARK—Exhibits showcase Pecos and West Texas history. Park contains Pecos' first building, Judge Roy Bean's saloon replica, and a visitor center. Admission charge. 120 E. Dot Stafford St. 432-445-5076

PINE SPRINGS

POP. 20 (EST.)

The community on US 62/180 just south of the New Mexico state line was the location of a station on the Butterfield Overland Mail Route. Tumbled stone ruins and a granite historical marker are all that remain.

GUADALUPE MOUNTAINS NATIONAL PARK—The park features hiking and camping. Find a cultural history museum in the 1870s Frijole Ranch House and exhibits in the visitor center. Admission charge. 400 Pine Canyon, Salt Flat. 915-828-3251

PRESIDIO

POP. 3,170

Presidio Convention and Visitors Bureau: 507 W. O'Reilly St. 432-229-3517; presidiotx.com

Take a drive along FM 170, called "the River Road." This area is popular for motorcycle touring and river rafting. Presidio offers hotels, restaurants, and shopping in town and across the bridge in Ojinaga, Mexico.

FORT LEATON STATE HISTORIC SITE—Exhibits showcase the fort and area. Regular guided tours are offered. It is the western visitor center for Big Bend Ranch State Park. Admission charge. FM 170 East. 432-229-3613

SANDERSON

POP. 664

Terrell County Visitor Center: 108 Oak St. 432-345-2324; co.terrell.tx.us/page/terrell.visitor.center

This town was designated the Cactus Capital of Texas by the Texas Legislature. Each April, US 285 between Sanderson and Fort Stockton hosts "the most challenging road race in the world"—Big Bend Open Road Race.

CACTUS CAPITAL HIKING TRAIL—A self-guided hiking/nature trail with interpretive signs leads to the top of the mesas above Sanderson. Free. The trailhead is at the north end of School Street. 432-345-2324

SIERRA BLANCA

POP. 315

Hudspeth County Judge's Office: 109 Millican St. 915-369-2321;

A historical marker downtown commemorates the completion of the nation's second transcontinental rail route.

ADOBE HUDSPETH COUNTY COURTHOUSE—The Southwest's only in-use government structure made of adobe displays a replica of old Fort Hancock. 109 W. Millican St. 915-369-2321

RAILROAD DEPOT HUDSPETH COUNTY MUSEUM—The museum's exhibits include railroad memorabilia, Native American artifacts, and county history. Free. 241 W. El Paso St. 915-369-2321

SCENIC DRIVE—Profuse stands of giant yuccas grow 15 to 20 feet high and are most spectacular in bloom in March and April. Take FM 1111 north 43 miles to US 62/180.

VAN HORN

POP. 1,920

Van Horn Convention and Visitors Bureau: 1801 W. Broadway St. 866-424-6939 or 432-283-2682; vanhorn-texas.org/2201

This town is a hub for several state and national parks and a popular stop for vacationers with its sunny climate; interesting mineral deposits; and abundant deer, antelope, and game birds.

CLARK HOTEL MUSEUM—It displays Native American artifacts and early ranch, farm, and home implements. Antique bar recalls frontier times. 112 W. Broadway St. 432-283-8028

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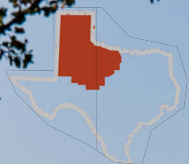
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IS ALWAYS ON THE HORIZON

PANHANDLE PLAINS





PANHANDLE PLAINS



Bankhead Texas Wine Bar

Healing Waters

New life in Mineral Wells, the classic resort town

By June Naylor

Dallas
1.5 hours

Austin
3.5 hours

San Antonio
4.5 hours

Houston
5 hours



Driving west from Fort Worth into the rolling, woodsy hills known as the Palo Pinto Mountains, visitors to Mineral Wells see the behemoth Baker Hotel well before entering the city limits. The 14-story building, made in the Spanish Colonial Revival style, has been a beacon since its opening in 1929. It hosted celebrity clientele during Mineral Wells' glory days as a resort town from the '30s to the '50s, including Judy Garland, Clark Gable, Roy Rogers, Dale Evans, Marlene Dietrich, and Lawrence Welk. They flocked to the Baker to drink the local well water and soak in mineral baths, which were thought to alleviate everything from rheumatism to dementia. The Baker hasn't hosted a guest since it was shuttered in 1972, but an ongoing renovation has already inspired new economic activity downtown. While a dedicated group of investors works toward the debut of the restored 165-room resort and spa in 2026, visitors who come to see the grande dame's overhaul will find plenty to witness.

PHOTO: TIFFANY HOFELDT

STAY

Magpie Inn

This bed-and-breakfast was opened by Chef Magen Desnoyers and her husband, Jeremy, in a stately former boardinghouse in 2020. A mere three-minute walk from downtown, the inn (rooms with breakfast start at \$125/night) boasts sweet and savory meals and an upstairs porch—shaded by aged oaks and pecans.

The Crazy Water Hotel

The 2018 renovation of this 120-year-old lodging with 62 rooms and suites (starting at \$169/night) allows for an engaging mix of ground-floor retail. At Sensology, find colorful eyeglasses and organic skin products. The Uptown Man offers clothes and furnishings for men and Toytopia is a kids' dream factory. Off the lobby, Rickhouse Brewing serves craft brews.

SHOP

Crazy Water Bath House and Spa

"Making folks feel good inside and out since 1881" is the tagline of Famous Mineral Water Co., which bottles the local healing waters. At the source, guests also enjoy soothing mineral baths and massage treatments in a restored century-old building. The pavilion next door sells bottled Crazy Water and signature soaps, lotions, and oils.

The Market at 76067

Peruse housewares and décor from 100-plus vendors in a cavernous showroom occupying a former grocery store. Under the same roof, Coffee and Cocktails serves stylish drinks (try the Crazy Cosmo) to accompany panini, pizza, and pie.

Downtown Crafting DIY Studio

A downtown storefront houses this studio, which invites creative spirits to paint pottery and canvases, make wooden signs for the home, pour candles, craft

holiday gifts, and sign up for one- and two-day art classes. A splash paint room—a big hit with kids and families—can be reserved in advance. All supplies and tutorials are provided.

SEE

Downtown Murals

Pick up a map at the visitor center or online for a self-guided tour of some two dozen massive murals painted by local artists on brick buildings. See images such as a vintage postcard, a cowboy watering his horse on a creek, and a 1920s flapper.

Lake Mineral Wells State Park and Trailway

Five miles east of town, the park showcases the western Cross Timbers landscape that characterizes the Palo Pinto Mountains. Climbers scale sandstone rock formations on the eastern edge of Lake Mineral Wells. Along with boating and fishing, the park also offers 13 miles of trails that link to a 20-mile trailway running between Mineral Wells and Weatherford.

EAT & DRINK

Bankhead Texas Wine Bar

Servers pour varietals from Texas wineries. The corner hangout also specializes in charcuterie boards filled with prosciutto, crackers, pickles, olives, and cheeses. Both the tasting room and the sprawling patio shaded by live oaks are dog-friendly.

EVENT

Merry Wells

The annual holiday celebration begins Thanksgiving week with a festival and lighted parade and an outdoor ice-skating rink. Local shops are decorated to make revelers feel like they've landed in a Hallmark Christmas movie. ★



FORT RICHARDSON STATE HISTORIC SITE

Explore the rich history and natural beauty of this North Texas destination, once an active military outpost. The site offers a glimpse into the past with well-preserved buildings and engaging exhibits. Hike or bike on scenic trails, fish in nearby lakes, and camp under the stars or reserve a cabin. With its blend of historical significance and outdoor activities, this site is perfect for history buffs and nature enthusiasts alike.

"My favorite things about Fort Richardson State Park are the quiet places under the shady trees along the Lost Creek. I love to listen to the birds singing, the wind blowing through the leaves, and watching the squirrels chase each other." —Jennifer Jenkins, Fort Richardson office manager since 2008

MORE PANHANDLE PLAINS STATE PARKS

ABILENE STATE PARK

BIG SPRING STATE PARK

CAPROCK CANYONS STATE PARK & TRAILWAY

COPPER BREAKS STATE PARK

LAKE ARROWHEAD STATE PARK LAKE COLORADO CITY STATE PARK

PALO DURO CANYON STATE PARK

POSSUM KINGDOM STATE PARK

SAN ANGELO STATE PARK

For more information, directions, and amenities, get your free mobile guide to all 80-plus state parks: texasstateparks.org/app

RV INFO

Camping options at the 2,905-acre Lake Mineral Wells State Park include several RV sites on the lakeshore. Developed campsites include hookups, wheelchair accessibility, picnic tables, and grills, with nearby restrooms and showers. The park also has primitive and equestrian camping. tpwd.texas.gov/state-parks/lake-mineral-wells



PANHANDLE PLAINS

ABILENE

POP. 127,385

Abilene Convention and Visitors Bureau: 1101 N. First St. 325-676-2556; abilenevisitors.com

Abilene's frontier spirit honors its heritage while embracing the future. Its historic Downtown Cultural District offers educational museums, urban parks, and a public art scene with an unrivaled collection of storybook sculptures.

12TH ARMORED DIVISION MEMORIAL MUSEUM—It includes a historical collection and is a teaching museum. Admission charge. 1289 N. Second St. 325-677-6515

ABILENE STATE PARK—Fishing, hiking, boating, biking, swimming, geocaching, yurts, and RV and tent sites are available. Admission charge. 150 Park Road 32, Tuscola. 325-572-3204

ABILENE ZOO—The zoo houses more than 1,000 animals from around the globe. Admission charge. 2070 Zoo Lane in Nelson Park. 325-676-6085

ADVENTURE COVE—The water park includes a leisure pool, lazy river, and waterslides. Admission charge. 2742 S. Ninth St. 325-455-3543

BIG COUNTRY ATHLETIC HALL OF FAME MUSEUM—The museum honors Big Country athletes from a 19-county area. Admission charge. 4310 Buffalo Gap Road. 325-704-1759

THE CENTER FOR CONTEMPORARY ARTS—Five galleries host changing exhibits of photography and regional art, plus award-winning short films. Free. 220 Cypress St. 325-677-8389

DISCOVERY CENTER—Museum provides scientific and historic evidence related to the creation/evolution issue. Free. 810 Butternut St. 325-673-5050

THE DOWNTOWN ABILENE WALKING TOUR—Second Saturday walking tour is led by cowboy poet "Gus McDusty." Admission charge. 209 Cypress St. 512-619-7326

DYESS MEMORIAL CENTER MUSEUM AND AIR PARK—Heritage museum and memorial park provides base history. Free. Arnold Boulevard and Military Drive. 325-696-2099

FORT PHANTOM HILL—The frontier post was abandoned in 1854 and later burned. Interpretive signs are offered. 10818 FM 600. 325-677-1309

FRONTIER TEXAS!—The frontier comes to life in this multimedia facility, which is a regional museum, visitor center, and gift shop. Admission charge. 625 N. First St. 325-437-2800

THE GRACE MUSEUM—This is a fine arts, history, and children's museum. Admission charge. 102 Cypress St. 325-673-4587

LAKE FORT PHANTOM HILL—The lake offers picnicking, camping, paddleboarding, kayaking, and fishing. 6565 W. Lake Road. 325-676-6217

NATIONAL CENTER FOR CHILDREN'S ILLUSTRATED LITERATURE—This museum exhibits the best works of today's children's book illustrators. Free. 102 Cedar St. 325-673-4586

PARAMOUNT THEATRE—The restored theater hosts films, concerts, and live performances. 352 Cypress St. 325-676-9620

STORYBOOK GARDENS—Downtown is home to a large collection of public storybook sculptures. Free. 1101 N. First St. 325-677-1161

ALBANY

POP. 1,900

Albany Visitor Center: 2 Railroad St. 325-762-2525; albanytexas.com

This was an early supply point on the Western Trail to Dodge City. **Fort Griffin Fandangle**—on the last two weekends in June—reenacts the settling of Fort Griffin with a mix of history and tall tales.

FORT GRIFFIN STATE HISTORIC SITE—The site offers camping, fishing, hiking, stargazing. Official State of Texas

Longhorn Herd observation, and events. Admission charge. 1701 N. US 283. 325-762-3592

GEORGIA MONUMENT—The monument honors the Georgia Battalion that fought for Texas' independence in 1836. South Main and South First streets.

LEDBETTER PICKET HOUSE—A restored dog-run cabin built of slender upright pickets features rustic period furnishings. 112 Main St. 325-762-2525

THE OLD JAIL ART CENTER—Restored county jail houses permanent and traveling works of art. 201 Second St. (SH 6). 325-762-2269

AMARILLO

POP. 201,291

Amarillo Convention & Visitors Bureau: 1000 S. Polk St. 800-692-1338; visitamarillo.com

Step into the real Texas in Amarillo, where the rugged western ranches of the Panchhandle Plains meet the vibrancy of a blossoming downtown. Explore and immerse yourself in its rich history, vibrant culture, and many opportunities for exploration.

ALIBATES FLINT QUARRIES NATIONAL MONUMENT—See FRITCH.

AMARILLO BOTANICAL GARDENS—It features outdoor and indoor exhibitions, plus demonstration gardens. Admission charge. 1400 Streit Drive. 806-352-6513

AMARILLO CIVIC CENTER COMPLEX—It is home to professional ice hockey and soccer. Admission charge. 401 S. Buchanan. 806-378-4297

AMARILLO MUSEUM OF ART—At Amarillo College, the museum hosts a collection of art and temporary exhibits. Free. 2200 Van Buren St. 806-371-5050

AMARILLO ZOO—The zoo hosts a bison herd and other High Plains animals. Admission charge. 700 Comanchero Trail. 806-381-7911

AMERICAN QUARTER HORSE HALL OF FAME AND MUSEUM—The facility includes state-of-the-art technology, artifacts, and the horse's history. Admission charge. 2601 E. Interstate Drive. 806-376-5181

Wild Trails, Authentic Tales.

In Abilene, every breeze carries folklore, every horizon whispers tales of old, and the golden sunsets paint narratives of days well spent. As you gather around a campfire or lay under the West Texas sky, you don't just witness the beauty – you become a part of it, bringing to life authentic tales that can only be felt in a land that is authentically Abilene.



Experience camping and comfort in a cozy yurt at Abilene State Park.



ARTS IN THE SUNSET—The center houses a local artist colony and a sculpture garden. First Friday ArtWalk features special family activities. Free. 3701 Plains Blvd. 806-354-8802

BILL'S BACKYARD CLASSICS—See classic cars and trucks from the 1920s to 2012. Admission charge. 5309 S. Washington St. 806-373-8194

CADILLAC RANCH—A “bumper crop” of 10 Cadillacs are buried nose down in a field. 13651 I-40 Frontage Road.

COWGIRLS AND COWBOYS IN THE WEST—The business offers a variety of horseback riding experiences on its land along Palo Duro Canyon. Admission charge. 19100 FM 1258. 806-672-9256

DON HARRINGTON DISCOVERY CENTER—The center hosts education and science exhibits, including hands-on kids' activities. Admission charge. 1200 Streit Drive. 806-355-9547

Helium Monument—A six-story, centennial column commemorates this natural element found near here. 1200-1348 Streit Drive. In front of the Discovery Center. 806-355-9547

HARRINGTON HOUSE—Neoclassical mansion includes decorative and fine arts. 1600 S. Polk St. 806-374-5490

HISTORIC ROUTE 66 (OLD SAN JACINTO)—Discover the charm of the historic district's amazing shops, art, and restaurants. Between Georgia and Western streets.

KWAHADI MUSEUM OF THE AMERICAN INDIAN—This museum preserves the history of the Native Plains and Pueblo peoples. Admission charge. 9151 I-40 East. 806-335-3175

PALO DURO CANYON STATE PARK—See CANYON.

PANHANDLE-PLAINS HISTORICAL MUSEUM—See CANYON.

RV MUSEUM—At Jack Sisemore Traveland, it has vintage recreational vehicles and motorcycles. Free. 14501 I-27. 806-690-3377

STARLIGHT RANCH EVENT CENTER—Entertainment complex features a zip line, a maze, live music, and events. 1415 Sunrise Drive. 806-372-6000

TEXAS AIR & SPACE MUSEUM—The collection includes a P-51 Mustang, a NASA Grumman jet, and an N34 DC-3 aircraft. Free. 10001 American Drive. 806-335-9159

TEXAS TRAVEL INFORMATION CENTER—It's operated by TxDOT. Professional travel counselors provide travel information, brochures, and trip-planning assistance. 9700 E. I-40. 806-335-1441 or 800-452-9292

WILDCAT BLUFF DISCOVERY CENTER—Experience more than 600 acres of grasslands, nature trails, and wildflowers. Admission charge. 2301 Soncy Road. 806-352-6007

WONDERLAND AMUSEMENT PARK—The park includes a double-loop roller coaster, water rides, kids' rides, and miniature golf. Admission charge. 2601 Dumas Drive. 806-383-3344

ANDREWS

POP. 13,276

Andrews Chamber of Commerce and Visitor Information Center: Free RV parking in back. 700 W. Broadway. 432-523-2695; andrewstx.com

Florey Park's mature trees and rural setting make it popular for RVs. Enjoy the 18-hole golf course, pickleball, Frisbee golf, and the City Splash Park (summer). The Andrews County Expo Arena hosts rodeos and other



Fort Concho

MAIN STREET COMMUNITIES

Texas Main Street communities are peppered throughout the Panhandle Plains region, offering an opportunity to experience the charm of revitalized historic districts.

One of the region's largest is Amarillo, which includes the restored Potter County Courthouse, Amarillo Museum of Art, and the Historic Route 66 district. In nearby Canyon, travelers can experience the massive Panhandle-Plains Historical Museum; restored Randall County Courthouse; and Main Street district's bars, restaurants, and shops.

Plainview is home to the Museum of the Llano Estacado and a notable collection of more than 60 early 20th-century commercial buildings, collectively known as the Plainview Commercial Historic District.

Another Texas Main Street city, Levelland, features the historic Hockley County Courthouse, surrounded by 100-year-old buildings. In Vernon, the Red River Valley Museum recalls the area's rich ranching heritage, and the downtown Classical Revival-style Wilbarger County Courthouse retains its historic 1928 appearance.

San Angelo offers a thriving art scene with a cultural district along the picturesque Concho River, where visitors can find Fort Concho, the San Angelo Museum of Fine Arts, and the Railroad Depot and Museum.

Find other Main Street communities across the state: thc.texas.gov/mainstreet.





PANHANDLE PLAINS

activities. Events include the Wild, Wild West Fest; a July 4 celebration; Oktoberfest; and the Holly Jolly Weekend.

ANDREWS BIRD VIEWING AREA—A quarter-mile nature trail offers bird viewing, a boardwalk, and observation points. Southeast Avenue E and Southeast 401. 432-523-4820

ANDREWS COUNTY VETERANS MEMORIAL AT LEGACY PARK—Six-foot granite tablets honor local veterans and interpret wars. There are seven battle crosses honoring Andrews heroes and a first responders memorial. 700 W. Broadway. 432-523-2695

ANSON

POP. 2,301

Anson Chamber of Commerce: 1132 W. Court Plaza. 325-823-3259; anson-tx.us

This town is named for Dr. Anson Jones, last president of the Republic of Texas. Each December since 1885, the Cowboys' Christmas Ball has been held in Pioneer Hall. The "Cowboy Dance" by Jenne Magafan is a well-preserved Works Progress Administration post office mural.

ANSON JONES MUSEUM—Artifacts include a miniature reproduction of the 1904 town square, a desk used by Dr. Anson Jones in his practice, and other local memorabilia. 1302 Ave. K. 325-823-3259

ARCHER CITY

POP. 1,606

Archer City Hall: 118 S. Sycamore St. 940-574-4570; archercity.org

Archer City Visitor Center: 940-574-2557; visitarchercity.com

Booked Up Inc. offers a large collection of antiquarian, rare, and unusual books, gathered by native son Larry McMurtry, author of the novel *Lonesome Dove*. The city is the backdrop for two movies based on novels written by McMurtry: *The Last Picture Show* and *Texasville*.

ARCHER COUNTY COURTHOUSE—The three-story structure is restored to its 1925 appearance. 100 S. Center St. 940-574-2557

HISTORICAL MARKERS—Sites range from the Early Bowman Church and Bowman Cemetery to the D.S. Dudley Wild West Show. 940-574-2557

LAKE KICKAPOO—The lake offers fishing, boating, camping, and picnicking. Off of SH 25, northwest of Archer City. 940-761-7477

ROYAL THEATER—It features quarterly performances by the Texasville Opry, plus other concerts and productions. 113 E. Main St. 940-574-2489

BAIRD

POP. 1,510

Baird Chamber of Commerce: 100 Market St. 325-854-2003; bairdchamber.com

In the Antique Capital of West Texas, restored turn-of-the-century buildings downtown feature antiques and specialty shops. A "Wall of Honor" in the courthouse remembers military personnel who died in wars. Hunting is popular in season. The 18-hole golf course is scenic and challenging.

BAIRD TEXAS AND PACIFIC DEPOT VISITOR CENTER AND TRANSPORTATION MUSEUM—The museum contains railroad memorabilia, antique buggies, photographs, and books related to transportation. 100 Market St. 325-854-2003

BALLINGER

POP. 3,574

Ballinger Visitor Information: 811 Hutchings Ave. 325-365-2333; baltx.org

The Ballinger Carnegie Library is still in use as a library. Downtown Pioneer Plaza honors early settlers. The City Park on Elm Creek offers RV connections, a playground, and a swimming pool. Events include the Texas State Festival of Ethnic Cultures Arts & Crafts Show and the Hunters Dinner.

COWBOY AND HIS HORSE STATUE—Sculptor Pompeo Coppini's work honors a local cowboy. On the courthouse lawn, at US 83 and US 67.

THE CROSS—The cross is about 100 feet tall. Adjacent are a grotto and statue of Our Lady of Guadalupe. On SH 158. 325-365-2333

O.H. IVIE RESERVOIR—This lake has public recreation areas with boat ramps, fishing, picnicking, and camping. Southeast of Ballinger off FM 1929, northeast of Eden. 432-267-6341

BENJAMIN

POP. 195

It's named after town founder Hilory Bedford's son, who was killed by lightning. Hunting is popular for waterfowl, deer, dove, quail, turkey, and wild hog in season.

KNOX COUNTY VETERANS MEMORIAL—An arch flanked by 10 granite slabs honors Knox County veterans from the Spanish-American War through current conflicts. At the corner of US 82 and SH 6.

SCENIC DRIVE—A 36-mile loop northeast of town provides views of lands cut by the South Wichita River. North on SH 6 to FM 1756, east to FM 267, south to US 82, then west back to Benjamin.

WICHITA-BRAZOS MUSEUM AND CULTURAL CENTER—Knox County's colorful history is depicted through rotating displays. 200 E. Hays St. (US 82). 940-459-2229

BIG SPRING

POP. 25,318

Big Spring Convention and Visitors Bureau: 113 E. Third St. 432-263-8235 or 866-430-7100; visitbigspring.com

Big Spring's name is derived from the huge natural spring in Sulphur Draw that provided water to area wildlife, as well as to the Comanche and Shawnee tribes. The city is home to Howard College and Southwest Collegiate Institute for the Deaf.

BIG SPRING STATE PARK—A 3-mile drive around Scenic Mountain can be enjoyed by joggers, walkers, and birders, or explore the 5-mile hike and bike trail. Admission charge. 1 Scenic Drive. 432-263-4931

BIG SPRING VIETNAM MEMORIAL—Displays include the memorial and an F-4E Phantom II, UH-1 Huey, Abrams tank, and Cobra helicopter. At Webb Air Force Base; accessible from FM 700.

COMANCHE TRAIL PARK—It's home to the historic Big Spring, an amphitheater, hiking trails, fishing, playgrounds, aquatic center, golf and disc golf courses, and Christmas Festival of Lights. 100 Whipkey Drive. 432-264-2323

The Spring—Explore the history and importance of the "big spring." Free. 2801 Buffalo Trail.

HANGAR 25 AIR MUSEUM—Restored World War II flight hangar features Bombardier School and Webb Air Force Base exhibits. 1911 Apron Drive. 432-264-1999

HERITAGE MUSEUM—Exhibits focus on area history and the West Texas oil industry. Admission charge. 510 Scurry St. 432-267-8255

Potton House—Tours of the restored Victorian home can be arranged through the museum. Admission charge. 200 Gregg St. 432-267-8255

LAKE MOSS CREEK—The lake offers fishing, boating, swimming, birding, and camping. About 10 miles northeast of Big Spring off of I-20. 432-393-5246

BORGER

POP. 12,249

Borger Chamber of Commerce: 613 N. Main St. 806-274-2211; borgerchamber.com

The town was established after the discovery of an oil field in 1926. Soon, a boomtown sprang up and the population grew to more than 40,000. It is home to Frank Phillips College.

BATTLE OF ADOBE WALLS—A marker at a roadside park commemorates two famous Native American battles. SH 207, 6 miles north of Borger.

HUTCHINSON COUNTY HISTORICAL MUSEUM—Exhibits feature county geology, paleontology, archeology, and history. 618 N. Main St. 806-273-0130

LAKE MEREDITH NATIONAL RECREATION AREA—See FRITCH.

THERE'S *Always* SOMETHING TO DO IN ANDREWS

Andrews, Texas, is the premier destination for travelers needing a resting place, FREE community events, and much more. Andrews boasts one of the finest golf courses in West Texas and hosts many FREE events throughout the year.

Stay updated on upcoming events and more by following us on social media @andrewschamberofcommerce and via our website at andrewstx.com.

POSITIVELY ANDREWS

**700 W BROADWAY ST.
(432) 523 - 2695**

SCENIC DRIVE—A 25-mile loop west on SH 136 to FM 1319 and FM 687 north to Stinnett crosses the Canadian River breaks and the Lake Meredith dam.

BOYS RANCH

POP. 173

Oldham County Chamber of Commerce: 904 Main St., Vega. 806-267-2828; oldhamcofc.org

Old Tascosa was a booming cow town that served several Texas ranches, including the famed XIT. Decline set in when the open range was fenced and the railroad bypassed it. Today, it is the site of Cal Farley's Boys Ranch.

BOOT HILL CEMETERY—In the 1880s, gunfights were the traditional means for settling disputes, and the cemetery was essential. US 385 at Boys Ranch.

JULIAN BIVINS MUSEUM—It features artifacts from pre-historic cultures, pioneer items, and Boys Ranch history. 3 Tascosa Trail. 806-533-1200

BRECKENRIDGE

POP. 5,177

Breckenridge Chamber of Commerce: 100 E. Elm St. 254-559-2301; breckenridgetexas.com

Breckenridge is known as the Mural Capital of Texas. Historic downtown features original brick streets and buildings from the 1920s. The Stephens County Courthouse is listed in the National Register of Historic Places. Texas State Technical College-West Texas, Breckenridge Campus is here.

BOOMTOWN BRECKENRIDGE MURALS—The murals depict city history based on Basil Clemmons' 1920s photos. The chamber has mural maps. Clemmons' photos can be viewed at the Swenson Memorial Museum.

BRECKENRIDGE FINE ARTS CENTER—See changing exhibits, paintings, sculptures, a large doll collection, and festival gowns. 207 N. Breckenridge Ave. 254-559-6602

HUBBARD CREEK RESERVOIR—It offers fishing, boat ramps, marinas, swimming, and camping. Off US 180 West and US 183. 254-559-3677 or 325-673-8254

LAKE DANIEL—A park at the dam has fishing, picnic sites, and primitive camping. Off US 183 and FM 576. 254-559-8287

POSSUM KINGDOM LAKE—The lake has lakeside resorts, camps, and boat ramps. Hunting is available during season. Off SH 16. 940-779-2321

POSSUM KINGDOM STATE PARK—Offers lake access, camping, hiking, swimming, boating, skiing, fishing, and scuba diving. Admission charge. 3901 State Park Road 33, Caddo. 940-549-1803

SWENSON MEMORIAL MUSEUM—The museum features county history, traveling exhibits, and Basil Clemmons' photography. 116 W. Walker St. 254-559-8471

BRONTE

POP. 948

Bronte City Hall: 114 S. Washington St. 325-473-3501; brontetexas.org

The town is named for English novelist Charlotte Bronte. The historic Atchison, Topeka, and Santa Fe Railway Depot; Veterans Memorial; and Texas Theater are on West Main Street. Bronte Park offers a swimming pool, a golf course, RV hookups, and a playground.

FORT CHADBOURNE—It includes historic ruins, as well as restored buildings. The visitor center displays artifacts from the site. 651 Fort Chadbourne Road. 325-743-2555

FORT CHADBOURNE CEMETERY—Many pioneers and early settlers of the area are buried here. About a mile northwest of the fort.

BROWNFIELD

POP. 8,717

Brownfield Chamber of Commerce and Visitors Center: 211 Lubbock Road. 806-637-2564; brownfieldchamber.com

Coleman Park, south of the city limits along US 62/385, offers RV sites. The Quilt Trail showcases quilts from around the state and beyond.

TERRY COUNTY HERITAGE MUSEUM—In the restored A.M. Brownfield Home, the museum displays local heritage, a pioneer kitchen, and artifacts. 600 E. Cardwell St. 806-637-2467

BUFFALO GAP

POP. 589

Buffalo Gap City Hall: 709 Litel St. 325-572-3347; buffaloaptx.com

Settlement here began at the site of a natural pass through which buffalo traveled. It also was a point on the Dodge (or Western) Cattle Trail. Today, the town offers a variety of restaurants, shops, and historical restorations.

ABILENE STATE PARK—See ABILENE.

BUFFALO GAP HISTORIC VILLAGE—Complex features historic buildings, a store, a visitor center, and playground. Admission charge. 133 N. William St. 325-572-3365

CANADIAN

POP. 2,230

Canadian Chamber of Commerce and Visitors Bureau: 119 N. Second St. 806-323-6234; canadiantx.com

The town is on the Canadian River. The Texas Commission on the Arts designated Canadian as a Cultural District in 2018. It has a thriving art community with a rich history, local artisans, and a world-class art museum.

CANADIAN RIVER WAGON BRIDGE—The 1916 steel bridge is part of a hike-and-bike trail and offers wildlife watching and scenic views. On US 60/83.

THE CITADELLE ART FOUNDATION—The mansion features a world-class art gallery. It includes gardens and a visitor center. Admission charge. 520 Nelson Ave. 806-323-8899

GENE HOWE WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT AREA—Restored wetlands, river bottoms, and creeks offer wildlife viewing opportunities. 15412 Lake Marvin Road. 806-323-8642

LAKE MARVIN—The lake offers camping, picnicking, fishing, and nature trails. Hunt during fall-winter seasons. Access via FM 2266. 580-497-2143





PANHANDLE PLAINS

RIVER VALLEY PIONEER MUSEUM—It features memorabilia from Canadian and Hemphill County. Donations accepted. 118 N. Second St. (US 60/83). 806-323-6548

CANYON

POP. 15,771

Canyon Chamber of Commerce and Visitor Center: 1518 Fifth Ave. 806-655-7815; canyonchamber.org

The town is a gateway to the spectacular Palo Duro Canyon State Park and is home to West Texas A&M University.

BUFFALO LAKE NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE—The refuge has interpretive trails, picnicking, birding, nature study, and campsites. Refuge headquarters is on FM 168. 806-499-3382

PALO DURO CANYON STATE PARK—Horseback ride, hike, or drive the park, which has campsites, cabins, an interpretive center, and an amphitheater. Admission charge. 11450 Park Road 5. 806-488-2227

PALO DURO CREEK RANCH—The ranch offers Jeep and horse tours of Palo Duro Canyon. Call for reservations. 11301 SH 217 East. 806-488-2100

PALO DURO RIDING STABLES—See Palo Duro Canyon from the back of a horse. Call for reservations. 10160 SH 217 East. 806-676-2161

PANHANDLE-PLAINS HISTORICAL MUSEUM—The museum includes history, art, oil wells, windmills, dinosaurs, and a research center. Admission charge. 2503 Fourth Ave. 806-651-2244

TEXAS—This outdoor musical depicts the West and the settlement of Texas. Admission charge. 1514 Fifth Ave. 806-651-2181

CHILDRESS

POP. 5,797

Childress Chamber of Commerce: 237 Commerce St. 940-937-2567; childress-chamber.com

The area is popular for hunting and bass fishing. Fair Park has a historical marker for the Goodnight Trail—an extension of the famed Goodnight-Loving Trail. A veterans memorial on the courthouse lawn honors those who served during the 20th century.

CHILDRESS COUNTY HERITAGE MUSEUM—The museum includes an Army airfield exhibit, Native American artifacts, and theater memorabilia. 210 Third St. Northwest. 940-937-2261

CISCO

POP. 3,883

Cisco Chamber of Commerce: 309 Conrad Hilton Blvd. 254-442-2537; ciscochamberofcommerce.com

Cisco offers a unique experience with local flair. It has brick-paved streets, antiques shops, wineries, and a brewery, not to mention eateries. Hunting, fishing, and boating on Lake Cisco are just a few of the things Cisco has to offer.

HILTON MUSEUM—Conrad N. Hilton's first hotel is now a community center, museum, and visitor center. Free. 309 Conrad Hilton Blvd. 254-442-2537

LAKE CISCO—The rock-bottom lake has lots of fishing and boating activities. 1057 FM 2807. 254-442-2111

LELA LATCH LLOYD MUSEUM—The museum houses historic documents, photographs, and artifacts. 116 W. Seventh St. 254-631-3573

OLD ZOO HIKING TRAILS—The 100-year-old abandoned zoo features old ruins and cages that have been turned into nature trails. Free. 4916 SH 6 North. 254-442-2537

CLARENDON

POP. 1,948

Clarendon Chamber of Commerce: 318 Kearney St. 806-874-2421; clarendontx.com/chamber

Fossilized specimens from the Clarendonian Age are found near here. Birding and wildlife viewing, as well as hunting, are popular. The Sandell Drive-In, an old-fashioned drive-in theater, shows movies April-August.

DONLEY COUNTY COURTHOUSE—This is the Panhandle's oldest courthouse. 300 S. Sully St. 806-874-3625

GREENBELT LAKE—It offers boat ramps, marina, picnicking, and camping. Call ahead about water levels. Off SH 70. 806-874-3650

SAINTS ROOST MUSEUM—The museum features area artifacts, a railroad depot, and a Red River War collection. 610 E. Harrington St. 806-874-2746

CLAUDE

POP. 1,197

Claude City Hall: 806-337-0388; claudetx.org

ARMSTRONG COUNTY MUSEUM—The Charles Goodnight Hall recounts the establishment of the JA Ranch and protection of the Southern herd of the American bison. 121 N. Trice St. 806-226-2187

CHARLES AND MARY ANN GOODNIGHT RANCH STATE HISTORIC SITE—The site includes the refurbished home of the rancher and chuckwagon inventor. Admission charge. 4989 CR 25. 806-944-5591

SCENIC DRIVE—Take SH 207 south toward Silverton. The highway plunges into Palo Duro Canyon. Farther south, the road drops into Tule Canyon.

COLEMAN

POP. 3,970

Coleman County Chamber of Commerce, Agriculture, and Tourist Bureau: 218 Commercial Ave. 325-625-2163; facebook.com/colemanchamber

Coleman City Park complex has a replica of Camp Colorado. The area offers abundant hunting, fishing, boating, and water sports. Events include the Coleman PRCA Rodeo and Fiesta de la Paloma.

COLEMAN MUSEUM AT HERITAGE HALL—See pioneer items, farm equipment, and barbed wire. 400 W. College Ave. 817-658-7866

HORDS CREEK—It offers developed parks with fishing, camping, and picnicking. Off SH 153. 325-625-2322

LAKE COLEMAN—Press Morris Park offers boat ramps, fishing, camping, and picnicking. Off US 283. 325-625-4116

COLORADO CITY

POP. 3,939

Colorado City Chamber of Commerce: 325-728-3403; coloradocitychamberofcommerce.com

Hunters seek deer, wild turkey, upland game birds, and waterfowl here. Downtown offers unique shops and great eats. Events include Pumpkin Patch, Hunters Dinner, Holiday Palooza and the J.O. Dockery July 4th Fly-in.

BRANDING WALL—Displays more than 230 cattle brands that have been used in Mitchell County. In Kiwanis Park at Second and Chestnut streets.

CHAMPION CREEK RESERVOIR—Fisher Park offers picnicking, beach area, kayak rentals, and fishing. 7134 W. CR 123. About 7 miles south of Colorado City off Texas 208. 325-728-5331

HEART OF WEST TEXAS MUSEUM—Items include frontier equipment, photos, and a Chief Lone Wolf exhibit. 340 E. Third St. 325-728-8285

LAKE COLORADO CITY STATE PARK—The lake is ideal for fishing, birding, and paddling. The park offers hiking, picnicking, and camping. Admission charge. 4582 FM 2836. 325-728-3931

RUDDICK PARK—The park has a creek, a 9-hole disc golf course, pavilions to rent, picnic tables, playgrounds, a city pool, and ducks to feed. Free. Houston Street and East Eighth. 325-728-5331

CROSBYTON

POP. 1,461

Crosbyton Chamber of Commerce: 124 S. Berkshire. 806-853-7140; crosbytonchamber.com

The town is a stop on the Quanah Parker Trail—part of the Texas Plains Trail Region. Free RV camping with hookups is offered in the city park. Historic Silver Falls Park is 4 miles east on US 82. Bed-and-breakfasts are available.

CROSBY COUNTY PIONEER MEMORIAL MUSEUM—Exhibits depict the settlement of the area to about 1930. 101 W. Main St. (US 82 at FM 651). 806-675-2331

WHITE RIVER LAKE—The lake features a marina, boat ramp, fishing, picnicking, and camping. Off FM 2794. 806-263-4240

CROSS PLAINS

POP. 926

Cross Plains City Hall: 201 E. Main St. 254-725-6114; crossplains.org

A historic marker in Treadaway Park notes where Robert E. Lee and Ulysses S. Grant camped. The city is the site of the original home of Robert E. Howard, creator of Conan the Barbarian, and tours are available by appointment. The Cross Plains Public Library has a large collection of first-edition books and original manuscripts by Howard.

CROSS PLAINS AREA VETERANS MEMORIAL PARK—Six large granite stones contain hundreds of names honoring those who served in the military from the Civil War to present day. 225 S. Main.

WOODY'S CLASSIC CARS & BASEBALL MUSEUM—Enjoy 22,000 square feet of classic cars and timeless baseball moments. 500 SW Fifth St., SH 36 West. 254-725-4042

CROWELL

POP. 736

City of Crowell: 940-684-1722; crowelltex.com

The recapture site, Pease River Battlefield, of history's most famous case of a white girl—Cynthia Ann Parker—captured and raised by Comanches is marked by a historical marker. B&Bs, hunting facilities, and RV hookups are available. Annual events include Cynthia Ann Parker Days and Cowboy Christmas Ball.

COPPER BREAKS STATE PARK—See QUANAH.

DEPOT LIBRARY/MUSEUM—The Old Santa Fe Depot offers area history and an extensive collection on Cynthia Ann Parker. 203 N. Main St.

DALHART

POP. 8,402

Dalhart Chamber of Commerce: 102 E. Seventh St. 806-244-5646; dalhart.org

Dalhart is known as the headquarters of the famous XIT Ranch—more than 3 million acres were sold by the state to pay for the Texas State Capitol building in Austin. Dalhart is a stop on the Quanah Parker Trail—as part of the Texas Plains Trail Region.

EMPTY SADDLE MONUMENT—This tribute to XIT Ranch cowhands and pioneers is a favorite photo subject. Just north of the US 87 underpass.

JAMES R. FOX MEMORIAL—Honors James R. Fox, who flew rescue missions during World War II. Outside the Dalhart County Courthouse.

LAKE RITA BLANCA—The park offers hiking, riding, fishing, and birding. It has a playscape with rock-climbing walls. Off US 385/87 and FM 281. 806-244-5511

RITA BLANCA NATIONAL GRASSLANDS—It's open for hunting, birding, and hiking. 575-374-9652

VETERANS MEMORIAL PARK—This memorial honors area veterans who served in all branches of the military. At Seventh and Rock Island.

XIT HISTORICAL MUSEUM—Exhibits include ranch artifacts, railroad items, and a frontier chapel. 108 E. Fifth St. 806-244-5390

DENVER CITY

POP. 4,303

Denver City Chamber of Commerce: 806-592-5424; denvercitychamber.com

Although the oil industry upon which it was founded still plays a role in the economy, the county and the surrounding region are a major agricultural area.

DENVER CITY HERITAGE MUSEUM—Exhibits and artifacts focus on local history starting in the early 20th century. 117 N. Avenue B. 806-592-2897

DIMMITT

POP. 4,118

Dimmitt Chamber of Commerce: 115 W. Bedford St. 806-647-2524; dimmittchamberofcommerce.com

A historical marker at the courthouse square commemorates a gunfight that happened after the town became the county seat. The Ogallala Quilt Festival is held in April.

CASTRO COUNTY MUSEUM—Housed in the Old Carter House, it features artifacts and a furnished half-dugout. 404 W. Halsell St. 806-681-9261

DUMAS

POP. 14,166

Dumas/Moore County Chamber of Commerce and Visitor Center: 1901 S. Dumas Ave. 806-935-2123; dumaschamber.com

Dumas offers outdoor recreation in eight city parks. Scenic beauty is found in the rugged canyons and hills of the Canadian River breaks. Fish and boat on Lake Meredith. RV park and bed-and-breakfast accommodations are available. The World Championship Mud Volleyball Tournament is in July.

CACTUS PLAYA LAKE—Bald and golden eagles, falcons, cranes, waterfowl, and shorebirds can be seen at times at this bird refuge. On FM 281, approximately 2 miles south-east of Cactus (about 13 miles north of Dumas).

WINDOW ON THE PLAINS MUSEUM—Exhibits focus on local history, wildlife displays, and Native American artifacts. Free. 1820 S. Dumas Ave. 806-935-3113

The Art Center—It features the work of local and regional artists. Free. 1810 Dumas Ave. 806-935-5312

EASTLAND

POP. 3,640

Eastland Chamber of Commerce: 209 W. Main St. 254-629-2332; eastlandchamber.com

Area lakes are popular for fishing. Lakeside and Lone Cedar golf courses each offer 18 holes. Events include Ripfest Parade and Festival, Rip's Ribs Cook-off, and an Old Fashion 4th of July Celebration.

DOWNTOWN WALKING TOUR—It features buildings in a two-block historic area. Pick up a map for this self-guided tour at the chamber. 254-629-2332

EASTLAND COUNTY MUSEUM—The museum archives area photographs and memorabilia. 112/114 S. Seaman St. 254-631-0437

LAW ENFORCEMENT MUSEUM—Exhibits artifacts and memorabilia from county and law enforcement history. 210 W. White St. 254-629-1774

LEON RESERVOIR—The lake offers fishing, boating, picnicking, and camping. Southeast of Eastland via FM 570 and FM 2214. 254-631-2833

MAJESTIC THEATRE—Historic landmark is a first-run movie house. Tours can be arranged. 108 N. Lamar St. 254-629-2102

"OLD RIP" THE HORNE TOAD—It was said to have lived 31 years sealed in the old courthouse's cornerstone. It was placed in a glass-front casket in the new courthouse after it died. 100 W. Main St.

