

FROM THE PUBLISHERS OF TEXAS HIGHWAYS MAGAZINE

TEXAS STATE -★- Travel Guide



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 Texas Department of Transportation



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

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From the remote mountains of Big Bend to the dense forests of the Piney Woods, and the warm waters of the Gulf Coast to the refreshing rivers of the Hill Country, Texas boasts an enticing array of landscapes to explore. As any longtime Texan will tell you, there is no better way to experience the vastness and diversity of the state than behind the wheel of your car. Encompassing 254 counties and 268,597 square miles, the country's second-largest state offers a seemingly endless number of routes and itineraries. Whether you want to explore the region's rich history, experience its diverse cultural offerings, or dine at nationally acclaimed restaurants, the Lone Star State rewards every kind of traveler.

In addition to listings for more than 2,400 attractions in nearly 500 cities, the 2024 Travel Guide includes themed and regional road-trip itineraries. Opportunities for adventure abound: Explore canyons in the Panhandle, embrace small-town life, seek year-round opportunities for wildflower viewing, learn about Texas' freedom colonies, or enjoy the solitude at one of our more remote state parks. Gas up your car, prep your favorite tunes, and get ready to be inspired by the open road.

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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 2024 Texas State Travel Guide and Texas Official Travel Map covers feature the Kilgore College Rangerettes, pioneers in dancing drill teams since 1940. Take in a half-time performance or visit the Rangerette Showcase & Museum in Kilgore.

The photos are the work of Bowie-based photographer Dave Shafer. More of his photographs showcasing East Texas can be seen at texashighways.com/easttexas.

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

Texas Department of Public Safety
dps.texas.gov

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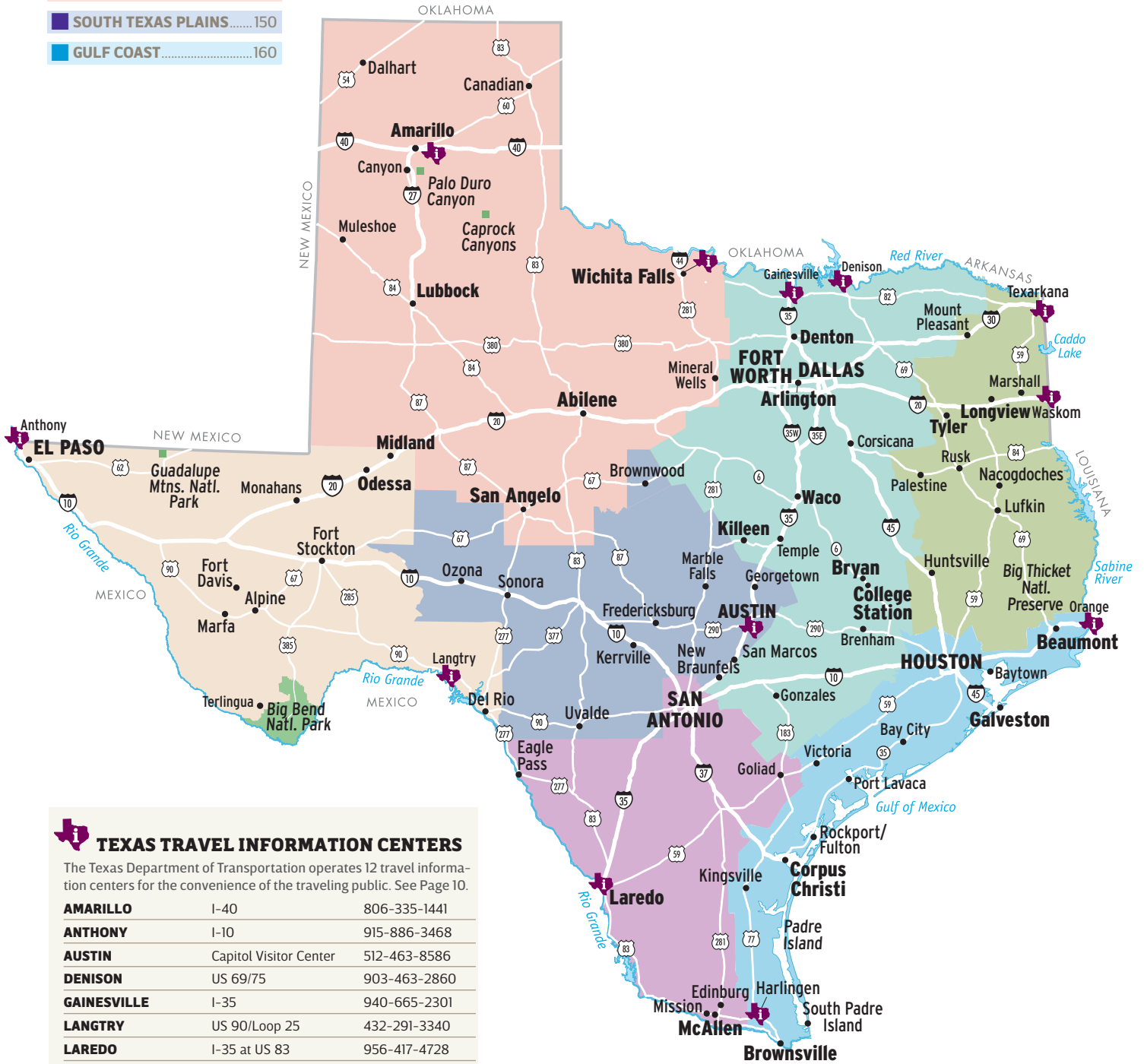
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TRAVELING ACROSS TEXAS

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



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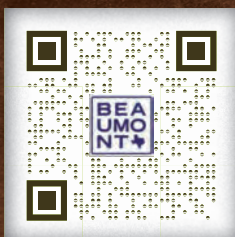
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Travel Information



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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 nationally. 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 numbered highways. Speed limits on Texas highways, especially urban freeways, may be reduced because of their individual operating characteristics. Limits apply to both cars and trucks for both day and night. 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. Visit txtag.org to view locations of toll roads and for information on payment forms accepted.

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.



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.

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—For more than 35 years, 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 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.

ACCOMMODATIONS—Consider making your stay in Texas even more memorable by selecting from some of the more unique options for lodging.

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 a cabin at Sea Rim State Park, but you will want to plan far in advance for a weekend stay. You might even decide to make your whole vacation into a stay at a dude ranch or nature preserve. 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 in *Texas Highways* magazine, texashighways.com. Search under Destinations for a curated list of places to stay in the state's most popular cities and towns. For a guide on camping, visit texashighways.com/camping.

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 options. 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.

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

Kerrville Bus Co.
coachusa.com/kerrville-bus-company

Megabus megabus.com

Valley Transit Co. valleytransitcompany.com

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



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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

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
explorergv.com

North East Texas Tourism Council
visitorsnortheasttexas.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 • ttia.org





Small Towns, Big Heart

*With a slower pace and stunning scenery,
rural Texas welcomes the curious traveler*

The state of Texas claims four of the most populous cities in the nation—Houston, San Antonio, Dallas, and Austin—where world-class cuisine, entertainment, and sporting events abound. If you’ve never been, by all means, visit these places. You won’t be disappointed. But the beauty of visiting Texas is that you can experience country living just as easily as you can feel the frenetic buzz of the big city. Those who venture outside the metros are in for a treat; rural Texas is where you can find the best chicken-fried steak you’ve ever eaten, stunning state parks that offer adventures from mountaintops to seafloors, and the coolest hole-in-the-wall music venue you’ve never heard of. Fill up the gas tank and break out of the city limits—there’s a lot to find out here if you’re willing to look.

STRAWN

POPULATION EST. 600

If you sneeze hard enough, you might just blow right past the small North Texas town of Strawn. “That’s what I always tell people,” says Cody Doyle, whose family has lived in and around the community for the past few decades. He’s talking while waiting

tables at Mary’s Cafe, a small stone facade building known for its legendary chicken-fried steak.

Opened in 1986 by owner Mary Stretter, it’s the only restaurant in town, unless you count the Greyhound Pac-and-Sac, a convenience store where locals occasionally hang out and grill burgers out back. Mary’s has long welcomed hungry travelers visiting nearby Possum Kingdom Lake, and the oversize chicken-fried steak has been the town’s main claim to fame.

That is, until now.

Strawn, incorporated in 1940, began serving as a set location for *Yellowstone* creator and Texas native Taylor Sheridan’s new Paramount+ show *Lawmen: Bass Reeves*, which takes place in the late 1800s. The town’s quiet, rustic downtown was an ideal spot for Sheridan to create the fictional town of Checotah, where visitors can find leftover props, like fake caskets, strewn throughout the streets. But Strawn is on the cusp of something much bigger than a television cameo—it’s set to house the only entrance into the much-anticipated Palo Pinto Mountains State Park, the first state park to open in North Texas in 25 years. The park is expected to welcome visitors in 2024. It will

encompass nearly 5,000 acres of land for hiking, camping, fishing, and other outdoor activities around Lake Tucker, which has provided the city’s water for decades.

“I’m sure there are some folks who like the town as it is, but we did this with Strawn’s growth in mind,” says Daniel Miller, who grew up in Strawn and now serves as the city administrator.

The City Council signed a 99-year lease with the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department for recreation rights on the water, agreeing that TPWD won’t open another entrance to the new park on the property around Lake Tucker. TPWD expects an estimated 100,000 visitors annually—meaning Strawn is about to see an unprecedented spike in traffic.

“This is the most excitement we’ve had out here in a long time,” Doyle says.

Currently, the town only has one formal place of lodging aside from Airbnb listings. The Watson House, a historic 5,400-square-foot mansion built in 1919 by an early town settler, offers private rooms or the whole house for rent. But when the park opens up, Miller says the town is bound to grow: “The new park will offer many opportunities, and there’s a lot we hope will happen.” —*Danielle Lopez*



TRADITIONS

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ALBERT

POPULATION EST. 7

Before you even set foot in Albert's dance hall, you'll hear live music emanating from the 100-year-old tin-covered building. The space is surrounded by acres of farmland and comes alive nightly with country music—whether it's a pickers' circle of local musicians or a live show from the likes of progressive country singer Gary P. Nunn. Couples and families two-step on the dance floor and then grab a drink from the icehouse next door or a burger from the on-site Cowboy Cantina food truck. In the backyard, folks hang out under the 600-year-old majestic oak tree.

Michael Miller, general manager of The Albert Dancehall & Icehouse, says most of his weekday clientele are regulars from nearby Hill Country towns such as Stonewall, Blanco, Fredericksburg, and Johnson City. On weekends, though, tourists visiting nearby wineries or escaping the bustle of crowded cities pop in. Lucky ones nab the renovated one-bedroom cabin across from the dance hall, rented out by Cozi Vacation Rentals, a Hill Country-based company.

"On weekends, most of our local clientele don't even bother stopping by," he says. "They see 100 cars in the parking lot, and they know, 'Well I don't get my same spot at the bar I've been sitting at for 30 years.'"

Albert sits a short drive down US 290 from Luckenbach, the famed town crafted by the late self-proclaimed mayor Hondo Crouch and put on the map by Waylon Jennings and Willie Nelson. Both places are now considered "ghost towns"—and they're actually named after the same person.

In 1892, German settler Albert Luckenbach and his wife, Minnie, left the first town named after him and moved about 20 miles east to a place called Martinsburg. They opened a general store and a post office, which they registered under the name Albert.

In the 1920s, the dance hall was built and became a popular gathering place. But the town began to decline in the 1930s, and the dance hall eventually closed. In 2004, an insurance broker bought Albert, restored the town, and put it up for sale on eBay. It's changed hands a couple of times since then.



The Albert Dancehall & Icehouse

Today, if you Google it, the population of the now 13-acre "town" is estimated to be just seven. James Franze has called the place home since he retired there in 2006. "It's just a really calm, laid-back place," he says. "There's something about a slower pace that intrigues most city dwellers."

Franze is president of the Albert Community Club, an organization of Gillespie County residents who maintain the only other remnant left of Albert, the historic Williams Creek School. The school opened in 1897, and President Lyndon B. Johnson attended it for a year as a boy.

"For a lot of folks, this is a step back in time," says Franze, who, at the end of the day, is glad Waylon and Willie chose

to sing about Luckenbach instead of Albert. "Not that we don't love people. We just like a moderate amount of traffic." —*Marisa Charpentier*

MARSHALL

POPULATION EST. 23,000

Old meets new in the East Texas city of Marshall, where historic buildings house up-and-coming businesses and longtime traditions attract new visitors every year.

The 116-year-old former Memorial City Hall building downtown has been transformed into a performance space for live music and comedy shows. Just down the street, Wisteria Garden Bed & Breakfast preserves a Queen Anne-style home built in 1884. For a nice meal, The



Train passing in Marshall

The Buard History Trail allows visitors to take self-guided tours of local Black history sites, including Wiley College, several cemeteries, the railroad depot, and the downtown Harrison County Courthouse Square. Trail guide brochures are available at the Wiley College's welcome center or the Harrison County Historical Museum.

Marshall is also the birthplace of boogie woogie, a heavily percussive type of blues music that began in African American communities in the 1870s. Music is still a big part of the city thanks to the Marshall Regional Arts Council, which organizes live performances every third weekend of the month. If you plan your trip wisely, you just might get to hear some blues tunes echoing from Telegraph Park as you stroll the downtown square. —M.C.

LOS FRESNOS

POPULATION EST. 8,295

Ocelots, cowboys, and conjunto music take center stage in Los Fresnos, one of the fastest-growing small towns in the Rio Grande Valley. While Texans might be more familiar with the town as the spot where traffic backs up on the way to South Padre Island, Los Fresnos rewards the curious traveler with the best of the RGV.

Though Los Fresnos proper—about 4.1 square miles—wasn't established until 1915, the town has been a farming community for much longer. Like most of the RGV, the land was cleared for ranching; the Valley has lost more than 90% of its natural habitat to clearance. But Los Fresnos is just a 30-minute drive to the Laguna Atascosa Wildlife Refuge.

Established in 1946, the refuge protects nearly 11,000 acres of natural habitat. With more than 1,000 species of animals, plants, and insects, the place is a naturalist's playground. Each year the refuge draws hundreds of birders, hikers, and nature enthusiasts. As the RGV's population continues to grow, the refuge is focusing on rewilding the land. Friends of the Laguna Atascosa National Wildlife Refuge host an annual Ocelot Conservation Day in March to raise funds and awareness for ocelots—a few of the spotted wildcats run wild in the reserve.

Ginnochio serves up steak, seafood, and pasta in a former historic hotel.

Locally owned shops worth perusing include Black Bird Bathhouse, which offers homemade soaps; clothing stores Royal Cypress, Deborah's Boutique, and Addictions by Rhonda; and Martinez Pottery, which sells handmade stoneware.

Marshall has several new attractions set to open this year, including a microbrewery and microdistillery; and a boutique hotel planned for the historic Elks Lodge downtown. What's driving these new developments? "A lot of it is just local people who have come back home and want to better the city of Marshall," says Marshall's Main Street manager Lacy Burson, who works with the Texas Historical Commission's program to revitalize local economies. "They realize that Marshall has so much potential, and they just want to be a part of that."

In the center of all this activity is Marshall's crown jewel: the Old Harrison County Courthouse. Built in 1901, the Renaissance Revival-style building boasts yellow brick and columns of pink granite. Each holiday season, the courthouse becomes the centerpiece of a 37-year-old tradition—the

Wonderland of Lights. "Most people describe it as coming to a little Hallmark town," Burson says. "It's magical."

Even if you don't visit around the holidays, the courthouse stuns year-round—stained glass adorns the courthouse dome, and several wings of the building house the Harrison County Historical Museum showcasing artifacts from local history. After the Civil War, many freedmen settled in Marshall. A lot of them were drawn to Wiley College, the first Black college west of the Mississippi River.

Today, visitors can tour the nearby New Town neighborhood, founded by African Americans in the early 1900s. Signs point out sites of the businesses, schools, and churches—some still standing—that existed in this self-sustaining Black community during the Jim Crow South. "There is such a rich history of people who had a very difficult time and yet they thrived," says Julia Williams, a member of the New Town Neighborhood Association, which helps preserve the area's history. "We felt very strongly about all the significant things that the people accomplished and the pride they must have felt in doing what they did."

“The refuge is a cool place because the South Texas ecosystem is so unique,” says Thomas deMaar, a veterinarian and treasurer for the friends group. “Palm trees, cacti, salt marshes, freshwater—it all comes together unlike anything else in the U.S. And you can go with the whole family. Where else can you get a day’s entertainment for everyone for just \$3?”

Los Fresnos also knows how to throw a party. For 33 years, the town has been home to “The Biggest Little Rodeo in Texas.” The three-day affair in February features pro-rodeo competitions, a carnival, and musical acts—previous performers included country stars Aaron Watson, Kevin Fowler, and Joe Nichols.

“For a small town like that, it’s impressive how long they’ve been doing this,” says Rogelio Nuñez, the director of the Narciso Martinez Cultural Arts Center in Los Fresnos. Named after the Mexican American accordionist and folk musician who grew up in nearby San Benito, the center is dedicated to preserving the cultural heritage of the Mexican American community in South Texas.

Nuñez helps oversee another beloved local event. This October marks the 30th annual Narciso Martinez Conjunto Festival, which celebrates the traditional Texan-Mexican music that often features a button accordion and bajo sexto. The event draws thousands of visitors from across the U.S. and is the second-longest-running conjunto festival in the nation behind San Antonio’s. Nuñez says it’s a chance for people to get a feel for the Valley and explore neighboring cities.

“We’re not all concentrated like the big cities, but we are one big region,” he says. “The Valley is very important. It produces musicians, it has a strong culture, and it’s got a strong sense of tradition.” —D.L.

ALPINE

POPULATION EST. 2,000

Like most folks who stumble upon Alpine, Chris and Ellen Ruggia were en route to Big Bend National Park. It was the early 1990s, and the population wasn’t much smaller than it is today. After the couple graduated from the University of Texas at Austin, Ellen



Murphy Street in Alpine

enrolled at Sul Ross State University in Alpine to study biology, while Chris took a job at a local print shop.

“That’s what brought us here,” Chris says, “but it’s the community that kept us here.”

Both the Ruggias are artists, and Chris is a musician in a band called The Swifts. These days he also serves as the city’s director of tourism. The duo are part of a thriving cultural scene, made up of musicians, artists, makers, and foodies. Though Alpine doesn’t get the same hype as Marfa, its more contemporary neighbor, locals seem to like it that way.

“It’s a world-class experience over there, sure,” Chris says. “But Alpine is much more approachable. It’s intimate.”

Alpine sits at the center of Marfa, Terlingua, and Fort Davis. It’s an energetic place that services the even smaller West Texas communities with its grocery stores, pharmacy, and other amenities. It’s home to numerous art galleries, restaurants, and trendy lodging options. In June, the Museum of the Big Bend debuted its remodel and opened the new Emmett and Miriam McCoy building dedicated to displaying local art.

“I’ve lived here 33 years, and I still pinch myself,” says Kerri Blackwood,

co-founder of Alpine’s Gallery Night Inc., which promotes the town’s arts.

Around town you’ll find more than 30 murals. The historic Murphy Street Mercado features shops like the Desert Rose Provisions, offering locally made products. Stop for a bite at the Reata Restaurant—named after the ranch in the movie *Giant*—or grab drinks from the Old Crystal Bar and the Old Gringo Bar & Grill, both of which have live music. Alpine also hosts the Lonestar Cowboy Poetry Gathering, an annual event in February featuring poetry and music from cowboy poets.

This November marks the 30th annual Alpine Art Walk, a weekend festival put on by Gallery Night that brings in artists and musicians from across Texas. There’s an art car parade and a silent auction that benefits the local public library. In 2022, Gallery Night kicked off a second festival: Spirits of the West Wine and Beef Festival. The event honors the region’s cattle-raising industry alongside local distillers and wineries like Chateau Wright in Fort Davis. “Alpine is just a little cultural hub,” Blackwood says. “It’s perfect for people looking to get away.” —D.L. ★



Big Bend bluebonnet

PHOTO: THERESA DIMENNO



Wildflower Fields Forever

Texas' varied landscapes and climates yield blooms all year long

By Joe Nick Patoski

While March and April are the apex of wildflower season, two months are hardly enough to celebrate our opulent blooms. Luckily, wildflowers can be found nearly year-round across the state, provided you know where and when to look. Blooms are already popping in early January in the Rio Grande Valley and the Big Bend region, while up in the Panhandle, wildflowers put on a show of color from April to late fall. In the southern half of the state, wildflowers can bloom year-round.

In the Chihuahuan Desert, the flowers aren't so much seasonal as opportunistic, waiting for rain to sprout. Mexican tulip poppies typically peak in February, and their only U.S. population blossoms in Mesa de Anguila and the valley between Mesa de Anguila and the Rio Grande in Big Bend National Park.

On the last day of 2021, in an otherwise barren culvert near a paved road west of San Marcos, I spotted a lone four-nerve daisy. In Texas, wildflower season is far more than just a spring thing. The early arrivers, late bloomers, and unsung species may not get the love their better-known cousins do, but each is just as memorable.

WINTER

Winter is hardly winter along Texas' southern reaches and on the coast. Tropical sage, Anacahuita, Turk's-cap lily, primrose, Spanish dagger, and sweet-scented huisache begin blooming in January and February. John Brush, an urban ecologist at the Quinta Mazatlan World Birding Center in McAllen, cites a project he started in 2019 using iNaturalist, a crowdsourced species-identification app.

"It is continually being updated with more data points as the community adds more observations," Brush says. "The data is sorted by month, showing what species have been documented, and is ordered by most observations to the fewest observations." The project confirms significant wildflower blooms in the Rio Grande Valley every single month of the year.

In Central Texas, four-nerve daisies—perhaps the only year-round blooms in the region—are both the earliest- and latest-flowering species, says Joe Marcus, a program coordinator at the Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center in Austin.

Out west, the typically larger Big Bend bluebonnets pop up in early January, and following wet summers,

the spindly ocotillo sprouts its flaming red tips by mid-February.

"My favorite early bloom is the Mexican tulip poppy," says Michael Eason, author of *Wildflowers of Texas*. "It's found in a remote corner of Big Bend National Park and is the only naturally occurring population in the U.S. It's very reminiscent of the Mexican poppy. There will be these big blooms in February, especially close to the river, with tens of thousands of flowers. That canyon turns golden. You can see it on Google Earth."

SPRING

In mid-April, bluebonnets, firewheels, Indian paintbrush, and spiderlilies peak in the central and eastern parts of the state. Iris, violet, orchid, and coralbean can be found here, along with the endangered Texas trailing phlox. Carnivorous pitcher plants flower in the densely forested wetlands of the Big Thicket. Up in the Panhandle, wildflower season is just beginning and remains in full force well into June.

Kris Erickson has been taking pictures of wildflowers for 30 years on the ranch she shares with her husband, John Erickson. "God's wonders never cease to bring joy and awe to the ones who see," says Kris, who authored *Panhandle*

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Beauty. Her favorites: “The rich fuchsia colors of the winecups and cholla cactus, the delicate white bell-shaped blossoms on the yucca stalks, the sparkling friendliness of the Indian blankets.”

Other Panhandle-Plains standouts include violet snapdragons, yucca, royal blue thistles, black-eyed Susans, sunflowers, and beebalm (also known as horsemint.) Prickly pear, along with the purple blooms of the poisonous lockweed, are often the first show of color up north.

Seth Hamby, the former head gardener of the Chihuahuan Desert Nature Center in Fort Davis, says “the Chihuahuan Desert has more bee species than anywhere else on Earth.” He counts cowpen daisy, Mexican poppy, chocolate flower, four-nerve daisy, and groundsel among the bee-attracting blooms in the region’s low desert, arroyos, slopes, and sky islands.

April through May is prime time for the Guadalupe Mountains violet in McKittrick Canyon, a feature of Guadalupe Mountains National Park. The rare wildflower is only found within the park.

Around the time spring wildflowers begin to dot the top of Texas, way down south in northwestern Hidalgo County, on El Mesteño Ranch and Arboretum, the *Manfreda maculosa* shows off its cream-colored flowers. The cactus-like succulent provides food for the globally endangered *Manfreda* Giant-Skipper butterfly.

SUMMER

Found almost everywhere in Texas, yellow composites—commonly called NYCs—don’t start their big show until May. Many are still in bloom when the summer solstice rolls around, provided sufficient rain has fallen.

Prickly pear, gayfeather, beebalm, and cardinal flower bloom in the Texas summer heat. Mountain pinks provide a surprising contrast to the browning landscape along the rocky roadsides of Central and West Texas. The long-stemmed Brazos rain lily typically appears a couple days after precipitation throughout the summer and sometimes into October, then usually disappears a couple days later.

PHOTO: LARRY DITTO



Gayfeather and yucca in West Texas



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SAN ANTONIO



Summer at Guadalupe Mountains National Park means continual wildflower blooms—if spring and summer rains come, says former park biologist Mike Medrano. “Some of the vegetation around GMNP is opportunistic. The season doesn’t matter. It’s going to bloom when there’s water,” he explains. “I’ve seen ocotillo in full bloom in December. There was stuff blooming last September, like species of asters, because of the summer monsoon rain that I’d never seen before.”

Medrano notes McKittrick Canyon and the Bowl Trail are particularly good spots to view wildflowers. “But there are also a number of gypsum-loving plant species found on the gypsum dunes of the Salt Basin on the west side of the park that are not generally found elsewhere in Texas,” he says.

The park cooperates with researchers studying the little-known Guadalupe Mountains violet, a vibrant flower whose blooms in late spring and early summer are unique to the park.

FALL

Maximilian sunflowers signal the end of summer and beginning of fall across much of Texas. Fall is also the season for Leavenworth’s eryngo, whose conically clustered flowers with blue anthers bloom from the Trans-Pecos region to North Central Texas. The purple-hued plant is frequently showcased in gardens at the Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center.

Found statewide, various species of false foxglove start showing in midsummer and peak in autumn. Different varieties of autumnal marigolds are similar summer-fall bloomers in the eastern half of the state, while Siam weed and wild leadwort make year-end appearances in the Rio Grande Valley.

Four years ago, on a brisk November day near the San Jacinto Monument east of Houston, I saw a bluebonnet in full bloom. Last year, lantana turned on its psychedelic easel of tiny colorful flowers during an unseasonably warm December in the Hill Country, while out west the Big Bend bluebonnets were doing their thing early. Down south, phlox and Turk’s cap were popping. Eyes wide open, I could clearly see that every month is wildflower month in Texas. ★





Julia and James Leveston near their Tamina home



Making Space

Freedom colonies provided a safe haven for formerly enslaved people after emancipation

By Michael Hurd

Family history plays an important role in the research of Andrea Roberts, the founder of The Texas Freedom Colonies Project. She started the project as a doctoral student at the University of Texas at Austin in 2014 to study the towns founded by freed Black families and friends after emancipation, including Houston-area Riceville, where the Roberts family are longtime residents.

“Freedom colonies were intentional Black community creations, not where people were pushed to live by default,” says Roberts, who holds a Ph.D in community and regional planning.

Her project includes an interactive map of freedom colony locations in Texas. So far, 557 names of towns founded between 1866 and 1930 have been identified through archival research. Of those, 489 have been verified as having existed, though only 10% were ever incorporated as legal towns. All are the subjects of growing research, exploration, and discovery by both scholars and descendants.

After emancipation, the great majority of the 250,000 newly freed Texas slaves scattered from plantations in search of somewhere they could call their own. “They seemed to want to get

closer to freedom ... like it was a place or a city,” said freedman Felix Haywood of San Antonio in the Slave Narratives—first-person accounts from former slaves collected in the 1930s for the Federal Writers’ Project.

Freedom was visualized as a place, a self-contained haven created by Black families and friends beginning their newfound independence in relative peace and isolation, and in total control, according to Roberts. They bought land, or squatted; built homes, churches, and schools; buried loved ones; and farmed in these small settlements.

Historical markers throughout East Texas, where slave populations were most dense, note surviving communities, schools, cemeteries, and churches. But Roberts’ map identifies locations to the south, like Restlawn Cemetery near Edinburg, and as far west as the Doyle District near Kerrville. Here, we explore the stories of three colonies holding on to their heritage.

SHANKLEVILLE

Most freedom colonies share similar founding stories, but none are as improbable as the tale of Jim and Winnie Shankle’s endearing romance that led to the founding of Shankleville in East Texas’ Newton County.

In the 1840s, the couple were enslaved in Mississippi when Winnie and her three children were taken to what is now Newton County. Yearning to reunite with his wife, Jim escaped and navigated 400 miles by foot, mostly at night to avoid slave patrols. They reunited one day at dusk when he found Winnie, still enslaved, working near a spring.

After emancipation, the couple became the first African Americans to buy land in Newton County. Along with friends and family members, they built “prosperous farms, churches, a cotton gin, gristmills, sawmills, and schools which operated from 1883 to 1909,” according to a 2016 article in the *Longview News-Journal*.

Lareatha Clay, a descendant of the Shankles, is an advocate for acknowledging and teaching Shankleville’s history. “They used to say, ‘If you meet Lareatha, after five minutes you will know about Shankleville,’” Clay says.

Clay’s knowledge about freedom colonies was enhanced in the 1980s while living in Orlando, Florida, where she served on the city’s historic preservation board. She helped stage the nationally recognized Zora Neale Hurston Festival of the Arts and Humanities in the writer’s hometown of Eatonville, one of the first self-governing



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African American communities in the U.S., founded in 1887. The festival was developed to reinvigorate Eatonville.

"I volunteered there for four or five years, and I thought, 'This could work for Shankleville,'" Clay recalls. "But what can we do? We don't have a Zora Neale Hurston; no famous person who grew up in Shankleville. What can we use? Purple hull peas!"

She started the annual Purple Hull Pea Festival in 2014 as a nod to the staple crop in Shankleville. Some years, historians, preservationists, and archeologists present at the event and address the histories, social foundations, and challenges of surviving communities.