OUTDOOR ART EXHIBIT—Each piece includes a story of the painter's life or interesting details. Maps are available at the chamber. 254-629-2332

POST OFFICE MURAL—National and post office history is depicted in a 6-by-10-foot mural of postage stamps. 411 W. Main St. 254-629-2383

EDEN

POP. 1,853

Eden Visitor Information: 120 Paint Rock St. 325-869-2211; edentexas.com

The Garden of Eden near downtown includes water features, walking paths, and native plants. Visitors can also enjoy a municipal golf course, deer and turkey hunting, and fishing and boating on O.H. Ivie Reservoir. Eden Fall Festival is in September.

DON FREEMAN MEMORIAL MUSEUM—Features Concho County history and honors the county's military veterans. On Paint Rock Street. 325-869-2211 or 325-869-5074

PAINT ROCK EXCURSIONS—Take a guided tour to view the pictographs. Near Paint Rock. 325-456-0072

ELECTRA

POP. 2,291

Electra Chamber of Commerce: 112 W. Cleveland Ave. 940-495-3577; electratexas.org

Electra was named the Pump Jack Capital of Texas by the Texas Legislature. Festivals include the Electra Goat Barbecue on Mother's Day weekend and the Holiday of Lights Christmas Parade and Angel Lighting. An RV park is at the fairgrounds.

DOWNTOWN HISTORIC DISTRICT—See brick streets, WPA-era artwork in the post office, and the Grand Theatre. A '50s-era oil derrick is lit during Christmas.

Grand Theatre Tour—The venue offers free Friday morning tours of the landmark 1920s opera house. 114 N. Waggoner St. 940-733-3620

FLOYDADA

POP. 2,594

Floydada Chamber of Commerce & Agriculture: 806-983-3434; floydadachamber.org/visit-floydada

CAPROCK CANYONS STATE PARK AND TRAILWAY—See QUITAQUE.

FLOYD COUNTY MUSEUM—The museum includes furnishings, implements, store fixtures, and photographs of early settlers. It also has artifacts from Coronado's expedition found in Floyd County. 105 E. Missouri. 806-983-2415

FRITCH

POP. 1,815

City of Fritch: 104 Robey Ave. 806-857-3143; fritchcityhall.com

ALIBATES FLINT QUARRIES NATIONAL MONUMENT—View the site by ranger-led guided tours only. 37084 Alibates Road. 806-857-6680

LAKE MEREDITH—The lake offers boat ramps, campgrounds, and picnic areas. Call ahead about water levels. Off SH 136. 806-857-3151

LAKE MEREDITH NATIONAL RECREATION AREA—The area offers fishing, boating, camping, hiking, and hunting. Park headquarters is on SH 136. 806-857-3151

GRAHAM

POP. 8,750

Graham Convention and Visitors Bureau: 608 Elm St. 940-549-0401; visitgrahamtexas.com

Graham has America's largest downtown square and is a great destination for hunting, fishing, and hiking. Check

out the Graham Drive-in, murals, Firemen's Park Disc Golf Course, and Graham Country Club golf course. Events include Food Truck Championship of Texas, Possum Pedal Bike Ride, and Crawfish & Cannons.

FORT BELKNAP—The fort, which protected earlier settlers, was the starting point of the Goodnight-Loving Trail and is home to one of the largest active mustang grape vines in the world. 5385 FM 61. 940-846-3222

GRAHAM DOWNTOWN SQUARE—America's largest downtown square features boutique retail, dining, and accommodations along brick streets with century-old architecture. 516 Fourth St. 940-549-0401

LAKES GRAHAM AND EDDLEMAN—Parks offer fishing, boating, and camping. Off US 380 and FM 61. 940-549-0401

OLD POST OFFICE MUSEUM AND ART CENTER—The facility holds an Alexander Hogue mural, historical artifacts, and special exhibits. Free. Corner of Third and Oak streets. 940-549-1470

POSSUM KINGDOM STATE PARK—See BRECKENRIDGE.

SCENIC DRIVE—Take SH 16 south to US 180 around Possum Kingdom Lake; SH 67 south to US 180 in Breckenridge; or US 380 east to Jacksboro, Bridgeport, Decatur, and Denton.

YOUNG COUNTY MUSEUM OF HISTORY AND CULTURE—Explore Young County memorabilia, artifacts, photos, maps, documents, and furniture. 401 Echo St. 940-282-2887

YOUNG COUNTY VETERANS MEMORIAL PLAZA—The site includes three memorials honoring the Young County men, women, and military working dogs who died defending our country. 516 Fourth St.

HALE CENTER

POP. 2,016

City of Hale Center: 702 Main St. 806-839-2411; cityofhalecenter.com

Outdoor murals on buildings depict life in this city.

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806-935-5312

888-840-8911

Call us for more information

DumasChamber.com

10 AM to 5 PM
Monday - Saturday
Free Admission

www.dumasmuseumandartcenter.org



PANHANDLE PLAINS

BELL PARK CACTI GARDEN—Established in honor of Hershell Bell, agronomy and range management authority. At FM 1424 and FM 1914.

HALE COUNTY FARM AND RANCH MUSEUM—It includes the Santa Fe depot and vintage farm equipment. 1910 I-27. 806-839-2556

HASKELL

POP. 3,075

Haskell Chamber of Commerce and Visitors Center: 112 N. Ave. E. 940-864-2477; haskelltexasusa.com

Haskell is the hub for smaller towns in Haskell County. The city is known for its museums and great antiques shopping. It has many shops and boutiques to interest shoppers around the square and throughout town. Lake Stamford is nearby for fishing. Visitors also may enjoy the Haskell Golf Course and the Haskell City Park.

FORT SAM MILITARY AND VINTAGE CAR MUSEUM—It features jeeps and large military vehicles, plus a selection of vehicles from every decade. 209 S. Ave. E. 940-864-2027

TEXAS STAR MUSEUM—This is a great source of Haskell's history with a collection of Americana going back to the early 1900s. 3 Ave. E. 325-669-0338

HENRIETTA

POP. 3,169

Henrietta Chamber of Commerce: 202 W. Omega St. 940-613-3193; hccchamber.com

A red granite monument on the courthouse square stands as a war memorial. Haggood Park off US 287 offers an RV park. Turkey Fest is held in April, and the Pioneer Reunion Rodeo is in September.

1890 JAIL MUSEUM-HERITAGE CENTER—It includes the original cells, a never-used gallows, and sheriff's living quarters. Admission charge. 116 N. Graham St. 940-538-5655

HEREFORD

POP. 14,765

Hereford Chamber of Commerce: 701 Main St. 806-364-3333; herefordtx.org

The historic Deaf Smith County Courthouse is the only Texas courthouse built entirely of white Georgia marble. Swimming is offered at the Hereford Aquatic Center. Events include the Pioneer Days Celebration, July Jubilee, Spicer Gripp Memorial Roping, and Beef Capital of the World "Beef Cook-Off" Challenge.

DEAF SMITH COUNTY HISTORICAL MUSEUM—Exhibits include a country store, a chapel, and a hand-carved miniature three-ring circus. 400 Sampson St. 806-363-7070

IOWA PARK

POP. 6,583

Iowa Park Economic Development: 102 N. Wall St. 940-592-5441; iowapark.com

Gordon Lake has a walking track and good fishing. Lake Iowa Park is for fishing, boating, and other watercraft. Buffalo Lake is known for its fishing. The city also has a spray park. Parkfest is held in May.

TOM BURNETT MEMORIAL LIBRARY—This colonial-style building was the home of a prominent cattleman and civic leader. 410 W. Alameda St. 940-592-4981

WINERY—Horseshoe Bend Cellars Vineyard & Winery. See TEXAS BEVERAGE TOUR section.

JACKSBORO

POP. 4,339

Jacksboro Chamber of Commerce: 302 S. Main St. 940-567-2602; jacksborochamber.com

The quaint downtown includes buildings constructed from native limestone, along with gift and antiques shops. Two city parks provide recreational activities and a nine-hole golf course.

FORT RICHARDSON STATE PARK AND HISTORIC SITE—The park offers restored historic buildings, camping, RV sites, nature trails, swimming, and fishing. Guided tours are available. Admission charge. 228 State Park Road 61. 940-567-3506

Lost Creek Reservoir State Trailway—This is a 10-mile hike, bike, and equestrian trail. A day-use trailhead provides a picnic area, swimming, and a fishing pier.

JACK COUNTY MUSEUM—This museum has period furnishings and local history exhibits. 241 W. Belknap St. 940-567-5410

LAKE JACKSBORO AND LOST CREEK RESERVOIR—Fort Richardson State Park offers access for fishing, swimming, and boating. Off SH 59. 940-567-5468 or 940-567-3506

LAMESA

POP. 8,425

Lamesa Chamber of Commerce: 123 Main St. 806-872-2181; lamesachamber.org

The Texas Legislature recognized Lamesa as the "Legendary Home of the Chicken-Fried Steak," celebrated annually with the Chicken-Fried Steak Festival. Shop in the historic downtown square. A golf course, disc golf course, swimming pool, and parks provide recreation. Forrest Park offers RV hookups.

DAL PASO MUSEUM—Exhibits include items from early settlers, as well as the Madame Alexander dolls and military items. 306 S. First St. 806-577-7488

LEVELLAND

POP. 12,337

Levelland Area Chamber of Commerce: 1101 Ave. H. 806-894-3157; levelland.com

This town is known as the City of Mosaics and features 13 outdoor mosaics. It is home to South Plains College, the Mallet Event Center & Arena, and the multipurpose Oxy Sports Complex. Several city parks provide recreational activities. An RV park on south US 385 offers free stays, with a three-day maximum.

SOUTH PLAINS COLLEGE ART MUSEUM—The Fine Arts Building houses a collection of old masters art. 1401 S. College Ave. 806-716-2261 or 806-716-2270

LIPSCOMB

POP. 30

Lipscomb County Courthouse: 105 Oak St. 806-862-4131; co.lipscomb.tx.us

A favorite spot for birders and photographers, the community is surrounded by the Canadian Breaks Loop portion of the Panhandle Plains Wildlife Trail.

WOLF CREEK HERITAGE MUSEUM—The museum preserves county history, exhibits local artists, and hosts educational events. 806-852-2123

LITTLEFIELD

POP. 5,783

City of Littlefield: 806-385-9202; littlefieldtexas.net

City parks offer picnicking and a free RV park.

LITTLEFIELD LANDS/DUGGAN HOUSE MUSEUM—This museum offers local history. 520 E. Waylon Jennings Blvd. 806-385-9001

REPLICA OF WORLD'S TALLEST WINDMILL—The original windmill was 132 feet tall and made of wood. It blew down on Thanksgiving Day 1926. The steel replica is 114 feet tall. Loop 430 at XIT Drive.

WAYLON JENNINGS MUSEUM—Housed in part of a former service station, the museum contains a collection of items and memorabilia. Free. Corner of US 385 and US 84. 806-385-5561

LUBBOCK

POP. 263,930

Lubbock Convention and Visitors Bureau: 1500 Broadway, Sixth Floor. 806-747-5232 or 800-692-4035; visitlubbock.org

Lubbock is called the "Hub City." It is home to Texas Tech University and is known for its legendary ranching and music heritage, vibrant arts culture, and award-winning wineries. Events include the National Cowboy Symposium & Celebration, Candlelight at the Ranch, and the Lubbock Arts Festival.

ADVENTURE PARK—The 20-acre park includes bumper boats, zip lines, and a laser maze. 5110 29th Drive. 806-793-7275

AMERICAN WINDMILL MUSEUM—The museum displays rare and fully restored windmills, along with windmill artifacts. 1701 Canyon Lake Drive. 806-747-8734

BUDDY HOLLY CENTER—A permanent exhibit features Holly's life and music. The center also hosts visual arts and Texas music. Admission charge. 1801 Crickets Ave. 806-775-3560

Allison House—Buddy Holly and J.I. Allison wrote many famous hits here. Admission charge. 1801 Crickets Ave. 806-775-3560

BUDDY HOLLY STATUE AND WEST TEXAS WALK OF FAME—Honors Lubbock and West Texas natives who've significantly contributed to the entertainment industry. 19th Street and Crickets Avenue.

BUFFALO SPRINGS LAKE—The lake offers fishing, boating, and picnicking. Five miles east of Loop 289 on FM 835 and East 50th Street. 806-747-3353

DEPOT ENTERTAINMENT DISTRICT—This area features restaurants and entertainment, including the 1930s-era Cactus Theater. Downtown, adjacent to I-27 at 19th Street and Buddy Holly Avenue. 800-692-4035

FIBERMAX CENTER FOR DISCOVERY—Exhibits include pioneer artifacts, restored tractors, and farm toys. Donations accepted. 1121 Canyon Lake Drive. 806-744-3786

LAKE ALAN HENRY—Samuel W. Wahl Recreational Area has hiking, picnicking, camping, fishing, and boating. About 65 miles southeast of Lubbock. 806-629-4259 or 806-775-2673

LOUISE HOPKINS UNDERWOOD CENTER FOR THE ARTS—LHUCA includes art studios, galleries, theater, and a rehearsal hall. Events include the First Friday Art Trail. 511 Ave. K. 806-762-8606

LUBBOCK AREA VETERANS WAR MEMORIAL—Honors veterans of Lubbock and the South Plains area. In Henry Huneke Park.

LUBBOCK LAKE LANDMARK—Interpretive center has a visitor center, exhibits, and trails. 2401 Landmark Drive. 806-742-1116

MACKENZIE PARK/PRAIRIE DOG TOWN—It includes a golf course, an amusement park, prairie dogs, equestrian trails, and a sculpture garden. 601 Municipal Drive. 806-775-2673 or 806-775-2687

MUSEUM OF TEXAS TECH UNIVERSITY—It houses arts, humanities, and natural sciences collections, plus the Moody Planetarium. 3301 Fourth St. 806-742-2490

NATIONAL RANCHING HERITAGE CENTER—The history of ranching is told through authentic and furnished structures dating from the 1700s to the 1950s. 3121 Fourth St. 806-742-0498

SCIENCE SPECTRUM AND OMNI THEATER—This museum features interactive science exhibits, live animals, aquariums, and the theater. 2579 S. Loop 289. 806-745-6299

SILENT WINGS MUSEUM—Tells the history of the U.S. Military Glider Program. 6202 N. I-27. 806-775-3049

VIETNAM CENTER AND ARCHIVES—It is the largest source of Vietnam War materials outside of the U.S. government. At 15th Street and Detroit. 806-742-9010

WINERIES—Bingham Family Vineyards, English Newson Cellars, Llano Estacado Winery, and McPherson Cellars. See TEXAS BEVERAGE TOUR section.

MCLEAN

POP. 656

McLean City Hall: 220 N. Main St. 806-779-2481

The town's Commercial District is listed in the National Register of Historic Places and on the National Parks Service Route 66 Travel Itinerary. A restored 1930s Phillips 66 station lies on the old westbound US 66, and murals along Main Street depict the history of the town and area.

DEVIL'S ROPE AND ROUTE 66 MUSEUM—View a large collection of barbed wire artifacts, fence-building tools, and Route 66 memorabilia. Free. 100 Kingsley St. 806-779-2225

MCLEAN-ALANREED AREA MUSEUM—The museum includes rooms furnished in pioneer style, local history, and records of the World War II German prisoner-of-war camp. 116 Main St. 806-779-2731

MEMPHIS

POP. 2,029

Memphis Chamber of Commerce: 515 W. Main St. 806-259-3144; memphistexaschamber.com

City Park has camping facilities, a swimming pool, a nine-hole golf course, and tennis courts.

HALL COUNTY MUSEUM—History exhibits include photographs, a schoolroom, doctor's tools, furniture, and paintings. Sixth and Main streets. 806-204-1744

PRESBYTERIAN BUILDING—Former church was based on Rome's St. Peter's Basilica. Chamber has tours. Eighth and Robertson streets. 806-259-3144

SCENIC DRIVE—SH 256 west to Silverton traverses rolling country often cut by tributaries of the Prairie Dog Town Fork of the Red River.

MIAMI

POP. 524

Miami Chamber of Commerce: 806-662-8029; facebook.com/miamitxchamber

Miami is nestled in a tree-lined valley along Red Deer Creek. The National Cow Calling Contest has been held on the first Saturday of June since 1949.

ROBERTS COUNTY MUSEUM—The museum features local artifacts and prehistoric archeological artifacts. 120 E. Commercial St. 806-868-3291

MILES

POP. 908

City of Miles: 110 N. Robinson St. 325-468-3151; milestexas.com

MILES HERITAGE MUSEUM—Inside the historic 1904 opera house, the museum displays historical artifacts and photos. 201 N. Robinson St. 325-468-3151

OLD OPERA HOUSE—Rooms house antiques from the early 20th century. 201 N. Robinson St. 325-468-3151

RUMLEY TRACTOR—It is a popular photo subject and weighs in at 19 tons. On US 67.

MINERAL WELLS

POP. 15,173

Mineral Wells Area Chamber of Commerce and Visitors Bureau: 511 E. Hubbard St. 940-325-2557; visitmineralwells.org

Visitors may enjoy swimming and fishing in area lakes, cliff diving, kayaking the Brazos River, or hunting on the many game ranches. Bike the hilly terrain, rock climb, or hunt for prehistoric relics. The historic Baker Hotel is being restored and renovated.

CLARK GARDENS BOTANICAL PARK—This is a Texas version of an English garden. Most of the garden is wheelchair accessible. Admission charge. 567 Maddux Road. 940-682-4856

CRAZY WATER BATH HOUSE—Experience the mineral baths of yesteryear. 609 NW First Ave. 940-325-8870

FAMOUS MINERAL WATER COMPANY—The site includes a historical marker and Texas native gardens. 209 NW Sixth St. 940-325-8870

LAKE MINERAL WELLS STATE PARK AND TRAILWAY—The park features rock climbing, camping, fishing, hiking, swimming, and an equestrian trail. Admission charge. 100 Park Road 71. 940-328-1171

Lake Mineral Wells Trailway—A 20-mile trailway of reclaimed railroad links Mineral Wells and Weatherford. Access the trail at four trailheads.

LAKE PALO PINTO—It offers boat ramps and fishing. Accessible via US 180 and FM 4. 940-328-7712

MINERAL WELLS FOSSIL PARK—Typical finds are crinoids, trilobites, and brachiopods of the Pennsylvanian Age. 2375 Indian Creek Road. 940-328-7803

MURALS @ 76067—Stop by the chamber of commerce and pick up a murals map. Free. 511 E. Hubbard St. 940-325-2557

NATIONAL VIETNAM WAR MUSEUM—Exhibits include a Huey Helicopter and Vietnam Veterans Memorial Wall half-scale replica. Donations accepted. 12685 Mineral Wells Highway. 682-239-0683

OLD JAIL MUSEUM—Complex includes four cabins, the Old Jail, and Fort Black Springs. Fifth and Elm streets.



LUBBOCK'S HIDDEN GEMS AWAIT

In Lubbock, Texas, the rich music history, Western roots, and warm hospitality will draw you in, but it's the local treasures that will make you want to extend your visit. From pinball bars and craft brews to Spanish tapas and historic stays, the Hub City has a charm all its own. Plan your trip today and uncover Lubbock's best-kept secrets!

Visit
LUBBOCK





PANHANDLE PLAINS

SCENIC DRIVES—Notable stretches are FM 4 from Palo Pinto south to I-20, SH 16 from US 180 to Possum Kingdom Lake, and US 281 south to I-20.

TEXAS FRONTIER TRAILS HERITAGE PARK—Hike the trails and learn about the history of Palo Pinto County. Free. 2999 N. Oak Ave. 940-682-6589

MORAN

POP. 231

Moran City Hall: 340 Fisher St. 325-945-3441

MORAN HISTORICAL MUSEUM—Exhibits include items from early days in the city, plus the genealogy of a ranching and oil boomtown. On Waters Street. 325-945-3441

MULESHOE

POP. 5,054

Muleshoe Chamber of Commerce and Agriculture: 115 E. American Blvd. 806-272-5873; muleshoetxchamber.com

Muleshoe was founded in a sparsely settled area of huge cattle ranches. Early in the 20th century, the immense ranches began to give way to farming.

MULESHOE HERITAGE CENTER—The center includes restored historic structures, a heritage museum, and a 22-foot muleshoe. 2000 Ash Ave. 806-272-5873

MULESHOE NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE—Short-grass prairie and rainwater lakes attract migratory birds and local wildlife. 1531 CR 1248. 806-946-3341

NATIONAL MULE MEMORIAL—The memorial to these unsung beasts is known as "Ole Pete." East American Boulevard and Main Street.

OLTON

POP. 1,935

Olton Chamber of Commerce: 518 Eighth St. 806-285-2292; oltonchamber.org

This town is near a chain of sand hills that extend 130 miles and are 3 to 5 miles wide.

SAND CRAWL MUSEUM—Exhibits on the area are inside the Olton Library. An outdoor exhibit features farm equipment, a half-dugout house, and replicas of the Sand Hills. 701 Main St. 806-285-7772

PADUCAH

POP. 1,001

Paducah Chamber of Commerce: 806-492-2143; facebook.com/paducah-texas-chamber-of-commerce-133780280600431

HERITAGE MUSEUM—Features farming and ranching artifacts, plus photographs from the county's early days. 122 Ninth St. 806-492-2143

MATADOR WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT AREA—This is a 28,000-acre area. Hunting (by permit only) includes an archery season. 3036 FM 3256. 806-492-3405

PAMPA

POP. 16,612

Pampa Chamber of Commerce: 200 N. Ballard St. 806-669-3241; pampachamber.com or visitpampa.com

Visit Pampa for a modern take on small town life. Spend the morning strolling along downtown's historic brick streets, and enjoy the museums, architecture, and locally owned shops and cafes. Pass the afternoon at the aquatic center, on the golf courses, fishing, taking in a movie, or shopping. Finish your evening at a local restaurant.

THE CROSS OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST—The 190-foot-tall cross can be seen for almost 20 miles. At I-40 and FM 295. 806-248-9006

FREEDOM MUSEUM USA—It highlights all military branches from the Revolutionary War to the present. Donations accepted. 600 N. Hobart St. 806-669-6066

MOBETIE JAIL MUSEUM—Features historical items from Wheeler County and Fort Elliott, plus historic buildings. RV hookups are available. Olaughlin Street on the west side of Mobeetie. 806-845-2028

WHITE DEER LAND MUSEUM—Exhibits furniture, artifacts, fossils, and arrowheads. All tours are guided. 112-116 S. Cuyler St. 806-669-8041

PANHANDLE

POP. 2,361

SCENIC DRIVE—FM 293 west to SH 136 north provides views of the High Plains and Canadian River Valley. A historical marker on SH 136, one-half mile south of FM 293, marks a portion of an old wagon trail. SH 136 leads north to Lake Meredith.

SQUARE HOUSE MUSEUM—The museum focuses on the history and art of the Texas Panhandle. Free. 500 Elsie St. 806-537-3524

THOMAS CREE'S LITTLE TREE—The site has two state historical markers and a medallion from the National Men's Garden Clubs of America. On US 60.

PERRYTON

POP. 8,139

Perryton-Ochiltree Chamber of Commerce: 2000 S. Main St. 806-435-6575; perryton.org

Perryton is known as "Wheatheart of the Nation" for its top wheat-producing status, which is celebrated in August.

MUSEUM OF THE PLAINS—Six buildings exhibit the history of the Texas Panhandle and the European settlement of the Great Plains. 1200 N. Main St. 806-435-6400

PLAINVIEW

POP. 19,599

Plainview Chamber of Commerce: 1906 W. Fifth St. 806-296-7431 or 800-658-2685; plainviewtexaschamber.com

The historic downtown has antiques stores, shops, and restaurants. Plainview has an 18-hole golf course and is home to Wayland Baptist University. Events include the Bar None Rodeo, July 2 Fireworks, and Christmas Parade of Lights.

ABRAHAM FAMILY ART GALLERY—In the Learning Resources Center on the Wayland Baptist University campus, the gallery hosts rotating exhibits. 1900 W. Seventh St. 806-291-3710 or 806-291-1000

HISTORIC DISTRICT/DOWNTOWN—The district features specialty shops, antiques shops, and restaurants. Call the Main Street office for a brochure. 806-296-1119

THE JIMMY DEAN MUSEUM—Chronicles the life of the late sausage entrepreneur and entertainer. 1900 W. Eighth St. 806-291-3660

MUSEUM OF THE LLANO ESTACADO—Inside the J.E. and L.E. Mabree Regional Heritage Center, the museum presents regional history. Free. 1900 W. Eighth St. 806-291-3660

POST

POP. 5,237

Post Chamber of Commerce: 1 Santa Fe Plaza. 806-495-3461; postcitytexas.com

Post is on the edge of the Caprock escarpment of the Llano Estacado. Historic Main Street is lined with shops in restored buildings. The 1920 Garza Theater was one of the first movie theaters in West Texas to feature silent films. Events include the Post Stampede Rodeo and Parade.

GARZA COUNTY HISTORICAL MUSEUM—The museum displays ranch and pioneer household items, Native American artifacts, and a frontier chapel. 119 N. Avenue North. 806-495-2207

LLANO ESTACADO TOURIST MARKER—The marker provides details about the Caprock Escarpment. On US 84 between Post and Justiceburg.

MEMORIAL PLAZA—Honors veterans and other citizens who helped make C.W. Post's dream a reality. On the Garza County Courthouse lawn.

OS MUSEUM—It houses the collection from the OS Ranch and rotating exhibits. 201 E. Main St. 806-495-3570

RAGTOWN GOSPEL THEATER—The theater presents spring, summer, and Christmas shows. Admission charge. 870 Ragtown Road. 877-724-8696

SCENIC DRIVE—FM 669 south toward Gail reaches the edge of the Texas High Plains. It travels through panoramas of steep cliffs and canyons.

QUANAH

POP. 2,247

Quanah Chamber of Commerce: 113 E. Second St. 940-663-2222

Quanah is named after the Last Comanche Chief Quanah Parker and a mural is downtown on Main Street. Historic sites include the Quanah Parker Memorial and Walkway, Veterans Monument, Lane Frost Sign, and Capt. Bill McDonald marker. Events include Cowboy Trade Days, Quanah Market, and the Lighted Christmas Parade.

COPPER BREAKS STATE PARK—This International Dark Sky Park offers stargazing, hiking, bison viewing, fishing, horseback riding, and camping. Admission charge. 777 Park Road 62. 940-839-4331

HARDEMAN COUNTY JAIL MUSEUM—The historic county jail was built in 1890, and the upper-floor cells are intact. A museum on the lower floor features area history. 105 Green St. 940-839-8066

MEDICINE MOUNDS—Comanches believed the mounds to be the dwelling place of spirits. They can only be viewed from the road. At US 287 and FM 1166.

Downtown Medicine Mound Museum—It has photos of early residents and historical markers. 292 Spur FM 91 South. 940-839-4451 or 940-704-8664

QUANAH, ACME AND PACIFIC RAILROAD DEPOT—This Spanish-mission-style structure has Quanah Parker's headdress, mosaic artwork, and a U.S. Army meteorological rocket. 102 Mercer St. 940-839-8066

QUITAQUE

POP. 343

Texas Caprock Chamber of Commerce: caprockchamber.org

Quitaque is designated as the Official Bison Capital of Texas. It first operated as a trading post.

CAPROCK CANYONS STATE PARK AND TRAILWAY—The park includes 90 miles of trails, scenic views, and the Official Texas State Bison Herd. Admission charge. 850 Caprock Canyon Road. 806-455-1492

Caprock Canyons Trailway—Goes through Clarity Tunnel and takes hikers, cyclists, and equestrians overland for 64 miles through rolling plains. 850 Caprock Canyon Road. 806-455-1492

COMANCHERO CANYONS MUSEUM—Depicts the history of the canyons and the land in Briscoe, Floyd, Hall, Motley, and Swisher counties. 200 S. Third St.

RANGER

POP. 2,285

Ranger Chamber of Commerce: 121 S. Commerce St. 254-647-3091; rangertx.gov

Ranger is home to Ranger College and the annual Eastland County PRCA Rodeo. There is an RV park for visitors.

MCCLESKY NO. 1—The site of the "oil boom that won the war" is marked by a granite monument at the Texas and Pacific Railroad depot downtown.

ROARING RANGER MUSEUM—It features photos and artifacts of the oil boom days, plus a Bankhead Highway exhibit. 121 S. Commerce St. 254-647-3091

SAN ANGELO

POP. 99,112

San Angelo Visitor Center: 418 W. Ave. B. 325-655-4136 or 877-655-4136; discoversanangelo.com

Discover San Angelo—a West Texas oasis. Stroll along the Concho River Walk, and enjoy the city's natural beauty. Visit Fort Concho and the historic downtown to see why San Angelo has been recognized as a "Top 10 True Western Town in the U.S." since 2019. Art abounds from alleys to parks. Enjoy live music and distinctive restaurants.

ANGELO STATE UNIVERSITY PLANETARIUM—It features a 3D view of the universe. Admission charge. 2333 Vanderventer Ave. 325-942-2242 or 325-942-2136

BUFFALO SOLDIER MEMORIAL—The memorial honors the Black regiments established by Congress in 1866. 717 S. Oakes St.

CHICKEN FARM ART CENTER—It houses artist studios, a restaurant, an inn, and a monthly First Saturday event. Free. 2505 Martin Luther King Drive. 325-653-4936

FORT CONCHO NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARK

The fort consists of 23 original and restored buildings and has history exhibits. Admission charge. 630 S. Oakes St. 325-657-4444

E.H. Danner Museum of Telephony—The museum pays tribute to the world of telephone communication. 630 S. Oakes St. in Officers' Quarters No. 4.

Robert Wood Johnson Museum of Frontier Medicine—Features items in a typical 19th-century frontier hospital. In the Post Hospital.

HERITAGE PARK OF SAN ANGELO—Learn about the rich cultural heritage of West Texas. Free. 36 E. Twohig Ave. 325-655-6565

HISTORIC MURALS OF SAN ANGELO—Historic murals—with subjects including ranching, history, and Native American culture—are visible throughout the downtown area. 325-653-0112

HISTORIC ORIENT—SANTA FE DEPOT—The Railway Museum of San Angelo features an operating diorama of the city in 1928, plus railcars. Call for special tours. 703 S. Chadbourne St. 325-486-2140

INTERNATIONAL WATER LILY COLLECTION—It's a premier water lily collection. Free. 2 S. Park St.

LAKE NASWORTHY—The lake offers outdoor water recreation. The Tule Princess Steamboat offers rides during summer, tuleprincess.com. Off US 277. 325-277-8766

MAYER MUSEUM—The 32,000-square-foot science and culture museum immerses visitors in the history of the Concho Valley. Free. 2501 W. Ave. North. 325-942-2785 or 325-942-2162

MISS HATTIE'S BORDELLO MUSEUM—This restored parlor house includes original furnishings and fashion. Admission charge. 18-1/2 E. Concho Ave. 325-653-0112

PAINTBRUSH ALLEY—Bright murals and symbols of Texas culture encompass the alley's *Giant* film theme. Free. 33 W. Twohig Ave.

PEACEFUL VALLEY DONKEY RESCUE—Call ahead to schedule a tour. 8317 Duckworth Road. 866-366-5731

POP ART MUSEUM—With 31 pieces, the former bowling alley showcases the work of local artists, including one from James Gill. Free. 125 W. Twohig Ave.

SAN ANGELO MUSEUM OF FINE ARTS—The museum features changing art exhibits. Admission charge. 1 Love St. 325-653-3333

SAN ANGELO STATE PARK—This park offers wildlife, fishing, paddling, cabins, Permian tracks, equestrian campsites, Longhorns, bison, and trails. Admission charge. 362 S. FM 2288. 325-949-4757

SHEEP STATUES OF SAN ANGELO—More than 100 fiberglass statues decorated by local artists are located around the city. 325-655-2345

SHERWOOD COURTHOUSE—This was the first permanent courthouse for Irion County. In Sherwood, east of US 67.

TWIN BUTTES RESERVOIR—The reservoir features fishing and lakeside parks. Call ahead about water levels. Off US 277. 325-277-8766

WEST TEXAS COLLECTION AT ANGELO STATE UNIVERSITY—It offers general history about West Texas. On the Angelo State University campus. 325-942-2164

SEMINOLE

POP. 7,141

Seminole Area Chamber of Commerce: 119 SE Ave. B. 432-758-2352; seminoletxchamber.org

The Quanah Parker birthplace marker is 20 miles east at Cedar Lake, a large salt lake also known as Laguna Sabinas.

GAINES COUNTY MUSEUM—Displays represent past to present life in Gaines County. 700 Hobbs Highway (US 180). 432-955-1016

SEYMOUR

POP. 2,580

Seymour Chamber of Commerce: 310 N. Washington St. 940-889-2921; cityofseymour.org

This town is home to vintage shops, a historical WPA City Park, and one of 73 WPA post office murals. City Park also



Silent Wings Museum in Lubbock

has a disc golf course. The red beds of Baylor County are rich in early Permian era fossils. Wildlife abounds for hunters and observers. The Old Settlers Reunion and Rodeo is in July.

BAYLOR COUNTY MUSEUM—It features county history and memorabilia. 116 N. Washington St. 940-889-6780

LAKE KEMP—On the Big Wichita River north of Seymour, the lake is great for fishing. In Baylor County, off US 183. 940-357-2346

MILLER'S CREEK RESERVOIR—This isolated reservoir has good fishing and primitive camping. Call about water levels. Access via US 277. 940-422-4051

SALT FORK RECREATIONAL COMPLEX—Complex includes a nine-hole golf course, tennis court, swimming pool, three fishing ponds, and an outdoor pavilion. Admission charge. 728 US 283 South. 940-889-2833 or 940-889-3148

WHITESIDE MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY—See how fossils are handled, the Texas Wildlife Exhibit, and the "Zoo-seum." Admission charge. 310 N. Washington. 940-889-6548

SHAMROCK

POP. 1,713

Shamrock Chamber of Commerce: 806-256-2501; shamrocktexaschamber.com

The Shamrock Water Tower in downtown was built in 1915 and is a Recorded Texas Historical Landmark. A fragment of the genuine Blarney Stone from the ruins of Blarney Castle, County Cork, Ireland, is mounted in Elmore Park.

PIONEER WEST MUSEUM—Exhibits include Plains-tribe culture and NASA moon-mission items. 204 N. Madden St. 806-256-3941

U-DROP-INN—One of the most photographed Route 66 buildings houses Shamrock's visitor center and a gift shop. 101 E. 12th St. 806-256-2501

SILVERTON

POP. 624

City Hall: 806-823-2125

This is one of only two towns in the county. It is a center for farming and ranching in an area that includes Palo Duro Canyon, Tule Canyon, and the edge of the Caprock.

LAKE MACKENZIE—This lake in Tule Canyon offers boat ramps, swimming, and fishing. Call ahead about water levels. Off SH 207. 806-633-4326

SCENIC DRIVES—Views of the High Plains can be seen along SH 86 and SH 207 north. The drive between Silverton and Claude crosses Tule and Palo Duro canyons. SH 256 east reaches edge of the High Plains (Caprock). SH 86 east offers a scenic route down the Caprock's edge.

SLATON

POP. 5,746

Slaton Chamber of Commerce: 806-828-6238; slatonchamberofcommerce.org

The town was designed in wagon-wheel fashion with City Hall at its center. Engine 1809, a steam-powered engine also known as the "Cotton Special," rests in City Hall Square. Slaton City Park features RV facilities, swimming, a playground, and a clubhouse.

HARVEY HOUSE—An example of Mission Revival architecture, it is an event center and B&B. Donation suggested. 400 Railroad Ave. 806-828-5900

SLATON MUSEUM—It features local history, including photographs, railroad and military exhibits, and an old post office. 115 W. Lubbock St. 806-828-3338

TEXAS AIR MUSEUM, CAPROCK CHAPTER—Shares military history through flight and displays. 12102 FM 400 No. 34. At Slaton Municipal Airport.

SNYDER

POP. 11,230

Snyder Chamber of Commerce: 325-573-3558; snyderchamber.org

The town is home to Western Texas College. See the restored 1935 Triangle Sinclair gas station at 25th Street and Coliseum Drive. Events include the West Texas Western Swing Festival.

LAKE J.B. THOMAS—The lake offers boating, picnicking, camping, and fishing. Call ahead about water levels. Access via SH 350 to FM 2085. 432-267-6341

SCURRY COUNTY MUSEUM—Features regional history and rotating exhibits. 6200 College Ave. 325-573-6107

WHITE BUFFALO STATUE—The statue commemorates a rare white bison found near here in the 1870s. Several historical markers on the courthouse square detail area history. 25th Street and College Avenue.

SPEARMAN

POP. 3,083

Spearman Chamber of Commerce: 806-659-5555; facebook.com/spearmantxchamber

J.B. BUCHANAN WINDMILL PARK—Buchanan's collection of windmills is displayed in the outdoor museum and around town. Free. SH 207 South, just past Ninth Avenue. 806-659-5555

STATIONMASTER'S HOUSE MUSEUM—The complex includes the restored depot agent's home, county history exhibits, farm machinery, and a Native American sculpture. 30 S. Townsend St. 806-316-5011

STAMFORD

POP. 2,921

Stamford Chamber of Commerce: 107 E. McHarg St. 325-773-2411; stamfordtx.org



PANHANDLE PLAINS

This city is known for the Texas Cowboy Reunion in July. The Reunion started in 1930 and continues as the world's largest amateur rodeo.

LAKE STAMFORD—Parks have boat ramps, fishing, picnicking, and camping. About 15 miles northeast of Stamford via US 277. 325-773-2095 or 325-773-2723

MACKENZIE TRAIL MONUMENT—Depicts this historic trail and its importance to early area pioneers. Intersection of US 277 and SH 6 North.

MUSEUM OF THE WEST TEXAS FRONTIER—It includes works by noted cowboy artists, plus farm and ranch artifacts. 113 S. Wetherbee St. 325-773-2500

STANTON

POP. 2,658

Martin County Chamber of Commerce: 432-756-3386; stantontex.com

The Old Martin County Jail can be viewed by appointment.

MARTIN COUNTY HISTORICAL MUSEUM—The museum features county history: Native American and Catholic heritage and ranching, oil, and railroad development. 207 E. Broadway St. 432-756-2722

STRATFORD

POP. 1,965

Sherman County Development Committee: 301 N. Main St. 806-366-2897; shermancountytexas.org

This city was established in the middle of a night in 1901, when Sherman County records were moved from the former county seat at Coldwater.

SHERMAN COUNTY DEPOT MUSEUM—Local history museum displays farm and ranch items, Native American artifacts, and fossils. It has a Quanah Parker Trail Arrow. 17 N. Main St. 806-290-3655

SWEETWATER

POP. 10,408

The Chamber, Sweetwater & Nolan County: 810 E. Broadway Ave. 325-235-5488; sweetwatertexas.org

The Sweetwater Commercial Historic District is in the National Register of Historic Places. The Nolan County Coliseum Complex features livestock shows, rodeos, Jaycees World's Largest Rattlesnake Roundup, and Nolan County Fair. One of the nation's largest wind farms is visible from I-20 and SH 70.

LAKE SWEETWATER—The lake offers fishing, boat ramp, camping, picnicking, and a golf course. Call ahead about water levels. Off FM 2035. 325-235-5003

MUNICIPAL AUDITORIUM—Historic building is in the Spanish Colonial Revival style. 400 Locust St.

NATIONAL WASP WWII MUSEUM—Showcases World War II Women Airforce Service Pilots history. Free. 210 Avenger Field Road. 325-235-0099

PIONEER CITY-COUNTY MUSEUM—Spotlights the lives of early Nolan County settlers. Free. 610 E. Third St. 325-235-8547

SWEETWATER MUNICIPAL AUDITORIUM AND HENDERSON GALLERY—Most of the art shows are held in conjunction with the concerts in the Applause series.

TAHOKA

POP. 2,413

Tahoka City Hall: 806-561-4211; tahoka-texas.com

Watch for the Tahoka daisy—first discovered at the lake—blooming mid-spring until frost.

O'DONNELL MUSEUM—It has local artifacts and an exhibit on the late actor Dan Blocker. Donations accepted. Eighth and Doak streets, O'Donnell. 806-428-3239

THROCKMORTON

POP. 778

City of Throckmorton: 116 N. Minter Ave. 940-849-4411; facebook.com/throckmortonchamber

The town was named "The Capital of Cow Country" by the Texas Legislature. The area is a popular destination for anglers and hunters. An RV park with full hookups is south of town. Events include Cow Country Christmas.

DEPOT PUBLIC LIBRARY—Displays include photos and artifacts related to the Cisco and Northeastern Railroad's history. 120 E. Chestnut St. 940-849-3076

TULIA

POP. 4,389

Tulia Chamber of Commerce: 127 SW Second St. 806-995-2296; tuliatexas.org

OZARK TRAIL MARKER—This was part of an effort, pre-dating the federal highway system, to link cities by roads. At Broadway and Maxwell avenues.

SWISHER COUNTY ARCHIVES AND MUSEUM—The collection includes Native American artifacts, vintage photos, historic buildings, and blacksmith tools. 127 SW Second St. 806-995-2819

TURKEY

POP. 324

Turkey City Hall: 602 Lyles St. 806-423-1033; bobwillsday.net

The annual Bob Wills Day celebration, held in April, honors the King of Western Swing.

BOB WILLS MUSEUM—It includes memorabilia of the Texas Playboys and of Wills' career. Sixth and Lyles streets. 806-423-1253 or 806-423-1033

HOTEL TURKEY—In operation since 1927, it is a now a bed-and-breakfast with original decor. 201 Third St. 806-423-1151 or 800-657-7110

VEGA

POP. 865

Oldham County Chamber of Commerce: 806-267-2828; oldhamcofc.org

Enjoy the nostalgia of Historic Route 66 and the town's Western heritage. Nearby, Adrian is the geo-mathematical midpoint of Route 66. Travelers take photos in front of the sign across from the Midpoint Cafe and Gift Shop that reads, "1,139 miles to Chicago-1,139 miles to Los Angeles."

MAGNOLIA STATION—The restored Route 66 building offers a glimpse into travel in the 1920s-50s. On Main Street. 806-267-2828

MILBURN-PRICE CULTURE MUSEUM—Learn about the history and culture of the Oldham County area. 1005 Coke St. 806-676-7169

OLDHAM COUNTY HERITAGE FARM AND RANCH MUSEUM—It includes horse-drawn and early motorized equipment and cattle brands. On Vega Boulevard. 806-267-2828

VERNON

POP. 9,745

Vernon Chamber of Commerce: 1614 Main St. 940-552-2564; vernontexas.info

The city is home to Vernon Regional Junior College and the Santa Rosa Palomino Club, which was legislatively proclaimed "Texas' Ambassadors on Horseback." Events include the Santa Rosa Roundup, Summer's Last Blast, Vernon Burnin' Bike Ride, and Christmas on the Western Trail.

RED RIVER VALLEY MUSEUM—Exhibits include game trophies, archaeological artifacts, and area history. 4600 College Drive. 940-553-1848

WELLINGTON

POP. 1,827

Wellington City Hall: 806-447-2544; wellingtontx.com

The restored historic Wellington Ritz Theatre hosts events and movies.

COLLINGSWORTH COUNTY MUSEUM AND ART CENTER—Exhibits trace the history of the area. 824 East Ave. 806-447-5327

WICHITA FALLS

POP. 102,664

Wichita Falls Convention and Visitors Bureau: 1002 Fifth St. 940-761-6820; discoverwchitafalls.com

Wichita Falls is a treasure trove of experiences. It is home to Sheppard Air Force Base and Midwestern State University. Events include an artwalk, St. Patrick's Day Festival, Red River Wine & Beer Festival, Cajun Fest, Hotter 'N Hell Hundred Bike Race, Texas-Oklahoma Fair, City Lights Festival, and MSU-Burns Fantasy of Lights Display.

9TH STREET STUDIOS—Exhibits showcase unique and artistic experiences in North Texas. Free. 920 Ninth St. 940-781-8841

CASTAWAY COVE WATERPARK—Includes waterslides, a kiddie park, a lazy river, and the Tidal Wave pool. Admission charge. 1000 Central Freeway East. 940-322-5500

DEPOT SQUARE HISTORIC DISTRICT—It includes the Littlest Sky Scraper, the farmers market, Holt Hotel, Depot Axe Throwing, and notable eclectic destination restaurants. 500 8th St.

JENNY TO JET EXHIBIT/CALL FIELD: PIONEERS OF FLIGHT MURAL—See aircraft and other artifacts from the World War II training camp—Call Field—to current-day Sheppard Air Force Base. Free. 4000 Armstrong Drive. 940-322-7628 or 940-761-6820

KELL HOUSE—Historic home includes many of its original 19th-century furnishings. 900 Bluff St. 940-723-2712

KEMP CENTER FOR THE ARTS—It's home to Wichita Falls Symphony Orchestra. Galleries and a sculpture garden show exhibits. Free. 1300 Lamar St. 940-767-2787

THE KING'S GOOD VINEYARD AND BERRY FARM—Pick strawberries April-June and blackberries June-July, with a corn maze and pumpkin patch September-October. 10372 W. FM 171. 940-631-1798

LAKE ARROWHEAD STATE PARK—It offers fishing, boating, swimming, campsites, disc golf course, and trails. Admission charge. 229 Park Road 63. 940-528-2211

THE LITTLEST SKYSCRAPER—Find out how the blueprints, which indicated square feet, were actually executed in square inches. 701 La Salle St.

MORATH ORCHARD—Farm tours explain the environmental, social, and economic relationship between food and consumption. 10852 W. FM 171. 940-544-2223 or 940-631-4333

MUSEUM OF NORTH TEXAS HISTORY—Permanent collection topics include Native Americans, oil and gas, medical, military, and dolls and toys. Free. 720 Indiana Ave. 940-322-7628

RIVER BEND NATURE CENTER—This 20-acre environmental education facility features native plants and animals, a butterfly conservatory, a wetland pond, and a bird habitat. Admission charge. 2200 Third St. 940-767-0843

TEXAS TRAVEL INFORMATION CENTER—It's operated by TxDOT. Professional travel counselors provide travel information, brochures, and trip-planning assistance. 900 Central Freeway. 940-723-7931 or 800-452-9292

TEXOMA SPEEDWAY—Dirt track races are every Saturday—sprint karts, quarter mods, box stock karts, and kids' fun karts. 7503 Seymour Highway. 940-337-8299

WEE-CHI-TAH SCULPTURE—This marvelous life-size sculpture features a Comanche family crossing the Wichita River with the woman testing the river's depth. 501-603 Wichita St. Near the Front Street Bridge.

WICHITA FALLS ART ASSOCIATION GALLERY—It features local artists. Free. 600 Eighth St. 940-343-7507

WICHITA FALLS MUSEUM OF ART AT MIDWESTERN STATE UNIVERSITY—It collects and exhibits works of art in the North Texas and Southern Oklahoma region. Free. 2 Eureka Circle. 940-397-8900

WICHITA FALLS WATERFALL—A 54-foot-high waterfall, built in 1987, replaced the original falls, which washed away in an 1880s flood. Faces north on I-44.

WICHITA THEATRE PERFORMING ARTS CENTER—A Texas landmark, the 1908 theater was a vaudeville house, then a movie theater, and now offers family entertainment. 919 Indiana Ave. 940-723-9037

WILD BIRD RESCUE—See the avian ambassadors and learn about the nonprofit wild bird rehabilitation. Free. 4611 Lake Shore Drive. 940-691-0828

WINTERS

POP. 2,330

Winters Chamber of Commerce: 100 W. Dale St. 325-794-6142; facebook.com/winterstxchamber

Z.I. HALE MUSEUM—Includes area history, veterans room, Rogers Hornsby exhibit, and a horse-drawn hearse. 242 W. Dale St. 325-754-2036



**ABUNDANT NATURE VIEWING AND
VIBRANT CULTURAL OPPORTUNITIES
ABOUND FROM THE BRUSH COUNTRY
TO THE LOWER RIO GRANDE VALLEY**

SOUTH TEXAS PLAINS



National Butterfly Center in Mission



When in Roma

*The nearly 300-year-old city
on the South Texas border is
a multicultural getaway*

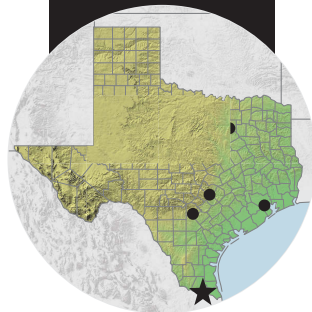
By Danielle Lopez

San Antonio
4 hours

Austin
5 hours

Houston
6 hours

Dallas
8 hours



Roma, a town of 11,500 people on the western edge of the Rio Grande Valley, has a story to tell. It's a tale of two towns, best experienced while perched atop the World Birding Center's Roma Bluffs. From here you can see Roma's sister city, Ciudad Miguel Alemán, just across the border with Mexico. The cities are split on the boundary of the Rio Grande. Originally founded in 1765 by Spanish explorers, Roma served as a port for steamers and flatboats transporting goods up and down the river. Travelers may recognize the historical structures as the setting of the 1952 film *Viva Zapata!* featuring Marlon Brando. The town's brick-paved plaza features architectural marvels, a one-of-a-kind agave distillery, and the world-famous birding site. Roma is a must-stop destination for history buffs in search of South Texas' distinctive charms.

STAY

Las Casitas at Rancho Lomitas

Founded by ethnobotanist and nature enthusiast Benito Treviño, this private ranch offers native plant education, birdwatching, and quiet, cozy accommodations. Located in Rio Grande City, roughly 28 miles from Roma, the casitas provide a place to rest among South Texas' flora and fauna. Rooms start at \$75/night.

SEE

Falcon State Park

This 572-acre park northwest of town sits at the southern end of the Falcon International Reservoir. Not only does the 84,000-surface-acre lake provide water and power for the region, it's also one of the best freshwater fishing lakes in South Texas.

Petrified Wood Collection

Twenty-seven million years ago, volcanic ash rained down over what is now Starr County, burying the landscape. This event resulted in an abundance of petrified wood. The largest collection of fossilized tree specimens in Texas can be seen at the Peña house on US 83 in Roma.

Trolley Tour

About 20 minutes east of Roma is Rio Grande City, the area's county seat. Take a ride on the Bessie III, an air-conditioned trolley that takes guests on a tour through the former trade hub's historic downtown.

LEARN

Roma Bluffs World Birding Center

A 3-acre nature preserve overlooking the Rio Grande is home to local species such as the red-billed pigeon and white-collared seedeater. The visitor center near City Hall has more info on local

critters, a small collection of Roma artifacts, and historical exhibits.

Fort Ringgold

Roam the grounds of this former military outpost. Listed in the National Register of Historic Places, this fort was occupied from 1848 to 1944 and played an important role during the Civil War.

EAT & DRINK

Ancestral Craft Spirits Distillery

Opened in 2021 by Leonardo Sanchez and his business partner Eduardo Ocampo, the distillery is at the forefront of the RGV's innovative cuisine. The two Roma natives have created their own line of agave-based spirits inside a century-old building.

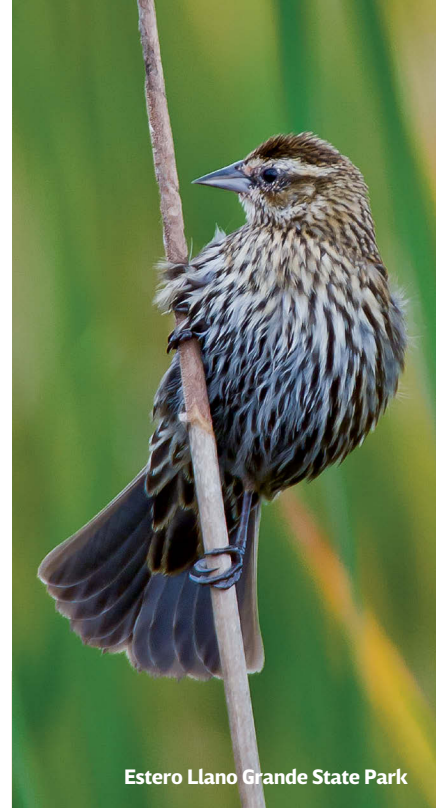
Rio Brewing Co.

Brewer Oscar Gonzalez moved the business into one of Roma's historic plaza buildings in fall 2023. The Roma-made offerings include the Coyota Hefeweizen, Gladiator Golden Ale, and Javelina Hard Seltzer.

EVENT

Party on the Plaza

Join Roma for a monthly market in the historic city center on the first Saturday of each month. Locals partake in a centuries-old tradition by gathering on the downtown plaza, a National Historic Landmark. Moonlight Market starts at 6 p.m. and features live music, libations, and booths selling food and handmade goods. Restored buildings include the Manuel Guerra Residence and Store, designed by German architect Heinrich Portscheller, who blended Mexican architecture with New Orleans-style accents using local materials. An evening celebration on the plaza overlooking the river transports visitors back in time. ★



Estero Llano Grande State Park

ESTERO LLANO GRANDE STATE PARK

Nestled in the heart of the Rio Grande Valley, this park is a paradise for bird-watchers and nature enthusiasts. The outdoor orchestra is always in full swing with birds singing, insects buzzing, frogs peeping, water trickling, and leaves rustling. Wander along tranquil trails that wind through wetlands, woodlands, and thorn scrub, offering prime spots for birding. Enjoy guided nature walks, butterfly gardens, peaceful observation decks and stunning views from the boardwalks.

"Estero Llano Grande State Park is home to many of the unique birds, butterflies, and other animals native to the Rio Grande Valley that are a must-see for so many people. Park staff and volunteers love to show these special critters to our visitors." —Javier de Leon, park superintendent

MORE SOUTH TEXAS PLAINS STATE PARKS

BENTSEN-RIO GRANDE VALLEY STATE PARK

CHOKE CANYON STATE PARK

FALCON STATE PARK

GOLIAD STATE PARK & HISTORIC SITE

LAKE CASA BLANCA INTERNATIONAL STATE PARK

For more information, directions, and amenities, get your free mobile guide to all 80-plus state parks: texasstateparks.org/app

RV INFO

Falcon State Park, located about 20 minutes from the heart of downtown Roma, offers more than 60 sites with electric and water hookups. tpwd.texas.gov/state-parks/falcon/fees-facilities/campsites



La Lomita Chapel in Mission

ALAMO

POP. 20,305

Alamo Chamber of Commerce and Visitor Center: 803 Main St. 956-787-2117; alamotexas.org/community

Called the "Land of Two Summers," Alamo features an abundance of vegetables and citrus. It is a winter resort/retirement area and one of the Rio Grande Valley's gateways to Mexico, via US 281 to Nuevo Progreso.

CITY OF ALAMO MUSEUM—This history museum focuses on Alamo and the surrounding area. Free. 840 W. Austin Ave. 956-961-4398

SANTA ANA NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE—The refuge features trails, one of which is wheelchair-accessible. Nature tours and walks are available. Admission charge. 3325 Green Jay Road. 956-784-7500

ALICE

POP. 17,697

City of Alice: 361-668-7210; cityofalice.org/visitors

Alice was named the birthplace of Tejano music by the Texas Legislature. It has 11 city parks, including one with an 18-hole municipal golf course. Events include the Jim Wells County Fair in October.

LAKE FINDLEY—This shallow lake offers fishing. It's 1 mile north of Alice in the San Fernando Creek basin. 361-668-7210

SOUTH TEXAS MUSEUM—In the historic McGill Brothers building, the museum focuses on the history and traditions of South Texas. Free. 66 S. Wright St. 361-668-8891

BEEVILLE

POP. 13,332

Bee County Chamber of Commerce: 1705 N. Saint Mary's St. 361-358-3267; experiencebeecounty.org

Beeville is home to Coastal Bend College. Hunters take deer, wild turkey, quail, dove, hogs, and javelina in the area during their seasons. In the spring, birders can spot a variety of species at Veterans Memorial Park while enjoying the wildflowers that cover the area.

BEEVILLE ART MUSEUM—In the historic Esther Barnhart House, see exhibits of Texas artists and collections. Free. 401 E. Fannin St. 361-358-8615

CARRIZO SPRINGS

POP. 4,720

Dimmit County Chamber of Commerce: 103 N. Sixth St. 830-876-5205; dimmitcountychamber.org

The famous El Camino Real de los Tejas passed near Carrizo Springs. Deer hunters prize the area, which is noted for its trophy bucks. Carrizo Springs Golf Course is a public championship nine-hole course.

HISTORIC TOURS—Sites include the courthouse and the jailhouse. Find brochures and maps at the visitor center. 103 N. Sixth St. 830-876-5205

MT. HOPE CEMETERY—Special markers note the graves of 17 Texas Rangers. 1412 N. Ninth St. 830-876-5205

WADE HOUSE MUSEUM AND LIBRARY—The museum exhibits an Native American artifact collection, plus city and county memorabilia. 200 N. Ninth St. 830-876-5788

COTULLA

POP. 3,634

Brush Country Chamber of Commerce: 830-879-2326; brushcountrychamber.com

The town was named for Joseph Cotulla, a Polish immigrant, who established the site.

BRUSH COUNTRY MUSEUM—The museum features area memorabilia and photos of ranch life in the early 1900s. 201 S. Stewart St. 830-483-5560

CHAPARRAL WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT AREA—The area offers driving trails, nature trails, birding, wildlife viewing, and primitive camping. Closed during hunting season. 64 Chaparral WMA Drive. 830-676-3413

DONNA

POP. 16,774

City of Donna: 956-464-3314; cityofdonna.org

This Rio Grande Valley town was named for the daughter of a townsite promoter. Today, it hosts an abundance of winter visitors.

DONNA HOOKS FLETCHER MUSEUM—Exhibits include photos and artifacts from the town's founding. 129 S. Eighth St. 956-464-9989

EAGLE PASS

POP. 28,255

Eagle Pass Chamber of Commerce: 830-773-3224; eaglepasstexas.com

The city is an international gateway to Piedras Negras. Enjoy fishing in the Rio Grande and hunting. Southwest Texas Junior College and Sul Ross State University campuses are here. Events include the International Friendship Festival, Fourth of July Celebration, and 16 de Septiembre Celebration.

DOWNTOWN EAGLE PASS—This area has a significant number of storefront (facade) restorations and hosts live music, holiday celebrations, cultural exhibits, and other public events. 830-773-1111

FORT DUNCAN—The post was established in 1849. Many restored stone buildings form the center of a municipal park. 480 S. Adams St. 830-773-4343 or 830-773-1111

FORT DUNCAN MUSEUM—The museum features area history from the colonial period to the early 1900s. Donations accepted. 310 Bliss St. 830-335-0404

KICKAPOO LUCKY EAGLE CASINO—Owned by the Kickapoo Traditional Tribe of Texas, the venue has gaming, a hotel, restaurants, and live bingo. 794 Lucky Eagle Drive. 888-255-8259

EDINBURG

POP. 104,294

Edinburg Chamber of Commerce: 602 W. University Drive. 956-383-4974; edinburg.com

Edinburg is the Hidalgo County seat, western gateway to the lower Rio Grande Valley, and a center of the vast vegetable- and citrus-growing area. It is home to the University of Texas-Rio Grande Valley.

EDINBURG SCENIC WETLANDS & WORLD BIRDING CENTER—The center features scenic trails and a wetland birding park, including observation platforms. 714 S. Raul Longoria Road. 956-381-9922

LA SAL DEL REY—This is a wet season salt lake. Accessible on foot only. 3325 Green Jay Road. 956-784-7500

MUSEUM OF SOUTH TEXAS HISTORY—Museum exhibits feature depictions of the Coahuiltecan people, Spanish exploration, and regional history. Admission charge. 200 N. Closner Blvd. 956-383-6911

SOUTH TEXAS MOTORCYCLE MUSEUM—The museum features dozens of motorcycles spanning the past century. 4403 E. Richardson Road. 956-292-0770

SOUTHERN PACIFIC RAILROAD DEPOT—Tour the historic depot and an exhibit featuring Southern Pacific memorabilia. Free. 602 W. University Drive. 956-383-4974

TEJANO WALK OF FAME—This landmark pays tribute to Tejano music stars. 415 W. McIntyre St. 956-383-4974

UTRGV ART GALLERIES—See contemporary artworks from the U.S. and Mexico, plus student work. 1201 W. University Drive. 956-665-4440 or 956-665-3480

FALFURRIAS

POP. 4,461

City of Falfurrias: 361-325-2420; falfurrias.us

The town became known for its dairy industry after Jersey cattle were brought to the area. Santa's Texas Workshop is a year-round Christmas store; reservations are required.

DON PEDRO JARAMILLO SHRINE—The shrine and a Texas historical marker are at the site of the famous healer's grave. 1109 FM 1418. 361-325-2420

HERITAGE MUSEUM—Displays photos and artifacts of early frontier days in Brooks County. 415 N. St. Mary's St. (US 281). 361-325-2907

THE SHRINE OF THE THREE CHAPELS—A replica of a chapel in Schoenstatt, Germany, and two other chapels dedicated to Virgin Mary are at Sacred Heart Church. 304 S. Caldwell St. 361-325-2420 or 361-325-3455

FLORESVILLE

POP. 8,050

Floresville Chamber of Commerce: 1805 Railroad St. 830-251-0944; floresvillechamberofcommerce.com

The Dewees Remschel House depicts the history of a significant Wilson County ranch; access is by tour only. Events include the Peanut Festival and Market Days.

CANARY ISLANDERS CEMETERY—The cemetery was established before 1732 by islanders who formed the first organized settlement in Texas. 710 10th St.

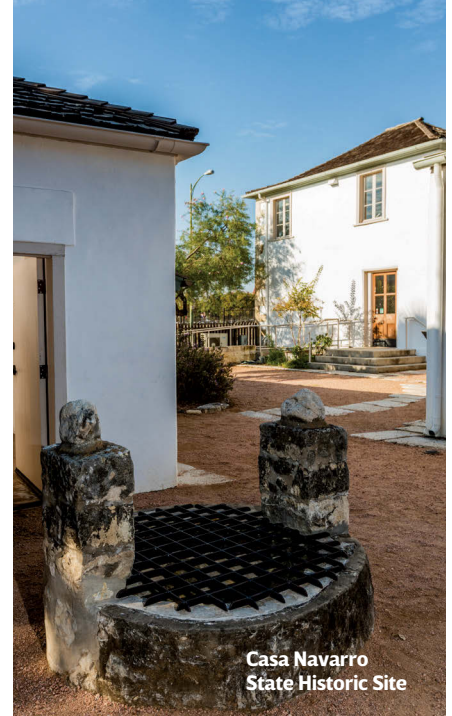
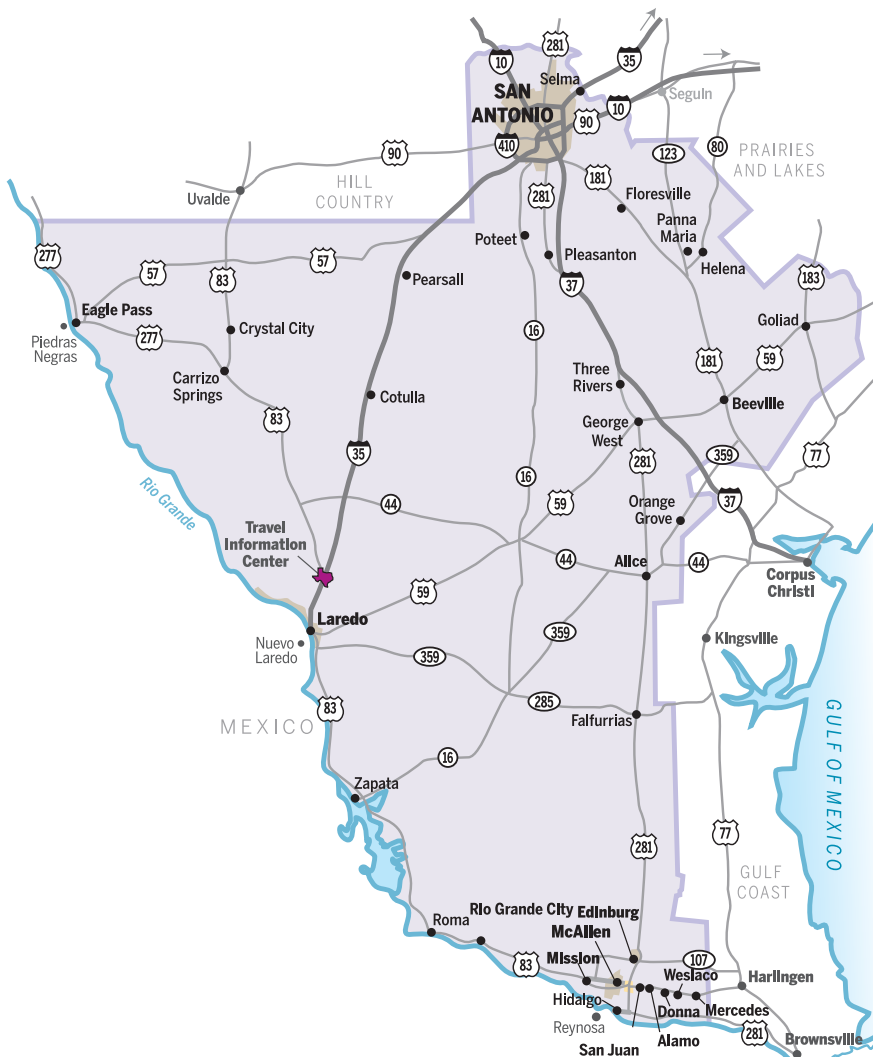
CYCLE RANCH MOTOCROSS PARK—This park has four different tracks and holds racing competitions. Camping is available. Admission charge. 2066 County Road 405. 323-484-6686

EL CAMINO REAL DE LOS TEJAS NATIONAL HISTORIC TRAIL—Floresville has the longest hikeable and bikeable section of the trail. Trailheads: Beer Warehouse at 1302 S. Second St. and Riverbend Golf Course.

RANCHO DE LAS CABRAS—Mission San Francisco de la Espada's grazing lands became known as Rancho de las Cabras (the Goat Ranch). Access is only through ranger guided tours in the fall. 210-932-1001

WILSON COUNTY COURTHOUSE—The historic downtown surrounds this stately courthouse. 1420 Third St. 830-251-0944

WILSON COUNTY JAILHOUSE MUSEUM—This jail housed prisoners, the sheriff, and his family until the mid-1970s. 1144 C St. 210-843-1002



Casa Navarro
State Historic Site

HISTORIC DESIGNATIONS

The Lone Star State has an embarrassment of historical treasures, many of which are recognized by official historic designations.

The South Texas Plains is the only region in the state with international, federal, state, and local designations. One of only 26 UNESCO World Heritage Sites in the U.S., the San Antonio Missions made the list in 2015. The designation consists of five 18th-century Spanish missions—including the Alamo—and a historic ranch.

The Alamo City is loaded with historic properties, including Casa Navarro State Historic Site, a National Historic Landmark, and the King William Historic District, which is listed in the National Register of Historic Places.

Other notable National Historic Landmarks in the region include Presidio La Bahía State Historic Site in Goliad and the Roma Historic District, the remarkably intact 19th-century core of this small town on the Rio Grande.

Also located near the border are La Lomita Chapel, a Recorded Texas Historic Landmark in Mission, and the 1872 San Agustín Cathedral, a Recorded Texas Historic Landmark in Laredo.

The circa-1850s Old City Cemetery in Brownsville is an official Historic Texas Cemetery and National Register-listed property that contains many above-ground crypts, ornate monuments, and ironwork fences that reflect the area's Spanish-French influence.

Find more designated historic properties across the state at the Texas Historical Commission's Texas Historic Sites Atlas: atlas.thc.texas.gov.



McNay Art Museum in San Antonio

GEORGE WEST

POP. 2,159

George West Chamber of Commerce: 400 N. Nueces St. (US 281). 361-449-2033; georgewest.org

Excellent hunting and fishing are available in the area. It was designated as the Storytelling Capital of Texas by the Legislature. The renovated Dobie West Theater hosts performing arts; tours are available by request.

BUCK WEST HOUSE—The former home of the town founder's nephew houses the chamber of commerce. 400 Nueces St. (US 281). 361-449-2033

GRACE ARMANTROUT MUSEUM—It displays household items, firearms, art, and early farm implements. Donations accepted. 1961 S. US 281. 361-449-3325

GOLIAD

POP. 1,683

Goliad Chamber of Commerce: 138 S. Market St. 361-645-3563; goliadtx.net

"Remember Goliad" became a Texas Revolution battle cry honoring Col. James W. Fannin Jr. and his men who were massacred at the order of Mexican Gen. Santa Anna. Courthouse Square Historic District is in the National Register of Historic Places, and a downtown walking tour is available. Market Days are the second Saturday.

CANOE TRAIL GOLIAD—Paddle the San Antonio River on the Goliad Paddling Trail. Put-ins are on US 59 and Ferry Street. 361-542-0374

COLETO CREEK PARK—See VICTORIA.

EL CAMINO REAL DE LOS TEJAS VISITOR CENTER—Learn about the influence of the national historic trail in South Texas. US 183 at South Burke Street.

FANNIN BATTLEGROUND STATE HISTORIC SITE—The site memorializes the soldiers who fought the Battle of Coleto Creek and has interpretive exhibits. 734 FM 2506. 512-463-7948 or 979-885-2181

FANNIN PLAZA—It includes a Texas Revolution cannon and several historical markers. At South Market and Franklin streets. 361-645-3454 or 361-645-3563

GOLIAD STATE PARK AND HISTORIC SITE—Camp under massive oaks, paddle in the river, and discover the site's past in the historic structures. Admission charge. 108 Park Road 6. 361-645-3405

GRAVE OF COL. JAMES W. FANNIN JR. AND HIS MEN—A monument marks the grave of the Texas revolutionaries who were massacred at the order of Gen. Santa Anna. Two miles south of Goliad off US 183.

MARKET HOUSE MUSEUM—This former firehouse was restored for use as a history museum in 1967. 205 S. Market St. 361-645-8767

PRESIDIO LA BAHÍA STATE HISTORIC SITE—The restored fort includes a museum with memorabilia from the Texas Revolution. Annual reenactment is held around March 27. Admission charge. 217 Loop 71. 361-645-3752

ZARAGOZA BIRTHPLACE STATE HISTORIC SITE—Adjacent to Presidio La Bahía is the reconstructed birthplace and statue of Mexican Gen. Ignacio Zaragoza. Off US 183. 361-645-3405

HELENA

POP. 35 (EST.)

Helena is a ghost town because the area's wealthiest rancher, Col. William Butler persuaded the railroad to bypass Helena after his son was killed there during a saloon shooting. Historic buildings include a farmhouse, the old post office, and one of the four original jail cells—all open the same hours as the museum.

KARNES COUNTY MUSEUM—The former courthouse holds an area history museum and includes a courtroom and schoolroom. 8167 N. FM 81. 830-780-3210

HIDALGO

POP. 14,437

Hidalgo Chamber of Commerce: 611 E. Coma St. 956-843-2734; cityofhidalgo.net

The Valley's subtropical climate attracts outdoor enthusiasts year-round. Golfers can choose from the area's numerous courses. Nearby wildlife refuges attract birders from throughout the world. The Hidalgo-McAllen-Reynosa International Bridge is a major port of entry in the lower Rio Grande Valley.

HIDALGO PUMPHOUSE MUSEUM & WORLD BIRDING CENTER—This restored historic structure includes irrigation exhibits. The grounds are landscaped to attract birds and butterflies. Admission charge. 902 S. Second St. 956-843-8686

KILLER BEE—Former parade float marks the discovery of the first Africanized bee in the U.S., made just outside Hidalgo in 1990. 701 Ramon Ayala Drive. 956-843-2734

LAREDO

POP. 256,187

Laredo Convention and Visitors Bureau:
101 Salinas Ave. 800-361-3360 or 956-795-2200;
visitlaredo.com

Texas begins in Laredo at mile marker 1 of I-35. Laredo's warm weather creates a relaxing ambience. The Max A. Mandel Municipal Golf Course offers 18 holes of golf overlooking the Rio Grande. Washington's Birthday Celebration in February honors George Washington. The Laredo Birding Festival in February offers guided tours.

FORT MCINTOSH—The former Army fort grounds are a National Register Historic District. On the Laredo Community College campus. 956-722-0521

LAKE CASA BLANCA INTERNATIONAL STATE PARK—Activities include boating, swimming, fishing, camping, hiking, biking, birding, and wildlife watching. Admission charge. 5102 Bob Bullock Loop (Loop 20). 956-725-3826 or 512-389-8900

LAREDO CENTER FOR THE ARTS—Hosts artistic and cultural events, including international art shows, dance productions, musical performances, and classes. 500 San Agustín Ave. 956-710-2084

REPUBLIC OF THE RIO GRANDE MUSEUM—Housed in one of Laredo's oldest structures, the museum's displays recreate an 1830s home in Laredo. Admission charge. 1005 Zaragoza St. 956-727-3480

SAN AGUSTÍN CATHEDRAL—This Gothic Revival church has a large spire that rises over San Agustín Plaza. 201 San Agustín Ave. 956-722-1382

TAMIU LAMAR BRUNI VERGARA PLANETARIUM—The facility offers shows, stargazing events, and field trips. Admission charge. 5201 University Blvd. 956-326-3128

TEXAS TRAVEL INFORMATION CENTER—It's operated by TxDOT. Professional travel counselors provide travel information, brochures, and trip-planning assistance. 15551 I-35 N. 956-417-4728 or 800-452-9292

VILLA ANTIGUA BORDER HERITAGE MUSEUM—

Housed in a restored home, the museum showcases the region's history, culture, and people. Admission charge. 810 Zaragoza St. 956-718-2727

MCALLEN

POP. 144,579

McAllen Visitors Information Center: 1200 Ash Ave. 956-682-2871; visitmcalen.com

The Rio Grande Valley is noted for its subtropical climate and facilities for summer and winter visitors. Numerous golf courses are available. Visit wildlife refuges and parks for birdwatching, tour fruit and vegetable groves, and shop five primary districts. Town Lake at Firemen's Park offers kayaking, canoeing, and camping.

ARTS DISTRICT—The Arts District is home to galleries and Archer Park. On Main Street. 956-776-0100

INTERNATIONAL MUSEUM OF ART & SCIENCE—The museum features world-class art exhibits. Children are welcomed to learn and play in the Discovery Pavilion and other spaces. 1900 Nolana Ave. 956-681-2800

MCA2 CREATIVE INCUBATOR—The former library features performances and exhibitions by local artists. Watch artists creating in studios. 601 N. Main St. 956-687-2787

MCALLEN NATURE CENTER—This park has various plants and animals, as well as an ADA-accessible trail. Free. 4101 W. Business 83. 956-681-3333

QUINTA MAZATLAN—This World Birding Center site has trails and bird habitat. 600 Sunset Drive. 956-681-3370

SANTA ANA NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE—See ALAMO.

VETERAN'S WAR MEMORIAL—The memorial honors those killed in battle dating back to the Revolutionary War. 3129 Galveston Ave. 956-631-2511

MERCEDES

POP. 16,717

Mercedes Chamber of Commerce: 320 S. Ohio Ave. 956-565-2221; mercedeschamber.com

Mercedes is well known for custom-made boots. The Fleet S. Lentz Native Plant Display at the civic center features native shrubs and trees. Mercedes is home to the Rio Grande Valley Premium Outlet Mall and the historical Llano Grande Country Club. The Rio Grande Valley Livestock Show & Rodeo is held in March.

BOTAS DE MERCEDES—This public-art project features 5-and-a-half-foot-tall sculpted boots adorned with college logos. Free. Various locations. Call for locations. 956-565-2230, ext. 2

DOLL DISPLAY—The library displays more than 500 dolls from 40 countries. 434 S. Ohio Ave. 956-565-2371

WESMER DRIVE-IN—This is the Rio Grande Valley's last drive-in theater. 2090 W. Business 83. 956-514-9292

MISSION

POP. 86,635

Greater Mission Chamber of Commerce & Discover Mission: 202 W. Tom Landry Blvd. 956-585-2727; missionchamber.com

Discover Mission, a haven for nature enthusiasts and festivalgoers. Enjoy the local golf course, scenic hike and bike trails, and top-tier birding and butterfly watching. Don't miss the Texas Citrus Fiesta, Winter Texan Fiesta, Texas Butterfly Festival, and the Grapefruit Festival. The town has a sunny climate and a hospitable culture.

BENTSEN-RIO GRANDE VALLEY STATE PARK & WORLD BIRDING CENTER—The park offers bird walks, natural history tours, nature trails, a wheelchair-accessible hawk tower, wildlife blinds, and campsites. Admission charge. 2800 S. Bentsen Palm Drive. 956-584-9156

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VISITLAREDO.COM



SOUTH TEXAS PLAINS

LA LOMITA CHAPEL—The tiny (12-by-25-foot) structure has a park with picnic areas and historical site signs. 500 E. Chimney Road. 956-580-8760 or 956-580-8650

LOS EBANOS FERRY—Call ahead to verify the hand-operated ferry is running. 200 Flores St., Los Ebanos. 956-485-1084

MISSION HISTORICAL MUSEUM—The museum features local history and an interactive area for children. 900 Doherty Ave. 956-580-8646

NATIONAL BUTTERFLY CENTER—This site features thousands of plants that butterflies need. Admission charge. 3333 S. Butterfly Park Drive. 956-583-5400

TOM LANDRY MURAL—The mural depicts the life, career, and legend of the Dallas Cowboys' first head coach. 101 E. Tom Landry Ave. 956-580-8650

ORANGE GROVE

POP. 1,185

Orange Grove Chamber of Commerce: 361-384-1300

Year-round hunting opportunities abound. Nearby lakes and the Texas coast provide boating and fishing facilities.

LAKE CORPUS CHRISTI STATE PARK—See MATHIS.

ORANGE GROVE AREA MUSEUM—Artifacts and memorabilia recall the history and German influence in the area. 119 S. Eugenia St. 361-384-1300

PANNA MARIA

POP. 45 (EST.)

Panna Maria Visitors Center: 830-780-4471; pannamariatexas.com

Town is noted in the National Register of Historic Places as the oldest permanent Polish settlement in America. Villages like Cestohowa, Pawelekville, and Kosciusko sprang from this settlement. The Panna Maria Historical Society is housed in the Pilarczyk Store. The historic Immaculate Conception Catholic Church is open daily.

ST. JOSEPH SCHOOL MUSEUM—The restored museum houses artifacts depicting the lives of Polish pioneers. Off FM 81 East. 830-780-4471

PEARSALL

POP. 8,878

City Hall: 830-334-4160; cityofpearsall.org

A giant peanut monument downtown salutes the area's primary crop. The Frio River and smaller streams offer fishing. During seasons, hunters take white-tailed deer, javelina, dove, and quail.

OLD FRIO COUNTY JAIL MUSEUM—The museum features items used by Frio County's early settlers. 501 S. Pecan St. 830-334-4181

PLEASANTON

POP. 11,004

Pleasanton Chamber of Commerce: 830-569-2163; pleasantoncofc.com

The town bills itself as the "Birthplace of the Cowboy," epitomized by a bronze statue in front of city hall. Hunters seek white-tailed deer, as well as dove and quail during hunting seasons.

LONGHORN MUSEUM—The museum documents the development of the American cowboy in the area. Donations accepted. 1959 SH 97 East. 830-569-6313

RIO GRANDE CITY

POP. 15,269

Main Street Office: 406 E. Main St. 956-488-0047 or 956-487-0672; cityofrgc.com/visitors

The city has an international bridge between the U.S. and Mexico. Explore the historical sites; bike, walk, or run the trails; or enjoy a festival.

FORT RINGGOLD—This preserved military post is part of the Rio Grande City school system. It includes a house once occupied by Col. Robert E. Lee. 1 S. Fort Ringgold. 956-716-6700

KELSEY BASS MUSEUM AND EVENT CENTER—Displays provide a glimpse into the heritage and culture of Rio Grande City and Starr County. 101 S. Washington St. 956-487-0672

LA BORDE HOUSE—Originally a home and store, it later became a hotel. Nine rooms and a parlor are restored with turn-of-the-20th-century décor. 601 E. Main St. (US 83). 956-487-5101

OUR LADY OF LOURDES GROTTO—This is a replica of the original shrine in Lourdes, France. 305 N. Britton Ave. 956-487-0672

TROLLEY TOURS—Take a journey through the historic downtown and Fort Ringgold. Admission charge. 406 E. Main St. 956-488-0047

ROMA

POP. 11,520

City of Roma: 956-849-1411; cityofroma.net

The buildings and the old mission resemble an interior Mexican town. Producers of the film *Viva Zapata* chose Roma for outdoor scenes.

DISTILLERY—Ancestral Crafts Spirits Distillery. See TEXAS BEVERAGE TOUR.

FALCON STATE PARK—The park offers scenic views, a butterfly garden, birding, fishing, and abundant wildlife. Admission charge. 146 Park Road 46, Falcon Heights. 956-848-5327

ROMA BLUFFS & WORLD BIRDING CENTER—The site includes an overlook of the river and a riverside trail. Free. 610 N. Portscheller St. 956-849-1411, ext. 1230

ROMA HISTORIC DISTRICT—The nine-square-block area contains more than 30 structures built before 1900. 1051 Whitewing St. 956-849-1411

SAN ANTONIO

POP. 1,472,909

Visit San Antonio: visitsanantonio.com

Bursting with adventures, San Antonio is home to the famous San Antonio Missions National Historical Park and the iconic Alamo, both a part of Texas' only UNESCO World Heritage site; noteworthy attractions and a vibrant art scene mesmerize visitors.

THE ALAMO—The 300-year-old mission, later turned fort, was made world-famous by the 13-day battle in 1836 that inspired the Texas Independence battle cry, "Remember The Alamo." Free. 300 Alamo Plaza. 210-225-1391

Alamo Cenotaph—This memorial commemorates the men and women who stayed to defend the Alamo. 300 Alamo Plaza. 210-225-1391

ALAMODOME—This stadium is home to the Alamo Bowl college football game in December, concerts, and events. Admission charge. 100 Montana St. 210-224-3663

THE AMAZING MIRROR MAZE AND THE VAULT LASER CHALLENGE—Explore endless hallways while trying to find the end or play a *Mission: Impossible*-themed game. Admission charge. 217 Alamo Plaza. 210-224-2288

AZTEC THEATRE—The theater is one of San Antonio's most cherished architectural and historical landmarks. Admission charge. 104 N. St. Mary's St. 210-812-4355

BAD WOLF GHOST TOURS—Join the San Antonio Ghost Walk, Texas' Oldest Haunted Pub Crawl, or The Haunted Dinner Tour. Admission charge. 507 E. Houston St., Suite 101. 805-757-0512

BOEING CENTER AT TECH PORT—Find an array of musical Tesla coils; concerts; events; and Area 21, part of the San Antonio Museum of Science and Technology. Admission charge. 3331 General Hudnell Drive. 210-600-3699

BRACKENRIDGE PARK—It's home to the Japanese Tea Garden, Sunken Garden Theater, the zoo, Lambert Beach, and ball fields. 3700 N. St. Mary's St. 210-207-7275

Japanese Tea Garden—The lush year-round garden offers shaded walkways, stone bridges, a 60-foot waterfall, and koi ponds. Free. 3853 N. St. Mary's St. 210-559-3148

BREWERIES AND DISTILLERIES—Devils River Distillery, Freetail Brewing Company, Maverick Distilling, Ranger Creek Brewing and Distilling, and Rebecca Creek Distillery. See TEXAS BEVERAGE TOUR section.



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BRISCOE WESTERN ART MUSEUM—Browse the art, history and culture of the American West at this museum. 210 W. Market St. 210-299-4499

BUCKHORN MUSEUM AND THE TEXAS RANGER MUSEUM—Features wildlife exhibits, Old West entertainment, and Texas Ranger artifacts. Admission charge. 318 E. Houston St. 210-247-4000

CARVER COMMUNITY CULTURAL CENTER—It has a gallery for contemporary art and a theater for performing artists. 226 N. Hackberry St. 210-207-7211

CASA NAVARRO STATE HISTORIC SITE—Interactive exhibits showcase José Antonio Navarro's achievements and legacy in his original home. Admission charge. 228 S. Laredo St. 210-226-4801

CENTRO DE ARTES GALLERY—Exhibits tell the story of the Latino experience in the U.S. with a focus on South Texas. 101 S. Santa Rosa Ave. 210-207-1436

CHARLINE MCCOMBS EMPIRE THEATRE—Listed in the National Register, it is home to concerts, comedy, children's theater, and events. Admission charge. 226 N. St. Mary's. 888-246-3185

CONFLUENCE PARK—The park is an interactive teaching tool to inspire a greater understanding of Texas ecotypes and watershed dynamics. 310 W. Mitchell St. 210-224-2694

COTTONWOOD WINE TOURS—They strive to share their love of wine, San Antonio, and the Texas Hill Country. Admission charge. 418 Villia St.

THE DOSEUM—This children's museum has exhibits designed to promote learning and exploration. Admission charge. 2800 Broadway St. 210-212-4453

EDWARDS AQUIFER AUTHORITY—The EOC details the Edwards Aquifer's role as a prolific source of water for over 2 million Texans. Free. 900 E. Quincy St.

THE ESCAPE GAME—The multiple rooms offer a variety of themes and difficulties. Admission charge. 5822 Worth Parkway, Suite 101. 726-227-3834

EXTREME ESCAPE—Take on all eight escape rooms. Admission charge. Two locations: 434 N. Loop 1604 W., Suite 1204, and 9995 I-10 W. 210-402-3722 or 210-641-2828

FRIEDRICH WILDERNESS PARK—The park has 10 miles of hiking trails and is internationally known for birding. 21395 Milsa Road. 210-207-3780

FROST BANK CENTER—This facility is home to the NBA's San Antonio Spurs, concerts, and other events year-round. 1 Frost Bank Center Drive. 210-444-5140

GARCIA ART GLASS INC.—Opened in 1998, the studio has glass-blowing demonstrations and a colorful gallery. 715 S. Alamo St. 210-354-4681

GOVERNMENT CANYON STATE NATURAL AREA—Hike and bike 40 miles of trails. Camp overnight on Fridays and Saturdays. Reservations are accepted. Admission charge. 12861 Galm Road. 210-688-9055

GUADALUPE CULTURAL ARTS CENTER—This facility preserves and promotes Chicano/Latino/Native American arts and culture, plus hosts events. 723 S. Brazos St. 210-271-3151

GUENTHER HOUSE—This historic house was restored as a museum, restaurant, and retail store. 205 E. Guenther St. 210-227-1061

HEMISFAIR—Explore public art, cultural offerings, family-friendly programming, unique dining, play areas, and signature community events. 434 S. Alamo St. 210-223-3101 or 210-709-4750

HISTORIC MARKET SQUARE—The three-block outdoor plaza lined with shops and restaurants is the largest U.S. Mexican market. 514 W. Commerce St. 210-207-8600

HOPSCOTCH—The experiential gallery features 14 distinctive, immersive, and interactive installations. Admission charge. 711 Navarro St., Suite 100.