COUNTY LINE

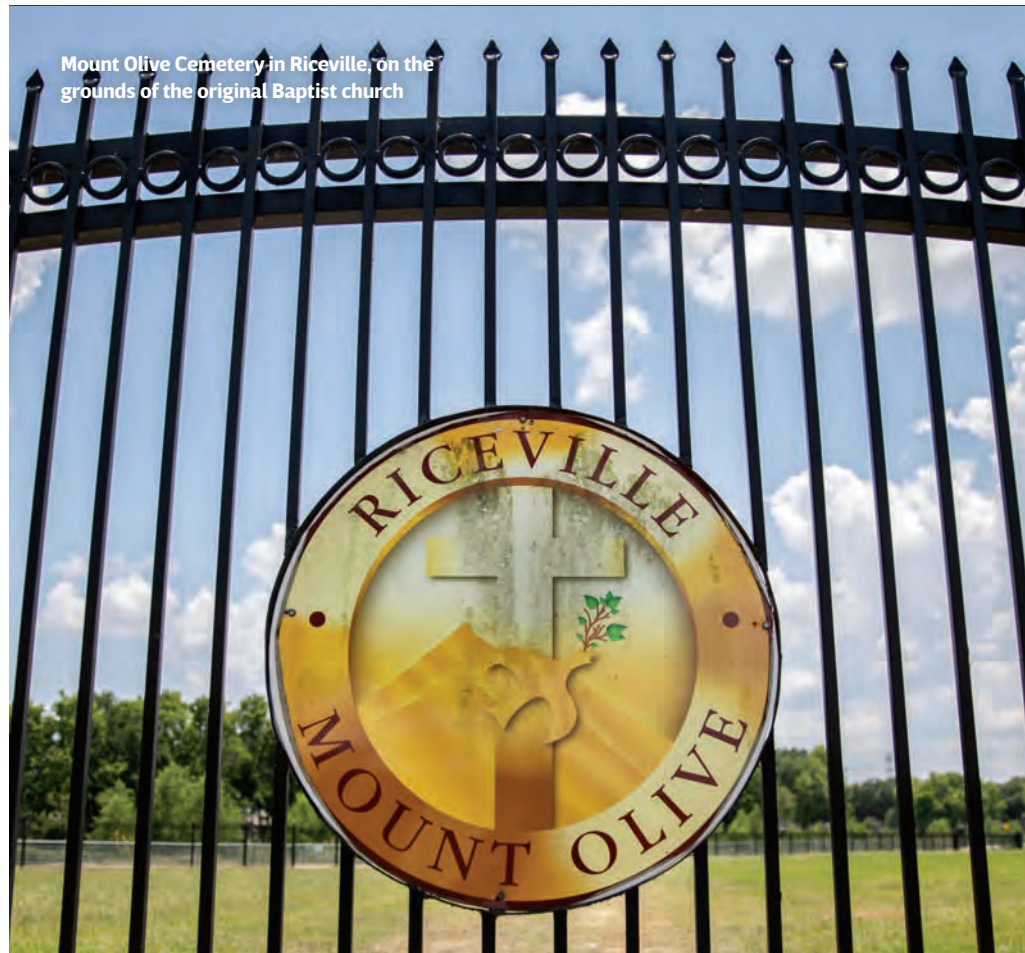
The remoteness of the County Line freedom colony defines its charm, at least to Beatrice Upshaw. She is the 12th of 13 children born to Leota and Monel, who is descended from Guss Upshaw, one of three brothers who founded the town in the 1870s. The secluded Piney Woods community is 20 miles northwest of Nacogdoches, which means long drives if you're looking for a grocery store.

"That's part of what you do if you live out here," Beatrice explains. "We were quite sheltered geographically and culturally, just a community of Black folks, family members. Nobody bothered us. The sense of community, the village, was very much a thing for us."

Her memoir, *A Biscuit For Your Shoe*, recalls how John Upshaw, the family patriarch, had borrowed \$75 in gold in 1875 from L.C. Whitaker to grow his own crop of cotton and corn on Whitaker's land in Douglass. The Upshaw brothers followed that by purchasing land nearby, which became County Line.

The three brothers farmed, milled, and worked as blacksmiths to support the fast-growing community. Originally spread out over 1 square mile, the town grew to 8 square miles of disappearing forest and declining population just east of the Angelina River.

"There are so few of us now, and everything that used to be farm and ranch land now is just trees and brush," Beatrice says. "People moved away, people died. There just isn't anyone here to farm and ranch like in times past."



Mount Olive Cemetery in Riceville, on the grounds of the original Baptist church

TAMINA

Progress has already put down roots in Tamina. The town's approximately 1,000 residents are mostly descendants of the 1871 founding freedmen who came to the area to help construct the Houston and Great Northern Railroad and later worked at Grogan's Mill.

Tamina (pronounced "tam-minah" or "tam-man-nee") sits near The Woodlands and Shenandoah. For several decades, the town has fought for basic services; early in 2023 it came to an agreement with the city of Shenandoah to use federal funds to install sewage and water lines. Even so, Tamina's existence hangs in the balance as gentrification gradually nudges the vibrant, tightknit settlement toward its likely demise—to be replaced by upscale housing and commercial development.

Some outsiders consider Tamina an eyesore, yet locals report weekly phone calls, offers from developers, and sightings of prospective land and

home buyers cruising the colony's narrow roads.

"We could be in a different financial status, but we're fighting for the community," says James Leveston, president of Tamina's water board and a retired airline mechanic.

Leveston and his wife, Julia, are lifelong Tamina residents passionate about protecting a rural life centered on family, friends, and neighbors.

"It's my home. I grew up here," says Julia, a retired Houston ISD secretary. "We had cows, horses, pigs, chickens. Daddy grew everything but cotton—corn, peas, squash, okra, cantaloupes—and we gave to all the neighbors. They were rough days, but good days."

Rita Wiltz works to preserve Tamina and its history as founder and executive director of the nonprofit Children's Books On Wheels, which provides reading materials to children in and around Montgomery County.

"Tamina will survive," Wiltz says. "We have survived, and we are survivors." ★



Palo Duro Canyon

PHOTO: KENNY BRAUN



Canyon to Canyon

Chasing Panhandle adventure from the caprock to Palo Duro to the Canadian River

By Matt Joyce

The mountain bikers of Amarillo have it better than most. On Thursday evenings, beginners and experts alike gather in Palo Duro Canyon State Park to ride some of Texas' most thrilling trails. They glide through the canyon bottom, swooping under shady cottonwood trees on the banks of the Prairie Dog Town Fork of the Red River. They rattle across sunbaked rocky draws lined by orange pinnacles. Those wanting to test their legs and lungs climb the park road 600 feet to the canyon rim.

At dusk, the riders gather on the grounds of a complex of vacation cabins owned by the Shepherd family, local cyclists. The fridge is stocked with beer from Amarillo's Pondaseta Brewing. Bratwurst sizzle on the grill. Stories are told and retold with fresh embellishment.

"One of the main things I love about riding in the canyon is every ride is different, whether you're riding in the summer when it's humid and like a jungle or in the wintertime when it's dry and crisp," says Richard Douglass, a rider from Amarillo. "I've met so many great people through this. The mountain biking community brings people from all walks of life together."

The Texas Panhandle sometimes gets a bad rap. Drivers speeding through on Interstate 40 or US 87 might dismiss the region as a horizontal expanse of dusty cotton fields, lonesome grain silos, and stinky feedlots. But this is

an uninformed perspective, as one look at a topographic map reveals. The Panhandle Plains are certainly vast, but rivers and creeks slash the country like lightning bolts. These drainages pierce the mighty Caprock Escarpment, creating a jumbled shelf over the rolling plains to the east. Millennia of erosion by wind and water have forged a landscape of valleys, breaks, and canyons.

I set out this summer from "downstate," the locals' term for the rest of Texas, to chart a course from Caprock Canyons to Palo Duro Canyon to the Canadian River. I found a wealth of adventures—and adventurers—amid the rugged landscape of this American frontier. Plus, I saw at least one Texas horned lizard on each day of my trip—always a good omen.

CAPROCK CANYONS

We're driving through the plains south of Quitaque when Chris Podzemny, a local trail builder and my guide for the day, swerves to a stop at a state historical marker. The plaque recounts the Republic of Texas' ill-fated Santa Fe Expedition that ended in a failed attempt to claim New Mexico for Texas. Disoriented, hungry, and peppered by Kiowa attacks, the expedition made camp at the juncture of Quitaque and Los Lingos creeks.

It's easy to imagine getting lost among the swells and valleys that approach the caprock, but today we have a clear destination—the Caprock Canyons Trailway, a 65-mile route that

follows an old railroad bed between the towns of Estelline and South Plains. The railroad opened in 1928, hauling commodities like cattle, cotton, and gravel across the Panhandle. The line closed in 1989, and by 1994, the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department had converted it into a trail. While Caprock Canyons State Park and Trailway is best known for its 300-head bison herd, prairie dog towns, and hiking trails that navigate 1,000 feet of elevation from the top of the Caprock Escarpment to the Little Red River. Lesser known is its moderate 21-mile, out-and-back route starting at Monk's Crossing.

Pedaling along a section of the trail that's mostly flat and surfaced with crushed rock and packed dirt, I dodge a parade of grasshoppers, six-lined racerunner lizards, and a couple of horny toads—all fat and happy with the unusually wet summer.

The star of this section of trail is the Clarity Tunnel, a 725-foot railroad shaft through a rocky hill. A colony of a half-million Mexican free-tailed bats has taken up summer residence in the tunnel. It's not for the squeamish, but riding a bike on a thin track through foot-deep guano with the chirping of bats overhead makes for a memorable adventure.

The payoff is spectacular scenery. As the trail follows Quitaque Creek and climbs in elevation, numerous bridges cross the gravel stream, giving overhead views of clear waters trickling through red-rock ravines and sandy

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banks thick with cottonwoods and wild plums. Overhead, Mississippi kites soar against a backdrop of billowing cumulous clouds.

“It’s a pretty hardcore trail—not a Disney ride for sure,” Donald Beard, the superintendent of Caprock Canyons State Park and Trailway, tells me later in reference to the full 65-mile route. “You’re on your own. Cellphone service may or may not work. But for a lot of people, it’s a challenge they want to conquer.”

PALO DURO CANYON

Given the pivotal role of horses in Panhandle history, horseback rides provide a fitting perspective of Palo Duro Canyon, the region’s signature natural attraction. The Spanish introduced horses to Texas in the 16th century: Francisco Coronado first traversed the Panhandle, including the canyon, in 1541. Plains tribes including the Kiowa, Apache, and Comanche quickly seized on the animals’ potential, evolving into master horsemen as warriors and hunters. The U.S. Cavalry subsequently fought the tribes on horseback and targeted the tribes’ remudas, a ruthlessly effective tactic on full display at the Battle of Palo Duro Canyon in 1874, a decisive defeat for the Comanches. The battle helped clear the way for sprawling cattle ranches built by cowboys like Charles Goodnight, forever linked with horses in Texas legend.

“Palo Duro Canyon and the surrounding area was the last free home of the most powerful Indian tribe in American history—the Comanches,” says Phyllis Nickum Golden, owner of Cowgirls and Cowboys in the West, which guides horseback rides on Los Cedros Ranch near Amarillo. “This was their winter home. When you get to the rim of the canyon, you’ll see the protection from the wind and weather in the canyon. And there’s water down there, which is very rare here.”

On our ride, Nickum Golden’s American quarter horses amble out across the open prairie, stepping around mesquite trees and prickly pear cactus. Spotting movement in the thick grass, a wrangler pounces from her horse and snatches a horny toad from the brush to show the riders. Soon, the land starts

buckling into shallow draws before abruptly giving way to the massive chasm of Palo Duro Canyon. We stop for pictures against a backdrop of big sky sliced in half by the opposite canyon rim and its walls of banded orange, pink, and green.

Later, in a visit to Palo Duro Canyon State Park, I walk along the Prairie Dog Town Fork of the Red River, which is flowing swiftly from summer rains. I try to picture how this narrow stream could carve a canyon 800 feet deep, 120 miles long, and 12 miles wide. On a hike up the canyon walls on the Rock Garden Trail, I reach a point on the Tub Springs Draw Spur—named for an old cowboy bathing spot—where a shallow slot canyon opens to a dry pouroff over a massive box canyon. I shimmy out on my stomach to crane my neck over the ledge for a head-spinning look at a shimmering pool far below.

“When you start to think of this place in terms of edges, it covers so many different aspects,” says Jeff Davis, formerly the Palo Duro assistant park superintendent. “We’re in this liminal space where the flats of the High Plains turn into the Rolling Plains at the Caprock Escarpment. We are at a juncture between different migratory paths of birds. And this canyon was the site of the Battle of Palo Duro, which was the edges of two cultures really clashing with each other and the end of a way of life for one of those cultures.”

CANADIAN RIVER VALLEY

A fascinating phenomenon unfolds when approaching the Canadian River from State Highway 136 at Alibates Flint Quarries National Monument. Just as the park road begins to descend into the valley, a massive view opens of the river channel splitting the valley before flowing into the blue water of Lake Meredith. The river water, hued a burnt orange from the surrounding rocks, meets the lake, creating a vibrant borderline of orange and blue that fades as the waters blend and give way to the lake’s ultramarine depths.

The scene is a precursor of the colorful Alibates flint rock I’ve come to see. President Lyndon B. Johnson created this national monument in the 1960s to protect the ancient quarries

located above the river valley when the Canadian River was dammed to create Lake Meredith for water supply and recreation. Archeologists have discovered evidence of a succession of indigenous cultures living here as long as 13,000 years ago. The monument includes the remains of a village of the Antelope Creek people, who lived above the valley from roughly A.D. 1150 to 1450, as well as more than 700 flint quarries. Dug from the dolomite caprock, the quarries are shallow depressions each about the diameter of a tetherball court.

Alibates flint—which was named in the early 1900s for a local cowboy named Allen Bates—occurs in about a 10-square-mile area, explains Kenny Points, formerly the park ranger here, during one of the daily hiking tours to see the quarries. Long ago, the natives figured out the flint could be shaped using stone hammers into hard, sharp blades for spear points, drills, scrapers, and arrowheads. Tools made from Alibates flint have been found as far afield as Mexico, Montana, and the Mississippi River. Conversely, archeologists have found far-flung artifacts here, including pipe stone from Minnesota, obsidian from New Mexico, and seashells from the Pacific Ocean.

“It’s just really amazing for rock to travel from Minnesota to here before there’s an automobile or even a horse to bring it here, and for this rock to travel all the way from here to the Great Lakes,” Points says.

In October, when the weather is cooler and in recognition of Texas Archeology Month, park rangers lead Saturday tours of the Antelope Creek village site, which is located a mile from the quarries themselves. “It was about a mile walk to work for them,” Points says. “We think that happened because the flint was being traded so heavily that they didn’t want to show anybody the exact location of the quarries.”

The caution of the Antelope Creek people makes perfect sense. But after exploring the Panhandle’s canyonlands and the scenic adventures around them, I see no reason to keep these Texas treasures a secret. ★



Mother Neff State Park

PHOTO: LAURENCE PARENT



Parks Less Traveled

Take a stroll off the beaten path at Mother Neff, Fort Boggy state parks

By Clayton Maxwell

I should have known better. After a weekend of vineyard-hopping in the Hill Country, I craved a detoxifying scramble up Enchanted Rock. Throughout the '90s, my college roommates and I would escape to this pink granite dome to marvel at the moonrise from its rough slope. Ahead of me, I can see the entrance to The Rock. My eyes follow the other cars turning in, but as I approach, I see a park ranger standing next to the dreaded sign: Park Is Full. Now I'm kicking myself for not making a reservation.

Don't get me wrong, it's good for all of us that people are enjoying our state parks. In 2009, approximately 7.5 million people visited one or more of our state parks, historic sites, or natural areas. In 2021, that number rose to almost 10 million. That's an extra 2.5 million people exploring the outdoors. And the state park reservation system is pretty easy to use.

Once home, I see that Enchanted Rock is booked solid for almost three months. In Plan B mode, I scroll the list of parks and realize I've visited just 14 of the 89. A bounty of unfamiliar Texas territories are begging to be explored, but first I have to figure out where to begin.

To give me some ideas, Aaron Friar, special assistant to the state park director for the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, sends me a list of park visitation numbers. I'm not surprised to see Enchanted Rock at the high end of usage, at No. 6, in the company of my other favorites: Pedernales, Palo Duro Canyon, and McKinney Falls. But I am surprised at the low visitation of a few, especially some of West Texas' most sublime treasures: the

Devils River, Big Bend Ranch, and Fort Leaton, a handsome adobe dwelling between Big Bend and Presidio with an intriguing past. But these parks are also remote, rugged.

"A lot of folks don't like to drive more than an hour and a half to a park," Friar says. "With some of these parks you must really, really want to get to them."

Visitation is also informed by the size of the park and the amenities it offers—fewer people can visit a park with just a handful of campsites than they can a park like Garner State Park, which is bursting at the seams with 354. And some folks don't want to drive miles of dirt roads, as you must at Big Bend Ranch. "We know that not everybody starts out in a tent," Friar says, "so we try to offer a balance from the most remote primitive backcountry experience all the way up to new cabins and full-service amenities."

It's time I get to know some of these less-visited parks. I want to learn more about the mother behind Mother Neff State Park and why Fort Boggy—located just about an hour and a half east of Waco—ranks No. 4 on the list of least-visited parks. I lace up my hiking boots and head out.

MOTHER NEFF

Nestled in the rolling prairies and limestone canyons near Temple, Mother Neff is small but plays an outsize role in the story of our park system. Isabella Neff and her husband purchased the land in 1852 after arriving in Texas from Virginia. They built a community, picnicking with neighbors along the Leon River. Before her death in 1921, she willed the property to the state,

indicating it was to be used as an outdoor public gathering place. Her son, Gov. Pat Neff, saw his mother's vision realized: In 1923 he persuaded the Texas Legislature to establish the State Parks Board, and the state parks system was born. Gov. Neff donated 250 acres of family land to the state, and Mother Neff State Park officially opened in 1937. A Civilian Conservation Corps crew constructed roads, trails, picnic areas, and campgrounds on the site from 1934 to 1938.

Hiking the park's two-mile loop, the limestone softened by moss on a sunny March morning, I bow to Mother Neff and her son. They shared their land with all of Texas. Thanks to their generosity, this morning I can hear the staccato call of the golden-cheeked warbler, an endangered bird that uses strips of bark from the juniper trees here to make its nests.

Mother Neff is now home to a handsome new limestone headquarters overlooking a butterfly garden and fields of bluebonnets. The parks also boasts 20 full hook-up RV sites and pristine bathrooms, which have received stellar online reviews from the RV community. "We have the Buc-ee's of the camping restroom world," says Angelina Fontenot, the park's office manager. "Everyone loves how nice they are inside."

I get a day pass and hike to the climbable stone water tower built by the CCC in the '30s and a rock shelter thought to have been inhabited by the Tonkawa. I think of the words of Gov. Neff; in a speech, he once called our natural spaces "breathing spots for humanity."

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Fulfilling Mother Neff's wish, her land is still a gathering spot for locals today. Many of them grew up attending weddings and religious events in the park's Rock Tabernacle, which was also built by the CCC. An average of 75 people visit the park each day just to get some fresh air. "Even their dogs are regulars," Fontenot says. "They know where the treat box is."

While this park may lack Enchanted Rock's dramatic landscape, it more than makes up for that with unrivaled quietude. With no lines of cars or crowds to worry about, I remember that even a little dose of nature can lift my spirits.

FORT BOGGY

From Mother Neff, I head to Fort Boggy, about a two-hour drive to the edge of the Piney Woods of East Texas. Located just south of Centerville, Fort Boggy is also a small, charming park with low visitation. Fort Boggy has five primitive camping spots burrowed into a forest of sweet gum, elm, and even river birch—the only species of birch native to Texas.

Fort Boggy was built in the 1840s by early settlers to defend against Native American attacks. The wooden fort has disintegrated—a historic plaque is the only visible reminder of this fraught period in state history.

When I check in at the modest portable building that serves as the park headquarters, office manager Eduardo Virjan hands me the key to my cabin and says, "If you want to be alone, you've come to the right park."

He wasn't exaggerating. As I haul my things from the car to the cabin, I don't hear another human anywhere in the park. The cabin's screened porch is big enough to host a cocktail party, but all I want to do is to sit and read and listen to the cicadas and frogs that call this vivid green park home.

Begrudgingly leaving the comfy cabin behind, I go to meet J.D. Miller, the park superintendent, who lives on the property with his wife. He takes me on a tour of the park in his pickup, explaining the bevy of activities here. The park offers night hikes, kids' fishing events, and glow-in-the-dark Easter egg hunts, all of which have surpassed turn-out expectations. "For our first Easter

egg hunt, we had every parent out there with their child and helping. It's what we love to see," Miller says.

Other than woods, the natural star of this park is Sullivan Lake, a 15-acre swimming hole encircled by trees. Fed by three natural springs, the water remains 72 degrees at its deepest point. Trout, which favor cooler water, can still be found here in even at the height of summer.

With its quaint summer camp feel, Fort Boggy might not stay quiet for long. "People drive past and don't even know we are here," Miller says, "but once we get them in the gate, we see them over and over."

I sleep that night with my cabin windows open, and in the morning, after a 2-mile hike on the Tunnel Trail, I stand on Sullivan Lake's dock. I am the only person around, and it's not every day you get a whole lake to yourself. I count to three, jump in, and breaststroke to a small floating pier. I pull myself out to lie flat on its surface, every cell content. I'll always hold close those moonrises at Enchanted Rock, but this may be my best state park moment yet. ★



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Blisswood in Cat Springs



Where the Dudes Roam

Experience life on the Western range at a Texas dude ranch

By Clayton Maxwell

It's the end of the last trail ride on a blazing summer day and time to put the horses away. Tami Martin, one of the wranglers at the Dixie Dude Ranch in Bandera, hoists weathered saddles off the trail-weary horses, her arms tan and strong from the job. In faded Wranglers and cowboy boots that read "Just A Good Old Girl" in capital letters on the back, she makes the work look cool and easy. So I ask Garrett Connell, a wrangler who'd been charming me with tall tales on the trail, if I can help "untack" my horse, Sancho.

"We aren't equestrians here; we're cowboys," he says. "We unsaddle." Then he shows me how to ease off Sancho's bridle and latigo. I'm no Tami, but it feels good to haul Sancho's gear to the barn and whiff the heady aroma of well-worn leather. Such a moment, I would later discover, is a microcosm of what dude ranches are all about.

What, exactly, is a dude? To many, the term evokes a vision of shaggy surfer types—someone trying to be cool. Or it's a way to address them, as in, "What's up, dude?" Though this may sound incongruous to people familiar with Texas dude ranches—where paying guests participate in Western activities from trail rides to chuckwagon dinners to skeet shooting—the contemporary connotations of "dude" are actually closer to the origins of the dude ranch than I realized.

"I do not believe there ever was any life more attractive to a vigorous young fellow than life on a cattle ranch

in those days," Theodore Roosevelt wrote in his eponymous autobiography published in 1913, a couple of decades after his first trip out West. Roosevelt, famous for his love of outdoor adventure, was one of America's first dudes. For in the 1880s, a dude—in addition to meaning a snazzy dresser—was an urban dweller, often from the East Coast, who goes to a ranch to embrace the work and wide-open spaces of the Western lifestyle. In a 2013 study, slang etymologists Barry Popik and Gerald Cohen linked the word back to the nonsense word "doodle," as in "Yankee Doodle Dandy."

"Back in Roosevelt's time, a dude was a specific thing," says Clay Conoly, owner of the Dixie Dude. "There were no 'guest ranches,' but there were dude ranches, and everyone who helped out in the corral from out of town was called a dude wrangler."

As families play card games at nearby tables, Conoly and I sit by the jukebox in the Roundup Room of the Dixie Dude. The 725-acre working ranch has been in Conoly's family since 1901, and it's where he lives with his wife, Diane, and sons Alec and Sharp. He explains his own take on the term: "A dude is a person traveling into an area they're unfamiliar with, but with an open mind, learning new things and appreciating the work that's done on a ranch. It's a good thing."

In an effort to better understand the quality of dudeness, over the course of a week this July I visited the Dixie Dude

Ranch in Bandera—a town billed as the Cowboy Capital of the World—and two other Texas ranches: Blisswood Bed and Breakfast Ranch, 350 acres in Cat Spring in the rolling prairie an hour's drive west of Houston; and JL Bar Ranch, Resort & Spa, 13,000 acres just off of Interstate 10 between Sonora and Junction at the edge of the Hill Country.

These are but a fraction of what's out there. From the historic Prude Ranch in Fort Davis to the Wildcatter Ranch in Graham to the Beaumont Ranch in Grandview, there are about a dozen dude ranches across Texas. The dude experience is a top vacation choice of visitors to our state, and when the COVID-19 pandemic struck, demand for dude ranch getaways grew from out-of-state visitors and Texans alike. In my own pursuit of dude life, I would do things I'd never done, such as unsaddle horses, feed buffalo, and hot tub with an armadillo. I'd learn the hard way that one should never wear shorts on a hayride. I'd befriend other dudes from around the world. And most importantly, I'd get a feel for what makes a good dude.

BLISSWOOD BED & BREAKFAST

As I pull off Interstate 10 onto the country roads of Austin County, my relief from the anxiety-inducing traffic and urban grind is immediate. The feeling morphs into full-on glee as I drive beneath arches of moss-draped oaks and approach Blisswood's barn, where white Paso Fino trail horses are



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The Dixie Dude Ranch in Bandera

grazing in a meadow. Sometimes you have to immerse yourself in nature to remember how much you need it.

I feel even better once I meet Skeeter, head of guest services, who right away takes me to feed bananas to some lemurs. His real name is Erwin Harrison Hagler Jr., but when he was just born, someone said he was so cute he looked like a little mosquito. He was forever after Skeeter—even now that he's 76. After the banana-crazy lemurs have their fill, Skeeter shows me how to throw hatchets.

"You don't want to overthink it," he says. "It's not baseball. Pull up by your ear almost like you're cuttin' your ear off." I emulate Skeeter's form and grunt as I hurl the shiny silver ax at a target of splintered wood. Then we load up in the Polaris, a four-wheeled ranch buggy, to visit bison in the wildlife pasture. As we approach, blackbuck antelope leap like ballerinas into the woods. Upon seeing Skeeter's Polaris, the bison rumble over and stick their wide wet noses into our seats as other guests and I try to shovel scoops of feed into their open mouths. It's a fun-filled mess of kibble, buffalo

slobber, and peals of laughter all around.

The next morning, I wake early for a sunrise soak in my cabin's hot tub. It's still dark, and when I shine my flashlight at a rustling in the brush, I see a fat armadillo, his bands shimmering in the beam. Usually, I see armadillos dead on the road, so the chance to study this scaly critter as he seeks breakfast is a treat.

This is one of the reasons dude ranches are such a welcome vacation. Rather than developing land for tourism, dude ranches preserve the land and allow animals to keep their wild spaces. Blisswood and the Dixie Dude participate in wildlife rehabilitation and land conservation programs. The entertainment is the kind of low-tech delight a dude appreciates: an armadillo rooting at sunrise, an antelope leaping into the woods, a buffalo slobbering on your fingers.

Carol Davis, Blisswood's owner, grew up on a farm in Fayette County. "I once was drawn to the lights of the big city, but after a while those lights dimmed for me," she says. "Being here, close to the horses and wildlife, makes my spirit sing. And I see it in my guests. One family

from the UK actually cried when it was time to leave, they felt so happy here."

I know my spirits are up, too. I see why those Yankee Doodle Dandies needed to come out West.

THE DIXIE DUDE RANCH

Connell, the Dixie Dude wrangler, holds my phone as he helps me mount Rooster, a one-eyed horse and cancer survivor. "Rooster's what you call an Overo paint," he tells me. "Is there anything else I need to know about Rooster?" I ask. "No," he says, "I'm gonna let you figure that out on your own. You signed a waiver."

Rooster may just have one eye, but he's sure-footed on the trail. The dozen of us on this morning ride wind our way through a limestone valley flanked by hills covered in oak and cedar trees. Our meditative pace makes it easy for me to pester Connell with questions, like where'd he get his big shiny belt buckle? It's a reward, he says, for one of the bull riding competitions he won on the pro rodeo circuit. After 17 broken bones and four surgeries, he retired from the sport in his late 20s. But he misses it. "When

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you're climbing down the chute onto the back of a 2,000-pound bull, there's nothing like it," he says.

That night, Alec Conoly takes a group of 45 guests on a hayride, pulling us behind his truck on a trailer lined with hay. Alec is the fifth generation of his family to live and work on the Dixie Dude, and it's clear he loves it. He takes pleasure in educating us about the Longhorns that approach and doesn't miss a beat when one named Nacho poops during his talk and a kid yells out, "Look, Nacho sauce!" Our group, including families from London and Turkey, is full of questions: Why are the steers' horns longer than the bulls'? Why don't we eat Longhorns? Mama, can we please get a bull?

The hearty meals served at the Dixie Dude are communal affairs. I'm impressed by Tracye Porter, a grandmother from Idalou, who brings each of her grandchildren to a dude ranch when they turn 10. Her granddaughter Alessa proudly describes to the table how she learned to unhook the perch she caught in the fishing pond. Also at the table, the three-generation Melline family of 13 dudes from Washington, D.C., steals the show with their matching T-shirts that say "Straight Trippin'" in sparkly letters. Although we are from many places and live different lives, the story swapping and bonhomie over home-cooked meals build a sense of connection that feels extra sweet these days.

Driving the Hill Country roads leading away from the Dixie Dude, buoyed by the good vibes of the ranch and the people I met there, I think about Clay Conoly, who says he has no regrets about leaving a career in oil to run the family ranch. "Spend time out here and it just works on you," he says. "You might call it spiritual."