IMAX—"Alamo...The Price of Freedom" recreates the 13-day siege and fall of the Alamo. 849 E. Commerce St. 210-228-0351

KING WILLIAM DISTRICT—The state's first designated Historic District was settled by prominent German mer-

chants. It's a 25-block area off South Alamo Street. 210-227-8786 or 210-215-9274

LA VILLITA—One of the original settlements of San Antonio is now home to restaurants and shops. 418 Villita St. 210-207-8577 or 210-207-8614

Arneson River Theatre—The open-air outdoor theater, on the San Antonio River Walk, hosts performances. 418 Villita St. 210-207-8614

LAKE BRAUNIG—Braunig Park offers fishing, boating, and picnic areas. 17500 Donop Road, Elmendorf. 210-635-8289 or 210-632-4128

LAKE CALAVERAS—This impoundment on Calaveras Creek has boat ramps and picnic areas at Calaveras Park. 12991 Bernhardt Road. 210-635-8359

LEGOLAND DISCOVERY CENTER SAN ANTONIO—Visit this Lego indoor playground for hands-on learning, adventures, and creative fun. 849 E. Commerce St. 210-610-1150

LIGGETTVILLE ADVENTURE CENTER—Challenge yourself on a ropes course, zip rail, and Clip 'n Climb walls. 849 E. Commerce St. 210-851-8500

MAIN PLAZA CONSERVANCY—This thriving city center links government, culture, business, and San Fernando Cathedral. Free. 115 Main Plaza. 210-225-9800

San Fernando Cathedral—This is the oldest cathedral sanctuary in the U.S. Mexican Gen. Santa Anna raised the red flag of "no quarter" here during the Alamo siege. 115 W. Main Plaza. 210-227-1297

MAJESTIC THEATRE—This is said to be one of the finest "atmospheric" theaters ever built. 224 E. Houston St. 210-226-3333 or 210-226-5700

MCMAY ART MUSEUM—The McNay has more than 22,000 artworks in its collection and 25 acres of outdoor sculpture grounds. Admission charge. 6000 N. New Braunfels St. 210-824-5368

MENGER HOTEL—Theodore Roosevelt recruited his Rough Riders at this historic hotel on the Alamo Plaza. 204 Alamo Plaza. 210-223-4361

MEXICAN CULTURAL INSTITUTE—The facility has a library and display of Mexican art and crafts. 600 HemisFair Plaza. 210-227-0123

MILITARY BASES—The military has been an integral part of the city. Most military installations require a visitor's pass. Some areas are restricted for security reasons.

Fort Sam Houston Museum—Chronicles the growth and development of the Army in San Antonio from 1845 to the present. Self-guided tour maps of historic sites on the post are available. Free. 1405 E. Grayson St., Building 16. 210-221-1886 or 210-221-2651

U.S. Army Medical Department Museum—The history of military medicine since 1775 is exhibited. Free. 3898 Stanley Road, Building 1046. 210-221-6358 or 210-221-6277

MITCHELL LAKE AUDUBON CENTER—This 624-acre birding site has a mixture of habitats with more than 7.5 miles of trails. Admission charge. 10750 Pleasanton Road. 210-628-1639

MORGAN'S INSPIRATION ISLAND—Tropically-themed park has splash pads, a River Boat Adventure ride, and waterproof wheelchairs. 5223 David Edwards Drive. 210-495-5888

MORGAN'S WONDERLAND—Theme park offers more than 25 attractions, including wheelchair-accessible rides, gardens, and landscapes. 5223 David Edwards Drive. 210-495-5888

MURAL RIDE—Take a guided bicycle street art tour of more than 20 murals. Admission charge. 302 E. Grayson St. 210-901-8981

NATURAL BRIDGE CAVERNS—Enjoy two spectacular caverns, a ropes and zip rail course, outdoor maze, and gem panning. Admission charge. 26495 Natural Bridge Caverns Road. 210-651-6101

NATURAL BRIDGE WILDLIFE RANCH—Drive through and view more than 45 animal species. Admission charge. 26515 Natural Bridge Caverns Road. 830-438-7400



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NELSON W. WOLFF MUNICIPAL BASEBALL STADIUM—It's home to the San Antonio Missions. Season is April–Labor Day. 5757 US 90 W. 210-675-7275

OLD SPANISH TRAIL—A decorative stone bench recognizes the Old Spanish Trail, which ran through here. 3400 Fredericksburg Road.

OLD TOWN TROLLEY TOURS—Iconic orange and green trolleys offer a blend of transportation and entertainment. Admission charge. 111 Alamo Plaza. 210-571-0825

PEARL—Located just north of downtown San Antonio, Pearl provides a unique experience as a top culinary and cultural destination. Pearl Parkway. 210-212-7260

RIPLEY'S BELIEVE IT OR NOT! ODDITORIUM, 4D MOVING THEATER AND LOUIS TUSSAUD'S WAX WORKS—Explore more than 50 exhibits, a multisensory theater experience, and more than 200 lifelike wax figures. Admission charge. 301 Alamo Plaza. 210-224-9299

RIVER CITY GHOSTS—Discover the haunting history of San Antonio. 126 W. Commerce St. 210-699-7090

RIVER WALK—Sightseeing, shopping, food, and fun are found on a world-renowned 15-mile urban waterway. Downtown San Antonio.

GO RIO! San Antonio Cruises—Colorful, new barges ride the river through downtown, while drivers provide

narrated tours. Admission charge. 809 River Walk. 210-227-4746

RIVER WALK PUBLIC ART GARDEN—The garden provides a full public art experience, including free-standing sculptures and wall-mounted art installations. Free. 802 River Walk.

RUBY CITY—The contemporary art center provides a space to experience works by local, internationally-acclaimed artists. Free. 150 Camp St. 210-227-8400

SA FLIGHT INC.—The tours are dedicated to promoting and preserving San Antonio's role in aviation history. Veterans Memorial Park, 100 Auditorium Circle.

SAN ANGEL FOLK ART—This comprehensive collection features artists from the Americas, Africa, and Europe. Blue Star Arts Complex. 210-226-6688

SAN ANTONIO AFRICAN AMERICAN COMMUNITY ARCHIVE AND MUSEUM—Collects, preserves, and shares the African American cultural heritage of the San Antonio region. Free. 218 S. Presa St. 210-724-3350

SAN ANTONIO BOTANICAL GARDEN—Enjoy display gardens, fountains, and natural areas (major walkways are wheelchair accessible). Admission charge. 555 Funston Place. 210-536-1400

SAN ANTONIO FIRE MUSEUM—Antique firefighter artifacts, documents, and photos plus restored vehicles are exhibited in the old Central Fire Station downtown. 801 E. Houston St. 210-390-7236

SAN ANTONIO MISSIONS NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK—Four of five Spanish colonial missions in San Antonio form this national historical park. 2202 Roosevelt Ave. 210-932-1001

Mission Nuestra Señora de la Purísima Concepción de Acuña—The original church and convent remain, along with original frescos. 807 Mission Road. 210-534-1540

Mission San Francisco de la Espada—Ruins of the compound walls, foundations of a granary, and a fortified tower can be seen. 10040 Espada Road. 210-932-1001

Mission San José y San Miguel de Aguayo—Look for flying buttresses, carvings, and the "Rose Window" at the "Queen of Missions." 701 E. Pyron Ave. 210-922-0543

Mission San Juan Capistrano—The small chapel and open bell tower are still used. The restored missionary residence displays Spanish colonial artifacts. 9101 Graf Road. 210-534-0749

SAN ANTONIO MUSEUM OF ART—View antiquities, paintings, art, and contemporary works. It is in a historic Lone Star Brewery building. Admission charge. 200 W. Jones Ave. 210-978-8100

SAN ANTONIO ZOO—Several hundred animal species reside in the recently voted “Best Zoo in Texas.” Admission charge. 3903 N. St. Mary’s St. 210-734-7184

SEA LIFE SAN ANTONIO—Explore this amazing underwater world with hands-on experiences. 849 E. Commerce St. 210-610-1150

SEAWORLD SAN ANTONIO AND AQUATICA—See dolphins from underwater, wade or walk among hundreds of tropical birds, and enjoy thrilling rides. Admission charge. 10500 SeaWorld Drive. 210-520-4732

SIDECARS SA—From the comfort of Vespa-powered “SIDECARS,” enjoy lighthearted tours that highlight connections, culture, and cuisine. Admission charge. 307 Pearl Parkway. 210-660-6939

SIX FLAGS FIESTA TEXAS—Attractions include rides, live shows, and concerts. Admission charge. 17000 I-10 W. 210-697-5050

SPANISH GOVERNOR’S PALACE—This National Historic Landmark is the last visible trace of Presidio San Antonio de Bexar. Admission charge. 105 Plaza de Armas. 210-207-7527

TEXAS GHOST TOUR—This beautiful city has a dark history, and this tour tells you all about it. Alamo Plaza. 210-378-8853

THE TEXAS STAR TRAIL—The walking tour leads to 80 historic sites and landmarks designated by blue disks in the sidewalks. A brochure and map (or mobile app) are available. 107 King William St. 210-224-6163

TEXAS TRANSPORTATION MUSEUM—It features antique vehicles, model railroads, and railroad memorabilia. Admission charge. 11731 Wetmore Road. 210-490-3554

TOBIN CENTER FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS—Listed in the National Register, the center offers ballet, opera, concerts, plays, conventions, and other social events. 100 Auditorium Circle. 210-223-8624

TOWER OF THE AMERICAS—In the heart of downtown, the tower has panoramic views from the restaurant or observation deck. Admission charge. 739 E. Cesar E. Chavez Blvd. 210-223-3101

TRADERS VILLAGE—Market features vendors, rides, events, and live music. 9333 SW Loop 410. 210-623-8383

TRAVIS PARK—Travis Park is one of the oldest municipal parks in the United States. It hosted concerts and community gatherings. 300 E. Travis St.

VIETNAM AND KOREAN VETERANS MEMORIALS—The memorials depict scenes from the conflicts. 451 Jefferson St.

VILLA FINALE—Collections include antiques, fine art, and books. Guided tour covers the history of the King William neighborhood. 401 King William St. 210-223-9800

THE WITTE MUSEUM—Permanent and rotating exhibits fill the space with history, storytelling, and interactive fun. 3801 Broadway. 210-357-1900

SAN JUAN

POP. 35,782

San Juan Economic Development Corp.: 905 W. First St. 956-223-2283 or 956-223-2200; sanjuanedc.com

BASILICA OF OUR LADY OF SAN JUAN DEL VALLE NATIONAL SHRINE—The shrine’s grounds include Italian life-size bronze statues of the crucifixion. 400 N. Virgen de San Juan Blvd. 956-787-0033

CESAR CHAVEZ MEMORIAL—The site is dedicated to the labor rights leader. 1601 US 83 Business. 956-223-2200

LIBERTY PARK—The park is a tribute to all military veterans. A granite war memorial is engraved with the names of local service members from San Juan who died in wars. 310 W. US 83 Business. 956-223-2200

SELMA

POP. 11,721

Selma Stage Stop Visitor Center: 9374 Valhalla Dr. 210-764-4030; ci.selma.tx.us

The town was created as a stagecoach stop for passengers and freight traveling between communities in Central, South, and East Texas.

RETAMA PARK—This track features quarter horse and thoroughbred races, plus restaurants. Admission charge. 1 Retama Parkway. 210-651-7000

THREE RIVERS

POP. 1,545

Three Rivers Chamber of Commerce Visitors Center: 105 N. Harborth Ave. 361-786-4330 or 888-600-3115; threeriverstx.org

Tips Park offers 31 acres with camping, fishing, and picnicking 1 mile west of Three Rivers off SH 72. Events include the Big Bang Salsa Festival in July.

CHOKE CANYON STATE PARK—It offers hiking, birding, swimming, camping, boating, water skiing, and fishing. Admission charge. 358 Recreation Road 8, Calliham. 361-786-3868

WESLACO

POP. 42,231

Weslaco Business-Visitor Center: 275 S. Kansas Ave. 956-968-2102; weslaco.com

Welcome to Weslaco—a vibrant city filled with adventure and charm. Visit three beautiful nature centers, dine at nationally recognized restaurants, explore unique shops, and join the excitement at events like the Weslaco Lighted Christmas Parade and the Texas Onion Fest, the biggest celebration of the year.

BANDERAS DE WESLACO—Display features all 50 state flags in the order they entered the union. 305 W. Railroad St. 956-968-2102

DOWNTOWN WESLACO—Shop unique shops and dine in historic Downtown Weslaco. Free. 500 S. Texas Blvd.

ESTERO LLANO GRANDE STATE PARK—This World Birding Center site includes birding, trails, boardwalks, pavilions, and observation decks. Admission charge. 3301 S. International Blvd. (FM 1015). 956-565-3919

FRONTERA AUDUBON—Birds include groove-billed ani, olive sparrow, and green jay. More than 70 kinds of butterflies have been documented. Admission charge. 1101 S. Texas Blvd. (FM 88). 956-968-3275

HISTORIC FIRE STATION/CITY HALL—The historic 1928 building was home to city hall and later a fire station. Free. 120 E. Fifth St.

LLANO GRANDE LANDMARKS—At the Texas A&M Agri-Life Extension, the camp was established in response to Mexican bandit raids in 1916. Free. 2401 Business US 83 East.

VALLEY NATURE CENTER—It features a winding trail and an indoor hall with interactive children’s exhibits. Admission charge. 301 S. Border Ave. 956-969-2475

WESLACO MUSEUM—Geological, military, and agricultural artifacts are on display. Admission charge. 500 S. Texas Blvd. 956-968-9142

WESLACO WATER TOWER (EL TINACO)—The historic building is home to the Weslaco tower Theatre. Free. 120 S. Kansas Ave.

ZAPATA

POP. 5,383

Zapata County Judge: 956-765-9920

The ruins of Hacienda Dolores, the earliest settlement in present-day Zapata County, are designated a state historic site. Excellent birding opportunities abound in the region.

FALCON RESERVOIR—Falcon State Park offers fishing, boat ramps, camping, and picnicking. Between Zapata and Roma on US 83. 956-848-5327

FALCON STATE PARK—See ROMA.

ZAPATA COUNTY MUSEUM OF HISTORY—Exhibits impart the area’s cultural and natural history. 805 US 83 North. 956-765-8983



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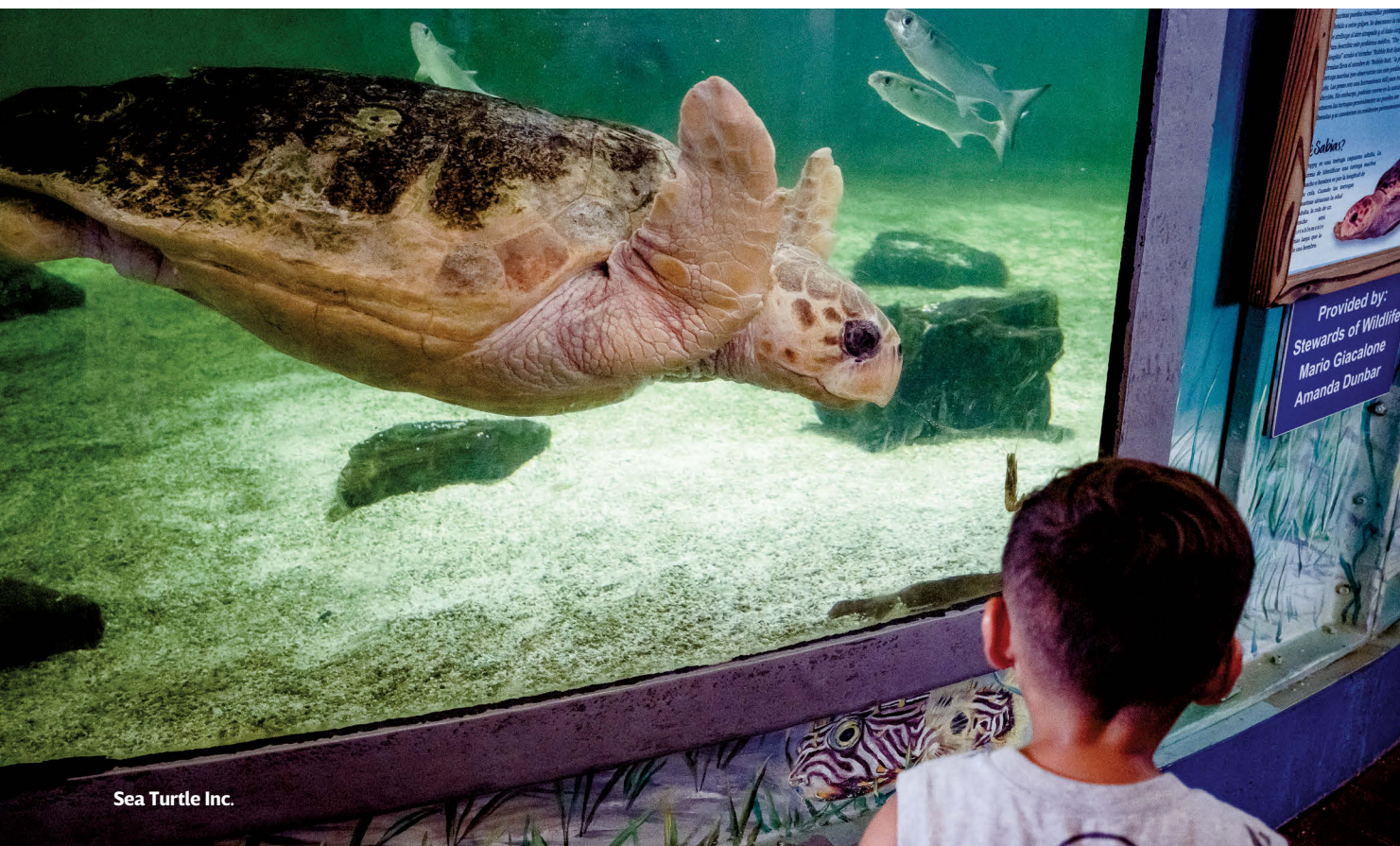




BEACHES, ART, HISTORY,
AND WILDLIFE MERGE IN
A PLACE WHERE BIG-CITY
SOPHISTICATION MEETS
SEASIDE RELAXATION

GULF COAST





Sea Turtle Inc.

Tropical Getaway

It's paradise all year long on South Padre Island

By Joe Nick Patoski

San Antonio

4.5 hours

Houston

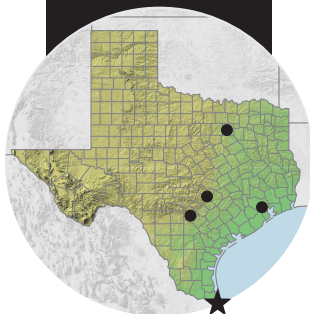
6 hours

Austin

6 hours

Dallas

9 hours



On my first visit to South Padre Island in 1967—several years before the Queen Isabella Causeway was constructed, back when the only way onto the island was by drawbridge—dining options were the Palmetto Inn and the Jetty Café. The only amusement for a teenager like me was renting a motorcycle at Andy's Sand Box to drive on the beach. Back then, I had a hard time believing my father's prophecy: "Someday, this will be Miami Beach."

It seems he was right: SPI has grown into a world-class beach resort with the wide strip of fine white sand fronting the Gulf of Mexico as its main draw. Modern additions include a Ferris wheel, bungee jumping, zip lines, horseback and helicopter rides, minigolf, and go-karts. Still, sand and shore are why crowds continue to pack the island from March through August. South Padre, population 2,000, is just as enticing outside of peak season, when the sea and sky—along with old-school amusements like fishing, surfing, and swimming—provide all the entertainment you need.

STAY

Palms Resort

Opened in 1972 as a motor court, Palms Resort is a short walk from the beach and boasts a vintage feel with cozy updated rooms. The popular on-site café and bar, Café on the Beach, serves everything from pancakes to lobster accompanied by views of the Gulf. Rooms start at \$99/night during the offseason.

The Aquarius

Condos are available for rent inside the second-oldest high-rise on the island. It dates to 1975, according to the black-and-white photograph in the lobby. The layout featuring two bedrooms, a kitchen, and a small balcony with ocean view is airy and comfortable. Rates at under \$300/night for two nights.

EAT & DRINK

Los Pecadores Coffee

Choose from a selection of coffee beans and tea from around the world, or try a coffee flight or espresso martini. There's also avocado toast, pie, a full bar, and fly-fishing supplies from local businesses.

Vival

The bright, spacious dining room opens to the Laguna Madre and is complemented by an elevated menu. Mahi-mahi ceviche, yellowfin tuna tartare, and street tacos are popular. Reservations are recommended.

Clayton's

The bright, spacious dining room faces the Gulf of Mexico and is complemented by a standard beach bar menu. Mahi-mahi ceviche, shrimp cocktail, and fish tacos are popular. Make a reservation to save time and lock in a seat.

SEE

Isla Blanca County Park

A sandy beach, walking trails, a prime surfing spot, deep-sea fishing charters, and a viewing area for the nearby SpaceX

launchpad site can be found at this park on the southern end of the island. Dolphin watching from Dolphin Cove in the late afternoon is sublime.

Fishing Charters

September is a good time for tarpon fishing before the prize game fish migrates toward Veracruz for the winter. Captain Brian Barrera, of South Texas Saltwater Experience, led clients to more than 100 catches of tarpon last year.

South Padre Island Birding Center

This is the island's premier spot for viewing nature, with 3,300 feet of boardwalk that extends into the wetlands of the Laguna Madre, five bird blinds, and a five-story observation tower with sweeping views of the bay and the island. The gators, including one called Big Padre, are also a big draw.

Sea Turtle Inc.

This conservation facility provides rehabilitation to the endangered Kemp's ridley and other species of sea turtle. View recovering and nonreleasable resident sea turtles on a self-guided tour, or sit in on one of the educational "Turtle Talks" throughout the day.

EVENTS

Fun in the Sun

A host of events still draw crowds after the spring and summer rush. The Texas International Fishing Tournament, the state's largest saltwater fishing competition, takes place July 30–Aug. 3. The Tacos & Tequila festival, held at the convention center in mid-September, features taquerias from across the RGV competing for top honors. The South Padre Island Triathlon runs (and cycles and swims) Sept. 28. A few days later, the 36th Annual Sandcastle Days, founded by the sandcastle builders Amazin' Walter McDonald and Lucinda "Sandy Feet" Wierenga, draws thousands of sand art admirers to Clayton's Beach Bar in October. ★



Galveston Island State Park

GALVESTON ISLAND STATE PARK

An excellent example of Texas Gulf ecology, this park offers a perfect blend of beachside relaxation and outdoor adventure. Swim, fish, or kayak in the warm Gulf waters, and explore miles of scenic trails for hiking and biking on the bay side. The park is a bird-watcher's paradise, with many migratory species passing through and over 300 bird species recorded so far. At night, enjoy the Gulf Coast breeze while camping or stay in one of the cozy beach lodges on the bay side. Whether you're sunbathing on the sandy shores or exploring coastal wetlands, this park promises a refreshing escape.

"I love Galveston Island State Park. Where else can you go on the Island, with 2,000 acres of undisturbed land and immerse yourself in nature, four different ecosystems you can enjoy year-round—the beach, prairie, marsh, and wetlands. I also would like to add the staff there is incredible!"

—Lynn Smith, volunteer since 2004

MORE GULF COAST STATE PARKS

BRAZOS BEND STATE PARK

GOOSE ISLAND STATE PARK

LAKE CORPUS CHRISTI STATE PARK

MUSTANG ISLAND STATE PARK

RESACA DE LA PALMA STATE PARK

SHELDON LAKE STATE PARK & ENVIRONMENTAL LEARNING CENTER

For more information, directions, and amenities, get your free mobile guide to all 80-plus state parks: texasstateparks.org/app

RV INFO

KOA Holiday Campground sits adjacent to Isla Blanca County Park and the Laguna Madre. The campground has 214 sites, a 25-meter pool, a dog park, cabins, tent camping, and a boat ramp. koa.com



Photo: A family of three smiles amidst the fields of strawberries at Froberg Farms in Alvin

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BAY CITY

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ALVIN

POP. 28,205

Alvin Convention and Visitors Bureau:

216 W. Sealy St. 281-388-4212 or 281-585-3359;
visitalvin.com

Tucked between the big city of Houston and the sandy beaches of Galveston lies Alvin—a charming Southern town dating to 1845. Here, visitors will find historical sites, antiques shopping, and family-friendly adventures. Visitors can also enjoy bass fishing, nature trails, disc golf, camping, and even skydiving.

ALVIN ART TRAIL—This is a great way to check out local art and grab some photos. Free. Various locations around Alvin. 281-388-4212

ALVIN HISTORIC TRAIN DEPOT—Explore the 100-year-old depot. 200 Depot Centre Blvd. 281-388-4299

ALVIN HISTORICAL MUSEUM & THE SLOVER-ROGERS COTTAGE—Exhibits showcase Alvin's history and culture. Admission charge. 300 W. Sealy St. 281-331-4469

BAYOU WILDLIFE ZOO—Take a tram ride with experienced wildlife guides. Admission charge. 5050 FM 517. 409-904-2525

FROBERG'S FARM—Pick your own fruit. 3601 SH 6. 281-585-3531

ANAHUAC

POP. 1,956

Anahuac Area Chamber of Commerce: 603 Miller St. 409-267-4190; anahuacareachamber.com

The first permanent settlement was established when a Spanish fortress became the port of entry for American colonists. Named the Alligator Capital of Texas by the Texas Legislature, Anahuac boasts more alligators than people and is the home of Texas Gatorfest in September.

ANAHUAC NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE—Activities include wildlife observation, birding, photography, fishing, and crabbing. 4017 FM 563. 409-267-3337

FORT ANAHUAC PARK—The park offers traces of fort remains, picnicking, camping, and a boat ramp. 1704 S. Main St. 409-267-2718

WALLISVILLE HERITAGE PARK—The park has a museum and genealogy library dedicated to Chambers County history. 20136 I-10 E., Wallisville. 409-389-2252

ANGLETON

POP. 19,610

City of Angleton Economic Development and Tourism: 121 S. Velasco St. 979-849-4364, ext. 2111; angleton.tx.us/287

Angleton, the county seat of Brazoria County, has an abundance of attractions for even the most diverse group. The city provides easy access to many historical sites and nearby museums and has great events and popular attractions. Events include Market Days and Freedom Fireworks.

BRAZORIA COUNTY HISTORICAL MUSEUM—Housed in the Brazoria County Courthouse, this museum depicts the area and the frontier experience. 100 E. Cedar St. 979-864-1208

CROCODILE ENCOUNTER—Experience nature up close and personal. Tours are guided. 23231 CR 48. 281-595-2232

MSR HOUSTON—Drive on a challenging but safe course, or take on the kart track. 1 Performance Drive. 281-369-0677

RING OF HONOR—The black granite memorial honors Brazoria County service members killed in action since World War I. 111 E. Locust St. 979-864-1289

STEPHEN F. AUSTIN STATUE—In Henry William Munson Park, the statue is a tribute to the "Father of Texas." 41885 SH 288. 979-849-4364, ext. 2111 or 979-849-5965

ARANSAS PASS

POP. 8,779

Aransas Pass Area Chamber of Commerce: 130 W. Goodnight Ave. 361-758-2750; aransaspas.org

Visitors may take a boat trip to see bottlenose dolphins or go snorkeling. Enjoy saltwater kayaking in South Bay. Anglers can fish from shore, wharves, piers, and jetties. Group boats offer bay and deep-sea fishing. Waterfowl hunting is available in season. The Official Shrimptree of Texas is in June.

COASTAL BIRDING TRAIL SITES—Of the more than 700 bird species in North America, 500 visit the Texas coast.

Aransas Pass Community Park—A boardwalk and observation platforms provide views of birds. Interpretive signs are posted. East Johnson Avenue. 361-758-5301

Conn Brown Harbor/Aransas Pass Wetlands—Apart from great birding, the site offers a marina, a boat launch, fishing, and kayaking. Off Huff Street. 361-758-5301

Newbury Park Hummingbird Garden—This park is home to the largest hummingbird garden in Texas. It also attracts many butterflies. 100-198 S. Lamont St. 361-758-2750

Ransom Road Navigation District Park—The waterfront park's boardwalk/fishing pier offers good views of the channel. Search the wetlands for rails and shorebirds. 500 Ransom Road. 361-758-2750 or 361-758-5301

LIGHTHOUSE LAKES PADDLING TRAIL—Explore loops ranging in length from 1.25 to 6.8 miles. Access from Port Aransas Causeway, SH 361. 361-758-3111

LYDIA ANN LIGHTHOUSE—It is privately owned but can be viewed from offshore waters. Near Harbor Island Road off SH 361.

SEAMAN'S MEMORIAL AT HARBOR PARK—The site honors shrimp industry founder and lost seaman Bill

Minter. The park is a popular fishing and boating site. 519 Bigelow St. 361-758-2750

STEDMAN ISLAND—Watch for waterfowl, shorebirds, and American oystercatchers. 1700 block of Redfish Bay Causeway. 361-758-2750

BAY CITY

POP. 17,505

Visit Bay City: 979-323-1176; visitbaycitytx.com

Many vacation homes, bed-and-breakfasts, and hotels provide accommodations here. Enjoy beach and river activities, shop the historic downtown district, or relax in a park. Play a round on the 18-hole, Gary Player-designed Rio Colorado Golf Course. Goose and duck hunting are seasonal attractions.

BEACHES—

Matagorda Beach—It offers fishing on jetties or piers and beach activities. Permits are required for driving on the beach. Jetty Park at the end of FM 2031 offers access. 979-479-9447

Sargent Beach—Sargent Beach is a coastal community 30 miles south of Bay City. This beach offers a quiet, uncrowded alternative. 979-245-8333

LCRA MATAGORDA BAY NATURE PARK—The park and nature preserve offers educational programs, kayaking, natural science center, playground, a pier, and jetties. 6420 FM 2031. 979-863-2603

MATAGORDA COUNTY BIRDING NATURE CENTER—It includes an observation platform, trails, fishing piers, kayaking trips, and educational programs. 1025 SH 35. 979-245-3336

MATAGORDA COUNTY MUSEUM & CHILDREN'S MUSEUM

—The county museum exhibits clothing, maps, tools, furniture, and paintings. The Children's Museum has exhibits and activities. Admission charge. 2100 Ave. F. 979-245-7502



Stark Museum

MUSEUMS

From the Stark Museum of Art in Orange near the Louisiana border to the Historic Brownsville Museum near the Mexican border, the Gulf Coast is rich with cultural-heritage museums that reflect the diversity of the region.

In Galveston, The Bryan Museum contains a stunning collection of more than 70,000 items spanning 2,500 years of Texas and Southwestern history, housed in a remarkably restored 1902 landmark building.

The Texas Energy Museum in Beaumont and the nearby Spindletop Boomtown Museum provide a wellspring of information on the state's oil industry.

The La Salle Odyssey museums—the Corpus Christi Museum of Science and History, Texas Maritime Museum in Rockport, Texana Museum in Edna, Calhoun County Museum in Port Lavaca, Museum of the Coastal Bend in Victoria, Matagorda County Museum in Bay City, and the City by the Sea Museum with its La Petite Belle home port in Palacios—tell the story of French explorer René-Robert Cavelier, Sieur de La Salle, who led an ill-fated expedition in 1684 to establish a French colony on the coast of the Gulf of Mexico.

These are among the hundreds of hometown history museums and world-class cultural institutions across the Lone Star State. Find one to explore at: textastimetravel.com/museums.





GULF COAST

BAYTOWN

POP. 84,324

Baytown Visitor Center: 311 Texas Ave. 281-691-6710 or 281-420-5343; visitbaytown.com

Steeped in rich history, Baytown shares its bay with the San Jacinto Monument and battlegrounds, which are just a ferry ride away. The town is home to the Trophy Barber Shop, with its polar bear and trophies on display, and to the Lee College Performing Arts Center. Baytown is 26 miles east of Houston.

ART CENTER OF BAYTOWN—The center has seasonal exhibitions and artwork for sale. Free. 110 W. Texas Ave. 281-427-2222

BAYTOWN HISTORICAL MUSEUM—The museum features Native American, Spanish, Mexican, Republic of Texas, and Baytown exhibits and artifacts. Free. 220 W. DeFee St. 281-691-6710

BAYTOWN NATURE CENTER—The center has birds, trails, kayak and canoe launches, and a children's nature discovery play area. Admission charge. 6213 Bayway Drive. 281-424-9198

BICENTENNIAL PARK—The 13-acre park features the Veterans Memorial Plaza and Fireman's Memorial. Free. 1001 Market St. 281-420-6597

CALYPSO COVE WATER PARK—Summer spot for children has a slide tower and zero-entry pool. Admission charge. 2428 W. Main St. 281-422-1150

DOWNTOWN ARTS DISTRICT—It offers an array of open air events year-round, food, the Sculpture Trail, murals, and historical markers. Free. 213 W. Texas Ave. 281-691-6710

EDDIE V. GRAY WETLANDS CENTER—On Goose Creek, the center has educational live-animal and hands-on exhibits, fishing, kayak launch, and birding. Free. 1724 Market St. 281-420-7128

LYNCHBURG FERRY—Take a ride across the Houston Ship Channel to visit the San Jacinto Monument. Free. 1001 S. Independence Parkway. 713-983-1899

PIRATES BAY WATER PARK—It features a lazy river, wave pool, waterslides, and activities. Admission charge. 5300 East Road. 281-422-1150

REPUBLIC OF TEXAS PLAZA—Visit a historic farmhouse and restored 1894 Wooster Common School. Free. 5117 N. Main St. 281-421-2099

WINERY—Yepez Vineyard. See TEXAS BEVERAGE TOUR section.

BEAUMONT

POP. 112,089

Beaumont Convention and Visitor Bureau: 505 Willow St. 409-880-3749 or 800-392-4401; visitBeaumontTx.com

Ben J. Rogers Regional Visitors Center: 5055 I-10 S. 409-842-0500; explorejeffersoncountytx.com

Babe Zaharias Museum & Visitor Center: 1750 I-10 E. 409-833-4622

On the border between Louisiana and the Lone Star State, Beaumont is a little bit Cajun, a lot Texan, and 100% unique to the South. Come explore the bayous, birding, and unique culinary landscape, and see where the world was changed forever in America's original boomtown.

ART MUSEUM OF SOUTHEAST TEXAS—The museum has a collection of paintings, sculptures, mixed media, and folk art, plus hosts traveling exhibits. Free. 500 Main St. 409-832-3432

THE ART STUDIO INC.—Watch artists at work, view exhibits, or attend classes. Admission charge. 720 Franklin St. 409-838-5393

BABE DIDRIKSON ZAHARIAS MUSEUM & VISITORS CENTER—Exhibits showcase the world's greatest female athlete. 1750 I-10 E. 409-833-4622 or 800-392-4401

BIG THICKET PRESERVE—See KOUNTZE.

CHAMBERS HOUSE—This historic house museum has original family furniture and artifacts. 2240 Calder Ave. 409-832-4010

CROCKETT STREET ENTERTAINMENT DISTRICT—Downtown district offers an array of food, live music, and dancing. 200 Crockett St. 409-880-3749

DISHMAN ART MUSEUM—At Lamar University, the collection includes paintings, sculptures, and carpets. 1030 E. Lavaca St. 409-880-8959

EDISON MUSEUM—Explore a large collection of Thomas Edison's inventions. 350 Pine St. 409-299-9195

FIRE MUSEUM OF TEXAS—The museum displays antique equipment and teaches fire prevention and safety. 400 Walnut St. 409-880-3927

GATOR COUNTRY ADVENTURE PARK—This is Texas' only alligator theme park. Guests receive a hands-on experience. Admission charge. 21159 FM 365. 409-794-9453

HIGH ISLAND BOY SCOUT WOODS AND SMITH OAKS NATURE SANCTUARIES—These bird sanctuaries are most active during spring and fall migrations. Admission charge. About 47 miles south of Beaumont off of SH 124 in High Island. 713-932-1639

JEFFERSON THEATRE—This historic theatre hosts a variety of shows. 345 Fannin St. 409-838-3435

JOHN JAY FRENCH HOUSE MUSEUM—It features antique furnishings, clothing, and utensils, as well as out-buildings. Admission charge. 3025 French Road. 409-898-0348

MCFADDIN-WARD HOUSE HISTORIC MUSEUM—This is a restored beaux-arts colonial mansion and carriage house. Reservations recommended. Admission charge. 1906 Calder Ave. 409-832-2134

NECHES RIVER ADVENTURES—Guides showcase the river's unique ecosystem. Depart from Colliers Ferry Park, 5390 Pine St. 409-651-5326

SPINDLETOP BOOMTOWN MUSEUM—This living history museum recreates the historic boomtown. Admission charge. 5550 Jimmy Simmons Blvd. 409-880-1750

TEXAS TROPICAL TRAIL



TEXAS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
TEXAS HERITAGE TRAILS PROGRAM



MUSEUMS!

MEMORIES Made Here!




Start Planning Your Trip To BAYTOWN



VISIT Baytown TEXAS



Mustang Island State Park
in Corpus Christi

TEXAS ENERGY MUSEUM—Spotlights the oil industry. Admission charge. 600 Main St. 409-833-5100

TYRRELL HISTORICAL LIBRARY—This Romanesque-Gothic building houses books on Texas history, genealogical resources, and art. 695 Pearl St. 409-833-2759

TYRRELL PARK—It includes the Beaumont Botanical Gardens and Warren Loose Conservatory. Free. 6088 Babe Zaharias Drive. 409-861-1929 or 800-392-4401

Cattail Marsh—It offers a variety of recreational activities. The Cattail Marsh Wetlands Education Center has informational materials and birding and nature activities. 4233 Babe Zaharias Drive. 409-554-2447

WINERY—Bruno & George Winery. See TEXAS BEVERAGE TOUR listing.

BRAZORIA

POP. 2,840

Brazoria Chamber of Commerce Visitor Center: Brazoria Civic Center, 202 W. Smith St. 979-798-6100; brazoriachamber.net

Visitors can find restaurants, bed-and-breakfasts, and access to nearby beaches. The Brazoria Historic Bridge was the first traffic bridge on the Brazos River. The San Bernard River offers opportunities for boating and fishing and is the location of the annual Christmas boat parade.

BRAZORIA HISTORICAL MUSEUM—The museum highlights area history from the 1800s to the present. Free. 202 W. Smith St. 979-798-8111 or 979-824-0455

The Train Museum—Shows how the railroad helped shape the area. Free. 208 W. Smith St. 979-824-0455

MASONIC OAK—The first Masonic Charter in Texas was signed here on March 1, 1835. On Pleasant Street.

SAN BERNARD NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE—See BRAZOSPORT AREA.

BRAZOSPORT AREA

POP. (COMB.) 41,742 (EST.)

Brazosport Convention and Visitors Council: 300 Abner Jackson Parkway. 979-285-2501; visitbrazosport.com

The area is known for its beaches, nature sites, museums, and sports. Recreational activities include fishing, boating, surfing, and crabbing. Deep-sea fishing, party, and charter fishing vessels are available for hire. Recreational vehicle facilities are found on or near the beach. The area has two 18-hole public golf courses.

ALDEN B. DOW OFFICE MUSEUM—The historic site recreates the office Dow used to design Lake Jackson's buildings and streets. Admission by donation. 101 S. Parking Place, Lake Jackson. 979-297-1570

BRAZORIA NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE—Activities include birding, wildlife watching, nature trails, waterfowl hunting, and fishing. 24907 FM 2004. 979-964-4011

BRYAN BEACH—Activities include fishing, beach recreation, and primitive camping. Take SH 288 to FM 1459 and turn right. 979-233-3526 or 979-285-2501

FREEPORT HISTORICAL MUSEUM—The museum displays replicas of historic buildings, historical memorabilia,

and a swing bridge model. 311 E. Park Ave., Freeport. 979-233-0066

GULF COAST BIRD OBSERVATORY—Walk the nature trails and look for woodland bird species and migrating birds. Maps are available. Free. 299 W. SH 332, Lake Jackson. 979-480-0999

JACKSON HISTORIC PLANTATION SITE—The ruins of eight buildings are the subject of study. 1030 FM 2004. 979-297-1570

LAKE JACKSON HISTORICAL MUSEUM—Exhibits include the prehistoric era, plantation era, and petrochemical industry. 249 Circle Way, Lake Jackson. 979-297-1570

QUINTANA BEACH COUNTY PARK—It includes a fishing pier and playground. Coveney House has a period museum and natural history display. Camping is by reservation. Admission charge. 330 Fifth St., Quintana. 979-233-1461

SAN BERNARD NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE—Spot birds along auto tours, hiking trails, and boardwalks. Free. 6801 CR 306. 979-964-3639

SEA CENTER TEXAS—This is a marine hatchery, aquarium, and education center. Hatchery offers tours by reservation only. 302 Medical Drive, Lake Jackson. 979-292-0100

SHRIMP BOAT MONUMENT—Former trawler is on display for photo opportunities (no climbing). SH 288 and Quintana Street, Freeport. 979-285-2501



GULF COAST

SURFSIDE BEACH—Beach house rentals, motels, fishing charters, restaurants, and shops are available. 979-233-1531

WILDERNESS PARK—The park offers an interpretive nature loop, hiking trail, picnicking, fishing, and wildlife viewing. 301 W. SH 332, Lake Jackson. 979-297-4533

BROWNSVILLE

POP. 189,382

Brownsville Convention & Visitors Bureau: 1312 E. Adams St. 956-546-3721 or 956-551-6025; visitbtx.com

The southernmost city in the state, Brownsville offers the history, culture, traditions, and languages of two countries. Matamoros, Mexico, is just across the Rio Grande. Visitors enjoy tennis, fishing, nature viewing, swimming, hiking, biking, birding, and kayaking. Events include the Charro Days Fiesta and the Latin Jazz Festival.

BROWNSVILLE HERITAGE COMPLEX—HOME OF THE STILLMAN HOUSE MUSEUM—The museum showcases the city from the Spanish arrival to modern times. The Heritage Resource Center offers local valley history. Admission charge. 1325 E. Washington St. 956-541-5560

BROWNSVILLE HERITAGE TRAIL—The walking trail takes visitors past important historic homes and buildings. Pick up maps at 1700 E. Sixth St.

BROWNSVILLE MUSEUM OF FINE ART—The permanent collection includes works by N.C. Wyeth, Marc Chagall, and James Whistler. 660 Ringgold St. 956-542-0941

BROWNSVILLE OLD CITY CEMETERY—Established in 1853, the cemetery reveals much of the city's history. East Madison and East Fifth streets. 956-548-1313

CHILDREN'S MUSEUM OF BROWNSVILLE—Learn through role play. Admission charge. 501 E. Ringgold St., No. 5, in Dean Porter Park. 956-548-9300

COSTUMES OF THE AMERICAS—Find rotating displays of costumes, a research center, and visiting exhibits. Admission charge. 1004 E. Sixth St. 956-525-7252 or 956-541-5560

FORT BROWN—This fort defended the border during the Mexican War and is now part of the University of Texas Rio Grande Valley and Texas Southmost College. Off International Boulevard. 956-882-8200

GLADYS PORTER ZOO—The park has nearly 380 species of animals. All facilities are accessible by wheelchair. Admission charge. 500 Ringgold St. 956-546-7187

HISTORIC BROWNSVILLE MUSEUM—A restored railroad depot exhibits local military and cultural history. Admission charge. 641 E. Madison St. 956-548-1313

PALMITO RANCH BATTLEFIELD—This was the site of the last land battle of the Civil War. 43296 Palmito Hill Road. 936-870-6180

PALO ALTO BATTLEFIELD NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK—The site tells the story of the Mexican War through both countries' perspectives. 7200 Paredes Line Road. 956-541-2785, ext. 333

RESACA DE LA PALMA STATE PARK—The park offers observation decks, bird blinds, tours, geocaching, hiking, and biking. Admission charge. 1000 New Carmen Ave. 956-350-2920

SABAL PALM SANCTUARY—It is home to many spectacular plant and animal species. 8435 Sabal Palm Grove Road. 956-541-8034

CLUTE

POP. 10,634

Clute Visitors Bureau: 100 Parkview Drive. 888-462-5883 or 979-265-2508; goclute.com

Nearby beaches include Bryan, Quintana, and Surfside. Enjoy fishing and crabbing. Deep-sea diving enthusiasts visit the Flower Gardens reef. Birding opportunities abound. See a performance at The Clarion at Brazosport College. Clute hosts the Great Texas Mosquito Festival.

CENTER FOR THE ARTS & SCIENCES—Center includes an art gallery, theater, aquarium, and planetarium. Free. 400 College Blvd. 979-265-7661 or 877-265-7661

CORPUS CHRISTI

POP. 316,239

Corpus Christi Visitor Information Center: 309 N. Water St., Suite D. 800-766-2322 or 361-561-2000; visitcorpuschristi.com

Corpus Christi has miles and miles of expansive beaches and rich outdoor experiences. Spend some time relaxing by the water, take a floating yoga class, or ride a horse on the beach. In addition, there are so many iconic attractions to visit. Find loads of diverse dining options, including Tex-Mex and seafood restaurants.

ART CENTER OF CORPUS CHRISTI—Brings together art in its seven galleries, plus shopping in the Gift Gallery and local artists' studios creating wonderful art. Free. 100 N. Shoreline Blvd. 361-884-6406

ART MUSEUM OF SOUTH TEXAS—A permanent collection and changing exhibits include photos, handcrafted pieces, murals, and historical paintings. Admission charge. 1902 N. Shoreline Blvd. 361-825-3500

BEACHES—With more than 100 miles of beaches in Corpus Christi, each has its distinct character and charm.

J.P. Luby/North Packery Beach—Ideal for surfing, jet-skiing, kiteboarding, and wakeboarding. Free. 104 Zahn Road.

McGee Beach—Bustling bay beach has a picturesque view and great swimming. Free. 402 S. Shoreline Blvd.

Michael J. Ellis Beach & Seawall—The site offers free parking, clean bathrooms, showers, and changing rooms. Lifeguards are on duty. Free. 14926 Windward Drive.

North Beach—Family-friendly beach is pedestrian access only and near shopping, restaurants, and attractions. Free. 201 Surfside Blvd.

South Packery Channel Beach—It's a great beach to fish, swim, and build sandcastles. Free. 14802 Windward Drive.

Whitcap Beach—Enjoy a quiet day on the white sands. Free. 14802 Whitcap Blvd.

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BIRDING & NATURE PARKS—Corpus Christi is home to hundreds of different species of birds.

Blucher Park—The park is popular for spring migrant fallouts and migrating passerines and hummingbirds. Free. 209 S. Tanchua St.

Hazel Bazemore Park—It's a unique location for hawk watching, picnics, and fishing. Free. 4343 CR 69. 361-561-2000

Packery Channel Park—The park teems with wild-life in the water and the air. It also has a beach, boat ramp, and Oak Motte Sanctuary. Free. 14218 S. Padre Island Drive. 361-826-3461

BREWERIES—Lazy Beach Brewing and Rebel Toad Brewing Co. See TEXAS BEVERAGE TOUR section.

CENTENNIAL HOUSE—Once a Civil War hospital, it has been restored and furnished. Admission charge. 411 N. Upper Broadway St. 361-882-8691

CORPUS CHRISTI MUSEUM OF SCIENCE AND HISTORY—Explore history, culture, and science exhibits, including a shipwreck. Admission charge. 1900 N. Chaparral St. 361-826-4667

GLOW ROW—Take a guided night tour in a clear kayak with a glow. Admission charge. 4 Coopers Alley. 702-720-4569

HARBOR PLAYHOUSE—This is Texas' oldest continually operating theater. 1802 N. Chaparral St. 361-888-7469 or 361-882-5500

HARRISON'S LANDING (PEOPLES STREET T-HEAD)—Sail, shop, and dine. Purchase tickets for a variety of bay cruises. 108 Peoples St. T-Head. 361-881-8503

HERITAGE PARK—Take a self-guided walking tour of 12 turn-of-the-century homes. 1581 N. Chaparral St. 361-826-3462 or 361-826-7529

Instituto de Cultura Hispanica—Promotes Hispanic culture with lectures, performances, art shows, and folklore displays. 1617 N. Chaparral St. 361-879-0336

HORSES ON THE BEACH—Create a memorable experience as you ride horseback along the beach. 19136 Park Road 22. 361-949-4944 or 361-991-7433

HURRICANE ALLEY WATERPARK—Adjacent to Whataburger Field, the park has waterslides, a wave pool, lazy river, and kiddie area. 702 E. Port Ave. 361-883-9283

K SPACE CONTEMPORARY—Gallery features emerging and midcareer artists with changing exhibitions. 623 N. Chaparral St. 361-887-6834

LAKE CORPUS CHRISTI STATE PARK—See MATHIS.

MUSTANG ISLAND STATE PARK—See PORT ARANSAS.

OSO BAY WETLANDS PRESERVE—The 162-acre nature preserve furthers knowledge of South Texas flora and fauna with miles of nature trails. Free. 2446 N. Oso Parkway. 361-826-3335

PADRE BALLI BEACH PARK—This county park has beaches, campsites, and a fishing pier. 15820 Park Road 22. 361-949-8121

PADRE ISLAND NATIONAL SEASHORE—Enjoy swimming, camping, and nature trails at this national park. Visitor center has a museum and bookstore. Admission charge. 20420 Park Road 22. 361-949-8068

SELENA MEMORIAL—MIRADOR DE LA FLOR—The bronze life-size statue honors Selena Quintanilla-Perez and her contributions to music and Corpus Christi. Free. Shoreline Boulevard and People's Street.

SELENA MUSEUM—The museum displays her outfits, music awards, and memorabilia. Admission charge. 5410 Leopard St. 361-289-9013

SOUTH TEXAS BOTANICAL GARDENS & NATURE CENTER—The 182 acres showcases various gardens, a butterfly house, trails, and a wetland boardwalk. Admission charge. 8545 S. Staples St. 361-852-2100

TEXAS SEALIFE CENTER—See sea turtles, raptors, shorebirds, and other creatures at this nonprofit wildlife hospital. Admission charge. 14220 S. Padre Island Drive. 361-589-4023

TEXAS STATE AQUARIUM—The aquarium features 460-plus species on exhibit with touch pools and wildlife presentations. Admission charge. 2710 N. Shoreline Blvd. 361-881-1200 or 800-477-4853

TOURS—

Enjoy Corpus Christi Tours—Take guided historical, art, and ghost tours or a family fun trek. Admission charge. 100 N. Shoreline Blvd. 361-696-9006

Japonica Bay Boat Tours—Enjoy a one-hour cruise along the bayfront. Admission charge. 108 Peoples St. T-head. 361-881-8503

Nell Betty II Sailing Excursions—Take a two- to eight-hour bay cruise on this 38-foot Catalina sailboat. Admission charge. 108 Peoples St. T-head. 361-881-8503, ext. 2

Texas Tease Boat Tours—Enjoy a two-hour cruise on the bay. Admission charge. 108 Peoples St. T-head. 361-881-8503, ext. 2

USS LEXINGTON MUSEUM ON THE BAY—This Essex aircraft carrier is an aviation museum and educational facility. Admission charge. 2914 N. Shoreline Blvd. 361-888-4873 or 800-523-9539

VOYAGE: A JOURNEY THROUGH OUR SOLAR SYSTEM—The 13 stations represent planets and other objects in the solar system. Peoples Street T-Head/Ocean Drive.

WHATABURGER FIELD—The field is home to the Corpus Christi Hooks. It includes a swimming pool and kids' area. 734 E. Port Ave. 361-561-4665

WORLDWINDS WINDSURFING INC.—Windsurf the longest undeveloped barrier island in North America. Admission charge. Bird Island Basin Road. 361-949-7472

CRYSTAL BEACH POP. 787 (EST.)

Bolivar Peninsula Chamber of Commerce:
1750 SH 87. 409-684-5940; discoverbolivar.com

On the Bolivar Peninsula, this area offers miles of sandy beaches and many recreational activities. This is a world-class birding area, especially during the spring and fall. Free Texas Department of Transportation ferries operate every 20 minutes between Galveston and Port Bolivar.

FORT TRAVIS SEASHORE PARK—The 60-acre park has old gun battery sites, picnic areas, and campsites. 900 SH 87. 409-934-8100 or 409-684-6231

DANEVANG POP. 300 (EST.)

Danevang Preservation Society: 979-578-0808; danevangtx.org

Danevang's earliest settlers were Danish immigrants who relocated from the Midwest to Texas. Danevang was declared "The Danish Capital of Texas" by the Texas Legislature. Many cemetery headstones bear names going back four generations.

DANEVANG LUTHERAN CHURCH—After the original building was destroyed by a 1945 hurricane, a new chapel was moved from Palacios. Some furnishings from the original building were salvaged. 357 CR 426.

DANISH HERITAGE PRESERVATION SOCIETY—The museum complex may be closed due to damage from Hurricane Beryl. 979-578-0808

DEER PARK POP. 33,468

City of Deer Park: 832-780-0973; deerparktx.gov/2048

Located 20 miles east of Houston, the city is home to parks, unique shopping and dining options, and The Battleground at Deer Park Golf Course. It is near the San Jacinto Texas State Historic Site.

DEER PARK NATURE PRESERVE—Enjoy the outdoors, including 1.5 miles of trails, a sensory garden, and geocaching. 2500 E. 13th St. 832-835-7209

PATRICK'S CABIN—A replica of the cabin where the peace treaty between Texas and Mexico was drafted after the Battle of San Jacinto. 1410 Center St. 281-479-2394

SAN JACINTO MONUMENT AND MUSEUM—See LA PORTE.



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DICKINSON

POP. 21,738

Dickinson Texas Chamber of Commerce: 1911 FM 517 E. 832-534-2583; dickinsontxchamber.com

Visitors may access Dickinson Bayou at Paul Hopkins Park or by a public boat ramp on SH 3 just south of FM 517.

DICKINSON RAILROAD MUSEUM—Discover stories about life in Dickinson and get a feel for rail travel of the past. 218 FM 517 W. 281-534-4367

EDNA

POP. 6,009

Jackson County Chamber of Commerce: 116 W. Cypress St. 361-782-7146; jacksoncountytexas.com

The area is rich with wildlife for hunters, birders, photographers, and nature enthusiasts alike. Edna is along the Great Texas Coastal Birding Trail.

BRACKENRIDGE RECREATION COMPLEX—It has water recreation, wildlife viewing, a nature center, and camping. 891 Brackenridge Parkway. 361-782-5456 or 361-782-5718

COASTAL BIRDING TRAIL SITES—Several birding sites are located near Edna, including Texana, Brackenridge, and Bennett parks. 361-782-7146

LAKE TEXANA—The lake has boat ramps and parks with fishing, picnicking, camping, and nature trails. Southeast of Edna. 361-782-5229

TEXANA MUSEUM—The museum depicts early life in the area, including an exhibit on the Karankawa Indians. 403 N. Wells St. (SH 111 North). 361-782-5431

EL CAMPO

POP. 12,179

El Campo Chamber of Commerce: 01 N. Mechanic St. 979-543-2713; elcampochamber.com

Historical murals painted on buildings throughout town depict the city's history. The area is known for waterfowl hunting and fishing. The city has a variety of restaurants and is famous for its barbecue. El Campo celebrates its heritage with the Prairie Days Festival in October.

EL CAMPO MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY—The museum features big-game trophies from five continents. The children's area includes hands-on activities. 2350 N. Mechanic St. 979-543-6885

FRIENDSWOOD

POP. 40,833

Friendswood Parks and Recreation: 281-996-3220; ci.friendswood.tx.us

The city is close to Houston-area attractions and the beach at Galveston. The Cecil and Frances Brown House was built by Houston architect Henry A. Stubbie. Annual events include the Spring Sparkle, Youth Fishing Derby, and Flapjack Fun Run.

1902 PERRY HOUSE—Completed in 1902, the restored home houses family furnishings. 109 W. Spreading Oaks.

FRANK J. BROWN HERITAGE MUSEUM AND BARN—Exhibits show how early Quaker homes would have looked and the history of the town. 108 Skyview Terrace.

VETERANS MEMORIAL—In Stevenson Park, the memorial includes a large, stainless steel American flag. 910 S. Friendswood Drive.

GALVESTON

POP. 53,089

Galveston Visitor Information Center: 2228 Mechanic St. 409-797-5000, ext. 7; visitgalveston.com

Early years gave the city many firsts in Texas: Roman Catholic convent, electric lights, and medical college. Galveston is home to three institutions of higher learning. Events include Mardi Gras! Galveston, FeatherFest, June-teenth, AIA Sandcastle Competition, Lone Star Motorcycle Rally, and Dickens on the Strand.

BEACHES—Galveston is home to seven public beach parks, each complete with amenities and concessions.

THE BRYAN MUSEUM—The museum features rare pieces from the pre-Columbian period to the present. 1315 21st St. 409-632-7685

COLONEL PADDLEWHEEL BOAT—Paddlewheel boat offers daily sightseeing cruises. Admission charge. Departs from Moody Gardens. 409-683-4200

FERRY RIDES—Texas Department of Transportation ferries operate every 20 minutes. Free. Between Galveston and Port Bolivar, SH 87.

FISHING—Boats are available for bay or offshore fishing. Make reservations at Piers 18 and 19 and Galveston Yacht Basin. 888-425-4753

FISHING PIERS—Free municipal jetties, rock piers, and commercial fishing piers are along Seawall Boulevard as well as at Seawolf Park on Pelican Island. 888-425-4753

GALVESTON HISTORIC SEAPORT—See the 1877 Tall Ship *Elissa*, and learn about seaborne commerce and immigration. Admission charge. Pier 22, Suite 8. 409-763-1877

GALVESTON ISLAND HISTORIC PLEASURE PIER—This amusement park, over the Gulf, offers rides, midway games, shopping, live entertainment, and a restaurant. 2501 Seawall Blvd. 409-766-4950

GALVESTON ISLAND STATE PARK—Camp, hike, swim, or bike. Kayak or canoe the paddling trails. Visit the nature center. Admission charge. 14901 FM 3005. 409-737-1222

GALVESTON RAILROAD MUSEUM—See vintage railroad cars, a model railroad, and rail history at the historic depot. Admission charge. 2602 Santa Fe Place. 409-765-5700

HAUNTED MAYFIELD MANOR—This year-round haunted house is in a building that served as a morgue after the 1900 storm. 2313 Harborside Drive. 346-510-0125

HISTORIC CHURCHES—888-425-4753

First Lutheran Church—It was founded in 1850 and rebuilt in 1915. At 25th and Winnie streets.

First Presbyterian Church—It is believed to house the oldest church organization in Galveston, dating from 1840. At 19th and Church streets.

Grace Episcopal Church—This Gothic-style building has stained glass and handcarved reredos. At 36th Street and Avenue L.

Sacred Heart Catholic Church—The building was designed by a Jesuit priest after the original was destroyed in the 1900 storm. At 14th Street and Broadway Avenue.

St. Mary's Cathedral—The first Catholic cathedral in Texas retains its original, splendid architecture. At 21st and Church streets.

Trinity Episcopal Church—Built in 1857, the church was traditionally repaired and reopened after any hurricane damage. At 22nd Street and Avenue H.

HISTORIC HOMES AND BUILDINGS—In Texas' earliest prominent city, scores of historic structures were built by sea captains, merchants, and prominent officials. 888-425-4753

Bishop's Palace—Tour the 1892 Victorian residence. Admission charge. 1402 Broadway Ave. J. 409-762-2475

Fort Crockett—Some of the massive coastal artillery bunkers can still be seen. Seawall Boulevard between 45th and 53rd streets.

Garten Verein—This Victorian structure is operated by the Galveston Historical Foundation. 2704 Avenue O. 409-765-7834

The Grand 1894 Opera House—This magnificently restored historic venue presents a year-round schedule of performing arts. Self-guided tours. 2020 Post Office St. 409-765-1894

Menard House—Galveston's oldest home was built in 1838. 1605 33rd St. 409-765-7834

Moody Mansion and Museum—Take a self-guided tour of this historic home with its antiques, photographs, and works of art. Admission charge. 2618 Broadway Ave. J. 409-762-7668

The Strand—National Historic Landmark District features art galleries, shops, restaurants, and historical exhibits. On Strand and Mechanic streets.

MOODY GARDENS—The complex includes an aquarium, a rainforest, and changing exhibits; a white sand beach; and theaters. It also has a hotel and golf course. 1 Hope Blvd. 409-744-4673

OCEAN STAR OFFSHORE DRILLING RIG AND MUSEUM—Experience the offshore industry on a retired jack-up drilling rig. Admission charge. 2002 Wharf Road. 409-766-7827

PELICAN ISLAND—Scenic location has palms and banks of oleanders with picnic facilities and a lighted fishing pier. 888-425-4753

Seawolf Park—Fish from the lighted pier. The Galveston Naval Museum features tours of a restored WWII submarine and destroyer escort. Admission charge. 100 Seawolf Parkway. 409-797-5114 or 409-770-3196

PIRATES! LEGENDS OF THE GULF COAST—This interactive museum explores the history of pirates in Galveston and along the Gulf Coast. 2313 Harborside Drive. 346-510-0125

PORT OF GALVESTON—It includes fish markets, seafood restaurants, and charter/group boat docks. Avenue A between 17th and 23rd streets. 888-425-4753

ROSENBERG LIBRARY—The library contains historical manuscripts and letters, rare books, artifacts, and an art collection. 2310 Sealy Ave. 409-763-8854

SCHLITTERBAHN GALVESTON WATERPARK—The water park features more than 35 rides, including uphill water coasters. Admission charge. 2026 Gene Lucas Blvd. 409-770-9283

TEXAS HEROES MONUMENT—Erected in 1900, it is 74 feet high and 34 feet square. At 25th Street and Broadway Avenue J. 888-425-4753

TOURS—Contact the Visitor Information Center for details.

Artist Boat—Take interpretive kayak tours to places of natural significance. 13330 Settegast Road. 409-632-0388 or 409-770-0722

East End National Historic Landmark District and the Silk Stocking Historic District—Information for a walking/driving tour of the East End District is available at the visitor center. 888-425-4753

Galveston Duck Tours—Enjoy a tour in an amphibious vehicle. 409-789-5035 At 25th Street and Seawall Boulevard. 409-789-5035 or 409-621-4771

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GULF COAST

Galveston Historic Harbor Tours & Dolphin

Watch—Take a narrated boat tour of the Port of Galveston. Admission charge. Pier 22, Suite 8. Departs from the Galveston Historic Seaport. 409-763-1877

Galveston Tree Sculptures—Trees damaged by Hurricane Ike have become artworks. The visitor center has maps and brochures.

Ghost Tours of Galveston—These ghostly history tours are infused with research and personal accounts. 713-898-4488

TROLLEY CARS—There are stops downtown and a sea-wall route with stops from Stewart Beach to Moody Gardens. 409-797-3900

HARLINGEN

POP. 71,678

Harlingen Convention & Visitors Bureau: 209 W. Jackson St. 956-216-5043; visitharlingentexas.com

With Harlingen's subtropical weather, golf courses are open year-round. Nuevo Progreso, Mexico, is southwest of Harlingen. The Harlingen Country Club hosts two tournaments. Other Harlingen events include the Jalapeño 100 Bicycle Ride and the Rio Grande Valley Birding Festival.

COASTAL BIRDING TRAIL SITES—The city has several Great Texas Coastal Birding Trail sites, including the Ramsey Nature Park and Harlingen Thicket Bird Sanctuary.

DOWNTOWN JACKSON STREET DISTRICT—The district is known for antiques, murals, local restaurants, and events. 956-216-4910

HARLINGEN ARROYO COLORADO—The trails connect Hugh Ramsey Nature Park and the Harlingen Thicket. 1001 S. Loop 499. 956-216-5043

HARLINGEN ARTS & HERITAGE MUSEUM—The museum features three historical buildings plus arts and cultural exhibits. Free. 2425 Boxwood St. 956-216-4901

HARLINGEN PUBLIC LIBRARY—The library displays original artworks by established and emerging artists. It

also has an extensive genealogical collection and archives. 410 76 Drive. 956-216-5800

IWO JIMA MEMORIAL AND MUSEUM—It's home to the original working model of the Iwo Jima statue, Marine Corps memorabilia, and a veterans' Hall of Fame. 320 Iwo Jima Blvd. 956-421-9234

LAGUNA ATASCOSA NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE—See LOS FRESNOS.

MURALS—Harlingen has more than 30 colorful, larger-than-life murals. A guide is available at the CVB.

TEXAS TRAVEL INFORMATION CENTER—It's operated by TxDOT. Professional travel counselors provide travel information, brochures, and trip-planning assistance. 2021 W. Harrison Ave. 956-428-4477 or 800-452-9292

HEMPSTEAD

POP. 6,179

Hempstead Chamber of Commerce: 979-826-8217; hempsteadtxchamber.com/pages/Home

The town was long known as a "Six Shooter Junction." In 1905, U.S. Congressman John Pinckney, his brother, and two others were gunned down in the courthouse while meeting with prohibitionists. Frazier's Ornamental and Architectural Concrete has fountains, statuary, and birdbaths.

THE JOHN FAIREY GARDEN—Only accessible by docent-led tours on the designated open days. Admission charge. 20559 FM 359. 979-826-3232

HOUSTON

POP. 2,302,878

Visit Houston: 713-853-8912; visithoustontexas.com

Houston has an air-conditioned pedestrian tunnel system with shops and restaurants; tours are available. Events include the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo and the Houston International Festival. A Houston CityPASS ticket provides discounted admission to five of the city's top attractions.

1940 AIR TERMINAL MUSEUM—This civilian aviation history museum is housed in an art deco building. 8325 Travelair St. 713-454-1940

ALLEN'S LANDING—Several restored historic buildings offer dining and entertainment. 1005 Commerce St. Enter at Commerce and Main streets.

BAYOU BEND COLLECTION & GARDENS—This Museum of Fine Arts, Houston house museum holds a collection of American decorative arts and paintings. Admission charge. 6003 Memorial Drive. 713-639-7750

BIG RIVERS WATERPARK & ADVENTURES—The park has waterslides, lazy river, other rides, aerial courses, a petting zoo, and other attractions. 23101 SH 242, New Caney. 832-509-1556

BREWERIES AND DISTILLERIES—Clutch Distilling, Eureka Heights Brewery, Giant Texas Distillers, Holler Brewing Co., Karbach Brewing Co., Saint Arnold Brewing Co., and Yellow Rose Distilling. See TEXAS BEVERAGE TOUR section.

BUFFALO SOLDIERS NATIONAL MUSEUM—Explores African American military history from 1770 to 2000. Admission charge. 3816 Caroline St. 713-942-8920

CHRIST CHURCH CATHEDRAL—Founded in 1839, the church has fine stained-glass windows, including a Tiffany one. 1117 Texas Ave. 713-222-2593

DISCOVERY GREEN—The 12-acre downtown park has public art, a lake, events, and ice skating in the winter. Free. 1500 McKinney St. 713-400-7336

DOWNTOWN AQUARIUM—Find marine life, a train ride through a shark tank, and a Ferris wheel. 410 Bagby St. 713-223-3474

DUNHAM BIBLE MUSEUM—Educational exhibits feature ancient and medieval manuscripts. Free. 7502 Fondren Road, in the Morris Cultural Arts Center. 281-649-3287

ETERNAL GANDHI MUSEUM HOUSTON—Highlights the power of nonviolent conflict resolution. 12379 Riceville School Road. 832-850-3464

THE HERITAGE SOCIETY AT SAM HOUSTON PARK—Ten historic structures depict early life in Houston and Harris County. 1100 Bagby St. 713-655-1912

The Heritage Society Museum Gallery—The gallery focuses on the history of the Houston region with changing exhibits and a permanent collection. 1100 Bagby St. 713-655-1912

HOUSTON ARBORETUM AND NATURE CENTER—This 155-acre sanctuary has more than 5 miles of trails plus interactive exhibits. 4501 Woodway Drive. 713-681-8433

HOUSTON BOTANIC GARDEN—Enjoy the display gardens, natural ecosystems, and walking trails. Admission charge. 1 Botanic Lane. 713-715-9675, ext. 100

HOUSTON INTERACTIVE AQUARIUM & ANIMAL PRESERVE—Immerse yourself in nature and interact with hundreds of different animals. 5440 N. Sam Houston Parkway East. 281-442-7000

HOUSTON MUSEUM OF AFRICAN AMERICAN CULTURE—The museum engages visitors through discovery-driven learning and preserves African American history. 4807 Caroline St. 713-526-1015

LAKE HOUSTON—This city of Houston lake offers boat ramps, marinas, fishing, and watersports. About 25 miles northeast of Houston. 713-440-1587

LAKE HOUSTON WILDERNESS PARK—The park includes campsites, trails, equestrian area, swimming, birding, and biking. Admission charge. 25840 FM 1485, New Caney. 832-395-7690

LONE STAR FLIGHT MUSEUM AND TEXAS HALL OF FAME—It features vintage aircraft—all in flying condition. Admission charge. 11551 Aerospace Ave. 346-708-2517

MINUTE MAID PARK—The park is home to the Houston Astros. Tours available. 501 Crawford St. 713-259-8000

MUSEUM DISTRICT—The district holds 19 institutions, plus restaurants and green spaces. Visit the Mecom Fountain and Sam Houston statue. 832-668-4410

Children's Museum of Houston—It features hands-on exhibits for children and an outdoor discovery garden. Admission charge. 1500 Binz St. 713-522-1138



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Buffalo Soldiers
National Museum
in Houston

Contemporary Arts Museum Houston—This non-collecting institution presents changing exhibits of current international, national, and regional art. 5216 Montrose Blvd. 713-284-8250

Czech Center Museum Houston—Exhibits feature the culture and arts of the Slavic people. Admission charge. 4920 San Jacinto St. 713-528-2060

The Health Museum—Depicts the body's inner workings. Admission charge. 1515 Hermann Drive. 713-521-1515

Holocaust Museum Houston—The museum features a permanent exhibit dedicated to human rights, a collection of diaries, a theater, and a research library. 5401 Caroline St. 713-942-8000

Houston Center for Contemporary Craft—The museum, dedicated exclusively to contemporary craft, has rotating exhibitions and educational programs. Free. 4848 Main St. 713-529-4848

Houston Museum of Natural Science—The museum features space science, geology, archeology, and natural history. Admission charge. 5555 Hermann Park Drive. 713-639-4629

Houston Zoo—This zoo is home to thousands of exotic animals. Admission charge. 6200 Hermann Park Drive. 713-533-6500

Japanese Garden—It features a teahouse and waterfalls amid paths and exotic plants. Admission charge. In Hermann Park. 6100 Hermann Park Drive. 713-524-5876

McGovern Centennial Gardens—Explore a variety of distinct gardens along a spacious lawn. 1500 Hermann Drive. 713-524-5876

The Menil Collection—The building, designed by architect Renzo Piano, houses contemporary, surrealist, and 20th-century art; antiquities; Byzantine and medieval art; and tribal art. 1533 Sul Ross St. 713-525-9400

Museum of Fine Arts, Houston—The museum houses more than 70,000 artworks from antiquity to the present. The Cullen Sculpture Garden is across the street. Admission charge. 1001 Bissonnet St. 713-639-7300

Rothko Chapel—Chapel may be closed while they assess Hurricane Beryl damage. 3900 Yupon St. 713-524-9839

MUSEUM OF AMERICAN ARCHITECTURE AND DECORATIVE ARTS—The museum features household furnishings and decorative arts from 1830 to 1930. 7502 Fondren Road. 281-649-3997

MUSEUM OF SOUTHERN HISTORY—Exhibits include clothing, furnishings, uniforms, tools, and weapons. 7502 Fondren Road. On the Houston Baptist Campus. 281-649-3997

NATIONAL MUSEUM OF FUNERAL HISTORY—The museum presents the nation's largest collection of funeral-service memorabilia. Admission charge. 415 Barren Springs Drive. 281-876-3063

NRG PARK—The stadium hosts the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo and the NFL's Houston Texans. Admission charge. 1 NRG Park. 832-667-1400

OIL RANCH—Ranch activities include hayrides, train rides, a petting zoo, and a paintball field. 23501 Macedonia Road, Hockley. 281-859-1616

SAM HOUSTON BOAT TOURS—The port offers free 90-minute cruises of the ship channel. Reservations required. 7300 Clinton Drive, Gate 8. 713-670-2631

SAM HOUSTON RACE PARK—See live thoroughbred and quarter horse races and off-track simulcast races. 7575 N. Sam Houston Parkway West. 281-807-8700

SAN JACINTO BATTLEGROUND STATE HISTORIC SITE—See LA PORTE.

SEISMIQUE—It's an innovative and experiential art museum. Admission charge. 2306 SH 6 South. 346-202-6006

SHELDON LAKE STATE PARK AND ENVIRONMENTAL LEARNING CENTER—The park provides wildlife viewing, paddling, fishing, an 82-foot observation tower, and wheelchair-accessible trails. Admission charge. 14140 Garrett Road. 281-456-2800

SIX FLAGS HURRICANE HARBOR SPLASHTOWN—See SPRING.

SMITHER PARK—This half-acre, mosaic-covered park is an artwork in progress. 2441 Munger St. 713-926-6368

SPACE CENTER HOUSTON—The visitor center offers live shows and presentations, interactive exhibits, and behind-the-scenes tours. 1601 NASA Parkway. 281-244-2100

THEATER DISTRICT—This district has eight performing arts organizations, including the Alley Theatre, Jesse H. Jones Hall for the Performing Arts, and the Wortham Theater Center.

TOYOTA CENTER—This downtown facility is home to the NBA's Houston Rockets and is an entertainment venue. 1510 Polk St. 713-758-7200

TRADERS VILLAGE—The market has children's rides, events, and an RV park. 7979 N. Eldridge Parkway. 281-890-5500

TRANQUILLITY PARK—The park has a fountain and bronze plaques in 15 languages that tell the Apollo story. 400 Rusk St.



GULF COAST

HUMBLE

POP. 16,336

Lake Houston Area Chamber of Commerce: 110W. Main St. 281-446-2128; lakehouston.org

In 1905, the town was an oil boom town. Four years later, Humble Oil & Refining Co. (now Exxon) was founded.

HUMBLE MUSEUM—The museum features oil field equipment, farming tools, furnishings and clothing of early families, and photographs. 601 Higgins St. 281-713-5439

MERCER BOTANIC GARDENS—Enjoy more than 20 different gardens, nature trails, a picnic area, and a playground. 22306 Aldine Westfield Road. 713-274-4160

INGLESIDE

POP. 10,106

Ingleside Chamber of Commerce: 2809 Main St. 361-776-2906; inglesidetxchamber.com

Visitors can take advantage of birding, fishing, and disc golf. The Ingleside Round Up Days and Music Festival is held in March.

COVE PARK—The park has a fishing pier, shaded picnic areas, a hike-and-bike trail, historical plaques, and a boat ramp. 1319 Ocean Drive. 361-776-2517

LIVE OAK PARK—This stop on the Great Texas Coastal Birding Trail provides a nature trail, a disc golf course, and baseball fields. 2020 Parkview Place. 361-776-2517

N.O. SIMMONS PARK—The park has a fishing pier and bird-watching observation deck, a skate park, a splash pad, and soccer fields. 2867 Avenue J. Off SH 361. 361-776-2517

SWAN LAKE HISTORICAL MARKER—Marks the site of an archeological excavation that yielded a large assortment of fossils. Some are at the Ingleside Library. 2800 block of Avenue A near First Street.

WHITNEY LAKE MARSH WILDLIFE REFUGE—The refuge protects 70 acres of wetlands. It offers a walking trail, bird watching areas, and a dock for wildlife viewing. Free. 1995 Kenny Lane. 361-776-2906

KATY

POP. 25,253

Katy Area Chamber of Commerce: 814 East Ave., Suite G. 281-391-5289; katychamber.com

Numerous parks provide recreational opportunities. Shoppers find bargains at Katy Mills outlet mall and La Center at Cinco Ranch. Katy Prairie is excellent for hunting, birding, and nature study. Events include the FFA Rodeo, the Folk Life Festival, and the Katy Rice Harvest Festival.

BLESSINGTON FARMS—Enjoy farm activities like hayrides, animal encounters, a maze, fishing, and a fall pumpkin patch. 510 Chisolm Trail, Simonton. 832-444-8717

BREWERY—No Label Brewing Co. See TEXAS BEVERAGE TOUR section.

HISTORIC HOMES AT KATY HERITAGE PARK—The complex includes three homes and other buildings. Donations accepted. 5990 George Bush Drive. 281-377-5710

JOHNNY NELSON KATY HERITAGE MUSEUM—The museum displays vintage farming equipment and artifacts from Katy's history. Free. 6002 George Bush Drive. 281-574-8618

KATY RAILROAD PARK—The restored MKT Depot houses the visitor center and a railroad museum. 5615 First St. 281-391-8400

KATY VETERANS MEMORIAL MUSEUM—A military exhibit encompasses every foreign conflict involving the United States. Donations accepted. 6206 George Bush Drive. 281-391-8387

KEMAH

POP. 1,792

City of Kemah: 604 Bradford Ave. 281-334-1611; discoverKemah.com

Nestled on the shores of Galveston Bay, Kemah offers a unique escape just half an hour away from both Houston and Galveston. Whether you're there to explore the

renowned boardwalk or the eclectic Lighthouse District, a memorable getaway in Kemah includes breathtaking sunrises, fine dining, live music, and a variety of entertainment options.

BUTLER LONGHORN MUSEUM & ITALIAN HERITAGE MUSEUM—Features a history of the Texas Longhorn. Admission charge. 903 FM 518, Suite B. 832-679-6571

KEMAH BOARDWALK—It features several themed restaurants, shops, a hotel, an interactive stingray petting reef, and amusement rides. 215 Kipp Ave. 877-285-3624

KEMAH LIGHTHOUSE DISTRICT—The district offers an eclectic blend of restaurants, shops, entertainment, and services. Sixth Street at Bradford Avenue. 409-977-1763

WINERY—Clear Creek Vineyard. See TEXAS BEVERAGE TOUR section.

KINGSVILLE

POP. 24,833

Kingsville Visitor Center: 1501 US 77. 361-592-8516; kingsvilletx.com

Kingsville is the birthplace of the American ranching industry and a birding, butterfly, and wildlife hot spot. It's home to the King Ranch, Naval Air Station Kingsville, Texas A&M University-Kingsville, and agricultural and ranching industries. Discover an array of restaurants and shops, and browse historical markers in the Main Street District.

1904 TRAIN DEPOT MUSEUM—Photos and artifacts tell about Kingsville's past. See the bandstand and butterfly garden. Free. 102 E. Kleberg Ave. 361-592-8516

BARRAZA FINE ART—The restored, historic Greek Revival-style home displays constantly changing art by Chicana artist Santa Barraza. Free. 407 S. Fifth St. 361-360-5788

BEN BAILEY ART GALLERY—Exhibits showcase the considerable artistic talent of the South Texas region. 916 W. Santa Gertrudis Blvd. 361-593-3401

BUTTERFLY BUDS POLLINATOR GARDENS—Experience a network of these gardens where visitors can explore Mother Nature. 361-592-8516

DICK KLEBERG PARK—It has a butterfly and hummingbird garden, a wildlife outlook, birding, fishing, a dog park, and sports fields. 501 Santiago Park Lane. 361-221-8705

JOHN E. CONNER MUSEUM—Enjoy interactive fun, wildlife displays, and animal mounts. Free. 905 W. Santa Gertrudis Ave. 361-593-2810

KING RANCH—Guided ranch, special interest, and nature tours are offered. Admission charge. 2205 SH 141 W. 361-592-8055

KING RANCH MUSEUM—Highlights the ranch's unique history. Admission charge. 405 N. Sixth St. 361-595-1881

KING RANCH SADDLE SHOP—The shop has outfitted governors, presidents, and foreign heads of state. 201 E. Kleberg Ave. 361-595-1424 or 877-282-5777

LA PORTE

POP. 36,569

City of La Porte: 604 W. Fairmont Parkway. 281-470-5017; visitlaportetx.com

Rich in history and built on community, La Porte is a small Texas town just 35 minutes from downtown Houston. It was established in 1892, and many families who settled there still call the city home. From bay views to boutique shopping to history lessons that helped shape the nation, there is much to explore at an easy pace.

HISTORIC MAIN STREET—It is home to many boutiques and antiques shops, local eateries, a food truck park, and events like Mardi Gras on Main and Main Street Trade Days. 100 S. Broadway St. 281-470-5017

SAN JACINTO BATTLEGROUND STATE HISTORIC SITE—A monument and museum mark the final battle site of the Texas Revolution. Admission charge. 3523 Independence Parkway S. 281-479-2431

SYLVAN BEACH PARK—This 32-acre park boasts fine sand and smaller waves for more enjoyable swimming. 636 N. Bayshore Drive. 281-471-5705



Come ready to explore a breadth of historical sites and attractions in League City. Connect with the past, and learn the stories that shaped the proud Texas coast. **VisitLeagueCity.com**

LCTX
— LEAGUE CITY —

LEAGUE CITY

POP. 115,418

League City Convention and Visitors Bureau: 600 W. Walker St. 281-554-1000; leaguecitycvb.com

Visitor Center: 512 Second St. in League Park.

On Clear Lake, 20 miles south of Houston, League City offers abundant recreation on and off the water. The historic district has antiques and gift shops, parks, and gardens. Historic homes on Main Street host shops and restaurants. Hike-and-bike trails offer plenty of recreation and birding opportunities.

THE BALLPARK AT LEAGUE CITY—Replicates six major league baseball stadiums, and includes volleyball courts, indoor soccer, and a children's play area. Admission charge. 1150 Ballpark Way. 281-316-3400

BREWERY AND DISTILLERY—Galveston Bay Brewing and Railean Distillers. See TEXAS BEVERAGE TOUR section.

BUTLER'S COURTYARD—Built in 1909, the city's first brick building now hosts events and weddings. Tours of the property are available. 122 N. Michigan Ave. 281-557-5551

CLEAR LAKE BIRDING LOOP—It's part of the Great Texas Coastal Birding Trail.

CLEAR LAKE PADDLING TRAIL—It meanders 5.5 miles through Clear Creek, starting at Lynn Gripon Park and ending at Heritage Park.

FOUNDER'S SQUARE—Nestled in the heart of the Historic District of League City, Founder's Square offers a lovely, local shopping experience. 501 E. Main St. 281-554-1199

HELEN'S GARDEN—This historic garden is tucked away beneath 100-year-old oak trees. 701 E. Main St. 281-554-1180

LEAGUE PARK—The historic park is restored to its 19th-century beauty. 512 Second St. 281-554-1021

NED AND FAY DUDNEY NATURE CENTER—Park includes bird blinds and picnic areas. Facilities are wheelchair accessible. 1220 Egret Bay Blvd. 281-554-1181

WEST BAY COMMON SCHOOL CHILDREN'S MUSEUM & BARN MUSEUM—Teachers in period dress conduct classes. Admission charge. 210 N. Kansas Ave. 281-554-2994

LOS FRESNOS

POP. 8,215

Los Fresnos Area Chamber of Commerce: 956-233-4488; losfresnoschamber.com

The city is surrounded by farm and ranch land. Los Ebanos Preserve offers wildlife viewing opportunities in a private nature park by appointment only.

ADOLPH THOMAE, JR. COUNTY PARK—The park includes lighted fishing piers, playground, boat ramp, nature trail, and recreational vehicle sites with hookups. 37844 Marshall Huts, Rio Hondo. 956-748-2044

LAGUNA ATASCOSA NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE—Enjoy kayaking, wildlife watching, hunting, hike-and-bike trails, guided tours, and a visitor center. 22688 Buena Vista Blvd. 956-748-3607, ext. 111

LOS FRESNOS ECOTOURISM NATURE PARK—The park has trails, a children's nature playground, a butterfly garden, and bird blinds. 820 N. Arroyo Blvd. 956-233-4488

MATHIS

POP. 4,282

Mathis is a gateway to Lake Corpus Christi.

LAKE CORPUS CHRISTI STATE PARK—The park offers swimming, camping, birding, boating, fishing, water skiing, and sailboarding. Admission charge. 23194 Park Road 25. 361-547-2635

LIPANTITLAN STATE HISTORIC SITE—This 5-acre site is named for the Lipan Apache and the 1835 battle between Texian and Mexican armies. Lipantitlan Park Road, Sandia. 936-870-6180

NASSAU BAY

POP. 5,164

City of Nassau Bay: 281-333-4211; nassaubay.com/562

Just across the street from Johnson Space Center and Space Center Houston, Nassau Bay is home to water activities and birding. It is just southeast of Houston, 12 minutes from Hobby Airport, and conveniently near the Kemah Boardwalk and Galveston.

NASSAU BAY PENINSULA—The park has a full nature trail and birding opportunities. At the end of Harbour Drive.

NEDERLAND

POP. 18,189

Nederland Chamber of Commerce: 1515 Boston Ave. 409-722-0279; nederlandtx.com

While many Dutch settled here, people also came from other parts of Texas and the United States. Growth came in earnest with the discovery of oil.

LA MAISON DES ACADIENS MUSEUM—The museum pays tribute to the French settlers from south Louisiana and was built as a replica of early Acadian homes. Free. 1500 Boston Ave. 409-722-0279

WINDMILL MUSEUM—Exhibits include artifacts from the city's founding and mementos of famed country singer Tex Ritter. Free. 1500 block of Boston Avenue in Tex Ritter Park. 409-723-1545

ORANGE

POP. 19,081

Orange Convention & Visitors Bureau: 812 N. 16th St. 409-883-1011; orangetexas.org

Texas' easternmost city, Orange is a recreational and industrial portal to Texas. Abundant freshwater and salt-water fishing, hunting, and birding opportunities are available. See a performance at the Lutchter Theatre for the Performing Arts or the Orange Community Playhouse. Browse the Farmer's Mercantile items.

BRIDGE CITY HISTORICAL MUSEUM (FORMER PRAIRIE VIEW TEACHERAGE)—Former teachers and students have donated items. The museum includes memorabilia on the city's growth. 150 W. Roundbunch Road, Bridge City. 409-735-5671

CHEMICAL ROW—Drive by the mileslong complex of modern plants producing various products derived from petroleum. On FM 1006.