JL BAR RANCH, RESORT & SPA

From Bandera, it's a 150-mile drive to the rugged terrain between Junction and Sonora. At 13,000 acres, the JL Bar is just a tad smaller than Manhattan. Within a minute of pulling off I-10, I arrive at a security gate that opens to a paved road through drought-baked



Blisswood in Cat Springs

earth and prickly pear. I turn right at the flag as instructed by the security guard and approach the Main Lodge, a stone behemoth surrounded by verdant grass and golf carts. I exit my car to the crooning of country music played over outdoor speakers. This landscape may be spartan, but the JL Bar, named for owners James and Lois Archer, is all country cush.

The JL Bar is a marksman's playground. You can shoot skeet, fire pistols, and hunt exotic game, including black buck, axis deer, and red stag. You can also shoot rifles on the ranch's long-range shooting complex. With a target that's 1,500 yards away, it's touted as one of the longest courses in Texas. Visitors can also request to take a sunset horseback ride.

My primary activity is hanging out by the infinity pool with a glass of sauvignon blanc and nosing on a butter-dabbed rib-eye at the ranch restaurant. The peace of this immense desert is soothing, particularly as the

July sun departs and the air begins to cool. But my boots stay clean.

The ranch does not list its prices publicly. "I wouldn't call this a dude ranch," says Jon Joseph, who oversees JL Bar's horse program. "It's a resort." Certainly, those who fly to the JL Bar from around the globe get a hefty dose of Texas ranch glamour within these gates. And those who try their hand at activities—like target shooting with a super-powered scope—are learning, dude-like, about horses and hunting.

Although the word "dude" has evolved over time, the classic version evoked by Roosevelt and his ilk back in the 1880s abides in Texas. As Porter, the grandmother from Idalou, told me when her granddaughter ran off to admire the Dixie Dude's peacocks: "We just watched the farrier shoe some horses—that was cool—and now she's off again. Alessa's free here; she can explore, try new things. She's being a good little dude." ★



Gulf Waters Beach Front RV Resort
in Port Aransas



Home is Where You Park It

Endless summers await a new generation of RVers on the Texas coast

By Sarah Hepola

Candace Pegg was living the American dream in a two-story, five-bedroom home when something unexpected happened: The American dream shifted. Pegg had only ever lived in North Carolina with her husband, Jake, and two children, ages 8 and 11. But the pandemic disrupted their domestic bliss, and the life she'd long wanted became more like a life she wanted to escape.

"COVID brought out the devil in everybody," she says, wearing jeans and a baggy sweatshirt as we stand in the clubhouse of Blue Water RV Resort in Freeport last fall. By early 2022, Pegg's job in the medical field had beaten her down, and between Zoom classes and conflicting work schedules, elementary school was a mess. She and Jake had always wanted to see the world, but they had jobs and children—the anchors of adulthood. She started poking around a Facebook group called Full Time RV Living With Kids, a resource and advice forum with nearly 60,000 members.

That's where she learned about Blue Water, a locale that appeared not so different from her town in North Carolina, a place of rural splendor about a 30-minute drive from the city. Bonus: The RV park was near the water, on the other side of a two-lane highway from the Gulf of Mexico, surrounded

by marshlands. "A tropical paradise for vacationing families, weekend warriors, snowbirds, and anyone seeking solace and adventure," according to the website, which noted a private boat ramp, docks for fishing and boating, and kayak and paddleboard rentals. The Peggs were hooked. In February 2022, they sold their house and got rid of their stuff, hitched an RV they had purchased to their truck, and moved to Texas sight unseen.

"We went from a five-bedroom, 2,500-square-foot house on 3 acres of land to a 44-foot camper," Pegg says, looking out the window of an event space that overlooks 5 acres of waterfront, 13 acres of bayfront, and 29 acres of marsh. A family of four in such small confines might be a nightmare for some, but for Pegg it was closer to freedom. "The simplicity of this lifestyle is like nothing I've experienced in my lifetime."

Retired couples tooling the interstates in sleek behemoths is an American tradition—and occasional punchline. But the cultural dislocation of COVID-19 brought a surge of new travelers who were a bit younger than the AARP demo. Hordes of the homebound took to the highways in RVs with names like Pleasure-Way, Sunseeker, and Palazzo. RV sales surged early in the pandemic as airplanes were grounded and

families sought to sate their wanderlust in safe environments. According to the RV Industry Association, sales peaked in 2021, with a 16.9% year-over-year dip in 2022 thanks to soaring gas prices and the return of traditional travel. But the die had been cast for families like the Peggs. They were roaming the highways and occupying RV parks with vistas they'd once only imagined.

"All these things in your house, do you really need them?" Pegg asks. She and Jake landed gigs on the Blue Water property to cover site rental and expenses. They found themselves among an unconventional group of seekers and settlers at 179 RV sites and four cottages occupied by RVs featuring license plates from far-flung locations: South Dakota, California, and the Canadian provinces of Quebec and British Columbia. "You'd be amazed at how many families do this," she says.

Texas has become an alluring location for RVers, thanks in part to its 89 state parks available to road trippers. Some of the state's most popular RV parks are nestled in the Hill Country. But the private beachside RV parks near port cities like Galveston and Corpus Christi emit a special siren call with their sandy shorelines and balmy afternoons during the months that require snow tires and shovels in other parts of the country. Though many



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of these nomads in RVs are “winter Texans”—folks who travel south to Texas during the colder months—these destinations are even more coveted in summer as spots for fishing, kayaking, and surfing.

About 50 miles northeast of Blue Water, on the Bolivar Peninsula, rises Camp Margaritaville, the megamall of beachside RV resorts. Each of the 204 sites has a fire pit, picnic bench, and palm tree, in addition to an RV hookup, or “pedestal tower.” Opened in early summer 2022 as Bolivar Beach Club, the upscale-yet-down-home concept has since become affiliated with the Florida-based Camp Margaritaville, a growing empire created by musician Jimmy Buffett. But Camp Margaritaville retains independent ownership.

I walk around the 150-acre property with street names like Paradise Way and Sunset Drive. RV parks are known for rustic charm, but Camp Margaritaville is in a class unto itself. There’s a concert stage overlooking a 50-foot expanse of artificial turf, a three-story bar and grill, and an arcade featuring Guitar Hero and Mario Kart. “What we’re doing is very ahead of the industry,” manager Brad Ballard says. “It’s more of the modern camping experience instead of old-school.” It’s the RV equivalent of glamping.

Bob Marley booms through the vast sound system when I visit in the early afternoon. Middle-aged guests sip frozen margaritas in an enormous, heated “License to Chill” pool with a swim-up bar flanked by hot tubs on both sides. Ballard says they’ve had 1,000 folks in the pool at once. The more discerning traveler can rent one of six VIP cabana suites with air conditioning, a flat-screen TV, and a wet bar. Although occupancy was modest that day in early December, the place gets packed on holidays and for live music. Some 1,200 people have rocked out to shows by country acts Kevin Fowler and Cory Morrow. Day passes are available, but the resort is targeting longtime RVers in the winter months. Golf carts are the preferred mode of transportation around these parts (and are available for rent). Nearby Crystal Beach could be a state highway considering the amount of

zigzagged tire tracks in the sand. What a Texan brag: Our beach is for driving.

Most beachside RV parks aren’t quite as ambitious. In Port Aransas, near Corpus Christi, I meet Susan Hunter, the manager of Port A RV Resort. This modest spot has two pools, a hot tub, and a few palm trees dotting 185 sites. Hunter sits in a mint-green office wearing an animal-print shirt with jeans and pink flip-flops and tells me about popular resident activities: bingo, yoga, line dancing.

In another life, she was a traveling saleswoman. Now divorced and with three kids, she was attracted to Port A RV because the community’s average

***“The simplicity
of this lifestyle
is like nothing
I’ve experienced
in my lifetime.”***

age hovers around retirement. “I don’t have to take care of my yard,” Hunter says. But the RV life isn’t perfect. After downsizing so quickly from her two-bedroom apartment in Rockport and placing boxes in storage, she still can’t find her winter coat. Not that she’d need it. Her 34-foot camper isn’t the easiest vehicle to maintain, but neighbors pitch in, and YouTube helps.

Female solo travel has exploded with a younger demographic, and the older demographic is proving no different. “We have a lot of women who set trailers up,” Hunter says. “I have two right now who became friends, living right across from each other.”

The park is a mix of folks traveling through and long-term residents. October and November are the lightest months, but the park starts filling up in December. Fourteen RVs check in on the day we speak.

Hunter drives me in a golf cart to a recently renovated rec hall. “This is where it all happens,” she says, as we enter an airy space with high ceilings, shuffleboard, and a flat-screen. A dozen or so white-haired residents looking trim and tan gather around slow cookers of chili and plates filled with ham for a noon potluck.

“Twenty months ago, we left home for five months and never came back,” says Paul Clifford, who wears an Arkansas Razorbacks baseball cap and a souvenir shirt from the Grand Canyon. He and his wife, Beth, love riding horses near an RV park in Napa Valley, California, but they come back to Port A for the winter months. The Upper Peninsula might be next, maybe Wyoming. “I tell everyone about this,” he says, lifting a champagne flute filled with a mimosa at 11:30 a.m.

Less than 5 miles away at Gulf Waters Beach Front RV Resort in Port Aransas, 158 sites occupy a cozy expanse lined with thatched-roof lounging areas, comfy patio furniture, and hammocks. A handful of ponds shimmer with the reflection of the many nearby palm trees, as a couple of fake mallards float on the water and a real pelican stands on the side. Gulf Waters has an unusual sense of permanence. Residents own their sites, with the option to rent them to travelers. They’re decorated with baubles and painted signs that in another part of the country might say “Home Sweet Home.” Here they say things like “Another Day in Paradise.”

This is not a bad way to spend your golden years (or your middle ones), especially if you’ve seen the cost of retirement villages. Russell Harwood came to this conclusion late one evening in his home state of South Dakota as he was poking around campingworld.com and stumbled across a 25-foot Winnebago for sale. (Jack Daniel’s might have been involved.) Harwood’s mother had passed away, and his father, Boyd, had reached his 80s, a decade of too much TV and torpor. The RV seemed like a way to see the country with the comforts of home.

This was in 2019, a few months before the pandemic. Since then, father and son have become seasoned travelers. They upgraded to a 40-foot RV with a full-size shower, a kitchen,

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and room for Rascal, a boxer mix that Russell calls his “70-pound lapdog.” The new RV is an older model, built in 2003, but Russell has honed his mechanical prowess on farm equipment for decades.

The pair drove to NASCAR races in Kansas and in Sonoma Valley, California, before winding their way to Galveston and settling at Sandpiper RV Resort, a beachside RV park not far from downtown. The 43-site park is ideal. There’s a Walgreens across the highway and a long stretch of shoreline a short walk from their front door. For Russell and Boyd, accustomed to bone-chilling winters and tending to the farm, this is easy living.

“Where else can I rent beachfront property for two months?” Russell asks me on a foggy day in early December that reached a high of 70 degrees. The flat-screen inside his RV is turned to The Weather Channel, which informs us that back home in South Dakota it’s 3 degrees.

“The fog was awesome today,” says Russell, who wonders if he might keep doing this even after his father is gone. It’s a good life. He has everything he needs: an air fryer that cooks pretty much anything, a liquor store in walking distance, an electric scooter when he needs to go to town, and nice folks for neighbors. “I walk 2 miles on the beach every day with the dog,” Russell says. He looks younger than his 62 years, with a boyish grin and skin lightly browned by the sun. Weekends can be crowded, but in these winter months, it’s a calm scene. “Monday through Thursday, I get the whole beach to myself,” he says.

About 30 miles southwest, back at the Blue Water RV Resort, Candace Pegg enjoys her own peace. “I’m not as stressed,” she says. “I got to come off medications from the stress of what I call my big-girl job.” Home-schooling isn’t even daunting after seeing the chaos of Zoom classes, she adds. Plus, the Full Time RV Living With Kids Facebook group is full of tips. Although the common critique of home-schooling is that kids lack socialization, Pegg sees her two children thriving.

“My kids are more social now than they were in public school,” she says. The park has a few other children,

in addition to a playground and a basketball court. It’s a community, with group activities like cornhole tournaments, and the kids have gotten to know grown-ups from across the country, strangers who became neighbors. “You miss your real family,” Pegg says, “but you make family here.”

Not long after the Peggs arrived, a couple from Texas pulled into the space beside them. A traveling nurse and an EMT worker in their 40s, they’re not much older than Candace and Jake. The families became close and check in on each other’s properties and pets from time to time. It takes creativity to negotiate four people in a 44-foot camper. But who said this unique lifestyle wouldn’t require ingenuity?

“When I’ve had a rough day, I go walk on the beach,” Pegg says. RVers refer to a normal house as “sticks and bricks,” and while that life made sense for a while, she prefers this way. It’s similar, with twists. “A date night isn’t going to a movie,” she says. “It’s going up to the rec hall and playing cards or putting the kids to bed and popping some popcorn to watch a movie.” For now, the kids enjoy the proximity to their parents, though they’re not yet teenagers. “When the kids are older, it might be different,” Pegg admits.

We take a golf cart out to the trail, where the canal leading to Christmas Bay disappears into marshland with sprays of yellow dandelion. “This is the place to be when the sun sets,” she says, stopping the cart and taking a deep breath in the robust breeze. “It’s always windy, but when you don’t have the wind, you get the mosquitoes.”

Blue Water turned out to be a home away from home after all, but the Gulf Coast did come with a downside. The salty ocean air started to corrode their new RV. Pegg runs her fingers along a patch of rust that showed up after a few months.

“If it weren’t for that, we’d probably never leave,” she says. “It’s a hard pill to swallow when you put so much into a camper.”

The Peggs have decided to take another work-camp gig near the Grand Canyon in Arizona. They’ll miss it here. Pegg looks around wistfully at Blue Water. “This place is the best,” she says. “Until I find the next place.” ★

Hooked Up

These prime RV spots span a 230-mile stretch of coastline.

GULF WATERS BEACH FRONT RV RESORT

5601 SH 361, Port Aransas.
361-749-4978;

gulfwatersrvresorttx.com

Palapas, fire pits, and wet bars dot the grounds of this RV park, where sites are individually owned and rented out for travelers just passing through.

PORT A RV RESORT

2600 SH 361, Port Aransas.

361-416-1405;

portarvresortparadise.com

A tightknit community of mostly retirees meets in recently renovated common areas for bingo, yoga, shuffleboard, and potlucks.

BLUE WATER RV RESORT

11511 Bluewater Highway, Freeport.

979-428-5867;

bluewaterrvpark.com

This family-friendly spot includes a playground and ice cream socials, plus a private boat ramp and docks for fishing, kayaking, and paddleboating.

SANDPIPER RV RESORT

201 Seawall Blvd., Galveston.

409-765-9431;

sandpiperrvresort.com

A short walk to Galveston’s Stewart Beach and a quick drive to downtown, this low-key resort offers a balance of city amenities and island life.

CAMP MARGARITAVILLE RV RESORT

796 SH 87, Crystal Beach.

409-515-1970;

margaritavilleresorts.com

A huge resort with live concerts and a swim-up bar in the self-proclaimed largest RV resort pool in the country attracts weekenders and year-round relaxers.



PINEY WOODS

**A collection of cultures under the influence of the Deep South
merge in wondrous forestland**



SCAN TO SEARCH
PINEY WOODS
CITIES &
ATTRACTIONS



Flowering dogwood
inside the Ruby M.
Mize Azalea Garden on
the Stephen F. Austin
University campus in
Nacogdoches



PINEY WOODS



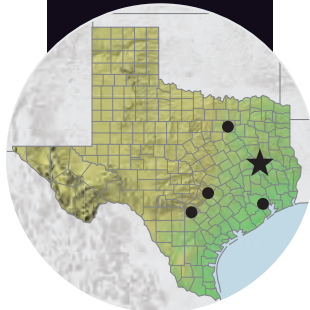
Fredonia Brewery

Old-Timey Charm

Nacogdoches is teeming with activities and history

By Clayton Maxwell

- Dallas**
3 hours
- Houston**
3 hours
- Austin**
4 hours
- San Antonio**
5.5 hours



Six flags have flown over Texas but the small Piney Woods city of Nacogdoches, or Nac as locals call it, claims nine. The stories behind those extra three flags—a dramatic mix of scrappy rebellion, bravado, and blunders—are the stuff of legends. First a Caddo settlement circa 1200 AD, but officially founded by a Spanish trader in 1779, this friendly burg is considered by many to be Texas’ oldest town. While that claim has been debated, one thing is certain: Nacogdoches delivers on an old-timey travel experience. Whether it’s a stroll down the red brick streets of the historic downtown, a visit to a Caddo Mounds State Historic Site, or an amble through a lush azalea garden, Nacogdoches immerses visitors in its unique history and culture amid the sweet-smelling pines of East Texas.

PHOTOS: BRIAN MASCHINO; KEVIN STILLMAN

STAY

The Fredonia Hotel

Check in at the midcentury modern Fredonia Hotel (starting at \$149/night), named for the 1826 rebellion in which settlers declared themselves independent from Mexico. The Republic of Fredonia, one of the city's unique flags, may have been short-lived, but it looms large in local lore. Restored to its retro charm in 2017, the hotel today is a deluxe starting point for exploring of the town's past.

EAT

Clear Springs Restaurant

Even the food in Nacogdoches has a history, including the Clear Springs Restaurant. Built in the 1900s, it previously served as a grocery store. What was once the first refrigerated warehouse west of the Mississippi is now a family-owned eatery known for its fried catfish and other comfort foods.

Maklemore's Ale House & Bistro

For a superlative burger, head to this laid-back bistro with a college vibe. Concoctions such as the BBQ Bacon Smoked Gouda Burger and the Cheeseburger Eggsplosion will fill the belly and perhaps inspire a post-meal digestive stroll. An ample selection of salads balances out the decadence.

Fredonia Brewery

With its tasty Nine Flags Amber Ale and Pine Cove porter, this homegrown brewery celebrates Nacogdoches through a skillful balancing of yeast, malt, and hops. A rotating lineup of food trucks serves dishes from around the world: Indian, Vietnamese, Mexican. Trivia nights, book club meetings, and live music bring in the locals for community fun. Tours of the brew room and cellar give visitors a glimpse into the art of making beer.

LEARN

Charles Bright Visitor Center

Located within a former stone-walled post office from 1918, the center houses a small museum full of tales of local revolts and heroes. A walking tour brochure guides visitors to a Caddo mound in city limits and Lanana Creek Trail, an almost 6-mile trail that was once a Caddo footpath leading into the Piney Woods.

Sterne-Hoya House Museum and Library

This historic landmark was a dogtrot house built in 1830 by a German immigrant who participated in both the Fredonian Rebellion and the Texas Revolution. Here you can visit one of the state's first wine cellars and ponder rumors that a grown Sam Houston was baptized there.

SEE

Ruby M. Mize Azalea Garden

Bright azaleas, sweet-scented camellias, and delicate Japanese maples envelop the senses in this lush garden located on the Stephen F. Austin State University campus, an anchor of Nacogdoches cultural life. Its easy walking trail winds through a mind-boggling variety of plant specimens. Marvel at the wonders of horticulture as you stroll.

SHOP

Main Street

For an authentic local shopping experience, explore the shops around downtown's Main Street. The Bosslight, an independent bookstore stocked with the work of Texas writers, is a beloved hub for Nac's bibliophiles. Nearby, check out the brick-walled Nacogdoches Cigar Co. More than a purveyor of cigars and pipes, this local institutions sells "mantiques:" knives, fishing memorabilia, and other cool relics. ★



Daingerfield State Park

TEXAS STATE PARKS: HIDDEN GEMS

DAINGERFIELD STATE PARK

Walk the trails beneath 100-foot pines. Dive into the pristine water. Paddle, fish, camp, and rest your head in a rental cabin. These are some of the many ways to admire the abundant natural beauty in this area of East Texas. Visit in spring to see colorful wildflowers and blooming dogwoods in shades of blue, pink, and yellow. Visit in fall to see sweetgums, oaks, and maple trees in breathtaking shades of gold, red, and orange.

OTHER HIDDEN GEMS

ATLANTA STATE PARK
LAKE BOB SANDLIN STATE PARK
VILLAGE CREEK STATE PARK

MORE PINEY WOODS STATE PARKS

CADDO LAKE STATE PARK
HUNTSVILLE STATE PARK
LAKE LIVINGSTON STATE PARK
MARTIN CREEK LAKE
STATE PARK
MARTIN DIES JR. STATE PARK
TYLER STATE PARK
MISSION TEJAS STATE PARK

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

RV INFO

Eagle Nest Hidden Lake Resort is a nature lover's hideaway. Its 14-acre lake offers fishing, canoeing, and paddleboarding, tempting guests to stay on-site all day. Reservations by phone only. Call the office before arriving to get the security gate code. Amenities include Wi-Fi and boat rentals. 19299 US 59 North. 936-520-0838; eaglenesthiddenlake.com



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 water-skiing, 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; carthagetexas.us

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—An excellent route is via SH 87 South, then 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

COLDSRING POP. 854

Coldspring/San Jacinto County Chamber of Commerce: 31 N. Butler St. 936-653-2184; coldspringtexas.org

Coldspring has antiques stores, art studios, a public library, tennis, a country club, and marinas. The city offers restaurants, motels, and overnight facilities.

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 them was Richard E. Jackson, a conservationist known as the "Father of the Big Thicket," who advocated for the preservation of the dense pine-filled 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 in Texas marker explains the 1930s 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 filling its streets 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 (CORE) 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 more than 2.5 million barrels of crude oil worth millions of dollars in the mid-1900s.

Find more historical markers and historic sites across the state at the Texas Historical Commission's Texas Historic Sites Atlas: atlas.thc.texas.gov



Davy Crockett National Forest near Crockett

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, 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 angler'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 features 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 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 or 936-544-5507

MISSION TEJAS STATE PARK—See GRAPELAND.

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

PHOTO: KEVIN STILLMAN

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, forestry, oil, and the Yamboree. 119 Simpson St. 903-843-5483

LAKE GILMER—Lake activities include fishing, skiing, boating, 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; visithenderson.com or hendersontx.us

Henderson's location makes it 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.

DEPOT MUSEUM AND CHILDREN'S DISCOVERY CENTER—This living history museum recalls early life in Rusk County and offers educational instruction in 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 Visitors 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 COLDSRING.

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

THE STARS AT NIGHT ARE BIG & BRIGHT

HUNTSVILLE
PURE TEXAS

#VisitHuntsvilleTX



PINEY WOODS

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 or 936-291-9726

WYNNE HOME ART & VISITOR CENTER—This is a cultural arts center. 1428 11th St. 936-291-5424

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 wartime artifacts to treasured Jasper County family heirlooms. 165 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, a 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

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. 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

TURNING BASIN RIVERBOAT TOURS—Take a narrated tour of Big Cypress Bayou. Admission charge. 200 Bayou St. 903-665-2222

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.

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

RANGERETTE SHOWCASE—It features uniforms and mementos of Kilgore College's famous drill and dance team. Free. 1100 Broadway Blvd. 903-983-8265

TEXAS MUSEUM OF BROADCASTING & COMMUNICATIONS—The museum showcases vintage

Discover new memories and adventures in Kilgore this year.

VisitKilgore.com

Scan for info

Visit Kilgore TEXAS



Historic Jefferson Hotel

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: 409-246-3413; 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 theaters, 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. 409-951-6800

MUSEUM OF HARDIN COUNTY—A restored bank building showcases area history. 830 S. Maple St. 409-755-7313

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

A vertical advertisement for Lindale, Texas. At the top, it says "Visit LINDALE TEXAS". Below that is a photo of a blonde woman wearing a white cowboy hat and a beaded top, holding a small blue flower. Underneath her is the text "Hometown of MIRANDA LAMBERT". Below that is a large, stylized sign that says "THE PINK PISTOL". At the bottom, there is a list of activities: "LIVE MUSIC * SHOPPING FESTIVALS & EVENTS MUSEUM * PARKS CANDY MAKING * WINERY & WINE BOTTLING".



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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." 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 is home to the Alabama and Coushatta tribes. Visitors enjoy gaming, scenic camping, fishing, and swimming. 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 MUSEUM—The museum collects, preserves, and interprets the county's history. 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 for fun. It's known for blue skies and fish fries. The town hosts the Great Texas Balloon Race and Downtown Live concerts. It has outdoor adventures, big trees, parks, biking, trails, and birding. 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-compliant 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

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. Moberly Ave. 903-233-3260

PHOTO: WILL VAN OVERBEEK



Ellen Trout Zoo in Lufkin

LUFKIN

POP. 34,152

Lufkin Convention and Visitors Bureau:
601 N. Second St. 936-633-0349; visitulufkin.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.

CASSELLS-BOYKIN PARK—It includes a handicap-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. 936-633-0349

THE HISTORY CENTER—Photos and records document East Texas history. Free. 102 N. Temple Drive, Diboll. 936-829-3543

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

PINES THEATER—The restored art deco theater hosts concerts, classic movies, and special events. 113 S. First St. 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.

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 historic 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. 903-938-9495

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

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PINEY WOODS

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

Included on the National Register of Historic Places, Mineola offers shops, restaurants, antiques, museums, the Select Theater, a 3,000-acre nature preserve, and special events all year. Festivals include the Iron Horse Festival, May Fiesta, MLOTA's Art Festival and Quilt Show, and Magical Mineola Christmas.

LAKE HAWKINS—Parks offer boating, fishing, and camping. 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. 903-569-2631 or 903-569-6983

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; mtpleasanttx.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 Whatley 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—Federation 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

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 offers education on the 19th century and its time as a hospital during the Civil War. 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 Mound 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 cover, 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 Ameri-

Sidetrack in Mineola Est. 1873

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PHOTO: STAN A. WILLIAMS



Old Nacogdoches University Building

can 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 and gorgeous scenic drives.

ANDERSON COUNTY COURTHOUSE—This historic 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. Admission charge.

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

HOWARD HOUSE MUSEUM—This Greek Revival structure contains period furnishings and exhibits. Free. 1011 N. Perry St. 903-723-0268

MOUNT VERNON A.M.E. CHURCH—The historic Gothic-style church is one of Texas' Most Endangered Places. Free. 913 Calhoun St. 903-723-3014

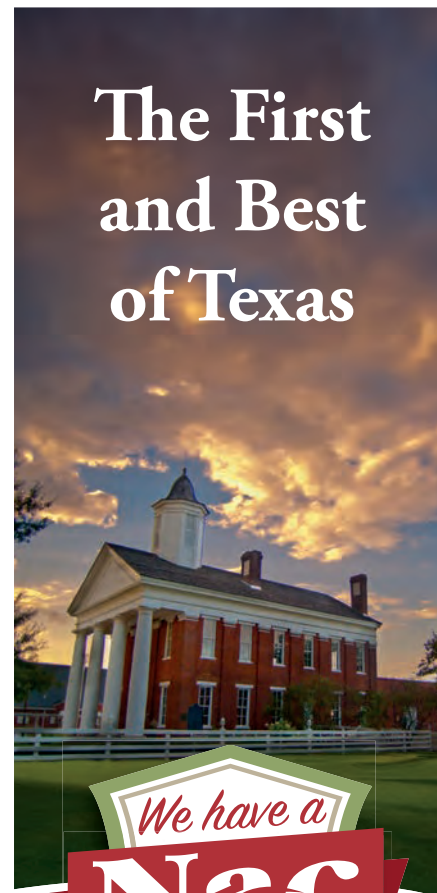
OLD TOWN PALESTINE—This vibrant area of the historic district is a must-stroll for visitors. Free. 299 E. Crawford St. 903-723-3014

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 historic 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 Dornis Model RR. Admission charge. 808 W. Oak St. 903-723-3014



Nacogdoches is a city of contrasts, where the past refuses to be forgotten and the future beckons like brilliant sunlight through the forest canopy. Plan your visit to this 300-year-old Texas treasure with the Visit Nac app or at VisitNac.com



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PALESTINE TEXAS

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, historic 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 is the picturesque town of Rusk. Rusk is rich in history and has something to offer everyone, including 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

Shop. Dine. Or Simply Unwind.



With a superb location, accommodations that appeal to both business and leisure travelers, and myriad shopping and dining options, Shenandoah, Texas, is a hidden gem that provides great value to those looking to stay in the North Houston area.

At just over two square miles in size, everything in Shenandoah is easily accessible and convenient. The city has a variety of well-reviewed hotels, nearly 60 restaurants and numerous shopping and entertainment options.

To learn more, go to VisitShenandoahTX.com





Footbridge Garden Park in Rusk

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

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; visitshenandoah.tx.com

With quality hotels, five shopping centers, more than 50 restaurants, and numerous entertainment venues, Shenandoah is conveniently located near North Houston area attractions. Whether you're enjoying restaurants and shops at the Portofino Shopping Center, the Sam Moon Center, or Metropark Square, there is plenty to see and do.

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 #savethepines 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 Ernest 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' wild-flower 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



PINEY WOODS



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 history 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

PATRICK J. AHERN HOUSE—The Classical Revival-style home is a living history museum. 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

Visitors find The Woodlands is a place they want to return to often. Enjoy a concert at the award-winning Cynthia Woods Mitchell Pavilion, upscale shopping in a walkable destination, top-tier amenities, waterfront restaurants, miles of hike-and-bike trails, and luxury accommodations.

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

BREWERIES, DISTILLERY, AND WINERY—The Distillery at Kiepersol, ETX Brewing Co., Kiepersol Vineyards and Winery, and True Vine Brewing Co. See TEXAS BEVERAGE TOUR section.