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH—The modified Greek Revival architecture has an opalescent glass dome and stained-glass windows. 902 Green Ave. 409-883-2097

HERITAGE HOUSE MUSEUM—The museum offers changing historical exhibits and authentic room settings. 905 W. Division St. 409-886-5385

SHANGRI LA BOTANICAL GARDENS AND NATURE CENTER—It includes themed-based garden rooms, boat excursions, a beaver pond, a bird blind, and a bat house. Admission charge. 2111 W. Park Ave. 409-670-9113

STARK MUSEUM OF ART—The collection focuses on the American West. Admission charge. 712 Green Ave. 409-886-2787

TEXAS TRAVEL INFORMATION CENTER—It's operated by TxDOT. Professional travel counselors provide travel information, brochures, and trip-planning assistance. 1708 E. I-10. 409-883-9416 or 800-452-9292

PALACIOS

POP. 4,357

Palacios Chamber of Commerce: 420 Main St. 361-972-2615; palacioschamber.com

Fishing is the dominant industry along with seafood processing plants. An attractive bayfront park along Tres Palacios Bay has palm trees, picnic areas, a walkway, fishing piers, jetties, and boat ramps. Events include a BP MS 150 Recommended Ride in October.

CITY BY THE SEA MUSEUM—Exhibits feature area history, including La Salle's odyssey. 401 Commerce St. 361-972-1148

STAY & PLAY IN

Nassau Bay

Boardwalk

Nassau Peninsula

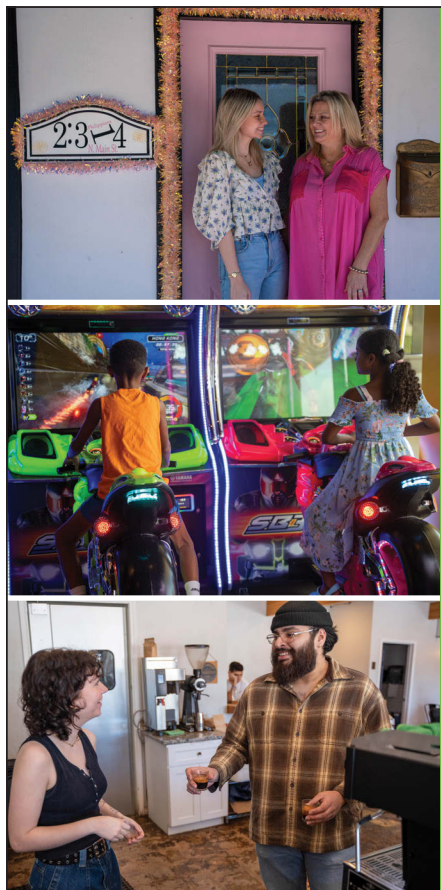
Nassau Bay Park

Let imagination fly with Space Center Houston nearby

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PASADENA

POP. 147,662

Pasadena Chamber of Commerce: 4334 Fairmont Parkway. 281-487-7871; pasadenachamber.org

The bayou figured prominently in the Battle of San Jacinto. The town is home to San Jacinto Junior College and Texas Chiropractic College.

ARMAND BAYOU NATURE CENTER—It features a bird blind with interpretive material, miles of trails, and a late 1800s farm site. Admission charge. 8500 Bay Area Blvd. 281-474-2551

PEARLAND

POP. 125,949

Visit Pearland: 11200 Broadway St., Suite 1390. 281-997-5970; visitpearland.com

Just a quick drive south of Houston, the city of Pearland has a spirit entirely its own. The thriving culinary scene, shopping, unique events, and affordable hotels will draw you in, but the welcoming culture will have you coming back again and again.

BREWERY—Vallensons' Brewing Company. See BREWERIES AND DISTILLERIES listing.

DELORES FENWICK NATURE CENTER—The center offers live examples of local flora and fauna, kid-focused events, and exciting lessons from knowledgeable staff. 5750 Magnolia Parkway. 281-652-1960

ED THOMPSON INCLUSIVE PARK—The 9,200-square-foot playground Park incorporates accessible structures, including slides, swings, balance beams, and sensory play environments. Free. 13050 Shadow Creek Parkway.

HISTORIC SITES—Sites include the Old Settlers Cemetery, a railroad depot, Zychlinski Park, and the First United Methodist Church. 281-997-5970

SRI MEENAKSHI TEMPLE—This is the only temple outside of India dedicated to the goddess Meenakshi. 17130 McLean Road. 281-489-0358

PORT ARANSAS

POP. 3,277

Port Aransas Chamber of Commerce and Tourist Bureau Visitor Center: 403 W. Cotter Ave. 361-749-5919; portaransas.org

Enjoy fishing, kayaking, beachcombing, jet skiing, surfing, and parasailing. Explore boutiques and art galleries, enjoy the beach, or golf at the Palmilla Beach Resort & Golf Club. Stay in a cottage, condominium, or beach house. Events include fishing tournaments and the Whooping Crane Festival.

CHUTE 'EM UP—It offers a high-tech paracraft boat. Observer boat rides are available. Admission charge. 154 W. Cotter Ave. 361-774-5792

FISHING PIERS—Free fishing is available (fishing license required) from beaches and jetties. For a fee, anglers may use the lighted Horace Caldwell Pier.

MUSTANG ISLAND STATE PARK—Hang out on the beach, fish, bird, see marine life, camp, and explore the unspoiled barrier island. Admission charge. 9394 SH 361. 361-749-5246

PATTON CENTER FOR MARINE SCIENCE EDUCATION—People of all ages can learn about the local marine life and the research that is conducted at the University of Texas Marine Science Institute. 855 E. Cotter Ave. 361-749-6711

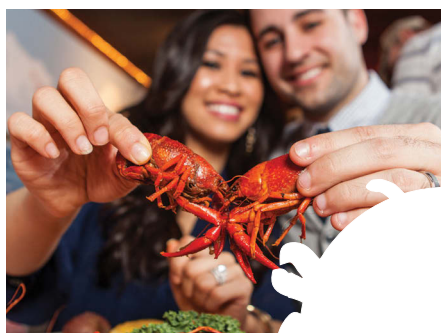
PORT ARANSAS ART CENTER—The center offers art classes, monthly art exhibitions, and activities. Free. 104 N. Alister St. 361-749-7334

PORT ARANSAS MUSEUM—Showcases local history and early island lifestyles. Free. 400 N. Alister St. 361-749-3800

Farley Boat Works—This is a living museum with a functional boat-building shop. 716 Ave. C. 361-416-1614

SKYDIVE SOUTH TEXAS—Tandem skydive over Mustang Island. Admission charge. 139 Piper Blvd. 361-945-5867

THE TARPON INN—This vintage wooden structure is completely restored. Tarpon scales in the lobby feature signatures of famous visitors. 200 E. Cotter Ave. 361-749-5555



along the upper Gulf Coast
ROAD TRIP TO PORT ARTHUR, TEXAS

visitportarthurtx.com



Museum of the Gulf Coast
in Port Arthur

TOURS—

Deep Sea Headquarters—It offers deep sea fishing, tours of the bay, and dolphin watch cruises. Admission charge. 440 W. Cotter Ave. 361-749-5597

Dolphin Dock Inc.—Enjoy bay fishing, state water, deep sea, and dolphin watching trips. Admission charge. 300 W. Cotter Ave. 800-393-3474

Port Aransas Fisherman's Wharf LLC—Full marina services, fishing trips, Jetty Boat to San Jose Island, and whooping crane boat tours. Admission charge. 900 Tarpon St. 361-749-5448

WILDLIFE VIEWING SITES—Many birds can be seen during spring and fall migration on Mustang Island. 361-749-5919

The Joan & Scott Holt Paradise Pond—Mustang Island's freshwater wetland is a stop for migrating birds. Cut-off Road. 361-749-4111 or 361-749-4158

Leonabelle Turnbull Birding Center—Birding on the Boardwalk is 9 a.m. Wednesdays. 1356 Ross Ave. 361-749-4111 or 361-749-4158

Port Aransas Nature Preserve—Tidal flats provide feeding areas and habitat. North entrance is 1300 Port St. South entrance is 2650 SH 361. 361-749-4111

Port Aransas Wetland Park—The park offers a boardwalk and gazebo with fantastic views of shorebirds. 1112 SH 361. 361-749-4111 or 361-749-4158

PORT ARTHUR

POP. 55,579

Port Arthur Convention and Visitors Bureau:
3401 Cultural Center Drive. 409-985-7822;
visitportarthurtx.com

Located on the Texas-Louisiana border, the city is an outdoor lover's paradise. With Sea Rim State Park beaches, marshes, Pleasure Island, Sabine Lake, and wildlife refuges, birders, boaters, and anglers all find a great time. It's also the official Cajun Capital of Texas.

BUU MON BUDDHIST TEMPLE AND LOTUS GARDENS—The four-tiered pagoda temple is known for its lotuses and waterlilies. 2701 Procter St. 409-527-2003 or 409-982-9319

MCFADDIN BEACH—Enjoy 20 miles of hard-packed, sandy public beach with free overnight camping. 7950 S. Gulfway Drive, Sabine Pass. 409-971-2909

MUSEUM OF THE GULF COAST—The museum explores the natural history of the Texas Gulf Coast and includes the Gulf Coast Music Hall of Fame. 700 Procter St. 409-982-7000

NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGES—Activities include wildlife observation, photography, waterfowl hunting,

fishing, and crabbing. McFaddin and Texas Point refuges along SH 87. 409-971-2909

PLEASURE ISLAND—It offers disc golf, RV parks, boat ramps, fishing levees, a lighted fishing piers, birding site, crabbing, and a marina. 520 Pleasure Pier Blvd. Access is via SH 82 causeway. 409-982-4675

POMPEIIAN VILLA—It was originally built for Isaac Ellwood, the "Barbed-Wire King," in 1900. 1953 Lakeshore Drive. 409-982-7000

QUEEN OF PEACE SHRINE AND GARDENS—See Asian gardens and a statue of the Virgin Mary, built in Hoa Binh Park. 801 Ninth Ave. 409-983-7676

ROSE HILL MANOR—This landmark is a Southern Greek Revival home with an upstairs wraparound balcony. Tours offered daily. 100 Woodworth Blvd. 409-985-7292

SABINE LAKE—The main body of this saltwater estuary is about 14 miles long and offers fishing and boating.

SABINE PASS—Laid out in 1836 by Sam Houston and Philip A. Sublett. Storms in 1886, 1900, and 1915 took heavy tolls. The town was annexed by Port Arthur.

SABINE PASS BATTLEGROUND STATE HISTORIC SITE—This location of a significant Civil War battle includes an interpretive pavilion and a scaled model of the fort. Free. 6100 Dick Dowling Road. 512-463-7948 or 979-325-1582

SEA RIM STATE PARK—Camp, observe wildlife, beach-comb, bird, canoe/kayak, fish, and seasonally hunt waterfowl. Admission charge. 19335 S. Gulfway Drive, Sabine Pass. 409-971-2559

SHRINE OF OUR LADY OF GUADALUPE—A 17-foot bronze statue is surrounded by arched rock walls with stained glass. 3648 S. Sgt. Lucien Adams Drive. 409-962-6777

TEXAS ARTISTS MUSEUM—The museum highlights works by artists from the Golden Triangle area. 3501 Cultural Center Drive. 409-498-1793

PORT ISABEL

POP. 5,108

Port Isabel Visitors Center: 421 E. Queen Isabella Blvd. 956-943-0735; portisabel-texas.com

Port Isabel Chamber of Commerce:
956-943-2262; portisabelchamber.com

This picturesque village is on the Laguna Madre. It's home to the only lighthouse open to the public on the Texas coast. Port Isabel offers accommodations, RV parks, restaurants, shopping, and attractions. Anglers can fish

PORT ISABEL TEXAS



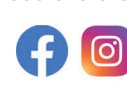
A TEXAS HISTORICAL COMMISSION STATE HISTORIC SITE



Port Isabel Visitors Center

421 Queen Isabella Blvd.

(956)943-0735



www.PortIsabel-Texas.com



GULF COAST

from beach, piers, jetties, or by boat; charters are available. Port Isabel is 2.6 miles from South Padre Island.

COMMEMORATIVE AIR FORCE, RIO GRANDE VALLEY WING—See WWII aircraft, vehicles, and artifacts. Airshow is in October. Admission charge. At Cameron County Airport. 956-479-8585 or 970-397-4604

LAGUNA MADRE—It's an important bird nesting and wintering area. Sport fishing is popular.

PADRE ISLAND—See SOUTH PADRE ISLAND.

PORT ISABEL HISTORICAL MUSEUM—The museum tells the story of Port Isabel and surrounding areas. Admission charge. 317 E. Railroad Ave. 956-943-7602

PORT ISABEL LIGHTHOUSE STATE HISTORIC SITE—The tower is open for self-guided tours. The visitors center has exhibits and a picnic area. Admission charge. 421 E. Queen Isabella Blvd. 956-943-0735

Port Isabel Lighthouse Keeper's Cottage—This replica houses the visitor center. 421 E. Queen Isabella Blvd. 956-943-2262 or 800-527-6102

QUEEN ISABEL INN—Opened in 1906, it was the only hotel for more than 20 years. 300 S. Garcia St. 956-943-1468

PORT LAVACA POP. 11,262

Port Lavaca Chamber of Commerce: 361-552-2959; portlavacachamber.org or portlavaca.org/visitors

This town is on a bluff overlooking Lavaca Bay. It has miles of nearby beaches, numerous bait and tackle shops, and boat ramps. Waterfowl hunting is available during the season. Hatch Bend Country Club offers a golf course.

CALHOUN COUNTY MUSEUM—The museum features artifacts and mementos of the early days in this area. 301 S. Ann St. 361-553-4689

HALF MOON REEF LIGHTHOUSE—Condemned after a 1942 hurricane, it was moved next to the chamber of commerce in 1979. 2300 N. SH 35. 361-552-2959

INDIANOLA—Destroyed by hurricanes, the ghost town has a historical marker and a 22-foot-tall statue of Sieur de La Salle. Adjacent to a highway rest area on SH 316.

LIGHTHOUSE BEACH & BIRD SANCTUARY—It offers a beach, camping, a swimming pool, and playgrounds. View birds from the Formosa Wetland Walkway and Alcoa Bird Tower. 700 Lighthouse Beach Road. 361-552-5311

MATAGORDA ISLAND WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT AREA—Former practice bombing area is popular for birding. Accessible only by charter or private boat. 361-205-1510

PORTLAND POP. 20,350

Portland Visitor Center: 1211 US 181. 361-777-4650; portlandtx.org

Located on a bluff overlooking Nueces and Corpus Christi bays, the town forms an almost perfect triangle with Portland, Maine, and Portland, Oregon. Windfest celebrates 49 years in April 2024.

FRED JONES NATURE SANCTUARY—This birding site is a hot spot during migration. Access by walking path. Off CR 69E, Taft.

INDIAN POINT PARK AND PIER—The park includes a fishing pier, two boardwalks, a wade fishing area, and a picnic area. 100 US 181. 361-777-4670

SUNSET LAKE PARK—Enjoy birding, fishing, hiking, kayaking, canoeing, swimming, and sailing in Sunset Lake. 201 Sunset Drive. 361-777-4670

RAYMONDVILLE POP. 10,167

Raymondville Chamber of Commerce: 700 FM 3168. 956-689-1864; raymondvillechamberofcommerce.com

Recreation includes the Willacy County Historical Museum, a nine-hole municipal golf course, one of the best saltwater fishing areas in Texas, birding, boating, and hunting. Shop market days every second Saturday of the month. Handmade custom Armando's Boots belongs to one of the original Rios Boot Shop bootmakers.

WILLACY COUNTY ART LEAGUE GALLERY—The gallery features work by members. 427 S. Seventh St. 956-966-6292

WILLACY COUNTY HISTORICAL MUSEUM—The museum offers local history, art, and natural history. 427 S. Seventh St. 956-689-6604

REFUGIO POP. 2,754

Refugio County Chamber of Commerce: 301 N. Alamo St. 361-526-2835; refugiocountytexas.org

Public parks offer picnicking, playgrounds, tennis courts, and a swimming pool. Fishing and water sports are available on nearby coastal bays. Hunters seek waterfowl, deer, wild turkey, and wild boar.

ARANSAS NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE—See ROCKPORT-FULTON.

WINERY—Texas South Wind Vineyard and Winery. See TEXAS BEVERAGE TOUR section.

RICHMOND POP. 12,520

Central Fort Bend Chamber: 4120 Ave. H. 281-342-5464; cfbca.org

The copper-domed county courthouse is listed in the National Register of Historic Places; historical markers are on the grounds. Morton Cemetery contains graves of many early Texas pioneers. Maps of the cemetery and walking guides are available at the Fort Bend Museum.

FORT BEND MUSEUM—Galleries feature historic eras, including the settlement of Spanish Texas and the Texas Revolution. Admission charge. 410 S. Fifth St. 281-342-6478

Long-Smith Cottage—The home was originally on land owned by Jane Long, the Mother of Texas. 500 Houston St.

Moore Home—On the grounds of the Fort Bend Museum, the neoclassical home was remodeled in 1905 from its original Victorian design. 406 S. Fifth St.

GEORGE RANCH HISTORICAL PARK—Visit the Jones farmstead, tour the Victorian mansion, and see cowboys working cattle. Admission charge. 10215 FM 762. 281-343-0218

ROCKPORT-FULTON POP. (COMB.) 12,268

Rockport-Fulton Chamber of Commerce and Visitors Center: 319 Broadway St. 361-729-6445; rockport-fulton.org

Rockport and Fulton share heritage, business, and recreational areas. To find area historic sites, trails, and birding sites, visit the Pathways Center or aransaspathways.com. Annual events include the Oysterfest, Rockport Arts Festival, HummerBird Celebration, Seafair, and Christmas by the Bay.

ARANSAS NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE—The refuge provides vital feeding, wintering, and nesting grounds for birds and native wildlife. Admission charge. 1 Wildlife Circle, Austwell. 361-349-1181

BAY EDUCATION CENTER—The Estuary Exhibit Hall has "Science on a Sphere" presentations on the hour. Free. 121 Seabreeze Drive. 361-774-1785

BIRDING—Hundreds of bird species, from hummingbirds to whooping cranes, migrate through the area. 361-729-6445

Connie Hagar Cottage Sanctuary—See resident and migrating birds along trails. Self-guided tours are available. First and Church streets. 361-729-6445

BOAT/KAYAK EXCURSIONS—Public boat ramps and piers include Cove Harbor, Fulton Harbor, and Rockport Harbor. Port Bay Road, Swan Lake, Copano Bay Fishing Pier, and Cavasso Creek are just a few places for kayaking.

FISHING PIERS—Public fishing piers are at Rockport Beach Park, Water Street Breakwater, and the Fulton pier. 361-729-6445

FULTON MANSION STATE HISTORIC SITE—Glimpse the life of an affluent late 1800s family. Admission charge. 317 S. Fulton Beach Road. 361-729-0386

FULTON SCHOOLHOUSE MUSEUM—See the schoolhouse as it was originally set up. 205 N. Seventh St. 361-729-5533

GOOSE ISLAND STATE PARK—The park is popular for birding, camping, and fishing. It also is home to the "Big Tree," a massive coastal live oak. Admission charge. 202 S. Palmetto St. 361-729-2858

HISTORY CENTER FOR ARANSAS COUNTY—Discover local history with captivating exhibits and artifacts. 801 E. Cedar St. 361-729-6445

LINDA S. CASTRO NATURE SANCTUARY—The preserve contains three distinct habitats, plus a Texas native plant garden. 4140 SH 35 North.


ROCKPORT BEACH—Find playgrounds, volleyball courts, boat launches, a trail, a bird sanctuary, and a fishing pier. Off Seabreeze Drive. 361-729-6661

ROCKPORT BIRDING AND KAYAK ADVENTURES—Bring a camera for the whooping crane tour November through April tour. In the summer, dolphin and sunset cruises are also available. 214 N. Fulton Beach Road. 877-892-4737 or 361-729-6445

ROCKPORT CENTER FOR THE ARTS—Gallery exhibits, concerts, an art festival, and a gift shop are offered. Free. 204 S. Austin St. 361-729-5519

TEXAS MARITIME MUSEUM—Experience the rich maritime heritage of Texas from Spanish exploration to the search for offshore oil and gas. Free. 1202 Navigation Circle. 361-729-1271

ZACHARY TAYLOR ARBORETUM PARK—This historic site has a gazebo, pond, and butterfly garden. 702 S. Pearl St. 361-790-1136



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Brazos Bend State Park
southeast of Rosenberg

ROSENBERG

POP. 40,739

City of Rosenberg: 3825 SH 36 S. 832-595-3520; rosenbergtx.gov/386

Southwest of Houston, Rosenberg is home to the Fort Bend County Fair and the Rosenberg Christmas Nights festival located in charming Historic Downtown. Experience the great outdoors at Seabourne Creek Nature Park, which offers birding, hiking, and fishing.

BRAZOS BEND STATE PARK—The park offers trails, wildlife viewing, fishing, birding, and camping, plus a nature center. Admission charge. 21901 FM 762, Needville. 979-553-5101

George Observatory—The observatory has three domed telescopes. Tickets must be purchased in person. 21901 FM 762. 281-242-3055

FORT BEND ART CENTER—The center offers education, exhibitions, and community outreach. 2012 Avenue. G. 832-945-2882

HISTORIC DOWNTOWN DISTRICT—It's home to historic buildings, the Cole Liberty Theater, the Christmas in Rosenberg festival, Rosenberg Rail Fest, and performance and visual arts.

ROSENBERG RAILROAD MUSEUM—It features artifacts, maps, photos, and memorabilia detailing local railroad history. Admission charge. 1921 Avenue. F. 281-633-2846

SEABOURNE CREEK NATURE PARK—The park offers birding, a wetland boardwalk, a hike-and-bike trail, a fishing lake, and events. 3831 SH 36 South. 832-595-3520

SAN BENITO

POP. 24,665

San Benito Visitor Information Center: 250 E. Heywood St. 956-281-0810; cityofsanbenito.com/651

This subtropical destination is a hot spot for birders and nature lovers. Heavin Resaca Trail is a waterfront path for

walkers, joggers, and bicyclists. Many Northerners visit each winter to take advantage of the pleasurable climate and hospitality. San Benito has one of the state's largest RV parks.

HISTORIC CITY CEMETERY—The cemetery dates to the city's origins in the early 1900s. On SH 345.

SAN BENITO CULTURAL HERITAGE MUSEUM—The museum features rotating exhibits. Admission charge. 250 E. Heywood St. 956-281-0810

TEXAS CONJUNTO MUSIC HALL OF FAME AND MUSEUM—It features the history of Conjunto and honors the artists who popularized this unique style of American folk music around the world. Admission charge. 402 W. Robertson St. 956-245-5005

SARITA

POP. 205

During spring, the area is famous for its colorful display of South Texas wildflowers. Birding is a year-round activity.

KENEDY RANCH MUSEUM OF SOUTH TEXAS—Learn about Mifflyn Kenedy and his family. Admission charge. 280 E. La Parra Ave. 361-415-2912

PARKS—Riviera and Loyola beaches are saltwater recreational areas on Baffin Bay. Riviera Beach Park has a fishing pier and bait-tackle shop. Access parks via FM 771 and FM 628, respectively. Kaufer-Hubert Memorial Park & Sea Wind RV Resort has a boat ramp, campground, swimming beach, playground, and fishing pier. 361-297-5738

SEABROOK

POP. 13,708

281-291-5777; seabrooktx.gov

With 11 miles of waterfront access to Clear Lake and Galveston Bay, 10 miles of hike-and-bike trails, and four birdwatching sites, Seabrook has plenty of opportunities for wildlife viewing and enjoying the outdoors. The town is a short distance from downtown Houston and area attractions.

BAY AREA VETERANS MEMORIAL—This peaceful place honors all who served and active United States military. 1106 Main St. 281-291-5600

CLEAR LAKE—Enjoy sailing, watercrafting, canoeing, kayaking, boating, and fishing. Access from NASA Road 1 or FM 2094.

COASTAL BIRDING TRAIL SITES—The area is excellent for birdwatching. McHale, Hester Garden, Robinson, and Pine Gully parks in Seabrook; Clear Creek Nature Center in League City; and Nassau Peninsula, a designated wetlands, offer great birding year-round.

MARCY FRYDAY PELICAN PATH—Tour the path of 6-to 8-foot artistically embellished pelican statues. 1210 Anders Lane.

PINE GULLY PARK—The park includes a fishing pier, hike-and-bike trails, and a playground. Admission charge. 605 Pine Gully Road.

SINTON

POP. 5,510

Sinton Chamber of Commerce: 218 W. Sinton St. 361-364-2307; sintonchamber.org

The town features shops, antiques stores, and a large squirrel statue outside Aunt Aggie De's Pralines Candy Store. Texas heritage and American Independence murals are at Jackson Square. The Rob and Bessie Welder Park offers a golf course, RV park, and birdwatching.

SINTON HISTORICAL MUSEUM—Exhibits feature household items and farm and ranch tools, WWI and WWII military uniforms, and Plymouth Oilers baseball memorabilia. 116 W. Sinton St. 361-364-2307

WELDER WILDLIFE REFUGE—This private refuge and educational facility occupies a portion of the historic Welder Ranch. It has a museum. Off US 77. 361-364-2643



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




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SOUTH PADRE ISLAND

POP. 2,056

South Padre Island Visitors Center: 321 Padre Blvd. 956-761-6433 or 800-767-2373; sopadre.com

At the southern tip of Texas and accessible from the Queen Isabella Memorial Causeway, South Padre is a 34-mile-long barrier island. The island has stunning sandy beaches, world-class wind and water activities, nature tourism attractions, local restaurants, and a growing entertainment district.

BEACH PARK AT ISLA BLANCA—The indoor and outdoor water park offers a variety of rides. It includes a restaurant. Admission charge. 33261 State Park Road 100. 956-772-7873

ISLA BLANCA PARK—The park features a beach, walking trail, fishing, camping, and a boat ramp. Admission charge. 33174 State Park Road 100. 956-761-5494

SAND CASTLE LESSONS—Sign up for sandcastle lessons from expert builder Andy Hancock. 3000 Gulf Blvd. 956-433-9948

SEA TURTLE INC.—This is an educational, rehabilitation, and rescue facility. 6617 Padre Blvd. 956-761-4511

SOUTH PADRE ISLAND ADVENTURE PARK—The park offers horseback riding, zip lines, and a petting barn. 21040 N. State Park Road 100. 956-761-4677

SOUTH PADRE ISLAND BIRDING, NATURE CENTER & ALLIGATOR SANCTUARY—Walk bayfront boardwalks, take a birding tour, and explore the nature center. 6801 Padre Blvd. 956-761-6801

TOURS—

Breakaway Cruises—It includes dolphin watch, eco-tours, parasailing, fishing, and fireworks cruises. Admission charge. 33384 State Park Road 100. 956-761-2212

Isla Tours South Padre and Captain Murphy's Fishing Charters—The company offers fishing, firework cruises, dolphin watch, and sunset cruises. Admission charge. 33256 State Park Road 100. 956-761-4752

The Original Dolphin Watch—South Texas is a year-round home to several large pods of dolphin. View them in all their natural splendor. 33256 State Park Road 100, Suite 104. 956-761-4243

UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS—RIO GRANDE VALLEY COASTAL STUDIES LABORATORY—It features marine life and representative examples from the Gulf and Laguna Madre. 100 Marine Lab Drive. 956-761-2644

SPRING

POP. 62,559

Spring Visitors Bureau: 281-288-2355; oldtownspringshopping.com

Spring's historic shopping area north of Houston is open 365 days. Shop, dine, and enjoy more than 100 local businesses.

JESSE H. JONES PARK & NATURE CENTER—The center includes exhibits on local plants and animals, plus a special children's program. 20634 Kenswick Drive. 281-446-8588

MERCER BOTANIC GARDENS—See HUMBLE.

OLD TOWN SPRING—Restored 1900s railroad village has shops, museums, art galleries, and restaurants. 26302 Preston Ave. 281-353-9310

SIX FLAGS HURRICANE HARBOR SPLASHTOWN—This wooded 80-acre park features slides, chutes, pools, and lagoons. Admission charge. 21300 I-45 N. 281-355-3300

SPRING HISTORICAL MUSEUM—Historic documents, photos, and memorabilia tell the story of Spring and the surrounding area. Spring Cypress Road and Gentry Street. 281-651-0055

SUGAR LAND

POP. 109,414

Visit Sugar Land Convention & Visitors Services: 198 Kempner St., Building B—Second Floor. 281-275-2045; visitsugarlandtx.com

Just 20 minutes southwest from downtown Houston, Sugar Land serves up big-city amenities with small-town hospitality. A high concentration of attractions are located within a short drive or walk from each other, including a

world-class baseball park, museums, and the Smart Financial Centre.

CONSTELLATION FIELD—It's home to the Sugar Land Space Cowboys baseball team, live concerts, and events. 1 Stadium Drive. 281-240-4487

CULLINAN PARK—Bird the 754-acre park, hike the 3.5-mile trail, and fish at White Lake. 12414 SH 6 South. 281-275-2825

FORT BEND CHILDREN'S DISCOVERY CENTER—Children (age 12 and younger) experience five hands-on exhibits. Admission charge. 198 Kempner St., Building B—First Floor. 832-742-2800

HOUSTON MUSEUM OF NATURAL SCIENCE AT SUGAR LAND—Exhibits include dinosaurs and fossils, exotic frogs, a dome planetarium, and rotating exhibits. 13016 University Blvd. 281-313-2277

SUGAR LAND ART CENTER & GALLERY—It displays the works of local artists. Classes and workshops are available. 104 Industrial Blvd., Suite Q. 281-565-0957

TAFT

POP. 2,869

TAFT BLACKLAND MUSEUM—Exhibits feature antique farm and ranch equipment, household items, and memorabilia from the Taft Ranch. 301 Green Ave. 361-528-2206

TEXAS CITY-LA MARQUE

POP. 74,814

Texas City: 1801 Ninth Ave. N. 409-948-3111; texascitytx.gov

Texas City-La Marque Chamber of Commerce: 9702 E.F. Lowry Expressway. 409-935-1408; tclmchamber.com

The cities, near Galveston, offer family-friendly activities that include fishing from the Texas City Dike, boating, swimming, a municipal golf course, and public parks and beaches. After playing outside, visit Tanger Outlets for

high-end retail. Events include the chamber's annual Shrimp Boil, an Art Walk, Bayou Fest, and Touch a Truck.

DIKE AND MARINA—The site offers deep water for pier fishing. Boat ramps and picnic shelters are available. Parking fee. On Dike Road.

FRANK B. DAVISON HOME—This 1897 Victorian structure houses period furnishings and archives. Admission charge. 109 Third Ave. North. 409-229-1660

TEXAS CITY MUSEUM—Learn about Texas City, the 1947 disaster, and see the Children's Discovery room. Admission charge. 409 Sixth St. North. 409-229-1660

TOMBALL

POP. 13,585

City of Tomball: 281-351-5484; tomballtx.gov

Tomball—28 miles northwest of downtown Houston—has family festivals, live music, antiques, award-winning eateries, history, model railroading, art, and lodging. Events include the Rails & Tails Mudbug Festival, Tomball German Heritage Festival, Groovefest, the Tomball Bluegrass Festival, and Depot Days.

DAVINCI ARTISTS GALLERY—The gallery features professional art exhibits, plus special events. 315 W. Main St. 281-516-9595

HISTORIC 1907 RAILROAD DEPOT MUSEUM—The museum hosts railroad artifacts and memorabilia, model railroad displays, and original railroad art. Free. 201 S. Elm St. 281-351-5484

TOMBALL MUSEUM CENTER—The center hosts 12 historic structures and a Farm Museum. Donations are accepted. 510 N. Pine St. 281-255-2148

VICTORIA

POP. 65,372

Discover Victoria Visitor Center: 700 N. Main St., Suite 101. 361-485-3116; discovervictoriatexas.com

Victoria is known for its rich history, abundant outdoor recreation, and lively arts scene. Theatre Victoria, Victoria



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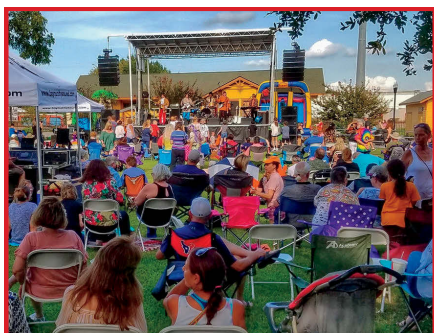
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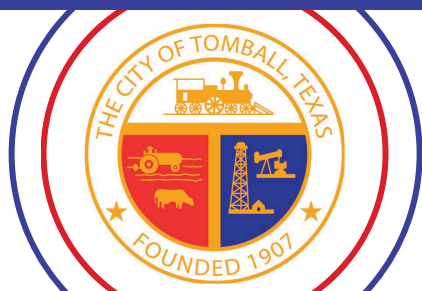
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Breweries • Eateries • Boutiques



Visit a community that treats you like family in a place that feels like home!



Find more info at www.tomballtx.gov



Varner-Hogg Plantation
State Historic Site
in West Columbia

Ballet Theatre, and the Victoria Symphony Orchestra regularly perform. Freshwater fishing, birding, canoeing, and kayaking are popular.

CHILDREN'S DISCOVERY MUSEUM OF THE GOLDEN CRESCENT—Interactive exhibits include a S.T.E.A.M. exhibit, art place, play town, and discovery lab. 1205 Sam Houston Drive. 361-485-9140

COASTAL TEXAS BARBECUE TRAIL—The trail features highly rated barbecue joints in and around the city. See website for addresses. 361-485-3116

COLETO CREEK RESERVOIR—Coleto Creek Park has camping, fishing, boating, mountain biking, a nature trail, and wildlife viewing. On US 59. 361-575-6366

FIVE POINTS MUSEUM OF CONTEMPORARY ART—Gives access to contemporary art while celebrating the cultural diversity of South Texas. 1201 N. Moody St. 361-572-0016

FOSSATI'S DELICATESSEN—This is the oldest deli in Texas and one of the oldest restaurants in the United States. 302 S. Main St. 361-576-3354

MUSEUM OF THE COASTAL BEND—Exhibits show Texas history, including Spanish Colonial artifacts and relics from La Salle's ship. 2200 E. Red River St. 361-582-2511

NAVE MUSEUM—The 1932 Greco-Roman building contains artist Royston Nave's archives and rotating art exhibits. 306 W. Commercial St. 361-520-4458

OLD VICTORIA DRIVING TOUR—This self-guided tour showcases the community's historical architecture. 702 Main St., Suite 101. 361-485-3116

RIVERSIDE PARK—The park offers a golf course, historic sites, disc golf, walking/biking trails, and a kayak/canoe entry. 532 McCright Drive. 361-485-3200

Athey Nature Sanctuary Birding Deck—Interpretive displays featuring local and migrating birds can be

found in Athey Nature Sanctuary and Riverside Park. Free. 3003 N. Vine St. 361-485-3116

Athey Nature Trail—The 1.5-mile trail features nature and wildlife viewing opportunities. 532 McCright Drive. 361-485-3200

ST. MARY'S CATHOLIC CHURCH—The 1904 church has an impressive facade and stained-glass windows. 402 S. Main St. 361-573-4328

THE TEXAS ZOO—The zoo includes native animals, an aviary, animal interactions, and conservation education. Admission charge. 110 Memorial Drive. 361-573-7681

VICTORIA ART LEAGUE—The league features a member gallery, guided art classes, and workshops. 905 S. Bridge St. 361-572-0825

VICTORIA COUNTY COURTHOUSE—The 1892 Romanesque structure is made of Texas granite and Indiana limestone. 101 N. Bridge St. 361-575-4558

VICTORIA EDUCATIONAL GARDENS—Tour the children's, vegetable, butterfly, water, and military honor gardens. 333 Bachelor Drive. 361-935-1556

VICTORIA FINE ARTS CENTER—The center holds musical concerts and live performances throughout the year, including the Victoria Symphony Orchestra. 1002 Sam Houston Drive. 361-788-9335

VICTORIA PADDLING TRAIL—The 25-mile long trail on the Guadalupe River is a slower moving trail. A 4.25-mile Riverside Park trail is navigable for all levels of paddlers. Free. 532 McCright Drive. 361-485-3200 or 361-485-3116

VICTORIA TRAIL THROUGH TIME—Interpretive displays in downtown Victoria, Riverside Park, and Victoria Regional Airport tell the story of the people and events that helped shape Victoria. 702 Main St., Suite 101. 361-485-3116

WINERY—Gulf Breeze Winery. See TEXAS BEVERAGE TOUR section.

WEBSTER

POP. 12,177

City of Webster: 281-316-4121;
spacecoasttexas.com

Midway between downtown Houston and Galveston, Webster is a gateway to excitement with entertainment, dining options, and shopping. Just minutes from Space Center Houston and Galveston's sun-drenched beaches, Webster is the heart of the action.

BREAK FREE ESCAPE ROOM—Various rooms and thrilling scenarios await adventurous players. 803 E. NASA Parkway. 281-201-3556

BREWERY—Saloon Door Brewing. See TEXAS BEVERAGE TOUR section.

GREAT WOLF LODGE—Day passes are available for the indoor water park. Admission charge. 1000 Great Wolf Way. 888-981-9653

SPACE CENTER HOUSTON—See HOUSTON.

WEST COLUMBIA

POP. 3,597

West Columbia Chamber of Commerce:
512 E. Brazos Ave. 979-345-3921;
facebook.com/westcolumbiachamber

A replica of the first Texas Capitol and other historic sites combine with shops, hotels, and restaurants to make this a popular tourist destination.

THE CAPITOL OF TEXAS PARK—A WALK THROUGH THE BIRTH OF TEXAS—The park has 21 stations depicting events of the early Republic. 100 E. Brazos Ave.

COLUMBIA HISTORICAL MUSEUM—The displays document the early history of West and East Columbia. Call for Saturday tours. 247 E. Brazos Ave. 979-345-6125

Rosenwald Schools—Rosenwald schools were hubs of rural African American life in the 1930s-40s. This one is a walk-in exhibit. 247 E. Brazos Ave. 979-345-6125

EAST COLUMBIA MAIN STREET NATIONAL HISTORIC DISTRICT—This site served as a supply depot for settlements on the Brazos River. 979-345-3921

Sweeny-Waddy Cabin—This log cabin was home to an enslaved African American family, who occupied it even after slavery was abolished in Texas in 1865. In East Columbia. 979-345-3921

HISTORICAL DRIVING TOURS—The self-guided driving tour booklet describes historical sites around the first capital of the Republic of Texas. Available at the chamber of commerce. 202 E. Brazos Ave. 979-345-3921

OLD COLUMBIA CEMETERY—The cemetery holds the graves of many Texas Revolution heroes. 16th and Jackson streets. 979-345-3921

VARNER-HOGG PLANTATION STATE HISTORIC SITE—The site features period furnishings, farm equipment, orchards, and a historic cemetery. Admission charge. 1702 N. 13th St. 979-345-4656

WHARTON

POP. 8,736

Wharton Chamber of Commerce: 225 N. Richmond Road. 979-532-1862; whartonchamber.com

Monterey Square downtown is a registered Historic Commercial District with unique shops, restaurants, a theater, and the restored 1889 Wharton County Courthouse. A self-guided historic home tour and antiques trail is on the chamber website. Events include the Monterey Square Wine and Arts Fair and Saturday Farmers Market.

20TH CENTURY TECHNOLOGY MUSEUM—Exhibits highlight technological developments in the 20th century. Free. 3615 N. Richmond Road. 979-488-7773

DICKSON MONUMENT—On the courthouse grounds, this granite shaft honors Sheriff Hamilton B. Dickson. Milam Street. 979-532-1862

FBC HERITAGE UNLIMITED MUSEUM—Highlights African American history and accomplishments in Fort Bend County. 630 Charlie Roberts Lane, Kendleton. 979-531-8694

WHARTON COUNTY HISTORICAL MUSEUM—Displays focus on local history. 3615 N. Richmond Road. 979-532-2600



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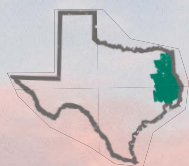
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A COLLECTION OF CULTURES
UNDER THE INFLUENCE OF
THE DEEP SOUTH MERGE IN
WONDROUS FORESTLAND

PINEY WOODS





PINEY WOODS



Sam I Am

*Exploring Huntsville's
history and lush scenery*

By Julia Jones

Houston

1 hour

Dallas

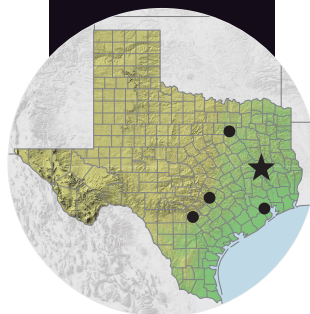
2.5 hours

Austin

3 hours

San Antonio

4 hours



Sam Houston casts a long shadow over the Piney Woods town of Huntsville, population 46,000. The former U.S. general and two-time Republic of Texas president made his home here in the 1860s. Huntsville hasn't forgotten its most famous resident—in 1994, a local artist built a likeness of Houston from concrete and steel mesh. Sometimes called Big Sam, the statue towers 67 feet in the air above Interstate 45, greeting visitors from the south with a steely stare. Streets and schools and a forest bear his name. So does Lake Raven in Huntsville State Park—Houston was given the nickname by a Cherokee chief named Oolooteka, whom he considered a surrogate father. You can learn more about Houston's fascinating history in this spirited college town, which has plenty more to offer: classic restaurants, gorgeous gardens, and majestic forests that could convince anyone to set down roots and stay for a little while.

PHOTO: WILL VAN OVERBEEK

STAY

The Williams Ranch

Nestled on 40 acres with a petting zoo and cowboy-themed rentals, the ranch offers seven places to stay on-site, just 5 miles from the center of town. Hunter down in one of three cabins, or enjoy a furnished RV. On-site activities include hiking, horseback riding, and lake fishing.

EAT & DRINK

Sam's Table

Unwind after a long day with tapas and drinks at Sam's Table, where the main dining room is graced with a light-up sketch of the countryman's head. The butternut squash soup is subtly sweet and pairs well with a bruschetta or other shareable plate. For dessert, head down the street to City Hall Cafe and Pie Bar.

Mr. Hamburger

Opened in 1959, the restaurant has long been a local institution for hungry Sam Houston State University students, residents, and visitors. Try the onion rings or the chocolate shake. Mr. Hamburger was initially shuttered in 2005, but was re-opened to a grateful public in 2011.

LEARN

Sam Houston Memorial Museum

Learn about Sam Houston's life by viewing the buildings where he lived, worked, and died. The shaded duck pond is an idyllic picnic spot, and the gift shop sells items like woven bookmarks made during on-site weaving demonstrations. Make sure to visit the 1858 Steamboat House, where Houston uttered his last words.

Wynn Home Arts & Visitor Center

Local art is on display at this historical home near the square. The 19th-century Wynn Home allows self-guided tours and gives arts and crafts classes for kids. The outside area features a pollinator garden and a tactile learning garden, as well as statuary from local makers.