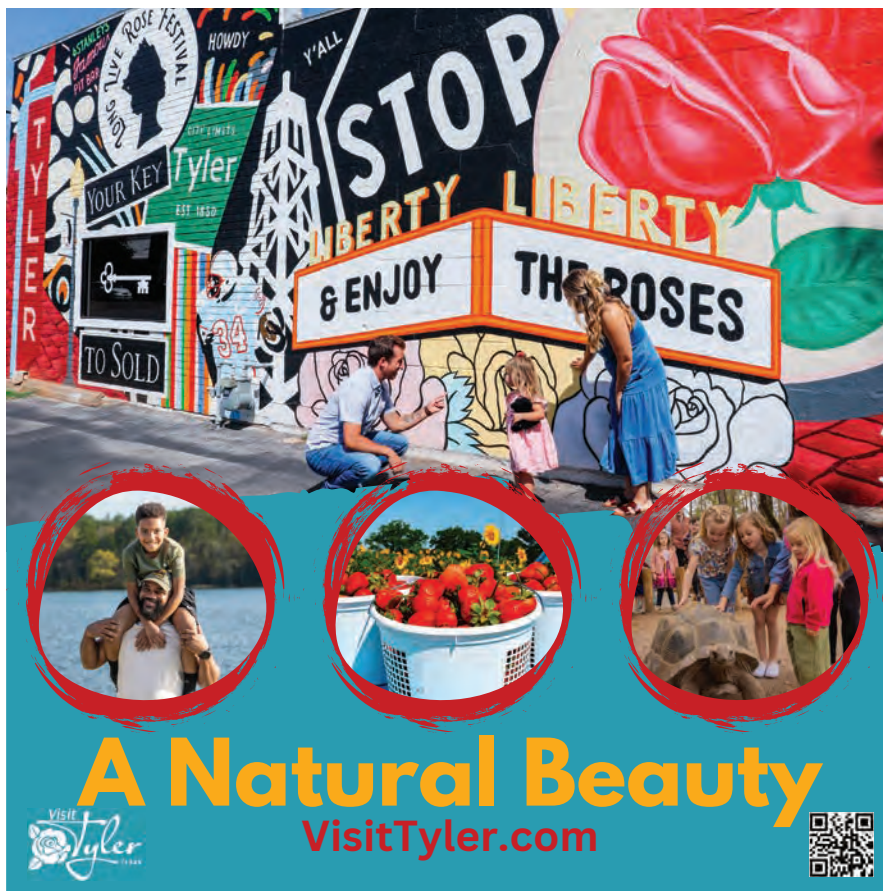


PHOTO: KEVIN STILLMAN



Heritage Village Museum in Woodville

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

CHARNWOOD 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 revises 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

SMITH COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY'S MUSEUM & ARCHIVES—The facility exhibits artifacts from Smith County's historic, 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; tylercountycoc.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 also is here. Admission charge. 302 N. Charlton St. 409-283-3709



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From fast-moving rides to walkable art districts,
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Grayson County Speedway in Bells



Recycled Books, Records, and CDs in Denton

Old Meets New

The college town of Denton is hitting all the right notes

By Stacey Swann

Dallas
1 hour

Austin
3.5 hours

Houston
4.5 hours

San Antonio
5 hours



Located just north of Dallas—Fort Worth, Denton manages to feel like a small town while offering the amenities of the big city. The population is near 140,000, yet the courthouse and historic square are still the true heart of the community. With two large universities—more than 45,000 students attend Texas Woman’s University and the University of North Texas—the city brims with the energy of a college town. Denton also has a long-standing, thriving music scene. The Denton Arts and Jazz Festival and the Thin Line Fest, both of which feature a wealth of music, film, and visual art, make it easy to forget this isn’t a bustling Dallas neighborhood. But just a few blocks from downtown you’ll find yourself on quiet one-way streets lined with stately homes, from Victorian to Mission Revival to Craftsman—some of which were built more than 100 years ago. Like the old Austin that Denton is often compared to, many students are seduced into staying long after graduation. But the charm is equally evident to those who are just visiting for a short spell.

PHOTOS: MICHAEL AMADOR



TEXAS STATE PARKS: HIDDEN GEMS

EISENHOWER STATE PARK

Nestled on Lake Texoma north of Dallas, this park is the place for fishing or watching a spectacular sunset. Four miles of trails are available for walking and biking, and the backcountry woodlands make great courses for all-terrain vehicles and dirt bikes (permit required). Swim at a pristine beach inside a cove surrounded by limestone cliffs. At night, visitors can sleep under the stars or reserve Ike's Cabin, which has bunk beds and sleeps up to five.

OTHER HIDDEN GEMS

FORT BOGGY STATE PARK LOCKHART STATE PARK

MORE PRAIRIES & LAKES STATE PARKS

BASTROP STATE PARK
BONHAM STATE PARK
BUESCHER STATE PARK
CEDAR HILL STATE PARK
CLEBURNE STATE PARK
COOPER LAKE STATE PARK
DINOSAUR VALLEY STATE PARK
FORT PARKER STATE PARK
**LAKE MINERAL WELLS
STATE PARK & TRAILWAY**
**LAKE SOMERVILLE
STATE PARK & TRAILWAY**
LAKE TAWAKONI STATE PARK
LAKE WHITNEY STATE PARK
MERIDIAN STATE PARK
MOTHER NEFF STATE PARK
PALMETTO STATE PARK
PURTIS CREEK STATE PARK
RAY ROBERTS LAKE STATE PARK
STEPHEN F. AUSTIN STATE PARK

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

STAY

The Brownlow House

Since buying this historic 1912 Victorian home in 2020, owners Whitney and Cuong Mai have given the property a major makeover. The lodging evokes the warmth of a bed-and-breakfast with the polish of a boutique hotel. Rates start at \$200/night for one of the four bedrooms, all featuring claw-foot bathtubs and traditional décor.

EAT

Beth Marie's Old Fashioned Ice Cream

Located on Denton's historic square, this popular ice cream parlor often has long lines winding through its 1950s-style interior. Flavor options abound—try a waffle cone with scoops of Texas Honey Whiskey and CinnFull Oats or the rotating Sundae of the Month.

Spiral Diner and Bakery

The original diner opened 20 years ago in Fort Worth, and there's a new location in Denton. Even the most skeptical of carnivores will enjoy comfort food with all-vegan ingredients. The cashew-based queso, soy milkshakes, and classic patty melt show the decadent side of a plant-based meal.

DRINK

East Side Denton

This bar has all the ingredients for a perfect afternoon with friends: a wooden deck and beer garden; lots of patrons' pooches to pet; and games like darts, foosball, and cornhole. Head to the food truck park on-site and buy a banh mi sandwich from The Pickled Carrot. Make sure to sample some of East Side's 80 beers on tap.

Music at Dan's Silverleaf

This club calls itself "your favorite musician's favorite live music venue." Long known for its stellar sound quality, the previously Americana-focused venue has hosted singers like James McMurtry

and Gary P. Nunn. Now it brings in a wide range of artists, such as the indie-rock band Yolanda Cruz and the Daydreamers.

SHOP

Recycled Books, Records, and CDs

There's a special charm to local bookstores, especially one inside a former opera house. Opened in 1983, the shop has multiple levels containing thousands of used books, LPs, CDs, and games. Pick up a new-to-you novel and walk down the street to West Oak Coffee Bar for an espresso to sip while you read.

LEARN

Denton County Historical Park

This large park is home to two museums. The Bayless-Selby House Museum is a Victorian home that showcases Denton life in the early 1900s. Quakertown House focuses on Denton County's African American history, including stories of residents of the thriving Freedman Town who were forcibly displaced in the early 1920s.

SEE

Courthouse-on-the-Square Museum

Located inside the Denton County Courthouse, the museum tells the history of the iconic structure. It was built in 1896 and restored in 2004 using blueprints from the original architect, W.C. Dodson. The courthouse serves as the gravesite of the city's namesake: John B. Denton, a minister, lawyer, and soldier. The museum hosts talks on archeology, Native American history, and more. Admission is free.

Ray Roberts Lake

Swimmers flock to the beaches and coves of this lake. Hikers can experience oak woodlands, prairie grasslands, and floodplains with wetlands. The 20-mile Greenbelt Corridor has multiuse trails with options for cyclists, horseback riders, and hikers. There are two marinas, watercraft rentals, campsites, and lodging. ★

RV INFO

The Sanger/Denton KOA Campground is 15 miles north of Denton; just off Interstate 35, this RV park has more than 150 sites with full hookups as well as spots for tent camping. Amenities include Wi-Fi, a playground, and a catch-and-release fishing pond. koa.com/campgrounds/sanger



ADDISON

POP. 17,310

Addison Tourism Department: 14681 Midway Road, Suite 200. 972-450-7079 or 800-233-4766; 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.

CAVANAUGH FLIGHT MUSEUM—See restored aircraft and signed print art. Admission charge. 4572 Claire Chennault Drive. 972-380-8800

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

Bethany Lakes Park features a large fishing pond, a disc golf course, a trail, and a playground. Golfers enjoy The Courses at Watters Creek.

ALLEN STATION PARK—The park offers multiple recreation opportunities, including a walking trail. 1120 N. Cedar Drive. 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

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.

FANTHORP 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. 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 countless 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. 201 W. Main St. 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 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

City of Athens Dept. of Tourism: 508 E. Tyler St. 903-675-5131; athenstx.org

Southeast of the Dallas-Fort Worth metroplex, Athens was so named because it was expected to become the cultural center of the state, as was its namesake in



PHOTO: STAN A WILLIAMS

Greece. According to Texas historian Frank X. Tolbert, the hamburger originated here. The Athens Old Fiddlers' Reunion is in May.

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

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

LAKE ATHENS—This reservoir has boat ramps, 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—Aquarium has exhibits, a fishing area, a tram, and a wetlands trail. 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. 512-332-8996; 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 WWII. 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

DINOSAUR PARK—Educational facility features life-size dinosaur exhibits, a fossil dig, and a 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



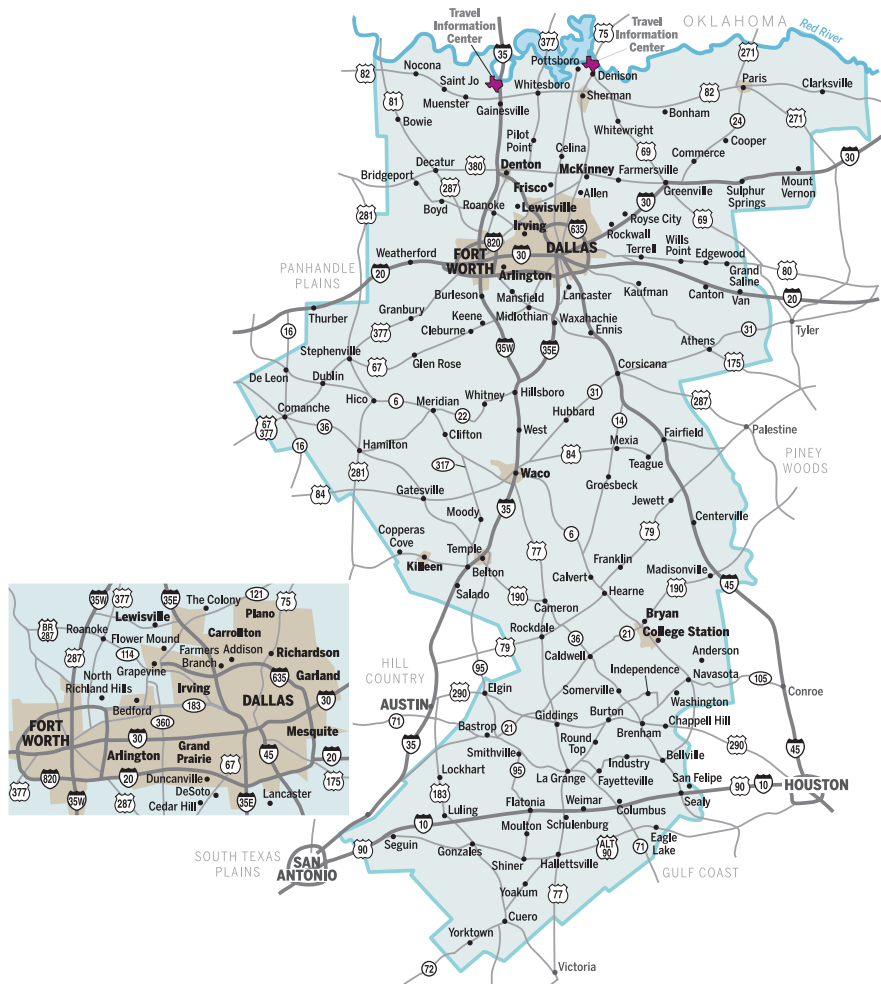
Sam Bell Maxey House

HISTORIC SITES

This 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





ADDISON

WHERE GETAWAYS HAPPEN

Experience the perfect getaway weekend in Addison, the true center of Dallas! With over 200 restaurants, 22 hotels, and close proximity to the renowned Galleria Dallas, Addison has everything you need for an unforgettable escape. Visit Addison - where relaxation happens.

VISITADDISON.COM

AT THE CENTER OF IT ALL

Meet in the Middle of Everywhere... and away from everything!

Explore our authentic small Texas town and we guarantee you'll want to come back and bring friends!



Visit **BRENHAM**
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VisitBrenhamTexas.com
979.337.7580



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 day trips or book one of 15-plus lodging/B&B options. Stroll two popular 1st Saturday Markets. Events include Texas Select from Forged in Fire, Saengerfest, Austin County Fair and PRCA Rodeo, Pickin' and Grinnin' Bluegrass Festival, and Small Town Christmas.

1890s 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

BREWERY AND WINERY—Huff Brewery Co. and U Bar Wines. See TEXAS BEVERAGE TOUR section.

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 two major lakes and plentiful woodlands, 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 originally 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 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 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 City of Bonham 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 preserves 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, cafes, 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. 1517 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 counting) 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 opportunities. The area offers more than 80 lodging options.

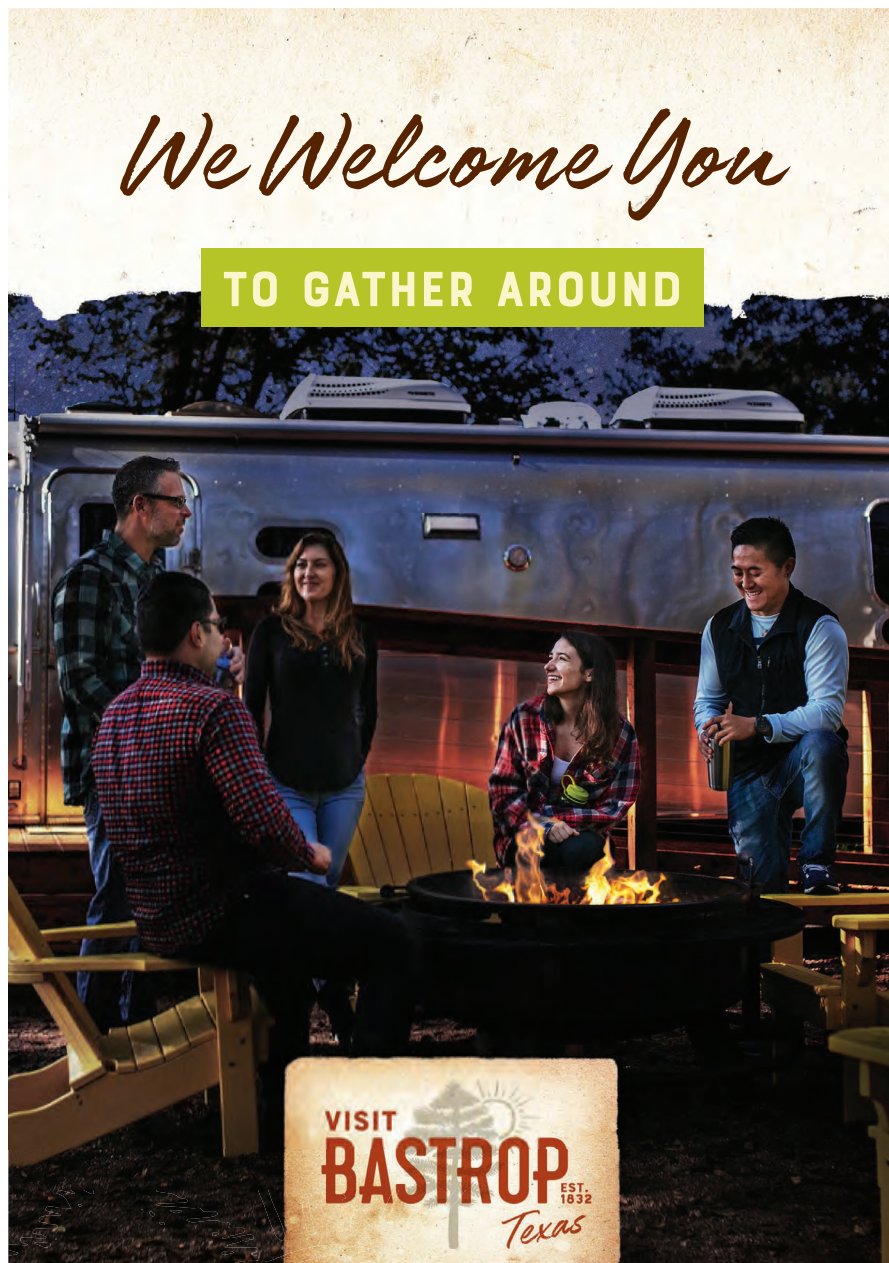
ANTIQUE CAROUSEL—C.W. Parker carousel has Charles W. Dare horses. Admission charge. 910 N. Park St. 979-337-7580 or 979-337-7250

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, Saddlehorn Winery, and Texas Star Winery/Chisolm Cellars. See TEXAS BEVERAGE TOUR section.

CHAPPELL HILL LAVENDER FARM—During the cutting season that occurs twice a year, you can cut your own fresh lavender. 2250 Dillard Road. 979-251-8114



In Bastrop, Texas, it all starts with exploring hidden gems in historic downtown, followed by a thrilling zip line experience through the treetops of Lost Pines. Then, take the crew to Lake Bastrop and spend the night under the Texas stars. And that's just half of it. We welcome you to make yourself at home and enjoy our special brand of Texas hospitality.

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PRAIRIES & LAKES

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 or destinationbridgeport.com

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. 2914 SH 101. 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

BRAZOS VALLEY AFRICAN AMERICAN MUSEUM—Exhibits highlight the history and heritage of African Americans in the Brazos Valley. Admission charge. 500 E. 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 AND WINERY—Blackwater Draw Brewing Co. and Messina Hof Winery. See TEXAS BEVERAGE TOUR section.

CARNEGIE HISTORY CENTER—Built in 1903, the center 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

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

TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY—See COLLEGE STATION.

BURLESON

POP. 53,381

Burleson Area Chamber of Commerce: 124 S. Main St., Suite 226. 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, exhibits feature local history, artifacts, and photographs. 124 W. Ellison St. 817-447-1575

WINERIES—Lost Oak Winery and Sunset 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 is home to 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/tourism

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.

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 or 979-567-1871

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 in 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.

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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: 119 N. Buffalo St. 903-567-1849 or 877-462-7467; 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 displays information on 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 an 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. Life is thriving here, and Celina's reputation is extending beyond city limits. 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.

CENTERVILLE POP. 932

Centerville Chamber of Commerce: 903-536-7261; 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



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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 include 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 to 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. 817-645-4215

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 the Candlewalk 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, boating, 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; clifontexas.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, and fossils. 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. 979-847-8113

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. 979-458-4910 or 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, a Hall of Honor, and an information center. 475 Short 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 the modern amenities of today's traveler. Columbus is a little slice of Americana with deep Texas roots. Come see for yourself.



PHOTO: J. GRIFFIS SMITH



George H.W. Bush Presidential Library Center in College Station

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

AUDIO DRIVING TOUR—Download the “Discover Columbus Texas” Audio Driving Tour App. 425 Spring St. 979-732-8385

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—The museum houses three major collections featuring Santas from all over the world. Admission charge. 604 Washington St. 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 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. 218 Lexie St. 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

The original townsite was a stopping point on the Chisholm Trail. The scenic area around the city is popular with bicyclists and runners. Cycling route maps are available from the visitor bureau. Events include Rabbit Fest and the Krist Kindle Markt holiday bazaar.



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FORT CAVAZOS—See KILLEEN.

OGLETREE GAP PRESERVE—This historic townsite includes the original stage stop. 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 dating 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. 361-875-0916

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—The Guadalupe River offers a 13.8-mile trail for fishing and river-paddling. Free. Put-ins are on FM 766, SH 72, and FM 236.

DALLAS POP. 1,299,544

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

From iconic attractions to world-class restaurants, Dallas has it all. More than a dozen entertainment districts near downtown offer culture, shopping, and dining. Dallas also has a vibrant arts scene, boasting the nation's largest contiguous urban arts district. Enjoy sporting events all year from the area's six professional sports teams.

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

BREWERIES AND WINERY—Community Beer Company, Deep Ellum Brewing Company, Four Corners Brewing Co., Peticolas 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 ARLINGTON.

DALLAS HOLOCAUST AND HUMAN RIGHTS MUSEUM—It teaches lessons on the Holocaust and memorializes the victims. Admission charge. 300 N. Houston St. 214-741-7500

DALLAS MUSEUM OF ART—It has art from myriad 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, and 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

FREEDMAN'S CEMETERY MEMORIAL—It commemorates the cemetery and significant contributions made by African Americans to Dallas. Lemmon Avenue and Central Expressway. 214-670-4209

FRONTIERS OF FLIGHT MUSEUM—Relive the history of aviation amid 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



Nasher Sculpture Center in Dallas

MORTON H. MEYERSON SYMPHONY CENTER—It's home to the Dallas Symphony Orchestra. Events admission charge. 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, restaurant, and revolving lounge. 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

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. 5900 Bishop Blvd. 214-768-2516

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PRAIRIES & LAKES

SOUTHFORK 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. 1820 Dowdy Ferry Road. 214-391-1000

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 architectural 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

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 as 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, 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 Ike 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 is no shortage of things to do with unique restaurants and shopping, craft breweries and bars, and a vibrant 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 galleries, an art studio, a 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. 940-349-8382

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 Chamber of Commerce and Visitor Center: 2010 N. Hampton Road, Suite 200. 972-224-3565; desotochamber.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

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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 grist mill 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 is called the Goose Hunting Capital of the World. The city is on the central migratory flyway, making it possible to see more than 250 species of birds in the area. The town is on the Texas Independence Trail.

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

NOFINGER HOME—The two-story structure, with original woodwork and fixtures, currently houses city offices. 310 N. Main St. 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 the perfect getaway to see the charm of a small town while being surrounded by a history-rich, nature-inspiring, foodie-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. 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

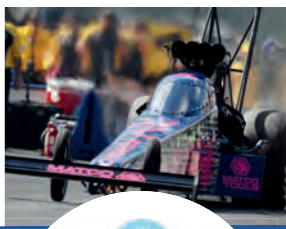
The Main Street City has restored turn-of-the-century buildings with shopping and dining. The Victorian-style Bain-Honaker House hosts tours by appointment. The historic 1930s Onion Shed is now a center for community events. Events include Audie Murphy Day, the Old Time Saturday Celebration, and the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

AUDIE MURPHY EXHIBIT AT THE RIKE MEMORIAL LIBRARY—It displays service medals, photos, and memorabilia from one of WWII'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



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Fort Worth Botanic Garden

FAYETTEVILLE

POP. 244

Fayetteville Chamber of Commerce: 713-206-4833; greaterfayettevillechamber.org

Music has long been an important part of life here. The tradition continues with the Fayetteville Chamber Music Festival in May, the Lickskillet Days Festival in October, and Texas Pickin' Park on the second Saturday each month. B&Bs and guest cottages are available.

ARTS FOR RURAL TEXAS—A gallery on the square offers rotating exhibits, ArtWalk events, and concerts. 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. 979-877-5290

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 Czhlispiel.

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

Recreational 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

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

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 Championship Rodeo—Professional cowboys and cowgirls compete year-round. It also features Pawnee Bill's Wild West Show. Admission charge. 121 E. Exchange Ave. 817-625-1025

Stockyards Museum—The museum exhibits 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 ARCHAEOLOGICAL MUSEUM—This facility exhibits archeological items from the ancient Near East. 2001 W. Seminary Drive. 817-923-1921

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 on 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—This is the Dallas Cowboys World Headquarters. The 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



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Glen Rose
Somervell County



exploreglenrose.org



Rough Creek Lodge and Resort in Glen Rose

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

GAINESVILLE POP. 17,912

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

This historic city boasts 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 E. 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

Garland is a culturally diverse city with Texas-sized opportunity. Get outdoors at Spring Creek and Rowlett Creek preserves, Firewheel Golf Park, and Lake Ray Hubbard. Shop Garland's charming downtown, Firewheel Town Center, and the Resistol Hat Outlet Store. Art comes alive at the Granville Arts Center and Plaza Theatre.

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

GRANVILLE ARTS CENTER—The center hosts Garland Symphony Orchestra performances from October through

May, musicals, ballets, stage plays, and concerts. 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 youngsters 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 16 miles of biking trails, bass fishing, and picnic areas. Free. 2525 Castle Drive. 469-546-5052

SPRING CREEK FOREST PRESERVE—It's home to a relic forest of 100- to 300-year-old oaks and more than 650 species of plants and animals. 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.

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 Romanesque Renaissance Revival 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

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 settlers. Outlaw Bill Longley was hanged here. Events include the Lee County Fair, 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, townfolk, and 11 hidden items. Free. 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. 979-884-0182 or 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

VETERAN'S 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 amazing 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 petting a pasture, café, store, trail, and 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

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

Visitor Center at the Old Jail Museum/Gonzales Chamber of Commerce and Agriculture: 414 St. Lawrence St. 830-672-6532; gonzaletx.travel or gonzaletexas.com

This town was designed by the Mexican government. The streets were named for saints, and markers today show the original plan. Gonzales is known as the "Lexington of Texas" because the first skirmish of the Texas Revolution was fought here. Today, the town celebrates its place in Texas history with the Come and Take It Festival.

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Traders Village in Grand Prairie

GONZALES MEMORIAL MUSEUM—The museum features the Come and Take It cannon, Mexican relics, and Texana. 414 Smith St. 830-672-6350

Eggleston House—The restored log house is furnished with antiques to depict Texas pioneer life. Tours available. 1256 Saint Louis St. 888-672-1095

HISTORIC HOMES TOURS—Contact the visitor center for information about self-guided walking and driving tours. 414 St. Lawrence St. 830-672-6532

HISTORIC SITES—Confederate Square and Texas Heroes Square downtown feature monuments and historic buildings. Battle of Gonzales markers, southwest on SH 97 near Cost. Earthworks of a Confederate fort are near US 90A/US 183 intersection.

HISTORICAL TRAIL—Driving tour is marked with “Come and Take It” signs. Contact the chamber for information. 414 St. Lawrence St. 830-672-6532

OLD JAIL MUSEUM—The cells, dungeon, gallows, and jailer’s quarters have been restored. 414 St. Lawrence St. 830-672-6532

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 11 S. 830-672-3266

PIONEER VILLAGE LIVING HISTORY CENTER—See houses and outbuildings, plus a 1920s-era school building and print shop. Admission charge. 2122 N. Saint Joseph St. 830-672-2157

ROBERT LEE BROTHERS JR. MEMORIAL LIBRARY—It displays a gun collection, war collectibles, and memorabilia. The Mary Elizabeth Tinsley Texas History Center has

original documents from the Texas Revolution era. 301 Saint Joseph St. 830-672-6315

SCENIC DRIVE—Park Road 11 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.

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

PHOTOS: WILL VAN OVERBEEK, MICHAEL AMADOR



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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 Texas Super Kings play professional matches 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



PRAIRIES & LAKES

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

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.

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

EAST TEXAS ZOO AND GATOR PARK—See alligators and other local animals. It also has a petting zoo. 9515 FM 1255. 903-962-5630

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

In historic downtown, many buildings are listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Visitors enjoy shopping, Grapevine’s Urban Wine Trail, galleries, restaurants, and luxury hotels. Several golf courses and Lake Grapevine offer outdoor recreation options. Grapevine also hosts many events, including GrapeFest in September.



Audie Murphy/American Cotton Museum in Greenville

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 Historical Museum—The museum highlights the cultural and family life of early Grapevine residents. 206 W. Hudgins St. 817-410-3526

Grapevine Vintage Railroad—The historic excursion train runs between Grapevine and the Fort Worth Stockyards. It offers special events. Admission charge. 705 S. Main St. 817-410-3189

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—Parks offer camping, picnicking, boat ramps, a marina, swimming, and fishing. On the north edge of Grapevine. 817-410-3122

GRAPEVINE WINE TOURS—Explore on your own, or take a guided excursion with tastings, a meal, and transportation. 817-259-9463

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

PALACE ARTS CENTER—It has performances, movies, visual arts, and a gallery. 300 S. Main St. 817-410-3541 or 817-410-3100

PEPPA PIG WORLD OF PLAY—Little ones will be immersed in the world of Peppa Pig. Admission charge. 3000 Grapevine Mills Parkway, 302A. 214-285-9110

SEA LIFE GRAPEVINE AQUARIUM—View more than 5,000 marine animals from Texas and around the world. Admission charge. 3000 Grapevine Mills Parkway. 469-444-3050

WHOAZONE—The action-packed floating water park is on Lake Grapevine. 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 large wave pool. Admission charge. 6501 I-30. 903-455-4040

WINERY—Landon Winery. See TEXAS BEVERAGE TOUR section.

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PHOTO: MICHAEL AMADOR

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

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 S. 361-798-2311

VIETNAM VETERANS MEMORIAL—An AH-1 Cobra helicopter, flags, and a plaque commemorate Lavaca County residents 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. 115 W. Henry St. 254-688-0165

HEARNE

POP. 4,538

Hearne Chamber of Commerce: 304 Market St. 979-595-8150; hearnechambertx.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 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 WWII 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

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. 120 N. Waco St. 254-582-8912

HILL COUNTY COURTHOUSE—The Second Empire-style building was restored after a 1993 fire. The grounds have 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—It explores Texas and its people during wartime. Free. 112 Lamar Drive. 254-659-7750

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PRAIRIES & LAKES

TEXAS THROUGH TIME FOSSIL MUSEUM—The museum offers free tours of the prehistoric fossil collection of 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 bath houses. 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.

ANTIQUÉ 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 on 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 on the National Register of Historic Places. On FM 390, one block east 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

Irving Convention and Visitors Bureau: 500 W. Las Colinas Blvd. 972-252-7476; irvingtexas.com

Spend an evening enjoying the tunes of a world-renowned musician at one of the best amphitheatres in Texas—Toyota Music Factory. Ride on a gondola. Get lost in art and history, including the Ruth Paine House Museum (open by appointment only), which tells a little-known side story to the assassination of President Kennedy.

GONDOLA ADVENTURES—Cruise Mandalay Canal on a long wooden gondola with a pilot. 357 W. Fork. 855-466-3652

IRVING ARCHIVES AND MUSEUM—It offers thought-provoking programs and exhibits exploring history and culture. Admission charge. 801 W. Irving Blvd. 972-721-3700 or 972-721-3714

IRVING ARTS CENTER—The 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. 972-869-9047

NORTHEAST TARRANT COUNTY CIVIL WAR MEMORIAL—This memorial names veterans of both Civil War armies who lived, died, or are buried in the county. 2401 Bedford Road, Bedford.

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 WWII 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. 903-626-4416

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 Theatre presents community shows. The Killeen 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.

FORT CAVAZOS—This modern Army post has the largest group of soldiers and fighting machines in the free world.

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



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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 Auf!, and the Bugle Boy presents live music in World War II army barracks.

FAYETTE HERITAGE MUSEUM AND ARCHIVES—It features historic 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

Inland Port Area Chamber: 1201 N. Dallas Ave., Suite 100. 972-227-2579; lancasterchamber.org

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 WWII artifacts collection, including a Japanese Zero. 650 Ferris Road.

LEONARD POP. 2,055

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

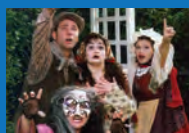
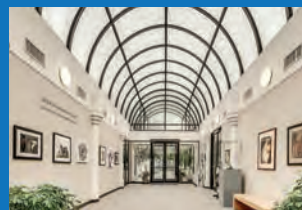
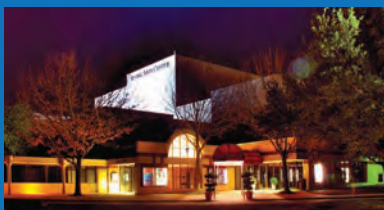
LEWISVILLE GRAND THEATER—This arts facility in the Old Town district hosts live music, theater performances, and art exhibits. 100 N. Charles St. 972-219-8446

LEWISVILLE LAKE—Parks and marinas offer fishing, boating, swimming, picnicking, and camping. Off I-35 E. 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. The park has a splash pad, gardens, and an outdoor stage. 155 W. Main St. 972-219-3401

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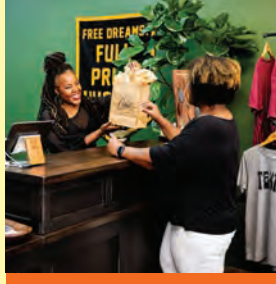
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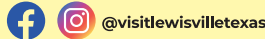
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LOCKHART

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 a popular 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. 5,564

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 backyards, and city parks. The famous Watermelon Thump Festival is held here in June.

DISTILLERY—AFT Distillery. See TEXAS BEVERAGE TOUR section.

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

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MANSFIELD

POP. 76,724

City of Mansfield: 1164 Matlock Road. 817-728-3390; visitmansfieldtexas.com

Near the DFW metroplex, Mansfield is a hub for arts and culture, including the Farr Best Theater and the Lot Downtown music venue. The town has over 900 acres of parkland and top-notch sports facilities. Events include the Juneteenth Celebration, Mansfield Rocks, Music Alley, Veterans Day Parade, and Hometown Holidays.

BIG LEAGUE DREAMS SPORTS PARK—It has replicas of eight Major League baseball fields, plus an indoor soccer complex. 500 Heritage Parkway South. 817-539-0700

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

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

MCKINNEY

POP. 211,397

Visit McKinney: 200 W. Virginia. 972-547-2058 or 888-649-8499; visitmckinney.com

McKinney touts one of the oldest, largest, and most vibrant historic districts with a downtown square containing boutiques and specialty shops, wineries, art galleries, a comedy club, 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 Tupps 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 and 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 a 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. 972-216-6468

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 on the National Register of Historic Places. 701-711 E. Kearney St. 972-216-6468

XCAPE ADVENTURES DFW—Choose from four rooms designed to be challenging and entertaining. 2414 US 80 East, Suite 100. 972-982-2073

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



PRAIRIES & LAKES

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; cityofmoody.net

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 the 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; cityofmountvermontexas.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 holds 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. 903-537-3931

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 Legislature and was home to noted songster Mance Lipscomb, who has 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 active since the 1860s. Musician Mance Lipscomb is buried 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 architectural era. It also has 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."

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 historic 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, which destroyed many houses and all but two downtown buildings. Today, Paris has the nation's largest collection of buildings circa 1916-1918; downtown is on the National Register of Historic Places.

BIFFEL 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. 940-440-0232

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



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HERITAGE FARMSTEAD MUSEUM

1900 W. 15th St.
Plano, TX 75075
972-881-0140

heritagefarmstead.org



The Heritage Farmstead Museum receives funding from the City of Plano

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.

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 Interurban 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; pottsborchamber.com

This area was the Texas starting point for the historic Shawnee-Preston Trail. Today, Pottsboro offers small-town ambience with services for Lake Texoma visitors.

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; richardsonstexas.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 Farmer's 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.

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; exploreroundtop.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, the Texas Antique Fest, 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

WINE DALE 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



Buescher State Park near Smithville

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 co-educational 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

TABLE ROCK 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

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. 940-995-2084

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

Shady Villa Hotel—This inn, built in 1860, was a site on the Chisholm Trail. It's restored as a restaurant and inn. 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



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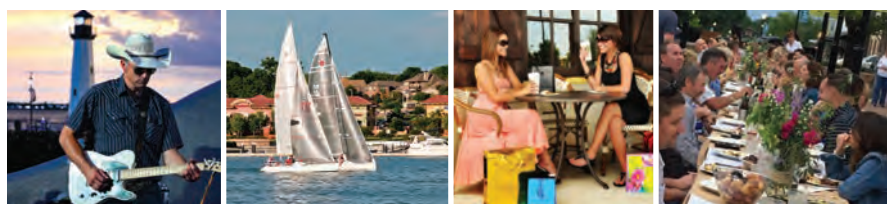


697 East I-30, Rockwall, TX 75087
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SCHULENBURG

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 historic 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 spectacular in the spring.

SEGUIN

POP. 33,408

Seguin Tourist Information Center: 116 N. Camp 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.

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, 1800s log cabin, jail, German adobe house, and Victorian doll house. 415 S. River St. 830-379-6382

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

PAPE PECAN HOUSE AND NUTCRACKER MUSEUM—It has more than 8,000 nutcrackers from all over the world, including depictions of presidents and animals. Free. 5440 SH 123 South. 830-379-7442

PECAN MUSEUM OF TEXAS—At the Texas Agriculture Education and Heritage Center, it has antique equipment and history. 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. Free. 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.

C.S. ROBERTS HOUSE—The Eastlake-style house is part of Heritage Row, an area of elegant Victorian homes. The chamber has maps. 915 S. Crockett St. 903-893-4067

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

Shiner is a great place to live and visit. With a bustling brewery, Spoetzl Brewery & Distillery; beautiful city parks; a wonderful, curated museum; and places to eat and stay. It'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 METHIDIUS 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

The historic downtown has antiques shops, restaurants, galleries, and a community theater. It's showcased in the films *Hope Floats* and *Tree of Life*. "Smitty" the Giant Gingerbread Man, near the chamber, is the largest in the country. Events include Smithville Jamboree, Texas Photo Festival, the Airing of the Quilts, and Festival of Lights.

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.

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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 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; visitsulphurspringstx.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 historic houses, shops, and mills 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; cityofteaguetx.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: 2 N. Main St. 254-298-5900; discovertemple.com

This city on the move features 66 parks, 29.5 miles of trails, two major lakes, and activities for families and adults. Events include music festivals, an annual air show, farmers markets, and a thriving downtown district full of culinary delights. Temple is known for its leading medical centers and innovative manufacturing base.

BELTON LAKE—See BELTON.

CULTURAL ACTIVITIES CENTER—It 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—Artifacts and exhibits feature the contributions of the Czech immigrants in Texas. Admission charge. 119 W. French Ave. 812-327-1766

DOWNTOWN DISTRICT—The district is home to authentic and locally owned shops, craft brews, restaurants, pubs, and live entertainment. Free. Downtown Temple. 254-298-5900

LIONS JUNCTION FAMILY WATER PARK—It has water slides, an aqua climb wall, a swimming pool, a lazy river,



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AT ALL

discover
TEMPLE

DISCOVERTEMPLE.COM

PHOTO BY JASON DECKMAN



PRAIRIES & LAKES

concessions, and a picnic pavilion. Admission charge. 5000 S. Fifth St. 254-298-5920

MILLER SPRINGS NATURE CENTER—It has 25 acres of wetlands, birdwatching, picnicking, camping, fishing, and 20 miles of hiking trails. Free. 1473 FM 2271, Belton. 254-298-5860

MOODY DEPOT MUSEUM—The museum features 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 exhibits exploring railroad and local history. Admission charge. 315 W. Ave. B. 812-327-1766

TEMPLE CHILDREN'S MUSEUM—The museum features hands-on learning, interactive play and skills stations, and family-friendly events. Admission charge. 11 N. Fourth St. 812-327-1766

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 historic 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



Magnolia Market at the Silos in Waco

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

TEXAS ZOOFARI PARK—The 900-acre drive-thru wild-life 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

Home to 23 miles of shoreline, nearly 3,000 acres of parkland, and one of the region's largest entertainment districts, The Colony offers outdoor recreation with modern amenities. Activities and special events include the annual Bow-Wow Luau, American Heroes: A Salute to Veterans, and Texas' longest-running LPGA Tour event.

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

GRANDSCAPE ENTERTAINMENT DISTRICT—Explore The Colony's central hub for entertainment, dining, and retail, plus traveling exhibitions, free outdoor concerts, and family festivals. Free. 5752 Grandscapes 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 Grandscapes 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. 972-624-3110

THE COLONY SHORELINE TRAIL—Enjoy a 3.5-mile nature trail made of natural crushed rock along Lewisville Lake. Free. 3700 Sparks Road & 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

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PHOTO: MICHAEL AMADOR

THURBER

POP. 8 (EST.)

thurbertexas.com

This “ghost town” was a community of more than 10,000 residents and the most important mine site in Texas for 30 years before its decline. Six original buildings still stand, 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. 143,984

Waco Visitor Information Center:
106 Texas Ranger Trail. 254-750-8696;
wacoheartoftexas.com

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 is a popular destination with fans of hometown celebrities Chip and Joanna Gaines. Annual events include Spring at the Silos, Margarita and Salsa Festival, 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

BREWERIES, 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

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—Antebellum Greek Revival-style structure has a detached kitchen, gardens, and 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, bird-watching, and photography. 1752 Eichelberger Crossing. 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, 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 artworks. 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

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PRAIRIES & LAKES

TEXAS SPORTS HALL OF FAME—Memorabilia highlight nationally known Texas sports figures. Admission charge. 1108 S. University Parks Drive. 254-756-1633

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 theatre now offers first-run and classic films, live music, and theatrical shows. 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 water-slide, 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 Longhorn 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—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 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 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 historic 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

Whitewright Chamber of Commerce: 113 W. Grand St. 903-364-2000; whitewright.org

Whitewright'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—Free-fall 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, and it is one of the leading watersport 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 area history. 144 W. Main St. 361-550-9136



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Comal River Tube Chute in New Braunfels

PHOTO: KENNY BRAUN



Coconut meringue pie at Blue Bonnet Cafe

Lake Retreat

Venture outdoors for fun and relaxation in Marble Falls

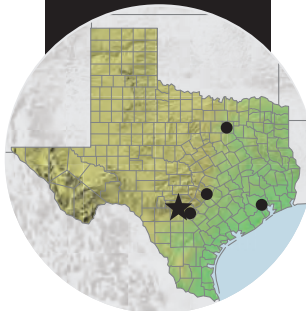
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San Antonio
1.5 hours

Dallas
3.5 hours

Houston
3.5 hours



Travelers won't actually see many waterfalls when visiting Marble Falls. The town's namesake cascade was submerged when the Colorado River was dammed in 1951 to create Lake Marble Falls. And the predominant rock isn't marble; it's granite. The native stone provided the building blocks for the construction of the Texas Capitol in the 1880s. Obviously, this Hill Country town knows how to make the most of things. Today, Marble Falls is a fast-growing community with an array of offerings to satisfy all sorts of weekenders. The walkable downtown harbors dozens of local shops, galleries, restaurants, and breweries, many with outdoor seating for patrons to enjoy the weather and people-watching. Anglers and water-skiers visit for Lake Marble Falls. Nearby Inks Lake State Park offers camping and water sports, and Balcones Canyonlands National Wildlife Refuge is known for hiking and birdwatching. For a serious workout, Spider Mountain Bike Park and Reveille Peak Ranch offer challenging terrain for mountain biking and trail running.

PHOTOS: BRANDON JAKOBET, WILL VAN OVERBEEK



Sauer-Beckmann Living History Farm at LBJ State Park & Historic Site

STAY

McKenzie Guest House

On a quiet block off Main Street, this circa-1907 clapboard hotel building went through several iterations before a renovation in 2018. The lodging offers five spacious and well-appointed suites (starting at \$200/night) with private kitchens and living spaces, a bungalow, and porches perfect for sitting a spell and enjoying the verdant gardens.

EAT

Blue Bonnet Cafe

A destination for comfort food since 1929, this café packs in hungry customers daily from 7 a.m. to 8 p.m. and till 1:45 p.m. on Sundays. The menu features homestyle cooking from pancakes to fresh-baked pies. The meringue is legendary. Chicken and dumplings are offered on Tuesdays. Don't be surprised if you have to wait for a table.

SEE

Lake Marble Falls

This sheltered body of water at the heart of town provides a scenic setting for fishing, kayaking, and picnicking. Cast a line from shore or rent a kayak or stand-up paddleboard from Just Yakin' to paddle among granite boulders and along craggy cliffs. Lakeside Park offers a walking trail, picnic tables, and a swimming pool.

Sculpture on Main

Since 2007, this outdoor public art program has placed diverse artworks along Main Street and a few side streets downtown. Permanent works include a bronze statue of country music great and former Marble Falls resident Floyd Tillman near the lake. Others are rotated each spring. New last year are two geometric sculptures by homegrown artist John Russo III.

Sweet Berry Farm

At this farm 4 miles from town, you can pick your own strawberries, tulips, and ranunculi and take photos in the fields (check the website for bloom updates).

Kids enjoy the pony rides, bounce house, and goat feeding. And you can't go wrong with a simple stroll through the grounds. The farm is open in spring and fall. Admission and parking are free.

Hill Country Wildflowers

Marble Falls makes a fitting home base for viewing Hill Country spring wildflowers. Blooms depend on the past year's rainfall, but most years bring bluebonnets, Indian paintbrush, winecups, and firewheels. Reliable routes can be found west of Marble Falls, with a side trip to Lake Buchanan. State Highway 29 takes motorists to Balcones Canyonlands.

LEARN

Longhorn Cavern State Park

The Civilian Conservation Corps built the entrance to this cavern, located 15 miles from town, in the 1930s. Tours cover a mile, following an ancient riverbed. Guides point out formations like Queen's Throne and spin tales of the cave's history as an outlaw hideout and underground dance hall.

DRINK

Bear King Brewery

Choose from a dozen or so craft brews served at long picnic tables inside or on the covered patio. The beers come with quirky names, such as Monkey Bridge Hefeweizen and Lady May, a hazy pineapple IPA, but the flavors speak for themselves. The food menu includes tacos, salads, and burgers. Live music on Fridays puts the foam on top.

Fiesta Winery

The Baxter-McCoury family uses Hill Country and High Plains grapes to make about 40 different wines, ranging from dry reds and whites to semisweets and sweets, including sparkling and dessert wines. At the location on Main Street, relax in the tasting room or take a glass of your favorite outside to sip beneath a giant oak tree. ★

TEXAS STATE PARKS: HIDDEN GEMS

LYNDON B. JOHNSON STATE PARK & HISTORIC SITE

Situated along the Pedernales River, across from the former president's ranch and birthplace, this day-use park is especially famous for its spring wildflowers. Try fishing, picnicking, and wildlife viewing, as well as a portion of the state's official Longhorn herd. Visit the Sauer-Beckmann Living History Farm to see how ranches in this area operated in the early 20th century. A swimming pool is available from June through mid-August.

OTHER HIDDEN GEMS

LONGHORN CAVERN STATE PARK

SOUTH LLANO RIVER STATE PARK DEVIL'S SINKHOLE STATE NATURAL AREA

MORE HILL COUNTRY STATE PARKS

BLANCO STATE PARK COLORADO BEND STATE PARK

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

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

RV INFO

Sunset Point RV Resort offers some 70 sites with hookups on the shores of Lake LBJ, about 6 miles from downtown Marble Falls. There's electricity, water, restrooms, laundry, boat slips, and fishing and swimming areas. 2322 N. Wirtz Dam Road. 830-798-8199; sunsetpointlbj.com



FIND YOUR STORY HERE

BULLOCK TEXAS STATE HISTORY MUSEUM | **Austin TEXAS** | **THE STORY OF TEXAS.COM**

The Bullock Museum, a division of the Texas State Preservation Board, is funded by Museum members, donors, and patrons, the Texas State History Museum Foundation, and the State of Texas.

Austin's art museum has a whole new vibe.

New art. New patio. New programs. From the Butler Sound Gallery to Second Saturdays to the new Latino art installations, there's a lot to experience at the Blanton. Now open Tuesday through Sunday, and late till 8 p.m. every Saturday.

BLANTON MUSEUM OF ART | The University of Texas at Austin / blantonmuseum.org

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 temperature of 68 to 70 degrees 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—The Austin Beer Garden Brewing Co., Austin Beerworks, The Austin Winery, Banner Distilling Co., Blue Owl Brewing, Crowded Barrel Whiskey Co., Genius Liquids Distillery, Independence Brewing Co., Infamous Brewing Company, Jester King Brewery, Live Oak Brewing Company, Revolution Spirits, St. Elmo Brewing Co., Still Austin Whiskey Co., and Texas Sake Company. 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.



Llano County Courthouse

HISTORIC TEXAS COURTHOUSES

Many of the county courthouse towers that punctuate the Hill Country sky have been restored to their original splendor thanks to the Texas Historical Commission's Texas Historic Courthouse Preservation Program.

The **Mills County Courthouse** in Goldthwaite opened in 1913 and features a distinctive neoclassical design. In Brady, the 1899 **McCulloch County Courthouse** boasts handsome exterior stonework and impressive Roman-inspired arches. The **Lampasas County Courthouse** in Lampasas is a Second Empire-style building completed in 1884 with a distinctive mansard roof. The 1909 **Williamson County Courthouse** in Georgetown was designed by Charles H. Page of Austin in the Beaux Arts style. In Llano, the 1892 **Llano County Courthouse** features a Romanesque Revival style with a corner tower. The 1931 **Menard County Courthouse** in Menard served as the prototype for other Texas courthouses in the art deco style. In Sonora, the 1891 **Sutton County Courthouse** exemplifies the Second Empire style, with impressive handwork in the architectural details. The 1891 **Edwards County Courthouse**, located on a prominent corner of Main Street in Rocksprings, represents the Romanesque Revival style. The **Kendall County Courthouse** in Boerne was initially built in 1870 using German vernacular construction. In New Braunfels, the **Comal County Courthouse**, designed by courthouse architect J. Riely Gordon in the Romanesque Revival style, was constructed in 1898. The recently restored **San Saba County Courthouse** in San Saba was built in 1911 and contains classical elements like a domed clock tower and ionic capitals.

textastimetravel.com/courthouses

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

LADY BIRD LAKE—The downtown lake is perfect for kayaking, canoeing, and paddleboarding. Rentals are available. 512-974-6700

LAKE AUSTIN—Several parks offer access. The lake is popular for boating, marinas, and swimming. On the western edge of Austin. 512-473-3200

LAKE TRAVIS—The lake offers boating, fishing, swimming, picnicking, and camping. West of Austin, also accessible from Lago Vista. 512-473-3200

LBJ PRESIDENTIAL LIBRARY—Exhibits include gifts from heads of state, a moon rock, and an Oval Office replica. Admission charge. 2313 Red River St. 512-721-0200

LIVE MUSIC VENUES—Iconic live music venues include the Broken Spoke, Antone's, Mohawk, ACL Live at Moody Theater, The Continental Club, and Hotel Vegas. 512-478-0098

MCKINNEY FALLS STATE PARK—The park offers mountain biking, hiking, fishing, birding, swimming, and camping. Admission charge. 5808 McKinney Falls Parkway. 512-243-1643

MEXIC-ARTE MUSEUM—It features works by Mexican, Latino, and Latin American artists. Admission charge. 419 Congress Ave. 512-480-9373

MOONLIGHT TOWERS—Austin is the only U.S. city with a tower system still intact.

MOUNT BONNELL—Covert Park overlooks Lake Austin and provides scenic views. 3800 Mount Bonnell Road. 512-974-6700

NEILL-COCHRAN HOUSE—It has Greek Revival architecture, antique furnishings, and historic documents. Admission charge. 2310 San Gabriel St. 512-478-2335

O. HENRY MUSEUM—See the writer's desk and other furnishings of the period. Donations accepted. 409 E. Fifth St. 512-974-1398

OAKWOOD CEMETERY—It's the oldest cemetery in Austin. A brochure is available at the chapel. 1601 Navasota St. 512-978-2320

SOUTH CONGRESS—This stretch of Congress Avenue is lined with quirky shops, trendy dining, and art galleries.

STEVIE RAY VAUGHAN MEMORIAL—The memorial features a bronze statue of the blues guitar legend. Auditorium Shores. 512-478-0098

TEXAS MILITARY FORCES MUSEUM—The museum has an extensive collection on Texas' military history. Requires photo ID. 3038 W. 35th St. at Camp Mabry. 512-782-5659

TEXAS STATE CAPITOL—Standing 14 feet taller than the U.S. Capitol, this building dominates a 46-acre, park-like area. Free. 1100 Congress Ave. 512-463-0063

The Capitol Visitors Center—The visitors center has historical exhibits, a gift shop, and tour information. 112 E. 11th St. 512-305-8400

TEXAS STATE CEMETERY—Monuments mark the resting places of patriots, statesmen, and heroes of Texas. A self-guided tour is available. 909 Navasota St. 512-463-0605

TEXAS TRAVEL INFORMATION CENTER—It's operated by TxDOT. Professional travel counselors provide travel information, brochures, and trip-planning assistance. 112 E. 11th St. 512-463-8586 or 800-452-9292

THEATER—Options include: Paramount Theatre, ZACH Theatre, One World Theatre, State Theater, St. Edward University's Mary Moody Northern Theatre, The University of Texas Performing Arts Center, Hyde Park Theatre, and *Esther's Follies*. 512-478-0098

THINKERY—It's a place where families can play and interact with science. Admission charge. 1830 Simond Ave. 512-469-6200

TOURS—Options include A0 Tours, Austin Duck Adventures, Black Austin Tours, and Austin Ghost Tours.

UMLAUF SCULPTURE GARDEN AND MUSEUM—It offers works by Umlauf and other contemporary sculptors. Admission charge. 605 Azie Morton Road. 512-445-5582

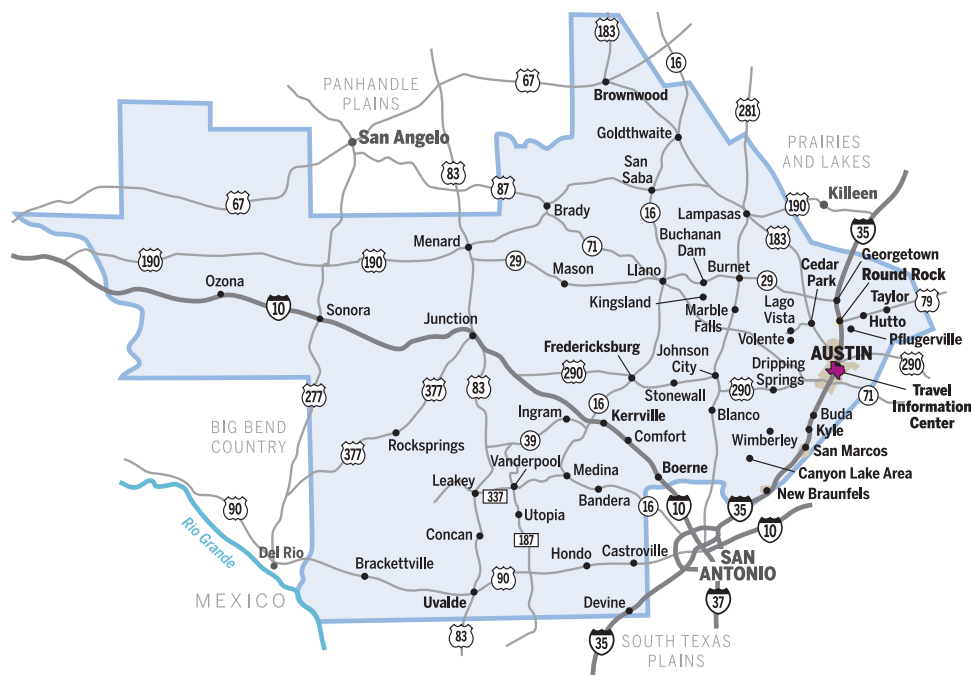
THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS—Buildings include the historic UT tower and state-of-the-art Moody Center. Public tours are offered. 405 W. 25th St. 512-471-1000

Harry Ransom Center—The center houses literary manuscripts, rare books, photographs, and art. 300 W. 21st St. 512-471-8944

WILD BASIN PRESERVE—It has 2.5 miles of hiking trails and a special trail for the mobility impaired. Guided tours are available. 805 N. Capital of Texas Highway. 512-327-7622

ZILKER METROPOLITAN PARK—The park includes Barton Springs pool, hike-and-bike trails, train rides, and canoe rentals. On Barton Springs Road, east of South Mopac Expressway.

Zilker Botanical Garden—It includes a Japanese garden, a rose garden, and a butterfly garden. Admission charge. 2220 Barton Springs Road. 512-477-8672





**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. Hear live music nightly. Find dude and guest ranches, horseback riding, hiking, camping, swimming, hunting, and a golf course.

BANDERA NATURAL HISTORY 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 CVB for information on self-guided Bandera County 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. 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 N to Medina and SH 337 from Medina to Vanderpool offer scenic views of the Texas 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 follow a ridge called the Devil's Backbone.

BOERNE

POP. 20,707

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.

THE AGRICULTURAL MUSEUM AND ARTS CENTER—The museum showcases antique farm equipment, horse-drawn implements, and household articles. It also hosts

SMALL TOWN
Big
TEXAS

BLANCO
Texas

VISITBLANCOTEXAS.COM

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 tours of Herff Farm. 140 City Park Road. 830-249-4616

HILL COUNTRY MILE—Culinary and walking tours are offered. Enjoy a walkable public art scene and the Cibolo Trail. Main Street.

OLD JAIL MUSEUM—The Kendall County Historic Jail Museum houses Kendall County artifacts. 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. FM 693 west then south.

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 place to visit, linger, and relax. It is home to hunting and other outdoor recreation. Birdwatchers, photographers, and nature lovers will love 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



Lake Buchanan Dam
near Kingsland

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 the 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 SH 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 multi-arch dam in the world. An observation deck is located at the Visitor Center. Lake Buchanan is a great place to go fishing.

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; budatxtourism.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, like 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.

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 and more. A former courthouse was turned into a lodge. Off FM 1863 and SH 281 North.



Just 25 minutes north of downtown Austin and the Austin Bergstrom International Airport, the city of Cedar Park offers a laid back, small town feel with big city comfort. Take a vintage train ride through rolling tree-lined hills, sip and savor a local craft brew, go on a shopping spree, or enjoy some live entertainment. These are just a few of the many things that will make you want to

STAY FOR MORE!



Milton Reimers Ranch Park in Travis County

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. Antiques 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.

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 FLYER—See CEDAR PARK.

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 tours November through March, along with winery tours and the opportunity to view stunning sunsets and scenery. 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.

CASTROVILLE POP. 3,077

Steinbach Hüs Visitors Center: 100 Karm St. 830-538-9838; steinbachhaus.org or visitcastrovilletx.com

If you have a passion for history, Castroville, the "Little Alsace of Texas," has to be on your visit list. Settled in the 1840s by people from the Alsace region of France, Castroville has 95 homes and structures built between 1844 and 1920. Get a map at the Steinbach Hüs Visitors Center for 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

LANDMARK INN STATE HISTORIC SITE—The site offers daily tours of exhibits, historic structures, and the gristmill. Admission charge. 402 E. Florence St. 830-931-2133

SHOOTING STAR MUSEUM—See vintage aircraft, antique autos, and farming equipment. Donations accepted. 5445 CR 5445, Devine. 210-386-6038

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. 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 till 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—Bent Oak Winery and 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. 512-401-5070

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 Pochontas Trail, Suite A. 512-401-5070

LAKE TRAVIS ZIPLINE ADVENTURE—Zip across Lake Travis on Texas' longest zip line. Reservations required. Admission charge. 14529 Pochontas 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 Visitor Center: 630 Front St. (SH 27). 830-995-3131; comfourtchamber.com

Known as an antique town with a bright future, Comfort is a charming Hill Country community that offers a unique visiting and shopping experience amid historic buildings. Visitors will find antiques, boutiques, art and pottery galleries, and unusual shops. Events include the annual Independence Day Celebration and Christmas in Comfort.