RV INFO

Huntsville RV Park boasts two fenced dog parks, free laundry, wildlife viewing, and a stocked pond for fishing just 10 miles from the center of town. Spots start at \$50/night. huntsvillervpark.com; 936-600-7878

SHOP

Bluebonnet Square Antiques

The town is bursting with antiques shops selling goods from decades past. Start at this store on the square, a two-story shop with 22 vendor stalls selling specialty items ranging from early-edition books to collectibles like baseball cards to a plentiful stash of cowboy boots.

SEE

Huntsville State Park

The park partially reopened after heavy rains caused significant flooding in early 2024. Months later, Hurricane Beryl uprooted hundreds of trees. The park's famous Piney Woods hikes offer a glimpse of towering loblolly pines, slithering alligators, and even the occasional beaver. If you're up for an adventure, try one of six mountain biking paths through the park.

The Boot House and Hat House

These larger-than-life structures are among the most visible works by artist and homebuilder Dan Phillips. They share a contiguous lot in the 2600 block of 12th Street (also known as SH 30, Huntsville's primary east-west thoroughfare).

EVENTS

Baptized Texan

March 2 brings Sam Houston's Birthday & Texas Independence Day Celebration to Huntsville's Oakwood Cemetery. As part of a curious Texas tradition, out-of-staters can be "baptized Texan" by kneeling at the grave of Sam Houston and being anointed with pond water. On April 26, General Sam Houston Day is held on the grounds of the Sam Houston Memorial Museum, bringing visitors back to the 1800s. Actors and historians dress in period costume, teaching crafts and telling of Houston's life. Admission to both events is free. ★



Caddo Lake State Park

CADDO LAKE STATE PARK

This park on the banks of the Big Cypress Bayou offers a landscape replete with scenic views and paddling opportunities. Traverse the enchanting waters on one of many canoe and kayak trails, and explore the scenic hiking trails. The park's diverse wildlife makes it a haven for birdwatchers and animal enthusiasts. Spend the night camping under the stars or in a cozy historic cabin for a truly immersive nature retreat.

"Inside Caddo Lake State Park, a sense of wonder, exploration, peace, and tranquility are all ignited. When you see the Saw Mill Pond for the first time, it feels like you've been immersed in a prehistoric world. ... This 400-acre park holds some of the richest biodiversity in East Texas, including the stunning pileated woodpecker, a personal favorite."

— Lane Neely, park interpreter

MORE PINEY WOODS STATE PARKS

ATLANTA STATE PARK

DAINGERFIELD STATE PARK

HUNTSVILLE STATE PARK

LAKE BOB SANDLIN STATE PARK

LAKE LIVINGSTON STATE PARK

MARTIN CREEK LAKE STATE PARK

MARTIN DIES JR. STATE PARK

MISSION TEJAS STATE PARK

TYLER STATE PARK

VILLAGE CREEK STATE PARK

For more information, directions, and amenities, get your free mobile guide to all 80-plus state parks: texasstateparks.org/app



Lone Star Hiking Trail in Cleveland

ALTO

POP. 1,044

Alto is the highest point between the Angelina and Neches rivers.

CADDO MOUNDS STATE HISTORIC SITE—Discover the life and history of the Caddo people. Admission charge. 1649 SH 21 West. 936-858-3218

SCENIC DRIVE—Find forested hills and streams along US 69, SH 21 (El Camino Real), and numerous local roads around Alto.

ATLANTA

POP. 5,427

Atlanta Area Chamber of Commerce: 101 N. East St. in the depot. 903-796-3296; atlantatexas.org

Atlanta was named for the Georgia home of many early settlers. The historic downtown plaza includes Veterans Memorial Plaza and the Atlanta library. Events include the Children's Independence Day Parade, Hoot N' Holler Festival, Cullen Baker Country Fair, Holiday Open House, and Christmas Parade.

ATLANTA HISTORICAL MUSEUM—Exhibits focus on the city's history and development. 101 N. East St. 903-796-3296

ATLANTA STATE PARK—Find waterskiing, boating, fishing, hiking, biking, and wildlife viewing. Admission charge. 927 Park Road 42. 903-796-6476

LAKE WRIGHT PATMAN—It's popular for fishing, boating, swimming, camping, and hiking. 903-838-8781

WINERY—O'Farrell Country Vineyards. See TEXAS BEVERAGE TOUR section.

CARTHAGE

POP. 6,562

Panola County Chamber of Commerce/CVB: 300 W. Panola St. 903-693-6634; panolacountytexas.com

The seat of Panola (Native American word for cotton) County, Carthage is also the birthplace of musicians Tex Ritter and Jim Reeves.

ESQUIRE THEATER—The Country Music Hayride is on the second and fourth Saturdays. 114 W. Sabine St. 903-736-2273

PANOLA COUNTY HERITAGE MUSEUM—Exhibits include antique dolls and a buggy in a restored historic bank building. Texas Tea Room is open for lunch on weekdays. 100 E. Sabine St. 903-693-8689 or 903-692-3836

PANOLA COUNTY HISTORICAL JAIL MUSEUM—It includes a historical building, the La Grone Family History Center, genealogy, and East Texas law enforcement history. 211 N. Shelby St. 903-693-3388

REEVES MEMORIAL—Site honors Jim Reeves, the Panola County native who became a country singer. On US 79.

TEXAS COUNTRY MUSIC HALL OF FAME AND TEX RITTER MUSEUM—It recognizes Texas contributors to country music and contains Tex Ritter memorabilia. Admission charge. 310 W. Panola St. 903-694-9561

CENTER

POP. 5,147

City of Center: 936-598-2941; centertexas.org/tourism-visitor

Center is named for its location in Shelby County.

LAKE PINKSTON—Near Toledo Bend Reservoir, the lake has boat ramps, fishing, and primitive camping. Ten miles west of Center on SH 7. 936-598-2941

SABINE NATIONAL FOREST—See HEMPHILL.

SCENIC DRIVE—One excellent route is via SH 87 South, then take FM 417 or FM 2694 to Boles Field east of Shelbyville.

SHELBY COUNTY COURTHOUSE—The courthouse, with turrets and towers, is modeled after an Irish castle. 200 Augustine St. 936-598-4164

SHELBY COUNTY MUSEUM—The museum features items from bearskins to war bonnets. 230 Pecan St. 936-598-3613

TOLEDO BEND RESERVOIR—The lake has parks, boat ramps, marinas, fishing, and camping. On the Texas-Louisiana state line. 409-565-2273

CLEVELAND

POP. 8,503

Greater Cleveland Convention and Visitors

Bureau/Civic Center: 210 Peach Ave. 281-592-2395;
clevelandtexas.com

105 SPEEDWAY—The quarter-mile track is used for various races. 1288 Fostoria Road. 832-527-8077

CLEVELAND HISTORICAL MUSEUM—The museum features historic relics and photos. 203 E. Boothe St. 281-659-2200

LONE STAR HIKING TRAIL—It's a 129-mile path from Sam Houston National Forest to the Big Thicket. 936-344-6205

COLDSPRING

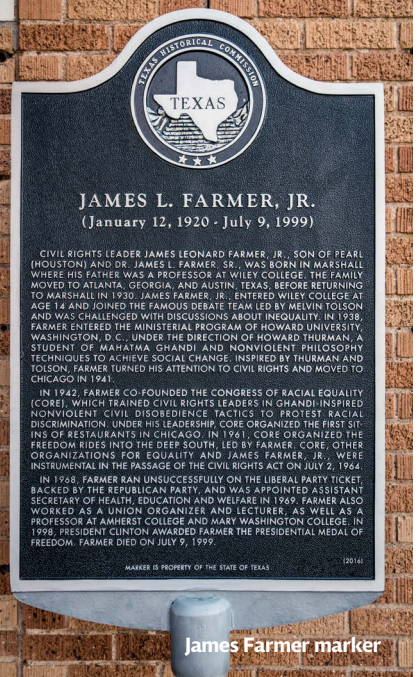
POP. 854

Coldspring/San Jacinto County Chamber of Commerce: 31 N. Butler St. 936-653-2184;
coldspringtexas.org

Come visit historic Coldspring, where outdoor recreation meets small town charm. The town offers antiques shops, farmers markets, overnight accommodations, Southern food restaurants, and outdoor fun.

SAM HOUSTON NATIONAL FOREST—Double Lake Recreation Area offers camping. Enjoy fishing, swimming, and hiking trails. 394 FM 1375 West, New Waverly. 936-344-6205

SAN JACINTO COUNTY AND OLD JAIL MUSEUM—The museum depicts the life of early settlers and includes a cell block and jailer's quarters. 200 Slade St. 936-653-2009



James Farmer marker

HISTORICAL MARKERS

The Piney Woods region of East Texas was the gateway to the Lone Star State for many early Texans, who established communities and institutions now commemorated by the Texas Historical Commission's official markers. Among these Texans was Richard E. Jackson, a conservationist known as the "Father of the Big Thicket," who advocated for the preservation of the landscape north of Houston.

Farther north, the Ratcliff CCC Camp marker tells the story of the Civilian Conservation Corps' establishment of the Davy Crockett National Forest in 1935. A U.S. Forest Service marker explains the creation of our four national forests: Angelina, Davy Crockett, Sabine, and Sam Houston.

The Old Town of Port Caddo, founded in 1838 on Caddo Lake near Jefferson, grew in importance along with its rowdy reputation for gamblers and gunslingers in the mid-1800s. In his hometown of Marshall, the James L. Farmer Jr. marker commemorates the civil rights icon who co-founded the Congress of Racial Equality and organized the freedom rides into the Deep South.

The World's Richest Acre in Kilgore tells the story of the most densely drilled tract in the world, a plot with 24 wells that produced over 2.5 million barrels of crude oil worth millions of dollars in the mid-1900s.

Find more in the Texas Historical Commission's Texas Historic Sites Atlas: atlas.thc.texas.gov.



BECOME

— A —



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Becoming a Conroe Texpert means immersing yourself in our city's rich Texas history, unique culture, natural beauty, and our crafted food and drink scene. Whatever adventure you choose, there's a Texpert trail waiting in Conroe for you to blaze!



***Did You Know:** The Lake Conroe area is one of the few places in Texas where you can easily view our national bird, the bald eagle.*

SCENIC DRIVE—Several Forest Service roads traverse the Sam Houston National Forest. FM 2025 leads to Double Lake Recreation Area.

WOLF CREEK PARK—The park is on Lake Livingston. Fishing, boating, water-skiing, swimming, hiking, campsites, and golfing are available. Admission charge. 21 Wolf Creek Park Road. 936-653-4312

CONROE

POP. 101,405

Visit Conroe: 300 W. Davis St. 936-522-3500 or 877-426-6763; visitconroe.com

Lake Conroe is every bass fisher's dream and is fun for water-skiing. The city is home to 336 species of birds. Downtown Conroe offers arts and nightlife, and live music can be found every night. Events include the Conroe Cajun Catfish Festival, Sounds of Texas Music Series, and Montgomery County Fair & Rodeo.

BREWERIES & DISTILLERY—B-52 Brewing Co., Bartlett's Distillery, Copperhead Brewing Company, and Southern Star Brewing Company. See TEXAS BEVERAGE TOUR section.

CRIGHTON THEATRE—Restored vaudeville theater hosts plays, music performances, and events. 234 N. Main St. 936-441-7469

HERITAGE MUSEUM OF MONTGOMERY COUNTY—It showcases the life of Texas flag designer Charles B. Stewart, historical items, and traveling exhibits. 1506 I-45 North Feeder. 936-539-6873

LAKE CONROE—Activities include watercrafting, kayaking, canoeing, and boating. Dam and observation point are off SH 105. SH 105 West. 936-588-1111

LAKE CONROE PARK—It features fishing piers, swimming areas, a playground, and volleyball courts. Admission charge. 14968 SH 105 West, Montgomery. 936-788-8302

LONE STAR MONUMENT AND HISTORIC FLAG PARK—Showcases Montgomery County as the birthplace of the Lone Star flag with historical battle and rally flags. Free. 104 I-45 North.

SAM HOUSTON NATIONAL FOREST—See COLDSRING.

W.G. JONES STATE FOREST—It offers birding, a nature trail, and demonstration areas. FM 1488, 1.5 miles west of I-45. 936-273-2261

CROCKETT

POP. 6,307

Crockett Area Chamber of Commerce:
1100 Edmiston Drive. 936-544-2359;
crockettareachamber.org

Crockett is among the oldest towns in Texas, and the Architectural District features beautiful buildings, churches, shops, and restaurants. Events include the World Championship Fiddlers' Festival and Regional Steak Cook-Off and Christmas in Crockett.

DAVY CROCKETT NATIONAL FOREST—It has streams, wildlife, Ratcliff Lake Recreation Area, and Big Slough Wilderness Area. 18551 SH 7 East, Kennard. 936-655-2299

DAVY CROCKETT SPRING AND BREWER PARK—A historical plaque marks the site where Crockett and others camped on the way to the Alamo. West Goliad Avenue. 936-544-8391

HOUSTON COUNTY LAKE—The reservoir offers boating, fishing, picnicking, and camping. Off FM 229. 936-544-2359

HOUSTON COUNTY MUSEUM—It features early implements, an old newspaper press, railroad memorabilia, and the history of the Republic's first county. 303 S. First St. 936-544-9520

MISSION TEJAS STATE PARK—See GRAPELAND.



Discovery Science Place in Tyler

DAINGERFIELD

POP. 2,518

Daingerfield Chamber of Commerce: 102 Coffey St. 903-645-2646; cityofdaingerfield.com

This town is the seat of Morris County—one of the smallest counties in Texas.

DAINGERFIELD STATE PARK—The park offers cabins, camping, paddleboating, and scenic hikes. Admission charge. 455 Park Road 17. 903-645-2921

GILMER

POP. 5,029

Gilmer Area Chamber of Commerce: 106 Buffalo St. 903-843-2413; gilmerareachamber.com

More than 50 historical markers are found in the city and around the county. Markers on the courthouse lawn tell about the Cherokee Trace. The East Texas Yamboree in October is one of the oldest annual festivals in Texas.

ELLISON CREEK RESERVOIR (LONE STAR LAKE)—This lake offers picnicking, swimming, a boat ramp, and a fishing pier. Off US 259. 903-656-2311

HISTORIC UPSHUR MUSEUM—The museum includes Caddo artifacts, along with information on forestry, oil, and the Yamboree. 119 Simpson St. 903-843-5483

LAKE GILMER—Lake activities include fishing, water-skiing, watercrafting, and duck hunting. Off FM 852, west of Gilmer. 903-843-2552

SCENIC DRIVE—Take SH 155 north 6 miles to Barnwell Mountain roadside park and overlook. Most area roads offer a mixture of forests and pastures, rich in fall color and spring wildflowers.

UPSUR COUNTY LIBRARY—It includes a genealogy department and Civil War materials. 702 W. Tyler St. 903-843-5001

GLADEWATER

POP. 6,230

Gladewater Chamber of Commerce: 215 N. Main St. 903-845-5501; gladewaterchamber.org

One of Texaco's first oil derricks is preserved on West Commerce Avenue. Gladewater was designated the Antique Capital of East Texas by the Texas Legislature in 1995. Events include the East Texas Gusher Days, the Gladewater Round Up, and the Gladewater Arts and Crafts Festival.

THE GLADEWATER MUSEUM—Learn about Gladewater's early settlers, railroad, oil boom, and rodeo history. 116 W. Pacific St. 903-845-7608

HELEN LEE ESTATE DAFFODIL GARDENS—The spectacular display of blooms draws visitors in early spring. 21600 CR 3103. 903-845-5780

LAKE GLADEWATER—It allows swimming, boating, fishing, water-skiing, and picnicking. 1602 Lakeshore Drive. Off FM 2685 north of US 80. 903-845-2196

GRAPELAND

POP. 1,475

Grapeland Chamber of Commerce: grapelandareachamber.org/wp

Several parks offer fishing, swimming, and picnicking. Salmon Lake Park has RV hookups and cabins. During World War II, peanuts were the primary agricultural product; the Peanut Festival is in October.

CADDO MOUNDS STATE HISTORIC SITE—See ALTO.

MISSION TEJAS STATE PARK—The park has a replica of the first Spanish mission. It also appeals to campers, anglers, picnickers, and hikers. Admission charge. 19343 SH 21 East. 936-687-2394

HEMPHILL

POP. 1,031

Sabine County Chamber & Visitors Center: 125 N. Texas St. 409-787-2732; visitsabinecounty.com or cityofhemphill.com/community/page/tourism

This gateway to Toledo Bend Reservoir is part of the El Camino Real de los Tejas National Historic Trail. The Gaines-Oliphant House is one of the oldest Anglo structures in Texas. Events include the Milam Settlers Day and Lions Club Christmas Parade and Lighting of the Courthouse Square.

PATRICIA HUFFMAN SMITH NASA MUSEUM "REMEMBERING COLUMBIA"—The museum tells the story of the Space Shuttle Columbia STS-107 from its first mission to its last. 375 Sabine St., Unit B. 409-787-4827

SABINE NATIONAL FOREST—Visitors can fish, hunt, picnic, boat, camp, hike, and ride horses and mountain bikes. 5050 SH 21 East. 409-625-1940

SCENIC DRIVES—Shortleaf pine forests are south of Hemphill via SH 87 and also on FM 2343. Find longleaf pine at the scenic roadside park on SH 184.

HENDERSON

POP. 13,385

City of Henderson Department of Tourism: 1500 Lake Forest Parkway. 903-392-8232 or 903-392-0691; visithendersontx.com or hendersontx.us

Henderson's location is perfect for a weekend getaway. Explore nearby Martin Creek Lake State Park, then enjoy live entertainment and a bite to eat at Tia Juanita's Fish Camp. Experience the Downtown Historic District's elevated shopping, entertainment, and year-round events, including the Heritage Syrup Festival in November.



Good times. Good vibes.

HUNTSVILLE

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DEPOT MUSEUM AND CHILDREN'S DISCOVERY

CENTER—This living history museum recalls early life in Rusk County and offers educational instruction of many folk arts. Admission charge. 514 N. High St. 903-657-4303

EAST TEXAS DISCOVERY WELL—A 1936 pink granite marker shows the site where the East Texas oil boom began. Off County Road 4136, Joinerville. 903-392-8232

Pioneer Park—This roadside park features derrick-covered picnic pavilions and the Joe Roughneck monument. On SH 64 at CR 4148.

GASTON MUSEUM—This museum features the area's history and heritage. 6558 SH 64 West, Joinerville. 903-722-9016

HARMONY HILL GHOST TOWN—Bypassed by railroads, the town declined. Only the cemetery remains. On SH 43. 866-650-5529, ext. 258

HOWARD DICKENSON HOUSE MUSEUM—Built in 1855 as the first brick home in Rusk County, this living museum is like taking a step back in time. 501 S. Main St. 903-657-6925

LAKE FOREST—This 15-acre lake in the heart of Henderson is a great place to cast a reel. 1500 Lake Forest Parkway. 903-392-8232

LAKE MURVAUL—Enjoy fishing, boating, lakeside camping, and winter waterfowl hunting. 638 FM 1234, Carthage. 903-693-6562

LAKE STRIKER—The lake has a marina, boat facilities, fishing, picnicking, and camping. 18560 County Road 4256. 903-854-4559

MARTIN CREEK LAKE STATE PARK—See TATUM.

HUNTSVILLE

POP. 47,351

Sam Houston Statue Visitor Center: 7600 SH 75 South. 936-291-9726 or 800-289-0389; huntsvilletexas.com

One of Texas' oldest cities, Huntsville is home to the headquarters of the Texas Department of Criminal Justice Institutional Division and Sam Houston State University. The historic downtown area has antiques and arts-and-crafts shops. The Richard Hass mural depicting Sam Houston is on the square's northeast side.

BLUE LAGOON—A scuba diver's certification card is required. Admission charge. 649 Pinedale Road. 936-438-8888

HUNTSVILLE STATE PARK—It offers multiuse trails, campsites, equestrian stables, canoe rentals, fishing, and wildlife. Admission charge. 565 Park Road 40 West. 936-295-5644

OAKWOOD CEMETERY—It's best known as the burial site of Sam Houston. At Ninth Street and Martin Luther King Jr. Drive. 936-577-2020

SAM HOUSTON MEMORIAL MUSEUM COMPLEX—The complex has historic buildings, a park, and a gift shop. 1836 Sam Houston Ave. 936-294-1832

SAM HOUSTON NATIONAL FOREST—See COLDSPRING.

SAM HOUSTON STATUE AND VISITOR CENTER—Site includes a 67-foot statue of Gen. Sam Houston, a visitor center, and gift shop. 7600 SH 75 South. 936-291-9726

SCENIC DRIVE—Take FM 1374 (not shown on most maps) to Stubblefield Lake Recreation Area, and FM 1375 to Walker Lake Recreation Area.

TEXAS PRISON MUSEUM—Exhibits highlight Texas prison system history. Admission charge. 491 SH 75 North. 936-295-2155

VETERANS MUSEUM OF TEXAS-HEARTS—It preserves military memorabilia, including war artifacts, photos, and love letters. 455 SH 75 North. 936-295-5959

WALKER COUNTY HISTORICAL MUSEUM—The 1862 Gibbs-Powell House was built in the Greek Revival style. Admission charge. 1228 11th St. 936-435-2497

WYNNE HOME ART & VISITOR CENTER—This is a cultural arts center. 1428 11th St. 936-291-5424



Blue Lagoon in Huntsville

JACKSONVILLE

POP. 14,215

Explore Jacksonville, Texas: 315 S. Ragsdale St. 903-339-3310; explorejacksonvilletx.org

The city honors its history with Tomato Fest in June. During the 2010 Tomato Fest, Jacksonville broke the former Guinness World Record, earning the title "Home of the World's Largest Bowl of Salsa."

CHEROKEE HISTORY TRAILS—A self-guided trail map features more than 135 historical markers. Maps are available at Love's Lookout visitor information center or the chamber office. 903-683-9680

KILLOUGH MONUMENT—It commemorates the site of East Texas' worst massacre by Native Americans. Off CR 3409. 903-683-9680

LAKE JACKSONVILLE—This lake is popular with anglers. Parks offer boat ramps and camping. Off US 79. 903-589-3510

LAKE PALESTINE—The lake offers boating, swimming, and fishing. It includes marinas, boat ramps, and camps. Off US 175. 903-876-2237

LOVE'S LOOKOUT PARK—This scenic park has a visitor information center, observation area, and picnic arbors. 43822 US 69 North. 903-586-4868 or 903-586-2217

RIVER RUN ATV PARK—The park hosts events and offers more than 2,000 acres for riding. 2001 CR 3315. 903-724-4100

JASPER

POP. 7,423

Jasper-Lake Sam Rayburn Area Chamber of Commerce: 500 S. Wheeler St. 409-384-2762; jaspercoc.org

The town square features a historic courthouse, B&Bs, galleries, outdoor sculptures, antiques shops, murals, and the old county jail. Sandy Creek Park offers a playground, fishing, and walking trails. Events include the Jasper Air Show, Azalea Festival, Butterfly Festival, and July 4 and Christmas festivities.

ANGELINA NATIONAL FOREST—Camping, fishing, hunting, hiking, four-wheeling, picnicking, canoeing, and swimming are permitted in recreation areas. SH 63 to Forest Road 303. 936-897-1068

B.A. STEINHAGEN LAKE—The lake offers marinas, camping, fishing, boating, and swimming. Off US 190. 409-429-3491

BELLE-JIM HOTEL—The hotel was built in 1910 by Mamie Patten and named for her children, Belle and Jim. 160 N. Austin St. 409-202-5004

E.O. SIECKE STATE FOREST—This 1,722-acre forest features hiking, wildlife viewing, nature study, horseback riding, and picnic areas. Off US 96. 409-423-2890

EAST TEXAS REGIONAL ARTS CENTER—The center features world-class art exhibits. Free. 364 N. Austin St. 409-384-2404

JASPER COUNTY HISTORICAL MUSEUM—Exhibits range from the time of the county's earliest settlers to the present. Free. 165 N. Main St. 409-384-6666

JASPER'S FIREMAN'S MUSEUM—The museum is filled with historical memorabilia, including Jasper's historic Engine No. 1. Free. 205 Water St. 409-383-6168

MARTIN DIES JR. STATE PARK—It has boat ramps, a fishing pier, mountain biking, paddling trails, camping, nature center, and interpretive programs. Admission charge. 634 Park Road 48 South. 409-384-5231

SAM RAYBURN RESERVOIR—The reservoir has parks, marinas, boat ramps, camping, and fishing. Off US 96. 409-384-5716

SWANN BED-AND-BREAKFAST HOTEL—The family home was converted into a hotel by the Swann family in 1915. 250 N. Main St. 325-315-8312

JEFFERSON

POP. 1,850

Jefferson Visitor Center: 305 E. Austin St. 903-665-3733; visitjeffersontexas.com

Many structures bear state historical medallions. More than 60 bed-and-breakfast accommodations are offered in historic buildings. Explore several antiques shops.

CADDO LAKE STATE PARK—Canoeists, anglers, and boaters explore the picturesque maze of bayous. Admission charge. 245 Park Road 2, Karnack. 903-679-3351



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EXCELSIOR HOUSE HOTEL—Guest rooms feature period furnishings, many original to the hotel. 211 W. Austin St. 903-665-2513

HISTORIC HOMES—Many are open during the Historical Pilgrimage or Candlelight Tour. Tours are available. 903-665-2672

House of the Seasons—The cupola has panels illustrating the four seasons. Admission charge. 409 S. Alley St. 903-665-8000

HISTORIC JEFFERSON HOTEL—This converted cotton warehouse features Victorian-era furniture. 124 W. Austin St. 901-468-3551

HISTORIC JEFFERSON RAILWAY—Visitors enjoy rides and special events. 400 E. Austin St. 866-398-2038

JAY GOULD PRIVATE RAILROAD CAR—The "Atalanta" includes four staterooms, kitchen, and bathroom. Admission charge. 903-665-2513

JEFFERSON CARNEGIE LIBRARY—It's one of a few still serving its original purpose as a library. 301 W. Lafayette St. 903-665-8911

JEFFERSON HISTORICAL SOCIETY MUSEUM—Find four floors of documents and antiques, including pioneer mementos. Admission charge. 223 W. Austin St. 903-665-2775

LAKE O' THE PINES—Several parks and marinas offer fishing, boating, swimming, picnicking, and camping. Off FM 729 and FM 726. 903-665-2336 or 877-444-6777

SCARLETT O'HARDY'S "GONE WITH THE WIND" MUSEUM—It includes rare movie posters, a first edition signed novel, and promotional items. Admission charge. 408 Taylor St. 903-665-1939

KILGORE

POP. 13,476

Visit Kilgore: 815 N. Kilgore St. 903-984-5022; visitkilgore.com

This "City of Stars" is home to the World's Richest Acre and the world-famous Kilgore College Rangerettes. From star-capped oil derricks to a rich history, discoveries are still made here.

BIGHEAD CREEK MTB TRAIL—This is a 3.1-mile mountain bike trail located in a scenic natural area of the Piney Woods. Free. 1701 Dudley Road.

DANVILLE CEMETERY—Danville Cemetery is the final resting place for Karen Silkwood, whose fight for nuclear safety created an impactful legacy and led to a film adaptation. Free. On CR 2452. 903-218-6896

EAST TEXAS OIL MUSEUM—The museum recreates the 1930s oil boom with films, dioramas, and mementos. Admission charge. 1301 S. Henderson Blvd. 903-983-8295

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH—Established in 1850, the First Presbyterian Church is home to a world-renowned Aeolian-Skinner organ, including the first trompette-en-chamade installed in the United States. Free. 815 E. Main St. 903-984-1502

RANGERETTE SHOWCASE—It features uniforms and mementos of Kilgore College's famous drill and dance team. Free. 1100 Broadway Blvd. 903-983-8265

SHAKESPEARE GARDEN—Built to complement the Texas Shakespeare Festival, plants and shrubs are grown in reference to Shakespeare's plays. Free. 1009 Brook Drive. 903-218-6896

TEXAS MUSEUM OF BROADCASTING & COMMUNICATIONS—The museum showcases vintage equipment and memorabilia. Admission charge. 416 E. Main St. 903-985-8115 or 903-643-7711

WORLD'S RICHEST ACRE PARK—The park pays tribute to the oil boom and features an original derrick and replicas. 100 N. Commerce St. 903-984-1333

KOUNTZE

POP. 2,155

Kountze Chamber of Commerce: 409-658-1741; kountzechamber.com

Kountze describes itself as "The Big Light in The Big Thicket." The Kirby-Hill House Museum has furnishings dating to 1832, hosts annual murder mystery dinner the-



J.R. Curtis Memorial Garden For The Blind
in Longview

aters, and is a B&B. Indian Springs Camp offers guided canoe tours, camping facilities, and an RV park. The Hardin County Music Festival is in May.

BIG THICKET NATIONAL PRESERVE—Several major biological zones combine here to create unusual combinations of ecosystems. 6102 FM 420. 409-951-6700

MUSEUM OF HARDIN COUNTY—A restored bank building showcases area history. 830 S. Maple St. 409-209-5377

LIBERTY

POP. 8,636

City of Liberty: 936-336-3684; cityofliberty.org/discover-liberty/pages/tourism

The town is among the oldest settled areas of Texas. The Liberty Jubilee is in March, and the Trinity Valley Exposition Fair & Rodeo is in October.

GERALDINE D. HUMPHREYS CULTURAL CENTER—The facility offers exhibits, a library, and a theater featuring the Valley Players. 1710 Sam Houston St. 936-336-8901

LIBERTY BELL—The bell was cast from the same mold as the Philadelphia original. 1710 Sam Houston St. 936-336-8901

SAM HOUSTON REGIONAL LIBRARY & RESEARCH CENTER—The facility includes artifacts, Jean Laffite's journals, and historic structures. Free. 650 FM 1011. 936-336-8821

LINDALE

POP. 6,660

City of Lindale Tourism Department/Visit Lindale: 55 Miranda Lambert Way, Suite 3. 903-881-5103; visitlindale.com

Nestled in the Piney Woods of East Texas, Lindale is the hometown of country music superstar Miranda Lambert, her famous Pink Pistol Boutique, and Red 55 Winery. It is also the location of the historic Lindale Candy Company and the rustic Old Mill Pond Museum.

LINDALE CANDY COMPANY—See hand-pulled and painted peppermint in a more than 75-year-old candy store. 113 W. Hubbard St. 903-730-1050

OLD MILL POND MUSEUM—On Old Mill Pond, this museum features historical treasures and artifacts depicting early American life circa 1850-1950. 2900 S. Main St. 903-881-5103

THE PINK PISTOL—Visit Miranda Lambert's one and only boutique, winery, and pour house. 114 E. North St. 903-882-9305

LINDEN

POP. 1,814

Linden Economic Development Corporation and Linden Area Chamber of Commerce: 201 N. Main St. 903-756-7774; lindentexas.org

This city proclaims itself "Music City Texas" because of its roots. The Music City Texas Theater hosts first-class performers. Events include the Wildflower Trails of Texas, Cass County Championship Rodeo, Big Bird Crawfish Boil, and Winterfest Christmas Parade.

CASS COUNTY COURTHOUSE—This antebellum-style courthouse is the oldest continuously used courthouse in Texas. 100 E. Houston St.

PLEASANT HILL CENTER—Viewable from the outside, this historic Rosenwald School is the only one in Cass County. 2722 FM 1399. 903-826-2495

LIVINGSTON

POP. 5,784

Livingston-Polk County Chamber of Commerce: 1001 US 59 Loop North. 936-327-4929; polkchamber.com

ALABAMA-COUSHATTA INDIAN RESERVATION—It's home to the Alabama-Coushatta Tribe of Texas. Enjoy the casino, camping, fishing, swimming, the annual Pow Wow, and July 4 fireworks and festival. 571 State Park Road 56. 936-563-1100

JONAS DAVIS CABIN—The historic log cabin was relocated downtown. 530 W. Church St.

LAKE LIVINGSTON—The lake has several parks, camps, and marinas with camping, boating, and fishing. Off US 190. 936-365-2292

LAKE LIVINGSTON STATE PARK—The park has a lighted fishing pier, birding, nature trails, a nature center, hiking, biking, camping, and programs. Admission charge. 300 Park Road 65. 936-365-2201

POLK COUNTY MEMORIAL MUSEUM—The museum collects, preserves, and interprets the rich heritage of Polk County. 514 W. Mill St. 936-327-8192

LONGVIEW

POP. 82,531

Visit Longview: 109 W. Tyler St. 903-753-3281; visitlongviewtexas.com

Welcome to Longview—an East Texas regional hub known for blue skies and fish fries. The town boasts The Great Texas Balloon Race and Downtown LIVE concerts. It has outdoor adventures, big trees, parks, biking, and kayaking. Also enjoy Art Walks, wine swirls, arboretum strolls, the symphony, museums, and live theater.

THE GREEN—It offers a walking trail, educational niches, a music garden, and sculptures. SH 31 and Spur 63. 903-237-1270

GREGG COUNTY HISTORICAL MUSEUM—The museum features local history, artifacts, and archeological relics. Admission charge. 214 N. Fredonia St. 903-753-5840

HERITAGE PLAZA—The park portrays Longview's first 100 years on etched walls. It is used for events and performances. 219 E. Methvin St.

J.R. CURTIS MEMORIAL GARDEN FOR THE BLIND—The hands-on learning environment has a pond, ADA sidewalks, and a butterfly garden. 100 Grand Blvd. 903-237-1230

LONGVIEW ARBORETUM—This master-planned, multi-use arboretum celebrates indigenous trees and native flora/fauna. Admission charge. 706 W. Cotton St. 903-212-2181



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LONGVIEW MUSEUM OF FINE ARTS—The museum exhibits works of art and provides educational opportunities. 215 E. Tyler St. 903-753-8103

LONGVIEW WORLD OF WONDERS—The facility lets children imagine, create, and explore in a hands-on educational environment. Admission charge. 112 E. Tyler St. 903-212-4969

R.G. LETOURNEAU MUSEUM—It houses many of the industrialist's business artifacts. Campus tours also are available. 2100 S. Mobberly Ave. 903-233-3260

LUFKIN

POP. 34,152

Lufkin Convention and Visitors Bureau: 601 N. Second St. 936-633-0349; visitlufkin.com

This city is the regional hub of East Texas and is known for miles of forests, beautiful parks and public spaces, arts, and cultural events. Lufkin offers access to a wide range of recreational activities in Angelina National Forest and on Lake Sam Rayburn, one of the nation's top-rated bass fishing lakes.

ANGELINA NATIONAL FOREST—See JASPER.

CASSELS-BOYKIN PARK—It includes an ADA-accessible pier, amphitheater, campsites, and boat ramps. FM 3123. 936-630-3231

DAVY CROCKETT NATIONAL FOREST— Off SH 94. See CROCKETT.

ELLEN TROUT ZOO—The zoo houses wild and exotic creatures from around the world. Admission charge. 402 Zoo Circle. 936-633-0399

HISTORIC DOWNTOWN LUFKIN—The renovated historic downtown area features shops, boutiques, and local restaurants. Free. 113 S. First St. 936-633-0359

THE HISTORY CENTER—Photos and records document East Texas history. Free. 102 N. Temple Drive, Diboll. 936-829-3543

KIWANIS PARK—The park offers soccer, tennis, slides, swings, a shallow water area, walking paths, bridges, waterways, gazebos, and benches. Free. 1117 S. Timberland Drive. 936-899-7444 or 936-633-0250

MUSEUM OF EAST TEXAS—The museum offers visual arts exhibitions, workshops, and children's events. Free. 503 N. Second St. 936-639-4434

NARANJO MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY—It features natural history artifacts and exhibits about ancient cultures, the natural world, and the universe. 5104 S. First St. 936-639-3466

PAWSITIVE ANIMAL ENCOUNTERS LLC—The private zoo offers close interactions with exotic animals like pythons, bearded dragons, tortoises, and fennec foxes. 4719 Peavy Switch Road. 936-404-8227

PINE VALLEY RACEWAY—It features unique drag races with novelty cars, colorful trucks, and crazy gadgets. Admission charge. FM 2497. 936-699-3227 or 936-899-7444

PINES THEATER—The restored art-deco theater hosts concerts, classic movies, and special events. 113 S. First St. 936-633-5454 or 936-633-0349

TEXAS FORESTRY MUSEUM—The museum explores the history of Texas forests and the timber industry. Free. 1905 Atkinson Drive. 936-632-9535

LUMBERTON

POP. 14,045

Lumberton Visitor Center: 826 N. Main St. 409-755-0554; lumbertoncoc.com

Lumberton served area sawmills and logging camps. Annual events include the Village Creek Festival and the Lighted Nighttime Christmas Parade.

BIG THICKET NATIONAL PRESERVE—See KOUNTZE.

VILLAGE CREEK STATE PARK—Enjoy hiking, camping, paddling, fishing, and wildlife viewing. Admission charge. 8854 Park Road 74. 409-755-7322

MAGNOLIA

POP. 3,349

City of Magnolia: 18111 Buddy Riley Blvd. 281-356-2266; cityofmagnolia.com

This is the official host city for the Texas Renaissance Festival and holds Stroll Thru the Renaissance, the Magnolia Showdown BBQ Cook-Off, and other events.

BREWERY—Lone Pint Brewery. See TEXAS BEVERAGE TOUR section.

HISTORIC DEPOT COMPLEX—The complex includes the Magnolia Depot Museum and historical buildings. Donations accepted. 426 Melton St.

TEXAS RENAISSANCE FESTIVAL—The 55-acre village comes alive for nine themed weekends October to December. Admission charge. 21778 FM 1174, Todd Mission. 800-458-3435

MARSHALL

POP. 23,641

Marshall Convention and Visitors Bureau: 110 S. Bolivar St., Suite 101. 903-935-7868; marshalltexas.com

The community has more than 100 historical markers and medallions. Explore the region's industrial past at historical sawmills, iron ore furnaces, and oil derricks. Learn about African American communities, churches, and cemeteries. Marshall celebrates the visual and performing arts year-round.

BRANDY BRANCH RESERVOIR—The lake offers a boat ramp and limited bank fishing. Between Marshall and Longview, off I-20 on FM 3251. 903-935-7868

CADDO LAKE STATE PARK—See JEFFERSON.

GINOCCHIO NATIONAL HISTORIC DISTRICT—Three blocks in old downtown surround the Ginocchio Hotel. 610 N. Washington St. 903-702-7777

HARRISON COUNTY HISTORICAL MUSEUM—Exhibits depict the history of Marshall and Harrison County. In the 1901 Harrison County Courthouse. 903-935-8417

MARSHALL DEPOT AND MUSEUM—The facility includes railroad memorabilia, city artifacts, a gift shop, and an Amtrak ticket counter. 800 N. Washington St. 903-923-5950

MICHELSON ART MUSEUM—It features the work of artist Leo Michelson, early 20th-century artists, and rare African masks. Admission charge. 216 N. Bolivar St. 903-935-9480

STARR FAMILY HOME STATE HISTORIC SITE—The site tells the story of the Starr family and their role in the settlement of Texas. Admission charge. 407 W. Travis St. 903-935-3044

WINERY—Enoch's Stomp Vineyard and Winery. See TEXAS BEVERAGE TOUR section.

MINEOLA

POP. 5,017

Mineola Tourism Department: 300 Greenville Highway. 903-569-6183 or 800-646-3652; mineola.com

In the National Register of Historic Places, Mineola offers shops, restaurants, antiques, museums, the Select Theater, and a 3,000-acre nature preserve. Festivals include the Iron Horse Festival, Fiesta de Mayo, MLOTA's Art Festival and Quilt Show, Music in May, and Magical Mineola (Christmas).

LAKE HAWKINS—Parks offer camping, picnicking, swimming, and fishing. Off FM 14. 903-857-2311

LAKE HOLBROOK—Lakeside parks have camping, picnicking, swimming, and fishing. Off US 69. 903-569-6351

MINEOLA HISTORIC MUSEUM—Exhibits include the Select Theater, Gov. James Hogg, Black history, and the military. Free. 114 N. Pacific St. 903-569-6183

MINEOLA NATURE PRESERVE—The preserve offers birding, hiking, biking, equestrian trails, fishing, an archery range, disc golf, and a playground. 1860 CR 2724. 903-569-6183

MINI TRAIN—The train runs the second and fourth Saturdays April to October, plus during special events. Free. 200 W. Front St. 903-569-6183

RAILROAD MUSEUM—Exhibits showcase the early railroad days in Mineola. Nearby is a restored caboose. 115 W. Front St. 800-646-3652 or 903-569-6183

MONTGOMERY

POP. 2,445

City of Montgomery: 101 Old Plantersville Road. 936-597-6434; montgomerytexas.gov

Montgomery County has been proclaimed the "Birthplace of the Lone Star Flag." The city has many historic homes and buildings. Find a self-guided city tour at the N.H. Davis Museum Complex or area businesses. The city hosts many events throughout the year.

FERNLAND HISTORICAL PARK—A 19th-century village is recreated with historic buildings. 770 Clepper St. 936-597-7764

N.H. DAVIS MUSEUM COMPLEX & MUSEUM—The facility showcases period furnishings and memorabilia in a pioneer home. 308 Liberty St. 936-597-4360

MOUNT PLEASANT

POP. 16,015

Mount Pleasant/Titus County Chamber of Commerce: 1604 N. Jefferson Ave. 903-572-8567; mtleasanttx.com

The historic downtown district hosts specialty shops, tea rooms, a veterans memorial, and the Titus County Courthouse. The town is home to Northeast Texas Community College and the Whitley Center for the Performing Arts.

LAKE BOB SANDLIN—The lake offers marinas, fishing, camping, cabins, and boat ramps. Five miles southwest of Mount Pleasant.

LAKE BOB SANDLIN STATE PARK—Enjoy fishing, boating, hiking, wildlife watching, camping, and fall foliage. Admission charge. 341 State Park Road 2117, Pittsburg. 903-572-5531

MASTER GARDENS NATURE TRAIL—It has demonstration beds, a nature trail, iris beds, bluebird houses, and wetland bogs. 1708 Industrial Road.

MID AMERICA FLIGHT MUSEUM—Boasts a stunning collection of aircraft, from a 1925 Waco Nine to the 1951 Grumman Albatross. 602 Mike Hall Parkway. 903-573-2888

MONTICELLO RESERVOIR—Lake is popular for bass fishing. Titus County Park has a boat ramp, camping, and electrical hookups. Off FM 127. 903-572-8567

MOUNT PLEASANT HISTORICAL MUSEUM—See photographs from the original pioneers, Caddo artifacts, old farm implements, and other items. 213 N. Madison Ave. 903-575-4180

NORTHEAST TEXAS BLUEBIRD TRAIL—The self-guided tour includes an established trail of bluebird nesting places. A map is available at the chamber. 1604 N. Jefferson Ave. 903-572-8567

SWEET SHOP USA CHOCOLATE FACTORY TOUR—Watch as chocolatiers roll, dip, and decorate each truffle by hand. 1316 Industrial Road. 800-222-2269 or 903-575-5505

WELSH RESERVOIR—It features a boat ramp and fishing access. Off FM 1735. 903-572-8567

NACOGDOCHES

POP. 31,990

Nacogdoches Convention and Visitors Bureau: 200 E. Main St. 936-564-7351 or 888-564-7351; visitnacogdoches.org

Nine flags, including those of three abortive republics, flew over Nacogdoches. Numerous landmarks and museums pay tribute to the town's historic past. The city is home to Stephen F. Austin State University. Events include the Azalea Trail, Texas Blueberry Festival, Freedom Fest, and Nine Flags Festival.

BREWERY AND DISTILLERY—Fedonia Brewery and Front Porch Distillery. See TEXAS BEVERAGE TOUR section.

DURST-TAYLOR HISTORIC HOUSE & GARDENS—The home reflects the 1840s-60s, when the Blackburn family lived there. Donations welcome. 304 North St. 936-560-4443

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Davey Dogwood Park in Palestine

LAKE NACOGDOCHES—Parks have boat ramps and a nature trail. Activities are fishing, picnicking, and swimming. Day use only. Off FM 225. 936-559-2960

LAKE NACONICHE—Lake is on Naconiche and Telesco creeks. Off SH 59. 936-559-9038

LANANA CREEK TRAIL—Beginning at Liberty Hall, it follows paths once used by Caddo Indians and Spanish explorers. 805 E. Main St.

MILLARD'S CROSSING HISTORIC VILLAGE—This reconstructed village has a sampling of East Texas architecture. Admission charge. 6020 North St. (US 59 North). 936-564-6631

NACOGDOCHES COUNTY MASTER GARDENERS DEMONSTRATION GARDEN—It includes ornamental gardening, fruit and vegetable production, and turf grass management. Free. East Main Street and University Drive.

OAK GROVE CEMETERY—Four signers of the Texas Declaration of Independence are buried there. 200 N. Lanana St.

OLD NACOGDOCHES UNIVERSITY BUILDING—The museum features education during the 19th century and its time as a Civil War hospital. 515 N. Mound St. 936-569-7292

OLD STONE FORT—The fort includes an exhibit on the house's history. 1808 Alumni Drive, Stephen F. Austin University campus. 936-468-2408

RAILROAD DEPOT—The current depot was built after a fire burned the original building. 101 Old Tyler Road. 936-462-8267

SFA GARDENS—These garden areas are on the campus of Stephen F. Austin State University. 936-468-1832 or 936-468-4129

Pineywoods Native Plant Center—It is home to endangered-plant research and the Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Demonstration Garden. 2900 Raguet St. 936-468-1832 or 936-468-4129

Ruby M. Mize Azalea Garden—The garden has thousands of azaleas from late March to early April. On University Drive. 936-468-1832

Stephen F. Austin Mast Arboretum—It includes 19 acres of rare trees, shrubs, vines, and ground covers, plus a children's garden. Wilson Drive north of the SFA Intramural Fields. 936-468-1832

STERNE-HOYA HOUSE MUSEUM & LIBRARY—The site includes objects from the Victorian era and the Empire period. Donations welcome. 211 S. Lanana St. 936-560-5426

ZION HILL BAPTIST CHURCH HISTORIC SITE—It was built in 1914 and home to one of the oldest African American Baptist congregations in Texas. Free. 324 N. Lanana St. 936-560-4441

NEW LONDON POP. 976

A tragic school explosion occurred in 1937. A cenotaph of Texas granite was placed in front of the new school in 1939.

LONDON MUSEUM AND TEA ROOM—This small museum recalls the horror of the school explosion. Includes a cafe. Admission charge. 10690 S. Main St., Overton. 903-895-4602

NEWTON POP. 1,593

Newton City Hall: 409-379-5061; newtontexas.org

There are several Texas historical markers and medallions throughout the county. Newton County is home to four Great Texas Coastal Birding Trail birding sites. Caney Creek Park features a walking trail around ponds and fountains. W.H. Ford College/Powell Hotel Museum is open by appointment only.

NEWTON COUNTY HISTORY CENTER/MUSEUM/ GENEALOGICAL LIBRARY—It houses the archives, archeology, history, and artifacts of Newton County. 213 E. Court St. 409-379-2109

PALESTINE POP. 18,981

Palestine Visitor Center: 825 Spring St. 903-723-3014 or 800-659-3484; visitpalestine.com

Palestine welcomes you for a getaway from the big city. Make the road trip to enjoy being a passenger aboard the scenic Texas State Railroad. Experience the foodie scene, from fine dining to pub fare. Home to one of Texas' favorite pie stops, Palestine is graced with stately homes, scenic drives, and a Texas friendly welcome.

ANDERSON COUNTY COURTHOUSE—This historical structure features neoclassical architecture and a stained

glass montage in the dome. Free. 500 N. Church St. 903-723-7403

COLUMBIA SCIENTIFIC BALLOON FACILITY—Operated by NASA, the facility launches balloons to study the upper atmosphere and outer space. Tours are available. Free. 1510 E. FM 3224. 903-729-0271

DAVEY DOGWOOD PARK—The 254-acre park has roads, hiking and biking trails, and scenic views. Free. 4205 N. Link St. 903-723-7406

DISTILLERY—Tahwahkaro Distilling Co. See TEXAS BEVERAGE TOUR section.

GUS ENGELING WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT AREA—The area is home to deer, foxes, rabbits, alligators, beavers, coyotes, and birds. It includes fishing and day-use campsites. Free. 16149 US 287 North. 903-928-2251

HISTORIC TEXAS THEATRE—The historical structure of Spanish Colonial architecture is available for tours by appointment. Admission charge. 213 W. Crawford St.

MOUNT VERNON A.M.E. CHURCH—The historical Gothic-style church is one of Texas' Most Endangered Places. Free. 913 Calhoun St. 903-723-3014

OLD TOWN PALESTINE—This vibrant area of the historic district is a must stroll for visitors. Free. 299 E. Crawford St. 903-723-3014

PALESTINE COMMUNITY FOREST AND LAKES—Visitors enjoy fishing, boating, picnicking, and scenic drives. Free. Across from the Palestine Civic Center. 903-723-3014

PALESTINE MAIN STREET DISTRICT—Downtown, Old Town, and Anderson County Square offer historical architecture, shopping, B&Bs, and restaurants. 800-659-3484 or 903-723-3014

PILGRIM CHURCH—The small log structure is an authentic reconstruction of the original 1833 church. 1559 FM 861, Elkhart. Four miles south of Elkhart on FM 861. 903-723-3014

RAILROAD HERITAGE CENTER—Enjoy various exhibits about railroading and the Domis Model RR. Admission charge. 808 W. Oak St. 903-723-3014

THE REDLANDS HOTEL—This historical hotel celebrates the days of railroading in Palestine and is listed in the National Register. 400 N. Queen St. 903-391-1002

SACRED HEART CATHOLIC CHURCH—This Recorded Texas Historic Landmark was built in 1893 using 675,000 hand-molded bricks. Free. 503 N. Queen St. 903-729-2463

TEXAS JAILHOUSE—The art deco-style building, featured in many films, was the county jail for about 55 years. 704 Ave. A. 903-480-0212

TEXAS STATE RAILROAD—It offers vintage steam and diesel excursions between Palestine and Rusk as well as special events. Reservations required. 789 Park Road 70. 855-632-7729

PITTSBURG

POP. 4,416

Pittsburg Chamber of Commerce: 202 Jefferson St. 903-856-3442; pittsburgcampcountychamber.com

This is a heavily timbered area and one of the top 10 peach-producing counties in the state. Blueberries and blackberries also are grown here. Some growers offer pick-your-own opportunities. Visit vintage grocery stores, hardware stores, drugstores, and antiques shops.

THE FARMSTEAD—It features a house, barn, and smokehouse furnished with period antiques. 206 Mount Pleasant St. 903-946-3243

LAKE BOB SANDLIN STATE PARK—See MOUNT PLEASANT.

NORTHEAST TEXAS RURAL HERITAGE CENTER & MUSEUM—Exhibits include artifacts, photos, and documents of local history. 204 W. Marshall St. 903-946-3243

Ezekiel Airship—An airship inspired by the Biblical book of Ezekiel was destroyed on its way to the 1904 St. Louis World's Fair. See a full-size replica.

WINERY—Los Pinos Ranch Vineyards. See TEXAS BEVERAGE TOUR section.

WITNESS PARK AND PRAYER TOWER—The 75-foot tower has four Paccard bells from France. The park has a statue of Jesus washing the disciple Peter's feet. Jefferson and Lafayette streets. 903-856-3442

QUITMAN

POP. 1,983

Greater Quitman Area Chamber of Commerce: 100 Gov. Hogg Parkway (SH 37 South). 903-763-4411; quitmancoc.com

Historical information is available at the chamber.

GOVERNOR JIM HOGG CITY PARK, ARBORETUM AND BOTANICAL GARDENS—Find gardens, trails, historical buildings, and a playground. 100 Hogg Parkway. 903-763-2223

LAKE FORK—It's popular for trophy bass fishing and birding and has boat ramps, marinas, lodges, cabins, and camping. Off FM 2946. 903-878-2262

LAKE QUITMAN—This lake offers marinas, boat ramps, fishing, swimming, picnicking, and camping. Access 4 miles north of Quitman via FM 2966. 903-878-2238

LAKE WINNSBORO—This lake has a marina, boat ramps, fishing, picnicking, and camping. Off SH 37. 903-629-7317

RUSK

POP. 5,433

Rusk Chamber of Commerce: 184 S. Main St. 903-683-4242; ruskchamber.com

Nestled in the heart of the Piney Woods of East Texas is the picturesque town of Rusk. Rusk is rich in history and offers hiking, camping, golf, shopping, historical markers, multiple parks, a museum, and community theater.

BONNER BANK BUILDING—Cherokee County's first bank was established in this building. 208 Henderson St. 903-714-8685

CHEROKEE COUNTY COURTHOUSE—Constructed of native limestone with decorative art-deco grillwork, it has portraits of famous Texans and historical renderings. 135 S. Main St. 903-683-4242

CHEROKEE TRACE ANIMAL SAFARI—The park is home to a variety of wildlife. 1200 CR 4405. 903-683-3322

FAIRCHILD STATE FOREST—Enjoy hiking, horseback riding, picnicking, wildlife viewing, and biking. Off US 84. 903-586-7545

FOOTBRIDGE GARDEN PARK—This wooded setting is home to a 546-foot footbridge built in 1861. One block east of town square. 903-683-4242

HERITAGE CENTER OF CHEROKEE COUNTY—This history museum features the Texas Eastern Penitentiary, books, and artifacts. 208 Henderson St. 903-714-8685

JIM HOGG HISTORIC PARK—It includes Hogg's restored birthplace, museum, family cemetery, hiking trails, and picnic areas. 334 Fire Tower Road. 903-683-2213

SCENIC DRIVE—Several routes near Rusk offer excellent woodland scenery: US 69 both north and south; also FM 347 and FM 747 leading north from US 84 West.

TEXAS STATE RAILROAD—It offers round-trip excursions between Palestine and Rusk as well as special events. Reservations required. 535 Park Road 76. 855-632-7729

WINERY—Maydelle Country Wines. See TEXAS BEVERAGE TOUR section.

SAN AUGUSTINE

POP. 1,885

San Augustine County Chamber of Commerce: 611 W. Columbia St. 936-275-3610; facebook.com/sanaugustinechamber

Visit antiques stores and sample the grapefruit highball at San Augustine Drug. The restored Old Town Well, complete with sweetgum roller, is in the old Stripling drugstore. Events include the April Texas Treasure Heritage Festival, a May PRCA rodeo and Sale on the Trail, a July civic auction, and the October Sassafras Festival.

ANGELINA NATIONAL FOREST—See JASPER.

EZEKIEL W. CULLEN HOME—An early district court judge lived in this Greek Revival-style home. The upper floor is a ballroom. 205 S. Congress St. 936-275-3610

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MISSION DOLORES STATE HISTORIC SITE—Mission Dolores was a Spanish mission built in 1721. It has a campground and picnic area. 701 S. Broadway St. 936-275-3815

SABINE NATIONAL FOREST—See HEMPHILL.

SHENANDOAH

POP. 3,665

Shenandoah Convention and Visitors Bureau: 29955 I-45, 281-292-5953; visitshenandoahTX.com

With quality hotels, five shopping centers, nearly 60 restaurants, and numerous indoor entertainment venues, Shenandoah is located in the greater North Houston/Woodlands area, close to numerous area attractions. Enjoy restaurants and shops at the Portofino Shopping Center, The Sam Moon Center, or Metropark Square.

HERITAGE MUSEUM OF MONTGOMERY COUNTY—See CONROE.

MONTGOMERY COUNTY PRESERVE—Site offers bird-watching, native plant observation, and hiking. Free. 1122 Pruitt Road, Spring. 281-367-3977

W.G. JONES STATE FOREST—See CONROE.

SILSBEE

POP. 6,864

Silsbee Chamber of Commerce: 545 N. Fifth St. 409-385-5562; silsbeecoc.com or cityofsilsbee.com

Events include Cruisin' Silsbee, Christmas in the Big Thicket, Christmas Lighted Parade, Village Creek Classic Fun Fest, an annual golf tournament, Fashion Forward, and #savethepinies events and fundraisers.

BIG THICKET CANOE TRIPS—Take a trip of three hours to three days in the national preserve. 409-385-5562

BIG THICKET NATIONAL PRESERVE—See KOUNTZE.

ICEHOUSE MUSEUM AND CULTURAL CENTER—The museum features memorabilia of Hardin County and Silsbee. View shows by local artists. 818 Earnest Ave. 409-385-2444

ROY E. LARSEN SANDYLAND SANCTUARY—It is an American Bird Conservancy Globally Important Bird Area. Six miles of trails offer hiking and nature study. Free. 4208 SH 327 West. 409-658-2888

VETERANS' MEMORIAL PARK—Honors those from Hardin County who served in the military. On Ernest Avenue. 409-385-2863

VILLAGE CREEK STATE PARK—See LUMBERTON.

TATUM

POP. 1,364

Tatum Economic Development Corporation: 903-947-6403; tatumtexas.com

Find excellent fishing in nearby lakes and streams, as well as woodland hunting. Travel Rusk County roads' wildflower trail from mid-April through May. Events include the Pecan Pie Festival and the Jingle Bell Bop & Shop.

MARTIN CREEK LAKE STATE PARK—The park has a fishing pier, boat ramps, hiking, biking, camping, RV sites, and winter fishing tournaments. Admission charge. 9515 CR 2181D. 903-836-4336

TEXARKANA

POP. 35,778

Texarkana Chamber of Commerce: 819 N. State Line Ave. 903-792-7191; texarkana.org or mainstreettexarkana.org

Texarkana straddles the border of Texas and Arkansas, and a photo island on State Line Avenue lets people stand with one foot in each state. The city is home to Texarkana College and Texas A&M University-Texarkana. Look for the Scott Joplin mural at Third and Main streets and Corinne Griffith mural at 201 E. Broad St.

ACE OF CLUBS HOUSE—The elegant Italianate-Victorian house is furnished as a living museum. 420 Pine St. 903-793-4831

FOUR STATES AUTO MUSEUM—See a collection of autos and transportation equipment. Free. 217 Laurel St. 870-772-2886

KRESS GAP—The mural park was created by local artists. 116 W. Broad St. 903-792-7191



Visit Tyler

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VisitTyler.com

PATRICK J. AHERN HOUSE—The Classical Revival-style home is a living history museum. Admission charge. 403 Laurel St. 903-793-4831

PEROT THEATRE—This neo-Renaissance theater was restored to its original royal blue and gilt splendor. 221 Main St. 903-792-4992

REGIONAL ARTS CENTER—It features national touring, juried, and invitational art exhibitions. Free to view exhibits. 321 W. Fourth St. 903-792-8681

TEXARKANA MUSEUM OF REGIONAL HISTORY—See archeological, pioneer, and Caddo artifacts, plus early medical and farm tools. Admission charge. 219 State Line Ave. 903-793-4831

TEXAS TRAVEL INFORMATION CENTER—It's operated by TxDOT. Professional travel counselors provide travel information, brochures, and trip-planning assistance. 1200 W. I-30. 903-794-2114 or 800-452-9292

WINERY—Red Road Vineyard and Winery. See TEXAS BEVERAGE TOUR section.

THE WOODLANDS

POP. 114,436

Visit The Woodlands: 2801 Technology Forest Blvd. 281-367-1151; visitthewoodlands.com

In The Woodlands, find concerts at the award-winning Cynthia Woods Mitchell Pavilion as well as upscale shopping, waterfront restaurants, luxury accommodations, and top-tier amenities in a walkable environment.

PLAY STREET MUSEUM—This interactive museum experience puts kids in the heart of an imaginary town. Admission charge. 207 E. Shore Drive, Suite 190.

RIVA ROW BOAT HOUSE—Rent single and tandem kayaks, paddleboards, water bikes, and swan boats. Admission charge. 2101 Riva Row. 281-210-3965

TEXAS TREEVENTURES—This outdoor aerial adventure course includes a series of poles, cables, and other elements. Admission charge. 6464 Creekside Forest Drive. 281-210-2048

THE WOODLANDS CHILDREN'S MUSEUM—It provides multiethnic and multicultural experiences for children of all backgrounds. 4775 W. Panther Creek Drive. 281-465-0955

TYLER

POP. 109,286

Visit Tyler: 110 N. College Ave. 903-593-6905; visittyler.com

The city, best known for its roses, is the site of Texas College, the University of Texas at Tyler, and Tyler Junior College. The Texas Rose Festival celebrates rose season each year in October. Other events include the Azalea & Spring Flower Trail, the East Texas State Fair, Azalea District Trail of Lights, and Red Dirt BBQ & Music Festival.

AMERICAN FREEDOM MUSEUM—It features hundreds of military artifacts, a Hall of Freedom, and a Hall of Presidents. Admission charge. 1051 N. Houston St., Bullard. 903-894-5252

BREWRIES, DISTILLERY, AND WINERY—The Distillery at Kiepersol, ETX Brewing Co., Kiepersol Vineyards and Winery, and True Vine Brewing Co. See TEXAS BEVERAGE TOUR section.

CALDWELL ZOO—This 85-acre park features animals from three continents in natural habitats. 2203 Martin Luther King Drive. 903-593-0121

CAMP FANNIN WORLD WAR II MEMORIAL—This unique monument honors U.S. armed forces veterans who served during World War II. 11937 US 271. 903-592-5993

CAMP FORD HISTORICAL PARK—It includes a park, a history kiosk, a walking trail with signage, and a reconstructed POW cabin. Free. 6500 US 271. 903-592-5993

CHARWOOD RESIDENTIAL HISTORICAL DISTRICT—It includes Tudor Revival, Classical Revival, Colonial, Craftsman, and Queen Anne homes. 110 E. Charnwood St. 903-595-1960

DISCOVERY SCIENCE PLACE—This children's math and science museum includes hands-on learning. Admission charge. 308 N. Broadway Ave. 903-533-8011

THE EARTH & SPACE SCIENCE CENTER FEATURING HUDNALL PLANETARIUM—It encourages an interest in science education, with hands-on science exhibits and large-screen movies. 1411 E. Lake St. 903-510-2312

GOODMAN-LEGRAND HOUSE & MUSEUM—Antebellum landmark revives the past with original furnishings and memorabilia dating to the mid-1800s. 624 N. Broadway Ave. 903-531-1286

HISTORIC AVIATION MEMORIAL MUSEUM—It holds aviation memorabilia and aircraft. Admission charge. 150 Airport Drive. 903-526-1945

LAKES TYLER AND TYLER EAST—These adjacent lakes include marinas, boat ramps, and parks for fishing and boating. Call ahead about water levels. Off SH 110. 903-939-2724

MUNICIPAL ROSE GARDEN & MUSEUM—It features more than 500 varieties. Roses are at their peak May through November. 420 Rose Park Drive. 903-531-1212

Tyler Rose Museum—The museum features exhibits on the rose-growing industry and Rose Festival history. Admission charge. 420 Rose Park Drive. 903-597-3130

PLANTATION PINES—Enjoy picking tulips in the spring; pumpkins and hayrides in the fall; and hayrides, a gift shop, and Christmas trees in winter. 10098 County Road 429. 903-253-3143

SMITH COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY'S MUSEUM & ARCHIVES—The facility exhibits artifacts from Smith County's historical, social, and economic culture. Donations accepted. 125 S. College Ave. 903-592-5993

TYLER MUSEUM OF ART—Museum hosts 19th- and 20th-century art and photography, a cafe, and gift shop. 1300 S. Mahon Ave. 903-595-1001

TYLER NATURE CENTER—TEXAS PARKS AND WILDLIFE—The center provides a natural setting for area birds and animals, including wetlands, grasslands, and ponds. 11942 FM 848. 903-566-1626, ext. 211

TYLER STATE PARK—Enjoy hiking, biking, boating, fishing, swimming, scuba diving, camping, and fall and spring colors. Admission charge. 789 Park Road 16. 903-597-5338

UNCERTAIN

POP. 83

Uncertain City Hall: 903-789-3443; cityofuncertain.com

The town evolved from fishing camps and resort operations around scenic Caddo Lake. Several antiques shops and an art gallery are around the lake, as are fishing guides. B&B accommodations are available.

CADDO LAKE—It has 42 miles of marked "boat roads." Fishing is popular. Camps and marinas are at lakeside, including at Caddo Lake State Park.

CADDO LAKE BOAT TOURS—Don't leave Uncertain without seeing Caddo Lake from the water. 903-789-3443

CADDO LAKE NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE—Enjoy wildlife watching, hunting, hiking, biking, an auto-tour route, and horseback riding. Zeugner Drive. 903-679-9143

CADDO LAKE STATE PARK—See JEFFERSON.

CAPTAIN RON'S SWAMP TOURS—Explore Caddo Lake and hear its history. Admission charge. 756 Pine Island Road. 903-679-3020

WASKOM

POP. 1,933

Waskom is off I-20 next to the Louisiana border.

T.C. LINDSEY & CO.—Part old-fashioned general store and part museum, it has been used in several Disney films. 2293 FM 134, Jonesville. 903-687-3382

TEXAS TRAVEL INFORMATION CENTER—It's operated by TxDOT. Professional travel counselors provide travel information, brochures, and trip-planning assistance. 1255 N. I-20 East. 903-687-2547 or 800-452-9292

WOODVILLE

POP. 2,415

Tyler County Chamber of Commerce: 717 W. Bluff St. 409-283-2632; visittylercounty.com

HERITAGE VILLAGE MUSEUM—The museum features buildings, shops, and homes from pioneer days to the Roaring '20s. Admission charge. On US 190. 409-283-2272 or 800-323-0389

SHIVERS LIBRARY AND MUSEUM—Mementos and historical documents from former Gov. Allan Shivers' administration are displayed. Woodville's public library is also here. Admission charge. 302 N. Charlton St. 409-283-3709

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TEXAS BEVERAGE TOUR

TOAST, TASTE, AND TOUR YOUR WAY ACROSS THE STATE'S ALCOHOLIC OFFERINGS

Visiting one of the state's growing number of wineries, breweries, or distilleries provides a chance to go beyond the bottle and gain a greater appreciation for the drink in your glass. When sitting down for a tasting, visitors can get a description of their drink and may also learn about the people who crafted it. Taking a tour will enhance your experience—getting a glimpse behind the scenes

offers an understanding of the process that creates these tasty beverages. All of the businesses listed in this section offer tours. It's best to touch base before traveling, as tours may fill up quickly, require reservations, or may be held only on specific days at certain times. Check with the visitor's center of any cities you plan to visit for additional opportunities that aren't listed here.

BIG BEND COUNTRY

Marfa Spirit Co., Marfa
432-426-6651
themarfaspirit.com

Val Verde Winery, Del Rio
830-775-9714
valverdewinery.com

Zin Valle Vineyards, Canutillo
915-877-4544
zinvalle.com

GULF COAST

Giant Texas, Houston
713-670-3003
gianttexas.com

Clear Creek Vineyard, Kemah
281-334-8300
clearcreekvineyard.com

Clutch Distilling, Houston
281-352-4572
clutchdistilling.com

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Eureka Heights Brew Co., Houston
832-953-4677
eurekaheights.com

Galveston Bay Brewing, League City
281-339-3210
galvestonbaybrewing.com

Gulf Breeze Winery, Victoria
361-550-1086
gulfbreezewinery.com

Holler Brewing Co., Houston
832-781-0555
hollerbeer.com

Karbach Brewing Company, Houston
713-680-8886
karbachbrewing.com

Lazy Beach Brewing, Corpus Christi
361-693-5347
lazybeachbrewing.com

No Label Brewing Co., Katy
281-693-7545
nolabelbrew.com

Railean Distillers, League City
713-545-2742
railean.com

Rebel Toad Brewing Co., Corpus Christi
361-444-6744
rebeltoadbrewing.com

Saint Arnold Brewing Company, Houston
713-686-9494
saintarnold.com

Saloon Door Brewing, Webster
281-332-5800
saloondoorbrewing.com

Texas South Wind Vineyard & Winery, Refugio
361-526-4662
texassouthwind.com

Vallensons' Brewing Company, Pearland
vallensons.com

Yellow Rose Distilling, Houston
281-886-8757
yellowrosedistilling.com

Yopez Vineyard, Baytown
281-804-3410
yopezvineyard.com

HILL COUNTRY

12 Fox Beer Co., Dripping Springs
512-626-4458
12foxbeer.com

Acopon Brewing Co., Dripping Springs
acoponbrewing.com

Altstadt Brewery, Fredericksburg
830-304-2337
altstadtbeer.com

Andalusia Whiskey, Blanco
830-507-4359
andalusiawhiskey.com

Augusta Vin Winery and Vineyards, Fredericksburg
830-307-1007
augustavin.com

The Austin Beer Garden Brewing Co., Austin
512-298-2242
theabgb.com

Austin Beerworks, Austin
512-821-2494
austinbeerworks.com

The Austin Winery, Austin
512-326-1445
theaustinwinery.com

Banner Distilling Co., Manor
512-815-2326
bannerdistilling.com

Basement Brewers of Texas, Kerrville
830-955-5073
basementbrewersoftexas.com

Becker Vineyards, Stonewall
830-644-2681
beckervineyards.com

Bell Springs Winery, Dripping Springs
512-643-7398
bellspringswinery.com

Bending Branch Winery, Comfort
830-995-2948
bendingbranchwinery.com

Blue Owl Brewing, Austin
512-593-1262
blueowlbrewing.com

Carter Creek Winery Resort & Spa, Johnson City
877-232-0138
cartercreek.com

Crowded Barrel Whiskey Co., Austin
512-850-9622
crowdedbarrelwhiskey.com

Desert Door Texas Sotol, Driftwood
512-829-6129
desertdoor.com

Dodging Duck Brewhaus, Boerne
830-248-3825
dodgingduck.com

Dripping Springs Distilling, Dripping Springs
512-858-1199
drippingspringsdistilling.com

Duchman Family Winery, Driftwood
512-858-1470
duchmanwinery.com

Fall Creek Vineyards, Tow
325-379-5361
fcv.com

Fast Friends Brewing Co., Austin
fastfriendsbeer.com

Fierce Whiskers Distillery, Austin
512-537-5779
fiercewhiskers.com

Free Roam Brewing Company, Boerne
830-582-9741
freeroambrewing.com

Garrison Brothers Distillery, Hye
512-381-3155 or 830-392-0246
garrisonbros.com

Genius Liquids, Austin
512-710-7907
geniusliquids.com

Grape Creek Vineyards, Fredericksburg
830-644-2710
grapecreek.com

Hawk's Shadow Estate Winery, Dripping Springs
866-551-9463
hawksshadow.com

Hye Meadow Winery, Hye
830-308-8551
hyemeadow.com

Independence Brewing Co., Austin
512-707-0099
independencebrewing.com

Infamous Brewing Company, Austin
512-487-8786
infamousbrewing.com

Jester King Brewery, Austin
512-900-1820
jesterkingbrewery.com

Hill Country Spirits, Kerrville
830-895-4233
kerrvillehillswinery.com

Kuhlman Cellars, Stonewall
830-461-7003
kuhlmancellars.com

Live Oak Brewing Company, Austin
512-385-2299
liveoakbrewing.com

Middleton Brewing, San Marcos
512-847-3435
middletonbrewingtx.com

Milam & Greene Whiskies, Blanco
830-833-3033
milamandgreenewhiskey.com

Pedernales Cellars, Stonewall
830-644-2037
pedernalescellars.com

Perissos Vineyards and Winery, Burnet
512-820-2950
perissosvineyards.com

Real Ale Brewing Company, Blanco
830-833-2534
realalebrewing.com

TEXAS WINE AND SPIRIT TRAILS

WINE TRAILS

WESTERN REGION

High Plains Wine & Vine Trail
highplainswinetrail.com

CENTRAL REGION

Dripping Wine Trail
drippingwinetrail.com

Fredericksburg Wine Road 290
wineroad290.com

Stagecoach—The Texas Wine Trail
stagecoachtexaswinetrail.com

Texas Hill Country Wineries
texashillcountrywineries.org

Way Out Wineries
wayoutwineries.org

NORTHERN REGION

North Texas Wine Country
northtexaswine.com

Piney Woods Wine Trail
pineywoodswinetrail.com

Red River Valley Wine Trail
redrivervalleywinetrail.com

Urban Wine Trail
grapevinetexasusa.com/wine/
urban-wine-trail

SOUTHEAST REGION

Sam Houston Wine Trail
samhoustonwinetrail.com

Texas Bluebonnet Wine Trail
texasbluebonnetwinetrail.com

Texas Independence Wine Trail
texasindependence
winetrail.com

BEER AND SPIRIT TRAILS

Austin Ale Trail
ataletrail.com

Distillery Trail
distillerytrail.com/directory-
distillery/locations/texas

Hill Country Craft Beer Trail
hillcountrycraftbeertrail.com

Fort Worth Ale Trail
fortworth.com/aletrail

Texas Whiskey Trail
texaswhiskeytrail.com

REMEMBER TO
DRINK RESPONSIBLY

There are consequences for having a drink or two and then getting behind the wheel of a car. These can affect quality of life—for you and others—as well as your bank account. TxDOT urges people who have been drinking to use a ride-sharing app, hail a taxi, take public transit, or designate a sober driver—someone who has not been drinking.

TEXAS BEVERAGE TOUR

Revolution Spirits, Austin
512-358-1203
revolutionspirits.com

Rivenburgh Wine, Kerrville
830-895-4233
roughhousebrewing.com

Roughhouse Brewing, San Marcos
512-667-7000
roughhousebrewing.com

Rustic Spur Vineyards, Fredericksburg
512-988-1910
rusticspurvineyards.com

Save the World Brewing Co., Marble Falls
830-637-7654
stwbrewing.com

Singing Water Vineyards, Comfort
830-457-9006
singingwatervineyards.com

Sister Creek Vineyards, Sisterdale
830-324-6704
sistercreekvineyards.com

Solaro Estate Winery, Dripping Springs
832-660-8642
solaroestate.com

Spicewood Vineyards, Spicewood
830-693-5328
spicewoodvineyards.com

St. Elmo Brewing Co., Austin
737-300-1965
stelmobrewing.com

Still Austin Whiskey Co., Austin
512-276-2700
stillaustin.com

Texas Legato, Lampasas
512-556-9600
texaslegatowinery.net

Texas Sake Company, Austin
512-344-9127
txsake.com

Treaty Oak, Dripping Springs
512-387-5822
treatyoakdistilling.com

Turtle Creek Olives & Vines, Kerrville
830-777-9501
turtlecreekvineyard.com

Tusculum Brewing Co., Boerne
830-428-0596
tusculum.beer

Vista Brewing, Driftwood
512-766-1842
vistabrewingtx.com

Westcave Cellars, Johnson City
512-431-1403
westcavecellars.com

Whitestone Brewery, Cedar Park
512-765-4828
whitestonebrewery.com

PANHANDLE PLAINS

Bingham Family Vineyards, Meadows
806-585-6616
binghamfamilyvineyards.com

Christoval Winery, Christoval
325-315-8077
christovalvineyards.com

English Newsom Cellars, Lubbock
806-863-2704
englishnewsom.com

Horseshoe Bend Cellars Vineyard & Winery, Iowa Park
940-855-2093
horseshoebendcellars.com

Llano Estacado Winery, Lubbock
806-745-2258
llanowine.com

McPherson Cellars, Lubbock
806-687-9463
mcphersoncellars.com

PINEY WOODS

B-52 Brewing Co., Conroe
936-447-4677
b52brewing.com

Bartletts Distillery, Conroe
936-873-8000
facebook.com/bartlettsdistillery

Briar Creek Vineyards, Whitehouse
903-530-0286
briarcreekvineyards.com

Bruno & George Winery, Sour Lake
409-963-8235
brunoandgeorge.com

Copperhead Brewery, Conroe
281-919-6134
copperheadbrewery.com

The Distillery at Kiepersol, Tyler
903-894-8995
kiepersol.com/distillery

Enoch's Stomp Vineyard and Winery, Harleton
903-240-1587
enochsstomp.com

ETX Brewing Co., Tyler
903-630-7720
etxbrew.com

Fredonia Brewery, Nacogdoches
936-305-5125
fredoniabrewery.com

Front Porch Distillery, Nacogdoches
936-564-3999
frontporchdistillery.com

Kiepersol Cellars Vineyards and Winery, Tyler
903-894-8995
kiepersol.com

Lone Pint Brewery, Magnolia
713-304-5069
lonepint.com

Los Pinos Ranch Vineyards, Pittsburg
903-855-1769
lospinosranchvineyards.com

Maydelle Country Wines, Rusk
903-795-3915
maydellewines.com

O'Farrell Country Vineyards, Atlanta
903-846-2054
ofarrellvineyard.com

Red Road Vineyard and Winery, Naples and Texarkana
903-897-9353 or 903-219-7581
redroadwine.com

Southern Star Brewing Co., Conroe
936-224-5848
southernstarbrewing.com

Tahwahkaro Distilling Co., Palestine
903-231-5464
tahwahkaro.com

True Vine Brewing Co., Tyler
903-600-0125
truevinebrewing.com

PRAIRIES AND LAKES

903 Brewers, Sherman
903-487-0910
903brewers.com

AFT Distillery, Luling
281-883-3846
aftdistillery.com

Arché, Saint Jo
940-900-9463
archewines.com

Balcones Distilling, Waco
254-755-6003
balconesdistilling.com

Bare Arms Brewing, Waco
254-759-8480
barearms.beer

Barrow Brewing Company, Salado
254-947-3544
barrowbrewing.com

Bendt Distilling, Lewisville
214-814-0545
bendtdistillery.com

Bernhardt Winery, Plantersville
936-894-9829
bernhardtwinery.com

Blackwater Draw Brewing Co., Bryan
979-704-6191
blackwaterbrew.com

Blue Ostrich Winery & Vineyard, Saint Jo
940-995-3100
blueostrich.net

Brazos Valley Brewing Co., Brenham
979-353-5361
brazosvalleybrewery.com

Brotherwell Brewing, Waco
254-301-7152
brotherwell.com

Brennan Vineyards, Comanche
325-356-9100
brennanvineyards.com

Chapelton Vineyards, Brenham
979-330-7641
chapeltonvineyards.com

Community Beer Company, Dallas
214-751-7921
communitybeer.com

Country Spring Vineyard and Wine Garden, Lorena
254-366-2681
countryspringvineyard.com

Dancing Bee Winery, Rogers
254-983-2899
dancingbeewinery.com

Denton County Brewing Company, Denton
940-435-0710
dentoncbc.com

Eden Hill Vineyard, Celina
214-850-4081
edenhill.com

Firestone & Robertson Distillery, Fort Worth
817-709-4008
frdistilling.com

Franconia Brewing Company, McKinney
972-542-0705
franconiabrewingcompany.com

Homestead Vineyard & Winery at Ivanhoe
903-583-4281
homesteadwinery.com

Ironroot Republic Distilling, Denison
903-337-0495
ironrootrepublic.com

Ivanhoe Ale Works, Denison
903-464-0030
ivanhoealeworks.com

Lakewood Brewing Company, Garland
972-864-2337
lakewoodbrewing.com

Landon Winery, Greenville
903-454-7878
landonwinery.com



Rohan Meadery in La Grange

Lenoir-Sage Vineyard, Bells
903-821-6773
lenoir-sagevineyards.com

Lost Oak Winery, Burleson
817-426-6625
lostoakwinery.com

Messina Hof Winery & Resort, Bryan
979-778-9463
messinahof.com

Neighbors Place Winery, Bonham
469-885-9463
npwinery.com

ODD Muse Brewing Company, Farmers Branch
214-200-3172
oddmusebrewing.com

Peticolas Brewing Company, Dallas
214-234-7600
peticolasbrewing.com

Rahr & Sons Brewing Company, Fort Worth
817-810-9266
rahrbrewing.com

Red Caboose Vineyard and Winery, Meridian
254-435-9911 or 254-675-0099
redcaboosewinery.com

Revolver Brewing, Granbury
817-736-8034
revolverbrewing.com/granbury

Rio Brazos Distillery, College Station
979-703-7935
boxcarwhiskey.com

Rohan Meadery, La Grange
979-249-5652
blissfulfollyfarm.com

Saddlehorn Winery, Brenham
979-289-3858
saddlehornwinery.com

Salado Winery Company, Salado
254-947-8011
saladowinery.com

San Martiño Winery & Vineyards, Rockwall
469-367-9417
sanmartinowinery.com

Southern Roots Brewing Company, Waco
254-732-2309
southernrootsbrewingco.com

Spoetzi Brewery, Shiner
361-594-3852
tours.shiner.com

Tara Vineyard & Winery, Athens
903-675-7023
tarawinery.com

Times Ten Cellars, Dallas
214-824-9463
timestencellars.com

Trinity River Distillery, Fort Worth
817-841-2837
silverstarspirits.com

Tupps Brewery, McKinney
214-856-7996
tuppsbrewery.com

Valley Mills Vineyards, Waco
254-848-4343
valleymillsvineyards.com

Western Son Distillery, Pilot Point
940-324-0008
westernsondistillery.com

Windmills, The Colony
972-777-6770
windmills-usa.com

SOUTH TEXAS PLAINS

Ancestral Crafts Spirits Distillery, Roma
956-844-3048
blasfemustx.com

Devils River Distillery, San Antonio
devilsriverwhiskey.com

Freetail Brewing Co., San Antonio
210-625-6000
freetailbrewing.com

Maverick Distilling, San Antonio
maverickwhiskey.com

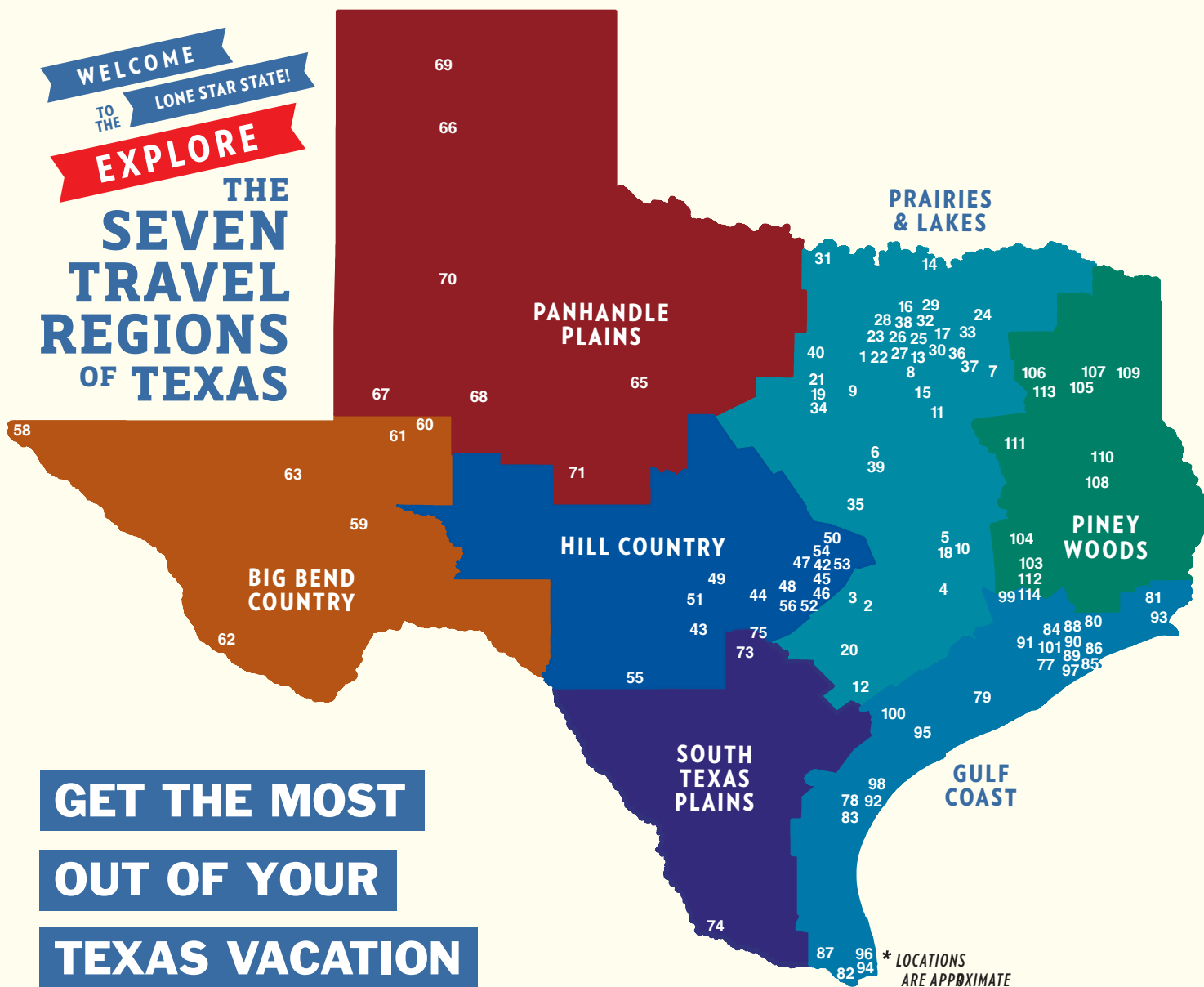
Poteet Country Winery, Poteet
830-276-4440
poteetwine.com

Ranger Creek Brewing & Distilling, San Antonio
210-339-2282
drinkrangercreek.com

Rebecca Creek Distillery, San Antonio
830-714-4581
rebeccacreekdistillery.com

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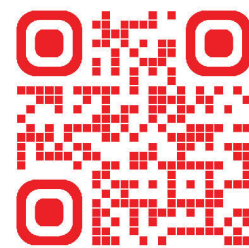
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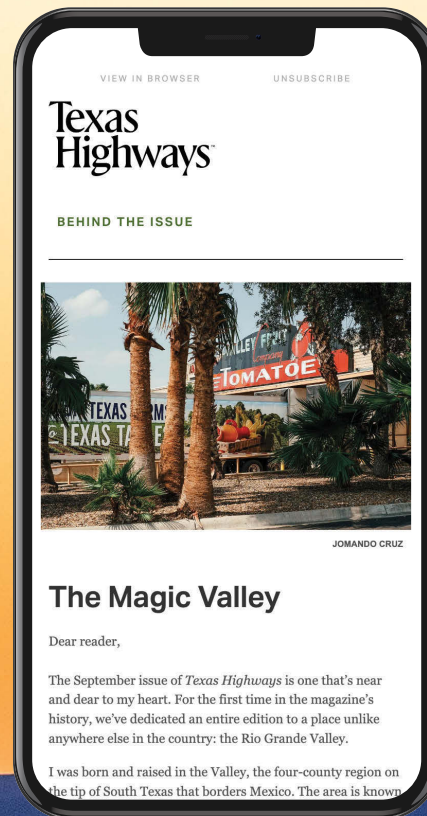
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