BED-AND-BREAKFASTS AND GUESTHOUSES—Visit the chamber website or call the office for details. 830-995-3131

FLATROCK RANCH MOUNTAIN BIKING—Enjoy trails, camping, organized rides, and panoramic views. 346 Flat Rock Creek Road. 830-995-2858 or 210-213-3006

TREUE DER UNION MONUMENT—This memorial honors local Union sympathizers killed by Confederate forces at the Battle of the Nueces. 348 High St.

WINERIES—Bending Branch Winery and Singing Water Vineyards & Bruins Creek Bistro. 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 paddleboats, 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. 830-282-7960; 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. There's also 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.

BREWERIES, 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, Solario 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

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



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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

Georgetown has Victorian architecture and is home to Southwestern University. Nearly 9 miles of hike-and-bike trails run along the North and South San Gabriel rivers. San Gabriel Park is noted for festivals, swimming, canoeing, and fishing. The Sun City Georgetown Golf Course features three renowned 18-hole, par-72 courses.

GAULT ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITE—The site has evidence of settlers pre-dating the Clovis peoples. Tours only. Admission charge. 3439 FM 2843, Florence. 512-232-4912

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.

HISTORIC INNS—Find notable historic inns in the heart of downtown Georgetown. 800-436-8696

INNER SPACE CAVERN—This is Texas' most accessible cavern. Admission charge. 4200 I-35 South. 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

VETERANS MEMORIAL PLAZA—The plaza honors Williamson County residents who lost their lives in war. 2 Texas Drive. 512-864-1200

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; hondo-chamber.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; hutto-tx.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 includes 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. Johnson'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

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

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. 2101 N. Main St. 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 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.

BREWERIES AND WINERIES—Kerrville Hills Winery, Turtle Creek Olives & Vines, and Basement Brewers. See TEXAS BEVERAGE TOUR section.

HILL COUNTRY ARTS FOUNDATION—See INGRAM.



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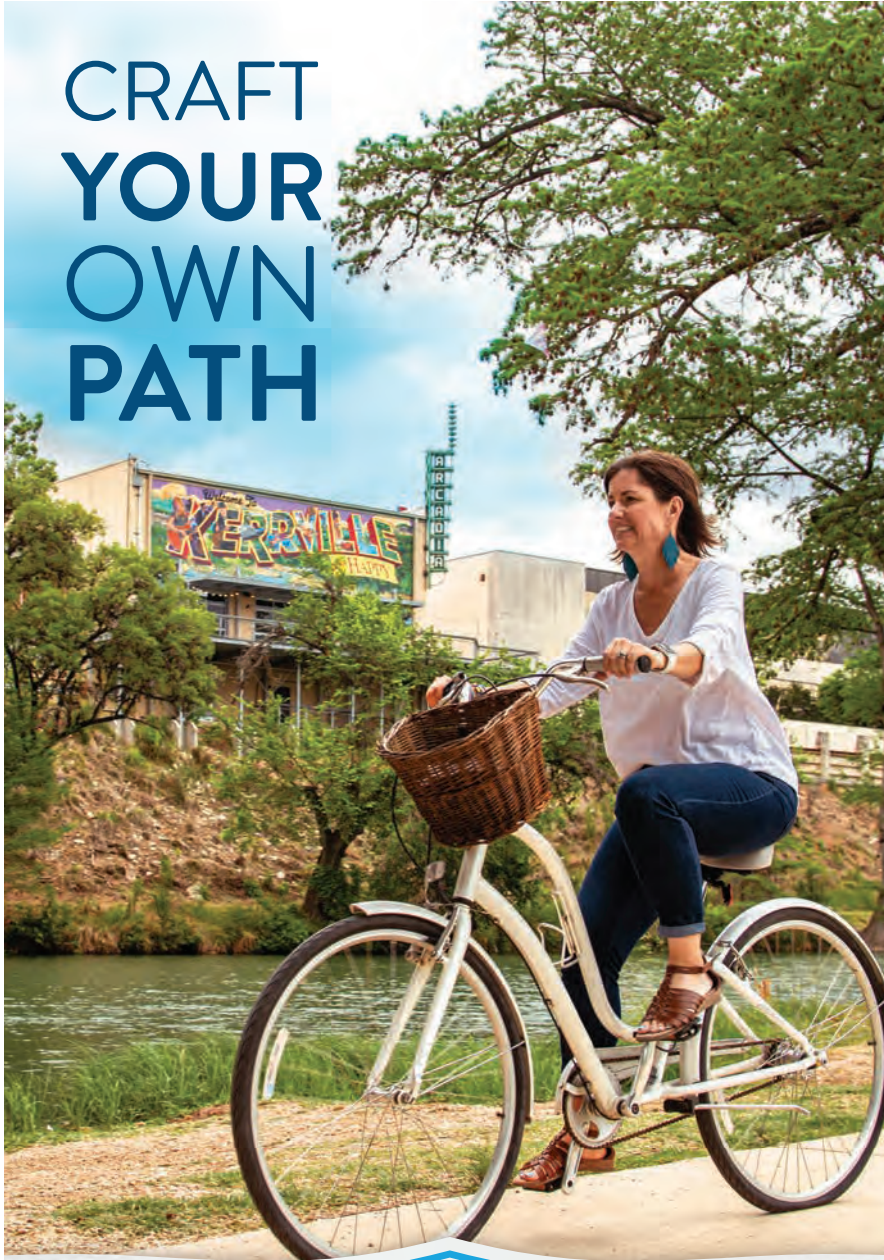
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JAMES AVERY VISITOR CENTER—The visitor center tells the story of the jewelry business James Avery started in his mother-in-law’s garage. 145 Avery Road North. 830-353-4001

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 back to Kerrville.

SCHREINER MANSION—The former home holds artifacts and antiques. Admission charge. 226 Earl Garrett St. 830-895-5222

“THE COMING KING” SCULPTURE PRAYER GARDEN—An 80-foot-tall steel cross 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 fishermen and water-sports enthusiasts. Visitors also enjoy golf, birding, antiques shopping, art galleries, scenic drives, and swimming. Packsaddle Mountain is popular with historians and geologists. The Aqua Boom 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

NIGHTENGALE 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 or cityofkyle.com/communications/visit-kyle-pie-capital-texas

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 dogtrot 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 rental, 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 bluebonnets 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.

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 Plum Street. 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.

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

SENERFITT GHOST TOWN—On the Oliver Ranch, all that remains of the town are the hotel, livery stables, and a cemetery. 3778 FM 581 West, Lometa. 254-547-7571

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

LEAKEY POP. 327

Frio Canyon Chamber of Commerce: 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 roadside 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 drugstore. 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



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MARBLE FALLS

POP. 7,423

Marble Falls/Lake LBJ Chamber of Commerce & Convention and Visitors Bureau: 916 Second St. 830-693-2815; marblefalls.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—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

CYPRESS VALLEY CANOPY TOURS—It offers zip lines, rope challenges, and swimming. Reservations required. 1223 S. Paleface Ranch Road, Spicewood. 512-264-8880

DOWNTOWN MARBLE FALLS—The historic district features local shopping, wineries, breweries, and restaurants. 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

INKS LAKE STATE PARK—See BUCHANAN DAM.

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

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.

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 BURNETT.

MASON

POP. 2,145

Mason County Chamber of Commerce: 108 Fort McKavitt St. 325-347-5758; masonctxcoc.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 unique 19th-century landmark on the first Saturday each 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—This military post from the Texas Indian Wars tells real stories of early life in West Texas. 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. 800-572-2626; playinnewbraunfels.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

CONSERVATION PLAZA—Discover the rich history of New Braunfels by visiting its 3.5-acre plaza. Guided tours available. Admission charge. 1300 Church Hill Drive. 830-629-2943

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

LANDA PARK—The park offers spring-fed swimming pools, tubing, boating, bicycling, hiking, golf, and a miniature train. 164 Landa Park Drive. 830-221-4000

MCKENNA CHILDREN'S MUSEUM—Children can interact with art, history, science, and technology exhibits. Admission charge. 801 W. San Antonio St. 830-606-9525



WELCOME TO NEW BRAUNFELS TEXAS



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

NATURAL BRIDGE CAVERNS—See SAN ANTONIO.

RIVER GUIDES, OUTFITTERS—Outfitters offer raft and canoe rentals, plus guided float trips on the Guadalupe and Comal rivers. 800-572-2626

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 water park offers river water tube chutes, uphill water coasters, and kid's playgrounds. 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—The park includes a cable lake, a skate park, and a motocross track. 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

EMERALD HOUSE—Many buildings from the county's first settlement, including this house, were moved to Ozona. Fairgrounds Park.

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 gives visitors 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; X-bar Ranch Nature Retreat: 325-853-2688

PFLUGERVILLE

POP. 66,556

Pflugerville Tourism PFUN'TX: 100 E. Main St., Suite 200. 512-251-7799; pfuntx.com

Pflugerville features more than 35 miles of beautiful trails. The city celebrates its heritage with an annual Deutschen Pfest. Other festivals include the Chamber of Commerce Pfamily Pfestival & Expo.



Cypress Valley Canopy Tours
in Spicewood

CENTRAL TEXAS BMX—Bicycle racing facility offers weekly clinics and races. 5001 Killingsworth Lane. 512-508-5001

FALLEN WARRIOR MEMORIAL—Statue honors local soldiers who died 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; groundrock.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, 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 Houston Astros affiliate, and Home Run Dug-out. Admission charge. 3400 E. Palm Valley Blvd. 512-255-2255

DOWNTOWNER ART GALLERY—It holds art and photography demonstrations, along with performances. 231 E. Main St., Suite 160. 512-218-7099

HISTORIC DOWNTOWN DISTRICT—Many of the buildings were constructed 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

Dip your toes or paddle in the crystal-clear San Marcos River. Shop big at the nation's largest outlet shopping 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—It 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



HILL COUNTRY

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, and *Lonesome Dove* memorabilia. Free. 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 (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, with other attractions within walking distance. The town reflects both the Texas Hill Country and Chihuahuan Desert. Hunters take wild turkey, white-tailed deer, and axis deer. Events include The Sonora Outlaw Rodeo & Sutton County Days and The Dry Devils River Music Flood.

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

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, and 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 Blackland Prairie Days, 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: 830-966-2134; 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. 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



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. Cavalry post in 1849. The park features hiking trails and picnic areas. Admission charge. On FM 140.

GARNER STATE PARK—See CONCAN.

JANEY SLAUGHTER BRISCOE 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 Leahey. At Leahey, turn west on RM 337 and south on SH 55, or drive east on RM 337 to Vanderpool (Lost Maples Natural Area) and south on RM 187 to Sabinal.

VANDERPOOL POP. 120 (EST.)

LONE STAR MOTORCYCLE MUSEUM—This museum features motorcycles dating from the 1910s to the present. Admission charge. 36517 SH 187. 830-966-6103

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 spectacular 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: 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—The park has a popular cypress-lined swimming hole fed by Cypress Creek, picnicking, and hike-and-bike trails. Reservations are 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.

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

WHERE TEXAS HILL COUNTRY CHARM MEETS NATURAL BEAUTY



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www.visitwimberleytx.org





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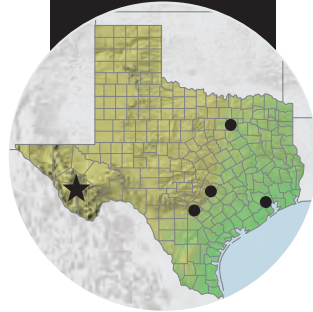
White Shaman Preserve in Comstock

Way Out West

Peace and quiet abound in Comstock along the Lower Pecos River

By Scott DuBois

- San Antonio**
3 hours
- Austin**
4.5 hours
- Houston**
6.5 hours
- Dallas**
7 hours



If not for the lone blinking yellow traffic light on US 90 just northwest of Del Rio, it'd be easy to miss the dusty little town of Comstock. The area is home to the oldest rock art in North America, making archeologists a majority of the population. The many limestone canyons that branch off from the Pecos River and Rio Grande conceal rock shelters with pictographs more than 6,000 years old. Seminole Canyon State Park and Historic Site is Comstock's best-known rock art destination, but there are over 325 documented sites nearby. History enthusiasts will enjoy touring them, but anyone can appreciate the area's natural beauty and rugged charm.

Gas up before heading farther west to other towns like Langtry—the home of legendary lawman Judge Roy Bean—as there aren't any fuel stops along the way. There certainly isn't anything in Pandale, which makes Terlingua look like Dallas. The hamlet is an hour north of Langtry up a caliche road past a small river crossing. There was once a post office and a school, but little remains except for a few cabins. It's a blissfully remote place to sit by the river, ponder our state's history, and enjoy the solitude.

PHOTOS: KEVIN BARTON STILLMAN

STAY

Pandale Crossing River Resort

There isn't a pool or trash service, but what this resort lacks in amenities, it rewards visitors with the greatest of luxuries: space. This collection of cabins, which start at \$115/night, has a private Pecos riverfront location and an incredible view of the Milky Way. The resort also rents kayaks and arranges hikes on a nearby ranch.

SEE

White Shaman Preserve

San Antonio's Witte Museum operates the preserve that protects one of the most spectacular rock art sites in the Lower Pecos region. The White Shaman mural, depicting a creation story, measures 26 feet long and is over 3,000 years old. Tours happen every Saturday morning, and reservations can be made online.

Amistad National Recreation Area

Lake Amistad is a massive reservoir near the confluence of the Pecos, Devils, and Rio Grande rivers. While lake levels are currently near historic lows, the rocky shoreline at Governor's Landing still has cool, clear blue water. There are also campgrounds, fishing guides, and fuel available nearby.

Pecos High Bridge

A few miles north of its confluence with the Rio Grande, the Pecos River is spanned by one of the tallest highway bridges in Texas. The Pecos High Bridge, opened in 1944, stands at 323 feet above the river and is 1,390 feet long. Look for a rest stop and picnic area with a panoramic view of the Pecos just before the east crossing.

EAT

The J and P Bar and Grill

This may be the lone restaurant to speak of in the area, but that's not the only

reason to visit. Though it serves everything from Tex-Mex to chicken-fried steak, J and P is most famous for its burgers, which are ground in-house and served on deliciously soft challah buns. It makes for the perfect post-hike meal.

LEARN

Judge Roy Bean Visitor Center

After the Civil War, Judge Roy Bean was a justice of the peace in Langtry. His offbeat brand of justice and revelry is the stuff of legend: He once staged a world championship boxing match on the Rio Grande, and as coroner, he pronounced the deaths of workers who perished building the original Pecos High Bridge. The center preserves his original saloon building and has a Travel Information Center and a xeriscape garden.

Shumla Archaeological Research & Education Center

This nonprofit protects and preserves the Native American rock art of the Lower Pecos region. More than 300 rock art sites can be found in the area, including paintings that cover the 40-foot walls of a limestone cave. Call in advance to see the work, but the best way to experience it is in the field through Shumla Treks. These are regular hikes guided by archaeologists to rock shelters in state parks and on private land.

Witte Museum

The museum exhibits permanent collections on topics such as archeology and natural history. It also offers private, guided tours of area sites throughout the fall. Find state park shelters and preserves, along with hard-to-access places like Meyers Spring and Bonfire Shelter. The museum's website lists various tour dates for registration. Each year the museum opens the White Shaman Preserve for a weekend of camping, music, barbecue, and tours of some of the state's best rock art sites. ★



Seminole Canyon State Park

TEXAS STATE PARKS: HIDDEN GEMS

SEMINOLE CANYON STATE PARK

Offering rugged stone cliffs, deep canyons, and sweeping valleys, this state park near Del Rio helps tell Texas stories that date back thousands of years. Walk more than 10 miles of trails to enjoy stunning views of the Rio Grande. Take a guided tour to view and study some of the oldest rock art in all North America. The park also boasts camping, biking, and birding, as well as a visitor center.

OTHER HIDDEN GEMS

FORT LEATON STATE HISTORIC SITE HUECO TANKS STATE PARK & HISTORIC SITE

MORE BIG BEND COUNTRY TEXAS STATE PARKS

BALMORHEA STATE PARK BARTON WARNOCK VISITOR CENTER BIG BEND RANCH STATE PARK DAVIS MOUNTAINS STATE PARK DEVILS RIVER STATE NATURAL AREA FRANKLIN MOUNTAINS STATE PARK INDIAN LODGE MONAHANS SANDHILLS STATE PARK

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

RV INFO

The Desert Vista Camping Area at Seminole Canyon State Park sits atop a small hill with panoramic views of the sagebrush and sotol scrubland. It has 23 sites with electric and water hookups. 432-292-4464; tpwd.texas.gov/state-parks/seminole-canyon



BIG BEND COUNTRY

ALPINE

POP. 5,927

Alpine Visitor Center: 106 N. Third St. 432-837-2326; visitalpinetx.com

Alpine is centrally located in the Big Bend 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 the 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. 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, plus seasonal 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 O 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 infor-

mation, 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, tubes, a restaurant, and picnic area. 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 South, 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.

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 while 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 houses 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. Be cautious of 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 county seat of Val Verde County and is just across the border from Ciudad Acuña, Coahuila, Mexico. From scenic San Felipe Creek to Lake Amistad, First Friday Art Walks to the Val Verde Winery, and downtown shopping to the many historical sites, the city has much to offer and is a true treasure just waiting to be explored.

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

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. 915-771-2380

CAMP COHEN WATER PARK—Camp Cohen is your base camp for an adrenaline packed adventure. Admission charge. 9700 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



PHOTO: J. GRIFFIS SMITH



BIG BEND COUNTRY

Ysleta Mission—This is the oldest mission in Texas, and it was established in 1681 for the Tigua Tribe. 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—This drive traces a winding course on the southern flank of Mount Franklin above downtown El Paso, with a view of 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 Locomotive 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 ride horseback. Admission charge. SH 118 North at Park Road 3. 432-426-3337

Indian Lodge—The 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 or 877-984-7827

FORT STOCKTON POP. 8,189

Fort Stockton Visitor Information Center: 1000 E. Railroad Ave. 432-336-2264 or 800-336-2166; 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 800-336-2166

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.

IRAAN POP. 1,008

City of Iraan: 432-639-2301; iraantx.com/tourism
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. 432-586-3745

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



PHOTO: BRANDON JAKOBETT



Annie Riggs Memorial Museum in Fort Stockton

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 historic buildings related to Judge Roy Bean and interprets 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—It 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:
marthontexas.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

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



BIG BEND COUNTRY

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 plays 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. at 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

YUCCA THEATRE—The Summer Mummies 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.

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. 432-557-3479

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

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PHOTO: J. GRIFFIS SMITH



Monahans Sandhills State Park

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, an Odessa landmark, 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. 102 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.us

Take a drive along FM 170, also 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. This site 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 state Legislature. Each April, on US 285 between Sanderson and Fort Stockton, "the most challenging road race in the world" is held in this rugged terrain—the 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. 915-986-2407

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

This town is a hub to 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

Discover PRESIDIO

GATEWAY to the BIG BEND

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PANHANDLE PLAINS



Plainview painted cow

High Plains

Plainview, a former Wild West outpost, explores its artistic side

By Michael Corcoran

San Antonio

6.5 hours

Austin

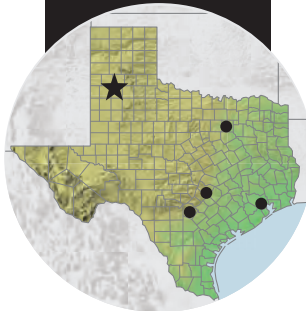
6.5 hours

Dallas

5.5 hours

Houston

8.5 hours



Located 47 miles north of Lubbock on Interstate 27's path to Amarillo, the town of Plainview is where West Texas meets the Panhandle. But this ranch-ringed community of 20,000 people is also where progress saddles up with tradition. Founded on a cattle trail in 1887, the people of Plainview appreciate their history while maintaining a pioneer's embrace of new things. That's evident in Broadway Brew, a coffee shop downtown that still has the booths and stools from its original 1950s diner, which appeared in the 1992 film *Leap of Faith*. Follow the red brick road up Seventh Street to the gates of Wayland Baptist University, Plainview's community hub since 1909. This small university is the home of the winningest women's college basketball program of all time. Plainview is also the birthplace of Jimmy Dean, who invested some of his royalties from the 1961 smash "Big Bad John" in a hog farm outside of town. He then went on to make breakfast sausage history. An infusion of energy comes from transplants like Ciara Claraty, an effervescent 34-year-old from the San Francisco Bay Area who recently bought the President's House Bed & Breakfast and plans to turn it into a wedding venue. "As I was driving into town there was a sign that read, 'Explore the Opportunities,'" Claraty says. "And I said, 'Exactly.'"

PHOTOS: KEVIN BARTON STILLMAN



Caprock Canyons State Park and Trailway

STAY

President's House Bed & Breakfast

This centrally located, stately abode with a magnificent patio overlooks Lloyd C. Woods Park. Built in the American Colonial style in 1939 and donated to Wayland Baptist in 1966, this elegantly furnished, five-bedroom home, with large meeting and sitting areas, housed the university's presidents for 50 years. Open to travelers since 2017, its rooms start at \$119/night.

LEARN

Travis Trussell Park

This 3-acre park is a prime habitat for migrating waterfowl and offers two wild-life viewing areas with interpretive signage. The walking trail around Duck Pond has seating and a nice view of the water. Try feeding the pond's resident fish for 25 cents a handful, a cheap and easy way to entertain the kids.

SEE

Mabee Regional Heritage Center

This three-in-one center is made up of the Museum of the Llano Estacado, the Jimmy Dean Museum, and the Flying Queens Museum. Learn about the history of the Southern High Plains, the famous sausage-selling singer, and the town's record-breaking women's collegiate basketball team. Admission is free.

Rock the Block

This downtown event, created in 2018, takes place on the second Saturday of each month. Townspeople and visitors alike gather for live music, food, and other entertainment. Previous events have included wine tastings and antique car shows. Shops along Broadway Street include The Rusty Rose boutique and 725 Vintage Co.

Conrad Lofts

Built in 1929 as the fifth Hilton Hotel,

this eight-story building welcomed travelers up until it was shuttered in 1983. It sat vacant for three decades before developers restored it. Though it's an apartment complex now, you can still marvel at architecture that reflects the glory of the town's boom years.

Cattle Drive public art project

More than 30 painted fiberglass cows located around town commemorate Hale County's ranching culture. The Unger Memorial Library is home to a bovine Harry Potter with glasses and a cloak, while the heifer in front of McDonald's is painted to look like the restaurant's mascot Ronald.

EAT

Table On 10th

The Nu-Griddle Cafe off State Highway 70 is a popular roadside diner. But on the other end of the culinary spectrum is fine dining restaurant Table on 10th, which opened in 2023. It offers what Plainview locals can't get elsewhere, from black truffle-infused chicken to custom baked goods. The owners plan to convert an adjacent car wash into a live music venue, with private cabanas in the bays.

Nena's Taquitos

There's no shortage of good Mexican food in Plainview. El Mercadito Street Tacos, Leal's, Carlito's, and Old Mexico are some of the most popular sit-down joints. But the four-star reviews suggest you get food to go from Nena's, a hole in the wall on the main drag, SH 70.

Frontier Market

Opened in 2022, family-owned Frontier Market sources its products from its 17-acre farm. The market sells beef from its own herd and fresh produce grown on its soil. The bestseller is fresh Salanova lettuce, \$6 for 12 ounces. The assorted meat bundles are also popular. ★

RV INFO

The Hitchin' Post RV Park and Cabins, 4 miles north of downtown on I-27, has full hookups for its "Texas-sized" RV sites, including water, sewer, electricity, and free Wi-Fi. Four fully furnished cabins as are also available, as well as 10 campsites with outlets at every site. 806-789-3066; thehitchinpostrvpark.com.

TEXAS STATE PARKS: HIDDEN GEMS

CAPROCK CANYONS STATE PARK & TRAILWAY

This park and trailway is bursting at the seams with outdoor activities, including more than 90 miles of trails for biking and riding horses. Visitors feeling less adventurous can mosey to the 120-acre Lake Theo. Native animals include bison, and pronghorn, and Mexican free-tailed bats. Watch for as many as 175 species of birds. A variety of campsites are available.

OTHER HIDDEN GEMS

COPPER BREAKS STATE PARK LAKE COLORADO CITY STATE PARK

MORE PANHANDLE PLAINS STATE PARKS

ABILENE STATE PARK

BIG SPRING STATE PARK

FORT RICHARDSON STATE HISTORIC SITE & TRAILWAY

LAKE ARROWHEAD 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



PANHANDLE PLAINS

ABILENE

POP. 127,385

Abilene Convention and Visitors Bureau:
1101 N. First St. 325-676-2556 or 800-727-7704;
abilenevisitors.com

Discover real Texas in Abilene. Spend a few days scouting this legendary area, and you'll find a Texas city where Western heritage is both a birthright and a pastime. See and feel real Texas—and do things in the Storybook Capital of America that you can't do anywhere else.

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 water slides. Admission charge. 2742 S. Ninth St. 325-676-6484

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

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—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

TAYLOR COUNTY HISTORY CENTER—See BUFFALO GAP.

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 Panhandle Plains meet the vibrancy of a blossoming downtown. Explore and immerse yourself in its rich history, vibrant culture, and endless 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 St. 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 includes 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

Authentically Abilene.

Escape the ordinary and experience the authentic charm of Abilene. Our city is brimming with rich heritage, cultural events, and Texas traditions. Whether you're looking for enriching adventures or a relaxing getaway, all roads lead to Abilene.

Discover the beauty and hospitality of West Texas and see why Abilene is authentically charming.

Learn More!
ABOUT ABILENE

ABILENEVISITORS.COM

ABILENE
EST. TEXAS 1881

PHOTO: KEVIN STILLMAN

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 their 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 NATURE 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 St. 432-523-2695; andrewstx.com

Floreys Park’s mature trees and rural setting make it popular for RVs. The 18-hole golf course attracts visitors. The Andrews County Expo Arena hosts rodeos, concerts, and other activities. Annual events include the Wild, Wild West Fest; an old-fashioned 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



Concho River Walk in San Angelo

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 commercial buildings from the early 1900s, collectively known as the Plainview Commercial Historic District.

Located in the southeastern corner of the Panhandle, **Childress** includes the Childress County Heritage Museum and remarkably restored art deco-style Palace Theater.

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, San Angelo Museum of Fine Arts, and the Railroad Depot and Museum.

Find other Main Street communities across the state: thc.texas.gov/mainstreet





ANDREWS, TX

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Where the American Dream lives on!

WILD, WILD WEST FEST
THIRD WEEKEND IN APRIL
SANCTIONED STATE CHAMPIONSHIP
BBQ COOK-OFF, LIVE MUSIC,
WILD WEST ENTERTAINMENT,
LIVING HISTORY, GUN SHOW,
TRACTOR PULLS, CAR SHOW
CARNIVAL & MORE!!

**ANDREWS VETERANS MEMORIAL
MEANS RANCH HOUSE MUSEUM
HISTORICAL SITES • BIRDING**

ANDREWS TEXAS
Chamber of Commerce
432-523-2695
www.andrewstx.com

#sunsetbigspring

ANDREWS COUNTY VETERANS MEMORIAL—Six-foot granite tablets honor local veterans and interpret wars from the American Civil War through the fight against terrorism. 700 W. Broadway St. 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. Jones in his practice, and other local memorabilia. 1302 Ave. K. 325-823-3683

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. 940-761-8811

ROYAL THEATER—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 antique and specialty shops. A "Wall of Honor" in the courthouse remembers military personnel who died in wars. Hunting is popular. 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; ballinger-tx.com

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 and a playground. The Texas State Festival of Ethnic Cultures Arts & Crafts Show and the Hunter's Dinner are held here.

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 is 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



Boomtown Breckenridge Murals

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 Tacosa 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 alongside 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

BENJAMIN POP. 195

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 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 is also 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 WWII 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 Ct. 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.org

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, archaeology, and history. 618 N. Main St. 806-273-0130

LAKE MEREDITH RECREATION AREA—See FRITCH.

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 Lake Meredith dam.



PANHANDLE PLAINS

BUFFALO GAP

POP. 589

Buffalo Gap City Hall: 709 Litel St. 325-572-3347; buffalogaptx.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.

TAYLOR COUNTY HISTORY CENTER—Complex features historic buildings, a store, a visitor center, and playground. Admission charge. 133 N. William St. 325-572-3974

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

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 or visitcanyontx.com

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 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

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.



The Citadelle Art Foundation in Canadian

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. 3,957

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. Cisco prides itself on past experience by looking forward to the future. 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. 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 here. 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—Offers boat ramps, marina, picnicking, and camping. Call ahead about water levels. Off SH 70. 806-874-3650

SAINTS ROOST 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 antiques and other shops. Events include Railhead Trade Days and the J.O. Dockery July Fourth 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.

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

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

MT. BLANCO FOSSIL MUSEUM—Exhibits include displays of dinosaurs and other fossils and casts. 124 W. Main St. 806-675-7777

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 the country from the Civil War to present day. 225 S. Main St.

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 commemorated by a historical marker. B&Bs, hunter's 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.

FIRE HALL MUSEUM—Includes a pioneer schoolroom and a mine exhibit. 116 N. Main St. (SH 6). 940-655-4308

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 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—Park offers hiking, 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 Street 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 it was founded on 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 after the town was chosen as 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. An 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 southeast 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



PANHANDLE PLAINS



Hale County Farm & Ranch Museum

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 a Fourth 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—This historic landmark is a first-run movie house. Tours can be arranged. 108 N. Lamar St. 254-629-2102

"OLD RIP" THE HORNFED 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. 325-732-4376

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

CAPROCK CANYONS STATE PARK AND TRAILWAY—See QUITAQUE.

FLOYD COUNTY 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 St. 806-983-2415

FRITCH

POP. 1,815

City of Fritch: 104 Robey Ave. 806-857-3143

ALIBATES FLINT QUARRIES NATIONAL MONUMENT—View the site by ranger-led guided tours only. 37084 Alibates Road. 806-857-6680

LAKE MEREDITH—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, brick streets, and 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 has 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.

PHOTO: MICHAEL AMADOR



Buddy Holly Center in Lubbock

HALE CENTER

POP. 2,016

City of Hale Center: 702 Main St. 806-839-2411; cityofhalecenter.com

Outdoor murals on buildings historically depict life in this city.

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. Shops and boutiques around the square and throughout town will interest any shopper. Lake Stamford is nearby for fishing fun. 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. 940-538-5261; hccchamber.com

A red granite monument on the courthouse square stands as a war memorial. Hapgood 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 antique 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 trail-head 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 with the annual 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

WINERY—Delaney Vineyards. See TEXAS BEVERAGE TOUR section.

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 city is surrounded by the Canadian Breaks Loop portion of the Panhandle Plains Wildlife Trail.



CHILTON Trail LBK TEX @VISITLUBBOCK

What started as a refreshing drink in a country club many summers ago can now be found all around the Hub City. Who knew a shot of vodka, a squeeze of lemon and a spritz of soda water would one day become an iconic Lubbock libation? From crisp cucumber to ruby grapefruit and every rendition in between, taste your way around the city one sip at a time with our cocktail pass! Scan the QR code to plan your first stop on Lubbock's Chilton Trail.

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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.

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—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, a 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—Exhibits include photographs, a schoolroom, doctor's tools, furniture, and paintings. Sixth and Main streets. 806-259-2983 or 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—Historical artifacts and photos are displayed inside the historic 1904 opera house. 201 N. Robinson St. 325-468-3151

OLD OPERA HOUSE—Rooms house antiques from the early 20th century. 201 N. Robinson St. 325-486-3151

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.

SCENIC DRIVES—Notable stretches include 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. 254-477-4261 or 325-945-3441

MULESHOE POP. 5,054

Muleshoe Chamber of Commerce and Agriculture: 115 E. American Blvd. 806-272-4248; 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 has 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 attracts 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—Inside the Olton Library are exhibits of the area. 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

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, 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 present. Donations accepted. 600 N. Hobart St. 806-669-6066

MOBEETIE 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 CREEK'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.



PANHANDLE PLAINS

ABRAHAM FAMILY ART GALLERY—In the Learning Resources Center on the Wayland Baptist University campus, it has rotating exhibits. 1900 W. Seventh St. 806-291-3710 or 806-291-1000

HISTORIC DISTRICT/DOWNTOWN—It features specialty shops, antique 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. Mabee 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—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: 220 S. Main St. 940-663-2222

Historic sites include the county courthouse, Quanah Parker Memorial and Walkway, the veterans monument, Trinity Episcopal and First Presbyterian churches, and the Capt. Bill McDonald marker. Events include the Fall Festival, Texas Country Air Rally, Dove Fest, and Christmas Parade and Festival.

COPPER BREAKS STATE PARK—The 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. 940-663-5272

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 is an extension of the Hardeaman County Jail Museum. 102 Mercer St. 940-839-8066

QUITAQUE POP. 343

Quitaque Chamber of Commerce: quitaque.com

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. 325-942-2136 or 325-942-2242

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 rail cars. Call for special tours. 703 S. Chadbourne St. 325-486-2140

INTERNATIONAL WATERLILY COLLECTION—It's a premiere waterlily collection. Free. 2 S. Park St.

LAKE NASWORTHY—Offers outdoor water recreation. The Tule Princess Steamboat offers rides during summer. 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

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Medicine Mounds in Quanah

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—Features changing art exhibits. Admission charge. 1 Love St. 325-653-3333

SAN ANGELO STATE PARK—This park offers wildlife, fishing, paddling, cabins, 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—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 or 432-758-4016

SEYMOUR POP. 2,580

Seymour Chamber of Commerce: 310 N. Washington. 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 has a disc golf course. The red beds of Baylor County are

the 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

WHITESIDE MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY—See how fossils are handled, the Texas Wildlife Exhibit, and the "Zoo-seum." Admission charge. 310 N. Washington St. 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—The museum 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—It shares military history through flight and displays. 12102 FM 400 No. 34. At Slaton Municipal Airport. 806-779-7332

SNYDER POP. 11,230

Snyder Chamber of Commerce: 325-573-3558; snyderchamber.org

The town is home to Western Texas College. See the unique 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 courthouse square detail area history. 25th Street and College Avenue.



PANHANDLE PLAINS



Kell House in Wichita Falls

SPEARMAN

POP. 3,083

Spearman Chamber of Commerce: 806-659-5555; facebook.com/spearmantxchamber

J.B. BUCHANAN WINDMILL PARK—Buchanan's collection of windmills are 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. 806-659-3008

STAMFORD

POP. 2,921

Stamford Chamber of Commerce: 107 E. McHarg St. 325-773-2411; stamfordtx.org

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; shermancountytx.com

This city was established in the middle of the night in 1901, when Sherman County records were moved from the former county seat at Coldwater.

SHERMAN COUNTY DEPOT MUSEUM—This 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 WWII 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 of the late actor Dan Blocker. Donations accepted. Eighth and Doak streets, O'Donnell. 806-200-0327 or 806-428-3711

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 insight 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 pro-

claimed "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; discoverwichitafalls.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 WWI training camp—Call Field—to current day Sheppard Air Force Base. Free. 4000 Armstrong Drive. 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 collections include the history of Native Americans, oil and gas, medical, military items; dolls; and toys. Free. 720 Indiana Ave. 940-322-7628

P'S CRAZY CAR MUSEUM—The museum features more than 40 classic cars, trucks, and motorcycles. Free. 1602 Midwestern Parkway. 940-205-4937

RIVER BEND NATURE CENTER—This 20-acre environmental education facility has 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 8th 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 historic landmark, the 1908 theater was a vaudeville house, then movie theater, and now offers family entertainment. 919 Indiana Ave. 940-723-9037

WILD BIRD RESCUE—See the avian ambassadors and learn about 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

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Roma Bluffs World Birding Center
over the Rio Grande



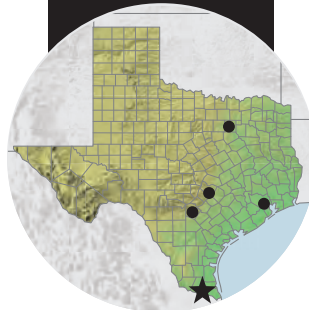
Laredo Center for the Arts

Cultural Nexus

Home to one of the oldest entrances into Mexico, Laredo offers a multi-cultural experience

By Luis G. Rendon

- San Antonio**
2.5 hours
- Austin**
4 hours
- Houston**
5.5 hours
- Dallas**
6.5 hours



Directions to Laredo are easy. Find your way to Interstate 35 and head south. Go far enough and you'll get there eventually. Coming from the Valley? Take a left at the Whataburger in Falfurrias and keep going. The flat scrub of South Texas eventually leads to this sprawling border town spread across a jagged crook in the Rio Grande. Today, 250,000 people live in the city that was originally founded as a Spanish colony in 1775. Laredo has long been a nexus for Mexican and Texan comingling. Its most popular and enduring cultural festival, the month-long George Washington Birthday Celebration features both a jalapeño festival and a debutante ball in full U.S. colonial garb. The celebration is held in February.

That Tex-Mex duality runs deep. Laredo's Mexican sister city, Nuevo Laredo, was founded in 1848 by Laredoans who wanted to keep their Mexican citizenship. Though the two are forever connected by history and culture, Laredo has forged its own identity as a birding paradise, an outdoor recreation and sports haven, and a modern Mexican food mecca. After a recession in the 1980s decimated the downtown business and cultural districts, Laredo is now experiencing a citywide renaissance. Flush with cash from the booming post-pandemic shipping industry—\$800 million in products come through Laredo's land ports each day—local entrepreneurs, chefs, and artists are transforming Laredo into much more than a historic gateway to Mexico. Next time you sing the folk song "The Streets of Laredo," just know they're busier than ever.

PHOTOS: MICHAEL AMADOR; CHASE FOUNTAIN/TPWD

STAY

The Laredo Mansion

Laredo businessman Peter Leyendecker built this mansion in the early 1900s and refurbished it, turning it into a boutique bed and breakfast in 2019. The transformation was part of a downtown revival of neglected but historically significant structures. Choose from one of four suites, each themed to reflect different aspects of Laredo culture: contemporary, French, Mexican, or Victorian. Suites range from \$79 to \$200 per night.

LEARN

Laredo Kayak

Peep the diverse bird population of Laredo while you kayak down the Rio Grande with Rick Rodriguez, a one-man river recreation revivalist, and owner of Laredo Kayak. For \$65, Rodriguez provides the kayak, paddles, life jacket, and guidance down a 4-mile stretch of the river.

Laredo Center for the Arts

Located in the original 1880s City Hall, the Laredo Center for the Arts showcases local artists and hosts musicals, festivals, and kid-friendly art classes. Join other art lovers on the first Friday of the month for Caminarte, an art walk through downtown that starts at the Center.

SEE

Los Olvidados

Equal parts art gallery, thrift shop, and performance venue, this mini cultural center is far more than a coffee shop. Stop by for DJ sets in the evening or sip fancy lattes made from beans sourced from Mexico. It's a place for Laredoans to make a human connection, the owners say.

Avenida San Bernardo

Once the highway to San Antonio, San Bernardo Avenue has been treating tourists to shops along the 40-block

corridor for decades. The shops are full of Mexican imports, such as clay pottery, hand-carved furniture, silk rebozos, all sourced from Mexican artisans.

Casa Ortiz

This nearly 200-year-old hacienda located downtown is at the center of the city's First Friday artwalk, Caminarte. Built by cattle rancher Don Jose Reyes Ortiz around 1830, the roughly 12,000-square-foot property is now owned by Webb County. The nonprofit Laredo Cultural District hosts cooking workshops, live music and dance performances, and movie screenings on-site.

Jamboozie

Laredo's most popular music festival has been bringing people downtown for music, food, and fun for over 20 years. Originally a Mardi Gras wannabe, this March festival has shed its imitator skin and become a daylong, music-centric showcase featuring local talent and big time headliners across multiple stages and genres on a closed city block downtown. There's something for everyone at Jamboozie.

EAT

Iturbide Street

Known locally as "It Street," the strip is home to more than a dozen bars and clubs in the center of Laredo's historic downtown, making it the heart of the city's entertainment district. The street is closed to traffic on Fridays and Saturdays, making it pedestrian-friendly for bar hopping.

Casa Lopez

Looking for a baile? Music lovers pack this unassuming restaurant every Thursday, Friday, and Saturday night to nosh on Spanish tapas, drink sangria, and dance the night away to live music. Special noches de flamenco, with performances by classically trained flamenco dancers, are local favorites. ★



Lake Casa Blanca International State Park

TEXAS STATE PARKS: HIDDEN GEMS

LAKE CASA BLANCA INTERNATIONAL STATE PARK

¡Bienvenidos! Swim, fish, boat, or simply walk the trails at this lakeside park in Laredo, only 10 miles from Tamaulipas, Mexico. Enjoy playgrounds and fields for team sports, as well as several pavilions and a recreation hall available by reservation. All campsites include water and electricity.

OTHER HIDDEN GEMS

BENTSEN-RIO GRANDE VALLEY STATE PARK

CHOKE CANYON STATE PARK

FALCON STATE PARK

MORE SOUTH TEXAS PLAINS STATE PARKS

ESTERO LLANO GRANDE STATE PARK

GOLIAD STATE PARK & HISTORIC SITE

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

RV INFO

Lake Casa Blanca International State Park is the most popular recreational area in Laredo. It features spacious, full-hookup campsites and lakeside vistas for \$21 a night. 5102 Bob Bullock Loop. tpwd.texas.gov/state-parks/lake-casa-blanca



SOUTH TEXAS PLAINS



Don Pedrito Shrine in Falfurrias

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.

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, one with an 18-hole municipal golf course. Events include the Jim Wells County Fair in October.

LAKE FINDLEY—This shallow lake offers fishing in the San Fernando Creek basin, 1 mile north of Alice. 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 Indian artifact collection, plus city and county memorabilia. 200 N. Ninth St. 830-876-5788

COTULLA

POP. 3,634

Cotulla-La Salle Chamber of Commerce: 290 N. I-35 Access Road. 800-256-2326; cotullachamber.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—It offers driving trails, nature trails, birding, wildlife, 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

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 AND 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. Clossner 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 a Southern Pacific memorabilia exhibit. 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 PEDRITO 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

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. Admission charge. 2066 CR 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. 830-393-7303

WILSON COUNTY JAILHOUSE MUSEUM—This jail housed prisoners, the sheriff, and his family until the mid-1970s. 1144 C St. 210-843-1002

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 on request.

BUCK WEST HOUSE—The former home of the town founder's nephew houses the chamber of commerce. 400 N. Nueces St. (US 281). 361-449-2033

GRACE ARMANTROUT MUSEUM—The museum 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; goliadcc.org

"Remember Goliad" became a 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; a downtown walking tour is available. Attend Market Days the second Saturday of the month.

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

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 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



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.

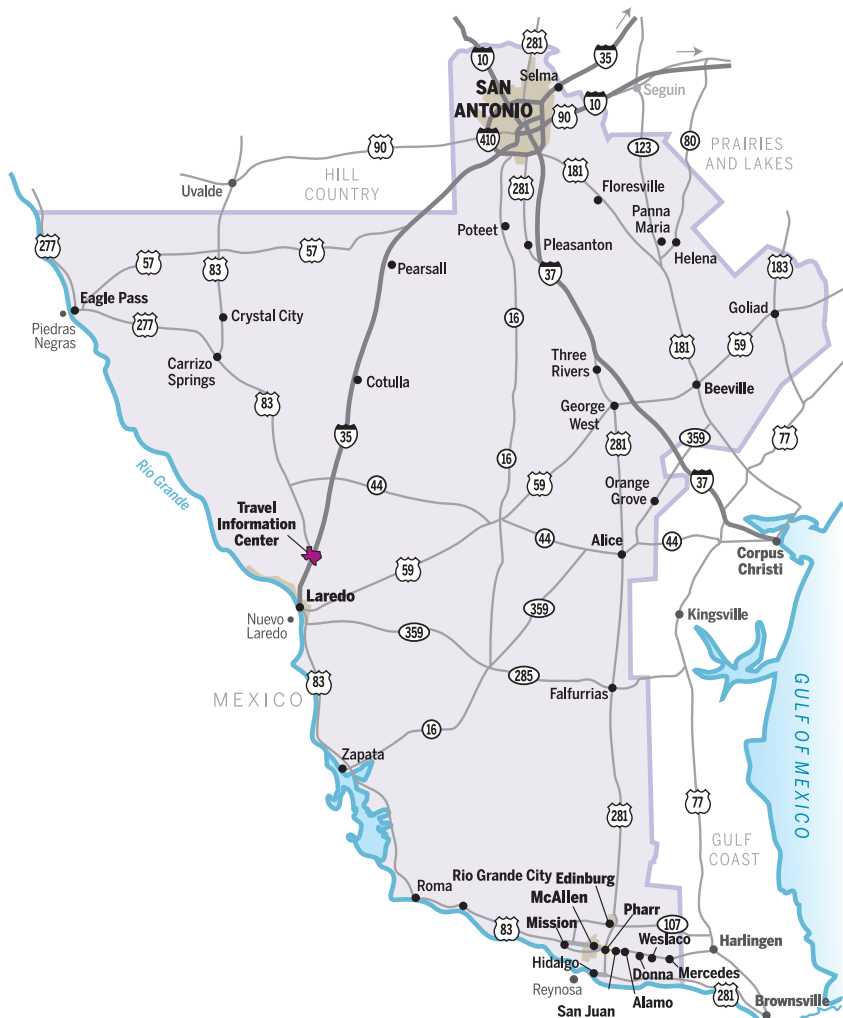
The South Texas Plains is the only region in the state with international, federal, state, and local designations. One of only 24 UNESCO World Heritage Sites in the U.S., the **San Antonio Missions** made the list in 2015. The designation consists of five 18th-century Spanish missions—including the Alamo—and 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





SOUTH TEXAS PLAINS

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—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

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 ambiance. 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. 956-725-1715

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. 1551 I-35 North. 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; visitmcallen.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 shopping 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 can 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 Ave. 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: 417 S. Ohio St. 956-565-2221; mercedeschamber.com

Mercedes is well known for custom-made boots. The Fleet S. Lentz Native Plant Display at the civic center fea-



WELCOME TO THE HEART OF MEX-TEX CUISINE

Laredo, Texas, isn't just a city on the border of two countries. We live at the nexus of two distinct cultures fusing together to create something brand new. Where authentic Mexican dishes are not only served next to hearty American fare, they also come together to form a unique cuisine we like to call "Mex-Tex." Learn more about this delicious melding of cultures at VisitLaredo.com.



#HolaLaredo | visitlaredo.com | 1.800.361.3360

PHOTO: WILL VAN OVERBEEK

tures native shrubs and trees. Mercedes is home to the Rio Grande Valley Premium Outlet Mall and the historic Llano Grande Country Club. The Rio Grande Valley Livestock Show & Rodeo is held in March.

BOTAS DE MERCEDES—This public-art project features nearly 6-foot-tall sculpted boots adorned with college logos. Free. Various locations. Call for locations. 956-565-2230, ext. 2

DOLL DISPLAY—More than 500 dolls from 40 countries are displayed in the library. 434 S. Ohio St. 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:
202 W. Tom Landry Blvd. 956-585-2727;
missionchamber.com

Outdoor enthusiasts will find four premier golf courses and the Mission Hike and Bike Trail. The Mansion on Shary was the home of John H. Shary, known as the father of the Texas citrus industry; open by appointment. Events include the Texas Citrus Fiesta, South Texas Outdoor Life Festival, and the Texas Butterfly Festival.

BENTSEN-RIO GRANDE VALLEY STATE PARK—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

World Birding Center Headquarters—The center educates the public about the region's wildlife. 2800 S. Bentsen Palm Drive. 956-584-9156

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 excellent 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;
pannariatexas.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.



Casa de Palmas on Main Street in McAllen

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: 408 W. Main St. 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

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.

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. 956-849-4930

ROMA HISTORIC DISTRICT—The nine-square-block area contains more than 30 structures built before 1900. 77 E. Convent 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; super-size attractions that will leave you in awe; and an arts and culture scene that will mesmerize. Come taste why it is the Culinary Capital of Texas.

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. 210-207-3663

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

AT&T CENTER—This facility is home to the NBA's San Antonio Spurs, concerts, and other events. 1 AT&T Center Parkway. 210-444-5140

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



SOUTH TEXAS PLAINS

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.

BRISCOE WESTERN ART MUSEUM—Browse the art, history and culture of the American West at this museum. 218 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

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

THE DOSEUM—This children's museum has exhibits designed to promote learning and exploration. Admission charge. 2800 Broadway St. 210-212-4453

THE ESCAPE GAME—Choose from 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 West, Suite 1204, and 9995 I-10 West. 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 Milisa Road. 210-207-3780

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

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 merchants. 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

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

MARKET SQUARE—Mercado features shopping, dining, and entertainment. 514 W. Commerce St. 210-207-8600

MCNAY 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. 300 E. Crockett St. 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 playscapes. 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

NELSON W. WOLFF MUNICIPAL BASEBALL STADIUM—Home to the San Antonio Missions. Season is April-Labor Day. 5757 US 90 West. 210-675-7275

OLD SPANISH TRAIL—A decorative stone bench recognizes the Old Spanish Trail, which ran through here. 3400 Fredericksburg Road.

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.

SAN ANTONIO
central
BALCONES HEIGHTS

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Looking for value, convenience, and genuine hospitality in the middle of San Antonio's main attractions?

Balcones Heights is the place to stay.

It's the perfect starting point for your next San Antonio adventure!

ReachfortheHeights.org



Falcon Reservoir near Zapata

GO RIO! San Antonio Cruises—Colorful new barges ride the river through downtown as drivers provide narrated tours. Admission charge. 849 E. Commerce St. 210-227-4746

SAN ANGEL FOLK ART—Comprehensive collection features artists from the Americas, Africa, and Europe. 110 Blue Star. 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 convento 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

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

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

SIX FLAGS FIESTA TEXAS—Attractions include rides, live shows, and concerts. Admission charge. 17000 I-10 West. 210-697-5050

SPANISH GOVERNOR’S PALACE—This National Historic Landmark was the original residence and working office for the captains of Presidio San Antonio de Béjar. 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. Brochure and map (or mobile app) are available. 107 King William St. 210-224-6163

TEXAS TRANSPORTATION MUSEUM—Features antique vehicles, model railroads, and railroad memorabilia. Admission charge. 11731 Wetmore Road. 210-490-3554

TOBIN CENTER FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS—Preserves the original facade of the Municipal Auditorium, listed in the National Register of Historic Places. 100 Auditorium Circle. 210-223-8624

TOWER OF THE AMERICAS—Glass-walled elevators ascend more than 500 feet to the restaurant and observation level. 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

UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT SAN ANTONIO INSTITUTE OF TEXAN CULTURES—It focuses on the people who helped shape Texas. Admission charge. 801 E. Cesar E. Chavez Blvd. 210-458-2300

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

WITTE MUSEUM—The museum features unique history, science, and cultural exhibits. Admission charge. 3801 Broadway St. 210-357-1900

SELMA

POP. 35,782

SAN JUAN POP. 35,782
San Juan Economic Development Corp.:
905 W. First St. 956-516-3897 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. 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.

CHOKO CANYON STATE PARK—The park offers hiking, birding, swimming, camping, boating, water skiing, and fishing. Admission charge. 358 Recreation Road 8, Callham. 361-786-3868

WESLACO

POP. 42,231

Weslaco Business-Visitor Center: 275 S. Kansas Ave. 956-968-2102; weslaco.com

Weslaco’s historic downtown features specialty jewelry, antiques, and gift shops. The Harlon Block Memorial honors a local Marine who participated in the famed flag-raising on Iwo Jima. Events include the Texas Onion Fest and the Mid-Valley Lighted Christmas Parade. Access to Nuevo Progreso, Mexico, is 7 miles south.

BANDERAS DE WESLACO—United States flags are displayed in the order that each state entered the Union. 305 W. Railroad St. 956-968-2102

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

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

ZAPATA

POP. 5,383

Zapata County Chamber of Commerce: 601 US 83 North. 956-765-4871 or 800-292-5253; facebook.com/zapatacochamber

The ruins of Hacienda Dolores, the earliest settlement in present-day Zapata County, are designated a state historic site. The region offers excellent birding opportunities.

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



GULF COAST

Beaches, art, history, and wildlife merge in a place where big-city
sophistication meets seaside relaxation





SCAN TO SEARCH
GULF COAST
CITIES &
ATTRACTIONS

Laguna Atascosa near Los Fresnos



Port Isabel

Treasure Trove

Unearth the bounties of the beach in the seaside town of Port Isabel

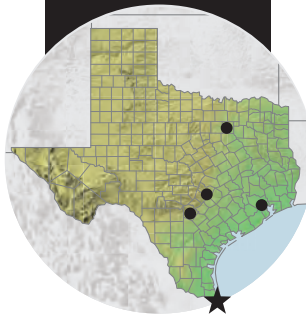
By Cat Cardenas

San Antonio
4.5 hours

Houston
5.5 hours

Austin
5.5 hours

Dallas
8 hours



Located on the tip of South Texas, the quiet town of Port Isabel has long charmed visitors looking for a relaxing seaside getaway. With a population of just 5,100, the city is ideal for anyone looking for a change of pace from the touristy bustle of its neighbor across the Queen Isabella Memorial Causeway, South Padre Island. Port Isabel's famous lighthouse, a white brick structure that stands at 72 feet in the city center, is just one of the many remaining traces of the town's fascinating past. Incorporated in 1928, the city is replete with relics of Spanish explorers, pirate treasure, and the exploits of the Spanish-American War. Though the town stays busy most of the year as travelers make their way to South Padre, August is the liveliest time for the region. That's the time when anglers travel here for some of the best fishing in the country and to compete in the annual Texas International Fishing Tournament. With seaside shops, eateries, and friendly locals, Port Isabel is an ideal place to decompress and remember how nice it is to unwind and take things slow.

PHOTOS: KEVIN BARTON STILLMAN, WILL VAN OVERBEEK

STAY

Lighthouse Boutique Hotel

Situated across from the city's most famous landmark, the hotel has quickly become a favorite of Port Isabel's visitors since its grand opening in 2022. The bright, coastal chic space includes a French-inspired café, a gift shop, and 10 luxury suites. Nightly rates start at \$195.

LEARN

Port Isabel Historical Museum

Built in 1899 as a general store, the Charles Champion building's seafoam green exterior looks like something straight out of a Wes Anderson film. Inside are two stories of displays that span centuries of the region's past, from Native American settlements to the Civil War. Visitors can also find one of the largest collections of artifacts from the Mexican-American War.

SHOP

Mercado Faro

With an array of local vendors selling their wares, this open-air market is the perfect place to pick up a handmade souvenir or keepsake to remember your trip. Wander through the stalls in search of crystals, textiles, custom jewelry designs, home decor, and even unexpected finds like fossils and shark teeth.

SEE

Port Isabel Lighthouse Tour

Take in the scenic view atop the only Texas lighthouse open to the public. A must see for any first-time visitor, the 72-foot structure once guided ships passing through the Brazos Santiago Pass and even served as a lookout spot during the Civil War and World War I. Make your way up the winding set of steps to take in the view, and marvel at the newly installed lantern, which allowed the lighthouse to shine for the first time in more than a century in 2022.

Fishing Pier

The longest pier in Texas brings anglers from all over the world down to the Laguna Madre. If you don't have your own gear, rent a pole at the bait and tackle shop. And if you're not one for fishing, head to the snack bar and enjoy the view.

Osprey Cruises

Each vessel in this fleet of six offers up a different experience to get you out on the water. Options include a sunset dinner cruise, an ecotour with a chance to spot dolphins and learn about local marine life, or an interactive adventure on the Black Dragon Pirate Ship.

Lighted Boat Parade

Visit Port Isabel on the first Saturday in December to snag a front-row seat to the city's one-of-a-kind lighted boat parade. The annual tradition looks a little different each year, and that's part of the fun—entrants are allowed to decorate anything that floats for the beach community's marquee holiday event.

DRINK

Hopper Haus

This friendly gastropub in downtown Port Isabel features more than the standard Tex-Mex and American fare. Their signature dishes have a Bavarian flair, with menu items including bratwurst, hand-breaded schnitzel, and sauerkraut. Unwind in the biergarten with a drink from the selection of craft beer.

EAT

Pirate's Landing

For beautiful views of the Laguna Madre, this eatery offers a themed dining experience that goes all-in on the region's swashbuckling history. Serving fresh local seafood, the restaurant's outdoor cannon bar offers the main draw of this destination: beautiful views and the refreshing breeze coming in from the gulf. ★



Sea Rim State Park

TEXAS STATE PARKS: HIDDEN GEMS

SEA RIM STATE PARK

Immerse yourself in the unspoiled beauty of these coastal wetlands, where gulf meets marsh, about 100 miles east of Houston. Walk, camp, fish, or paddle through tranquil marshes, channels, and lakes. Enjoy more than 5 miles of shoreline along the Gulf of Mexico, including beach camping and a cabin available by reservation. Watch for local wildlife, including native alligators, as well as bird species, such as roseate spoonbills, egrets, herons, and meadowlarks.

OTHER HIDDEN GEMS

GOOSE ISLAND STATE PARK

RESACA DE LA PALMA STATE PARK

SHELDON LAKE STATE PARK & ENVIRONMENTAL LEARNING CENTER

MORE GULF COAST STATE PARKS

BRAZOS BEND STATE PARK

GALVESTON ISLAND STATE PARK

LAKE CORPUS CHRISTI STATE PARK

MUSTANG ISLAND STATE PARK

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

RV INFO

Sandpiper Trailer Park has 36 RV sites for rent, all equipped with full hookups. Showers, restrooms, and laundry facilities are on-site. 1106 SH 100, Port Isabel. 956-943-1268



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 HISTORICAL MUSEUM & THE SLOVER-ROGERS COTTAGE—Exhibits showcase Alvin's history and culture. Admission charge. 302 W. Sealy St. 281-331-4469

ALVIN HISTORICAL TRAIN DEPOT—Explore the more than 100-year-old depot. 200 Depot Centre Blvd. 281-388-4299

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 East. 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

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

ARANSAS PASS

POP. 8,779

Aransas Pass Area Chamber of Commerce: 130 W. Goodnight Ave. 800-633-3028 or 361-758-2750; aransaspass.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 Shrimporree 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. South Lamont Street. 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. 361-758-5301

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. Just north of Aransas Pass at 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. Bigelow Street. 361-758-2750

STEDMAN ISLAND—Watch for waterfowl, shorebirds, and American oystercatchers. Follow SH 361 to the island, which is after the second bridge. 361-758-2750

BAY CITY

POP. 17,505

Visit Bay City: 979-323-1176 or 979-245-8081; 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. 979-245-8333

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. 6430 FM 2031. 800-776-5272, ext. 4740

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

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

Visit ALVIN
TEXAS

Check out amazing artwork on the **Alvin Art Trail**

Learn More at www.VisitAlvin.com

From Harms Way to Historic

GALVESTON NAVAL MUSEUM

www.GalvestonNavalMuseum.com

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. 281-427-8768 or 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

PIRATE'S 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. 5117 N. Main St. 281-421-2099

THOMPSON'S FISH CAMP—Launch a boat or arrange a guided fishing tour. Visit the bait and tackle shop. 213 Simms Road. 281-427-2300

WINERY—Yepez Vineyard. See TEXAS BEVERAGE TOUR section.

BEAUMONT POP. 112,089

Beaumont Convention and Visitor Bureau: 505 Willow St. 800-392-4401; beaumontcvb.com

Ben J. Rogers Regional Visitors Center: 5055 I-10 South. 409-842-0500; co.jefferson.tx.us/visitorcenter/brrvc.htm

Babe Zaharias Museum & Visitors Center: 1750 I-10 East. 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, sculpture, mixed media, and folk art. It also hosts traveling exhibits. Free. 500 Main St. 409-832-3432

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 East. 409-833-4622 or 800-392-4401

BIG THICKEST PRESERVE—See KOUNTZE.



Stark Museum of Art

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 region 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 **Spindletop-Gladys City 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 Cavalier, 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: texastimetravel.com/museums





MEMORIES Made Here!

Start Planning Your Trip To BAYTOWN



- 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 landmark vaudeville house 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**—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-GLADYS CITY BOOMTOWN MUSEUM**—It includes an information center and other town buildings representing a boomtown. Admission charge. 5550 Jimmy Simmons Blvd. 409-880-1750
- 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
- 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 MUSEUM—The museum highlights area history from the 1800s to the present. Free. 202 W. Smith St. 979-798-8111

The Train Museum—Shows how the railroad helped shape the area. Free. 208 W. Smith St. 979-236-0241

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 Visitor 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. RV 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. Three miles south of FM 1495, Freeport. 979-233-3526

FREEPORT HISTORICAL MUSEUM—The museum displays replicas of historic buildings, historical memorabilia, and a swing bridge model. 311 E. Park St., 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. FM 2004 near SH 332. 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. CR 723 east, 3 miles to park entrance. 979-233-1461

SAN BERNARD NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE—Spot birds along auto tours, hiking trails, and boardwalks. Free. Office: 2547 CR 316. 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. 979-233-3306

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. On SH 332, Lake Jackson. 979-297-4533

BROWNSVILLE

POP. 189,382

Brownsville Convention & Visitors Bureau Inc.:
650 FM 802. 956-546-3721 or 800-626-2639;
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 & OLD CITY CEMETERY CENTER—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—Exhibits include learning through roleplay. 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 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 or 956-546-2177

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. A historical marker is on SH 4 in Boca Chica.

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 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, but the best of all are the 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—This is a wonderland for surfing, jet-skiing, kiteboarding, and wakeboarding. Free. Access Road 3A-1 off SH 361.





GULF COAST

McGee Beach—Bustling bay beach has a picturesque view and great swimming. Free. 1102 S. Shoreline Blvd.

Michael J. Ellis Beach & Seawall—The site offers free parking with clean bathrooms, showers, and changing rooms. Lifeguards are on duty. Free. 15200 Woodward Drive.

North Beach—Family-friendly beach is pedestrian access only and near shopping, restaurants, and attractions. Free. 3200 E. Surfside Blvd.

South Packery Channel Beach—It's a great beach to fish, swim, and build sandcastles. Free. 14802 Woodward Drive.

Whitecap Beach—Enjoy a quiet day on the white sands. Free. 14802 Whitecap Blvd.

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. 100 Block of Carrizo Street.

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 wildlife in the water and the air. It also has a beach, boat ramp, and Oak Motte Sanctuary. Free. 14218 S. Padre Island Drive. 361-949-8121

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

HARBOR PLAYHOUSE—This is Texas' oldest continually operating theater. 1802 N. Chaparral St. 361-888-7469 or 361-882-5500



Texas State Aquarium
in Corpus Christi

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. 361-826-3411 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. 16499 Park Road 22. 361-949-4944

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. 20301 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. 600 N. Shoreline Blvd.

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-acre facility 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—Enjoy a one-hour cruise along the bayfront. Admission charge. 108 Peoples Street 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

SegCity Tours—Ride along the Seawall, through downtown, and in the historic district. 403 N. Shoreline Blvd. 361-563-4050

Texas Tease—Enjoy a two-hour cruise on the bay. Admission charge. 96 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

TEXAS TROPICAL TRAIL

TEXAS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
TEXAS HERITAGE TRAILS PROGRAM

MUSEUMS

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 includes the following exhibits:

Danish Heritage Preservation Society—The society depicts the local Danish community, the farming history in the area, and the community's social history. 153 CR 426. 979-578-0808

Pioneer Home—The building was moved from its original farm site and restored. The furniture and appliances recall early life in Danevang. 153 CR 426.

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—This is a replica of the cabin where the peace treaty between Texas and Mexico was drawn up after the Battle of San Jacinto. 1410 Center St. 281-479-2394

SAN JACINTO MONUMENT AND MUSEUM—See LA PORTE.

DICKINSON

POP. 21,738

Dickinson Texas Chamber of Commerce: 1911 FM 517 East. 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 West. 281-534-4367

EDNA

POP. 6,009

Jackson County Chamber of Commerce: 317 W. Main 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, nature center, and camping. 891 Brackenridge Parkway. 361-782-5456 or 361-782-5718

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 (SH 111 North). 361-782-5431

EL CAMPO

POP. 12,179

El Campo Chamber of Commerce: 1 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. Stubee. 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: 523 24th St. 409-763-8676; galveston.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, EXCURSION 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. 409-762-6677

HISTORIC CHURCHES—888-425-4753

First Lutheran Church—It was founded in 1850 and rebuilt in 1915. At 25th and Winnie streets.

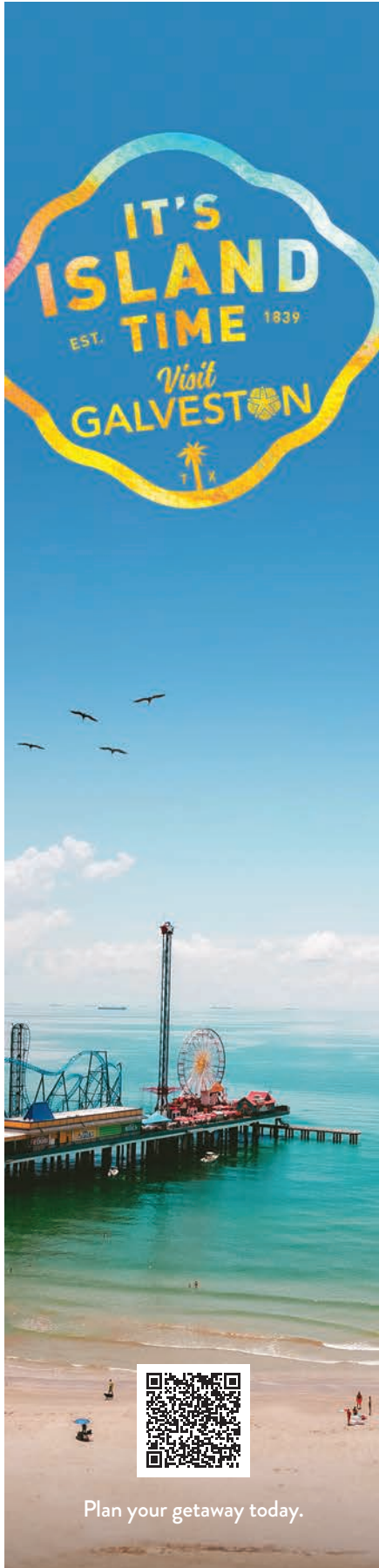
First Presbyterian Church—It is believed to house the oldest church organization in Galveston, dating from 1840. At 19th and Church streets.

DISCOVER
Texas History

The Birthplace of Texas - Deer Park, Texas

Visit the Deer Park Visitor's Center for more information on the Battle of San Jacinto and the San Jacinto Monument and Museum. Located within 20 miles east of Houston.

VISIT.DEERPARKTX.ORG



IT'S ISLAND TIME EST. 1839 Visit GALVESTON

Plan your getaway today.

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 and Broadway streets.

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 and Winnie streets.

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 Ave. 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. 409-763-7173 or 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 artworks. 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. Off 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. 409-797-5114 or 409-770-3196

PIER 21 THEATER—It features Galveston history documentaries. Admission charge. 2100 Harborside Drive. 409-763-8808

PIRATES! LEGENDS OF THE GULF COAST—This interactive museum explores the history of pirates in Galveston and along the Gulf Coast. 2313 Harborside Drive. 409-762-6677

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

SCHLITTEBAHN GALVESTON ISLAND WATER-PARK—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

Dash Beardsley Ghost Tours—These ghostly history tours are infused with research and personal accounts. 409-356-9266

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 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 Island Duck Tours—Enjoy a tour in an amphibious vehicle. At 25th Street and Seawall Boulevard. 409-621-4771

Galveston Tree Sculptures—Trees damaged by Hurricane Ike have become artworks. The visitor center has maps and brochures.

TROLLEY CARS—There are stops downtown and a seawall route with stops from Stewart Beach to Moody Gardens. 409-797-3900

HARLINGEN POP. 71,678

Harlingen Convention & Visitors Bureau: 311 E. Tyler Ave. 956-622-5053 or 956-423-5440; 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 sites on the Great Texas Coastal Birding Trail, 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. 956-427-8873

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.

SOUTH PADRE ISLAND—See SOUTH PADRE ISLAND.

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

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

Houston Visitors Center: 1001 Avenida de las Americas. 713-853-8100; 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.

ART CAR MUSEUM—Custom cars feature whimsical motifs. Many participate in the Art Car Parade. 140 Heights Blvd. 713-861-5526

BAYOU BEND COLLECTION & GARDENS—This house museum of the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, holds a collection of American decorative arts and paintings. Admission charge. 6003 Memorial Drive. 713-639-7750

BREWERIES AND DISTILLERIES—BJ Hooker's Vodka, Buffalo Bayou Brewing Co., Clutch Distilling, Eureka Heights Brewery, Holler Brewery, Karbach Brewing Co., Saint Arnold Brewing Co., Whitmeyer's Distilling 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

GRAND TEXAS SPORTS AND ENTERTAINMENT DISTRICT—Development includes the Big Rivers Waterpark and Speedsportz Racing Park. 23065 SH 242, New Caney. 832-509-1556

THE HERITAGE SOCIETY AT SAM HOUSTON PARK—The site features 10 historic structures, depicting 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 15 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

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, archaeology, 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. 1700 Hermann Drive in Hermann Park. 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, displays 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—Interfaith chapel houses canvases by the late Mark Rothko. 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

ORANGE SHOW MONUMENT—This is a maze-like folk-art creation constructed of concrete, brick, steel, and found objects. Admission charge. 2401 Munger St. 713-926-6368

THE PRINTING MUSEUM—The museum shows how written communication has influenced the course of history. Admission charge. 1324 W. Clay St. 713-522-4652

SAM HOUSTON BOAT TOURS—The port offers free 90-minute cruises of the ship channel. Reservations required. 7300 Clinton Drive, Gate 8. 713-670-2416

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.

SEISMOQUE—It's an innovative and experiential art museum. Admission charge. 2306 SH 6 South. 346-202-6006



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GULF COAST

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 story of the Apollo 11 moon landing. 400 Rusk St.

HUMBLE POP. 16,336

Lake Houston Area Chamber of Commerce: 110 W. 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. 219 E. Main St. 281-713-5439



Lake Corpus Christi State Park near Mathis

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, 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 Ave. J. Off SH 361. 361-776-2517

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 Centera 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 hayrides, animal encounters, a maze, fishing, and a fall pumpkin patch. 510 Chisolm Trail, Wallis. 832-444-8717

BREWERY—No Label Brewing Co. See TEXAS BEVERAGE TOUR section.

JOHNNY NELSON KATY HERITAGE PARK—The complex includes three homes and other buildings. Donations accepted. 5990 George Bush Drive. 281-377-5710

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. 6202 George Bush Drive. 281-391-8387

KEMAH POP. 1,792

City of Kemah: 281-334-1611; visitkemahtx.com

This "Gateway to the Bay" is a destination point. Events include the Blessing of the Fleet, the July 4 Parade and Fireworks, Steel Drum Festival, Christmas in Kemah and Tree Lighting Ceremony, and Christmas Boat Lane Parade.



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

PHOTO: STAN A. WILLIAMS

KEMAH BOARDWALK—It features several themed restaurants, shops, a hotel, an interactive stingray petting reef, and amusement rides. 215 Kipp Ave. 877-285-3624

KINGSVILLE POP. 24,833

Kingsville Visitor Center: 1501 US 77. 361-592-8516; kingsvilletexas.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 ARTS—The restored, historic Greek Revival-style home displays constantly changing art by Chicana artist Santa Barraza. Free. 407 S. Fifth St. 361-360-5788 or 361-522-3704

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. Various locations. 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 West. 361-592-8055

KING RANCH MUSEUM—Highlights the ranch's unique history. Admission charge. 405 N. Sixth St. 361-221-0242

KING RANCH SADDLE SHOP—Through the years, 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 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 South. 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

LEAGUE CITY POP. 115,418

League City Convention and Visitors Bureau: 300 W. Walker St. 281-554-1000; visitleaguecity.com

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.

BIG LEAGUE DREAMS—Replicates five major league baseball stadiums and includes volleyball courts, indoor soccer, and a children's play area. Admission charge. 1150 Big League Dreams Parkway. 281-316-3400

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.

DISTILLERY—Railean Distillers. See TEXAS BEVERAGE TOUR section.

HELEN'S GARDEN—This historic garden is tucked away beneath 100-year-old oak trees. 701 E. Main St.

LEAGUE PARK—The recently historic park is restored to its 19th-century beauty. 512 Second St.

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—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 RV 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

LIPANTILAN STATE HISTORIC SITE—This 5-acre site is named for the Lipan Apache and the 1835 battle between Texian and Mexican armies. Off SH 359, FM 624, and FM 70.

NASSAU BAY POP. 5,164

City of Nassau Bay: 281-333-4211; visitnassaubay.com

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

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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 milelong 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

W.H. STARK HOUSE—The fully restored Victorian home features original furnishings. Access is by tour only; reservations are advised. Admission charge. 610 W. Main St. 409-883-0871

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, and a walkway. Other features include 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

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 farm site from the 1800s. Admission charge. 8500 Bay Area Blvd. 281-474-2551

HERITAGE PARK & MUSEUM—The collection highlights local history from pioneer times to the present. Free guided tours are available. 204 S. Main St. 713-472-0565

PEARLAND POP. 125,949

Pearland Convention and Visitors Bureau: 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, fabulous shopping, unique events, and affordable hotels will draw you in, but the welcoming culture will have you coming back again, and again.

ANTIQUES AND BOUTIQUE SHOPPING—Find hidden treasures at locally owned boutiques, consignment stores, and antiques shops. Broadway Street. 281-997-5970

BREWERY—Vallensons' Brewing Company. See BREWERIES AND DISTILLERIES listings.

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

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. 136 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

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 N. 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. 1300 Port St. 361-749-4111 or 361-749-4158

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 a paradise of outdoor adventure. 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. 409-880-5157

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—Explores the natural history of the Texas Gulf Coast. The museum 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, lighted fishing piers, a 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 "Barb 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—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 979-365-1582

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 61st St. 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 Chamber of Commerce and Visitor Center: 421 E. Queen Isabella Blvd. 956-943-2262; portisabel-texas.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 from the 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

PORT ISABEL TEXAS

DINING
FISHING
LODGING
HISTORY
MUSEUMS
SHOPPING

LIGHTHOUSE TOURS

Port Isabel Visitors Center
421 Queen Isabella Blvd.
(956) 943-0735

Port Isabel TEXAS

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A TEXAS HISTORICAL COMMISSION STATE HISTORIC SITE

www.PortIsabel-Texas.com



discoverportlavaca.com

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 Causeway. 956-943-2262

Port Isabel Lighthouse Keeper's Cottage—This replica houses the visitor center. 421 E. Queen Isabella Causeway. 956-943-2262 or 800-527-6102

QUEEN ISABEL INN—Opened in 1906, it was the only hotel for more than 20 years. 300 Garcia St. 956-943-1468

PORT LAVACA POP. 11,262

Port Lavaca Chamber of Commerce: 361-552-2959 or 800-556-7678; portlavaca.org

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: 1512 Wildcat Drive. 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 Koonce Loop Road.

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. 956-689-1860; raymondvillechamberofcommerce.weebly.com

Recreation includes a swimming pool, parks, golf course, and nearby saltwater fishing. Raymondville and Willacy County offer shopping, dining, boating, birding, wildlife viewing, and hunting. Several RV parks are available. Inquire locally about the original boot-making families that still craft boots by hand.

LAS MAJADAS POND—It provides wildlife viewing and birding and includes a paved path to a deck that is wheelchair accessible. On SH 186. 956-689-1864

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; refugiocountytx.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; cfcbca.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. 500 Houston 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. 500 Houston 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. 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. Off FM 2040. 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—Get a glimpse into the life of an affluent family in the late 1800s. Admission charge. 317 S. Fulton Beach Road. 361-729-0386

FULTON SCHOOL HOUSE 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



Goose Island State Park near Rockport

ROSENBERG

POP. 40,739

City of Rosenberg: 3825 SH 36 South. 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 Ave. 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 Ave. 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: 350 N. 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

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 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. Admission charge. 1202 Navigation Circle. 361-729-1271

WHOOPING CRANE BOAT CRUISE—Bring a camera for this popular November through April tour. In the summer, dolphin and sunset cruises are also available. 361-729-6445

ZACHARY TAYLOR PARK—This historic site has a gazebo, pond, and butterfly garden. 702 S. Pearl St. 361-790-1136 or 361-727-2158

Spend the day your way at
Indian Point Park in
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Enjoy fishing, grilling, birding and more.

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Building Community and Raising Families.



GULF COAST

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. 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 Mifflin Kennedy and his family. Admission charge. 200 E. La Parra Ave. 361-294-5751

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; seabrooklove.com

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 convenient distance from downtown Houston and area attractions.

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, 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.

PINE GULLY PARK—The park includes a fishing pier, hike-and-bike trails, and a playground. Admission charge. 605 Pine Gully Road.

SEABROOK PELICAN PATH—Tour the path of 6- to 8-foot artistically embellished pelican statues. 1706 Second St.

SINTON

POP. 5,510

Sinton Chamber of Commerce: 218 W. Sinton St. 361-364-2307; sintonchamber.org

The town has 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, fishing pier, 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

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. 310 Padre 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, a 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





Mercer Arboretum and Botanic Gardens in Humble

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 HUMBLET.

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 North. 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 of 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 Skeeters 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. North. 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.



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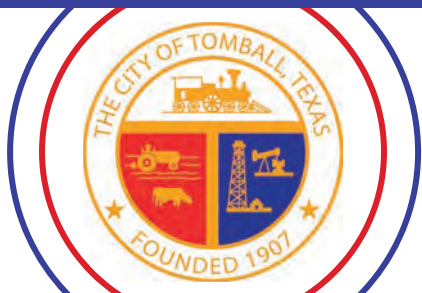
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Find more info at www.tomballtx.gov



Varner-Hogg Plantation State Historic Site in West Columbia

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—Exhibits feature the founding of Texas City, the 1947 disaster, and a 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

Explore Victoria Visitor Center: 700 N. Main St., Suite 101. 361-485-3116; explorevictoriatexas.com

Victoria is known for its rich history, abundant outdoor recreation, and lively arts scene. Theatre Victoria, Victoria Ballet Theatre, and the Victoria Symphony Orchestra regularly perform. Freshwater fishing, birding, canoeing, and kayaking are popular. Victoria is celebrating its bicentennial in 2024.

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.

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. 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 TRAIL THROUGH TIME—Interpretive displays in downtown Victoria, Riverside Park, and Victoria Regional Airport tell the story of 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

As the gateway to NASA and central business district of the Clear Lake region, Webster is midway between Houston and Galveston, along I-45. The city is home to Flyway, 33 shopping centers, more than 150 restaurants and entertainment venues, sports training facilities, and 21 hotels. It's famous for aerospace, medical, and tourism.

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.

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 and '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

VICTORIA IS CELEBRATING OUR

200th Birthday!



Join us throughout 2024 as we celebrate 200 years of our multi-cultural heritage!

The festivities will include free concerts, art and artifact exhibits, tours of the original town site, a living history event, and more! Scan the QR code for a schedule of events.

Experience Texas History in Victoria!



VictoriaTX200.com

LOOKING FOR AN
OUT OF THIS WORLD
VACATION?
YOU CAN SEE
OUTER SPACE FROM HERE!



VISIT **SPACECOASTTEXAS.COM**
TO REQUEST A FREE VACATION PACKET





Rahr & Sons Brewing Company in Fort Worth

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 enliven 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

BJ Hooker's Vodka, Houston
713-670-3003
gulfc coastdistillers.com

Buffalo Bayou Brewing Co., Houston
713-750-9795
buffbrew.com
182

Clutch Distilling, Houston
281-352-4572
clutchdistilling.com

Eureka Heights Brew Co., Houston
832-953-4677
eurekaheights.com

Gulf Breeze Winery, Victoria
361-550-1086
gulfbreezewinery.com

Haak Vineyards & Winery, Santa Fe
409-925-1401
haakwine.com

Holler Brewing Co., Houston
832-781-0555
hollerbeer.com

Karbach Brewing Company, Houston
713-680-2739
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

Whitmeyer's Distilling Co., Houston
whitmeyers.com

Yellow Rose Distilling, Houston
281-886-8757
yellowrosedistilling.com

Yepez Vineyard, Baytown
281-573-4139
yepezvineyard.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**
830-483-9463
bellspringswinery.com

Bending Branch Winery, Comfort
830-995-2948
bendingbranchwinery.com

Bent Oak Winery, Cedar Park
512-953-8094
bentoakwinery.com

Blue Owl Brewing, Austin
512-593-1262
blueowlbrewing.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
325-374-5361
fcv.com

**Free Roam Brewing Company,
Boerne**
830-582-9741
freeroambrewing.com

Garrison Brothers Distillery, Hye
512-381-3155
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
512-661-8736
jesterkingbrewery.com

Kerrville Hills Winery, Kerrville
830-895-4233
kerrvillehillswinery.com

Kuhlman Cellars, Stonewall
512-920-2675
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

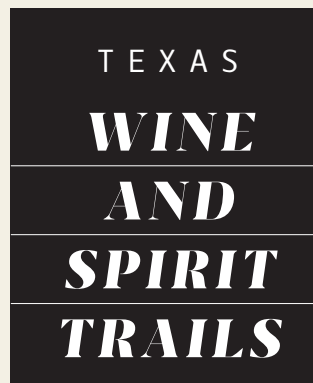
**Perissos Vineyards and Winery,
Burnet**
512-415-7479
perissosvineyards.com

**Real Ale Brewing Company,
Blanco**
830-833-2534
realalebrewing.com

Revolution Spirits, Austin
512-358-1203
revolutionspirits.com

Roughhouse Brewing, San Marcos
512-667-7000
roughhousebrewing.com

**Rustic Spur Vineyards,
Fredericksburg**
512-988-1910



WINE TRAILS

WESTERN REGION

High Plains Wine & Vine Trail
highplainswinetrail.com

CENTRAL REGION

Driftwood Wine Trail
driftwoodwinetrail.com

Dripping Wine Trail
drippingwinetrail.com

**Fredericksburg Wine
Road 290**
wineroad290.com

**Stagecoach—
The Texas Wine Trail**
stagecoachtxwinetrail.com

Texas Hill Country Wineries
texashillcountrywineries.org

Way Out Wineries
wayoutwineries.org

NORTHERN REGION

Cross Timbers Wine Trail
crosstimberswinetrail.com

Grapevine Wine Trail
grapevinewinerytrail.com

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
atxaletrail.com

Hill Country Craft Beer Trail
hillcountrycraftbeertrail.com

Fort Worth Ale Trail
fortworth.com/aletrail

Fort Worth Distillery Trail
fortworth.com/things-to-do/
distillerytrail

Texas Whiskey Trail
texaswhiskeytrail.com

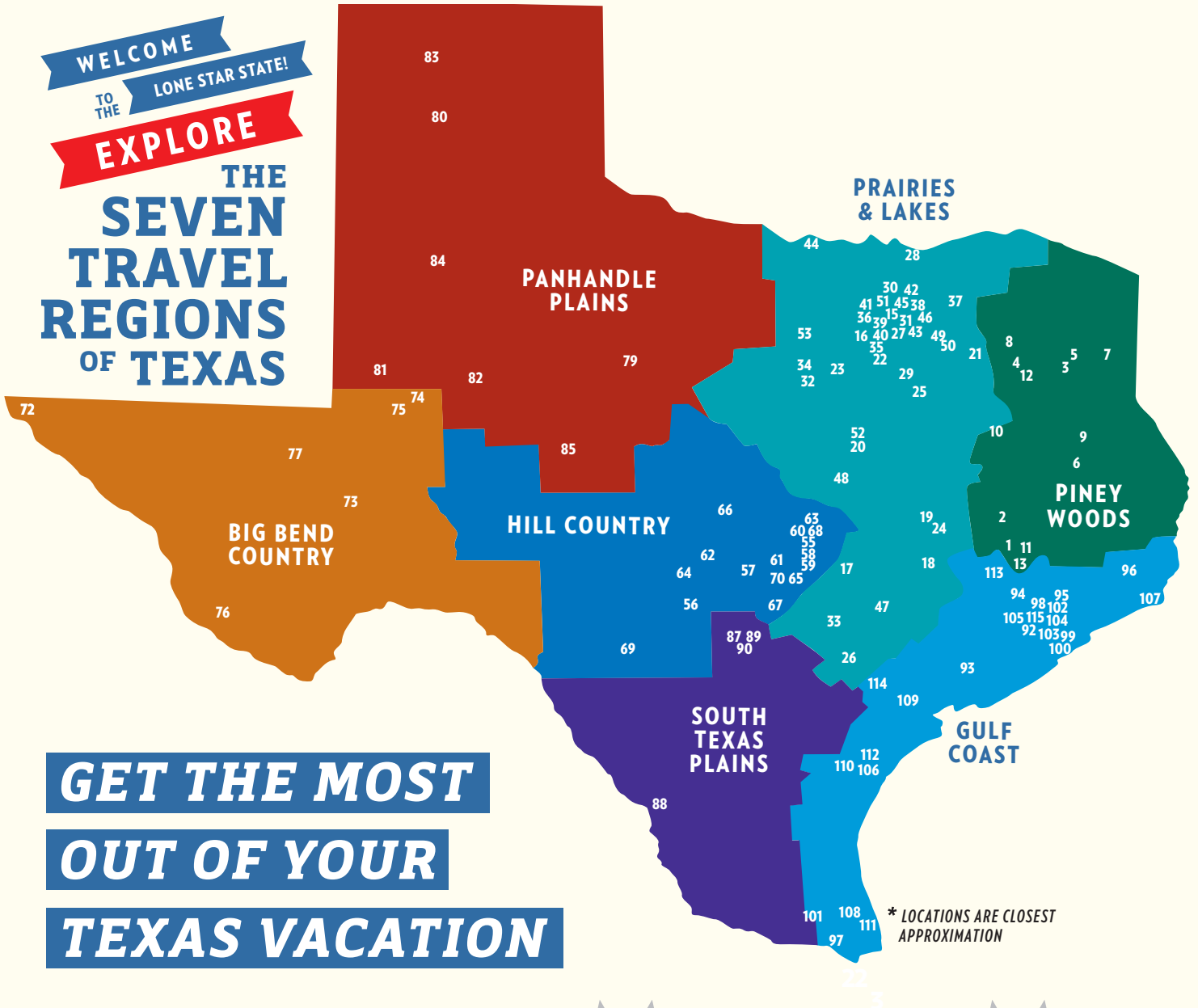
REMEMBER TO

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.

WELCOME
TO THE
LONE STAR STATE!
EXPLORE

THE
SEVEN
TRAVEL
REGIONS
OF TEXAS



GET THE MOST
OUT OF YOUR
TEXAS VACATION

REQUEST FREE
TRAVEL PLANNING
INFORMATION
COURTESY OF THE
ADVERTISERS IN
THIS GUIDE

FREE TRAVEL INFORMATION
For fastest service, go to texashighways.com/travelguideadinfo
FOR MORE INFORMATION, CIRCLE THE INDEX NUMBERS OF THE ADVERTISERS YOU ARE INTERESTED IN.
OR CHECK THE "ALL" BOX TO RECEIVE INFORMATION ON ALL ADVERTISERS IN THAT REGION.

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PINEY WOODS

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- 4 LINDALE
- 5 LONGVIEW
- 6 LUFKIN
- 7 MARSHALL
- 8 MINEOLA
- 9 NACOGDOCHES
- 10 PALESTINE
- 11 SHENANDOAH
- 12 TYLER
- 13 WOODLANDS

PRAIRIES & LAKES

- 15 ADDISON
- 16 ARLINGTON
- 17 BASTROP
- 18 BRENHAM
- 19 BRYAN
- 20 CAMERON PARK ZOO
- 21 CANTON
- 22 CEDAR HILL
- 23 CLEBURNE
- 24 COLLEGE STATION
- 25 CORSICANA
- 26 CUERO
- 27 DALLAS
- 28 DENISON
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- 30 FRISCO
- 31 GARLAND
- 32 GLEN ROSE
- 33 GONZALES

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HILL COUNTRY

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- 56 BANDERA
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- 75 ODESSA
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- 82 BIG SPRING
- 83 DUMAS
- 84 LUBBOCK
- 85 SAN ANGELO

SOUTH TEXAS PLAINS

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- 88 LAREDO
- 89 NATURAL BRIDGE WILDLIFE RANCH/NATURAL BRIDGE CAVERNS
- 90 SAN ANTONIO

GULF COAST

- 92 ALVIN
- 93 BAY CITY
- 94 BAYOU BEND-MUSEUM OF FINE ARTS HOUSTON
- 95 BAYTOWN
- 96 BEAUMONT
- 97 BROWNSVILLE
- 98 DEER PARK
- 99 GALVESTON ISLAND
- 100 GALVESTON NAVAL MUSEUM
- 101 HARLINGEN
- 102 LA PORTE
- 103 LEAGUE CITY
- 104 NASSAU BAY
- 105 PEARLAND
- 106 PORT ARANSAS/MUSTANG ISLAND
- 107 PORT ARTHUR
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- 118 TEXAS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
- 119 TEXAS PARKS AND WILDLIFE

TEXAS BEVERAGE TOUR

Slate Mill Wine Collective, Fredericksburg
830-998-8930
slatemillwinecollective.com

Singing Water Vineyards, Comfort
830-995-2146
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
830-896-0010
turtlecreekolivesandvines.com

Tusculum Brewing Co., Boerne
830-428-0596
tusculum.beer

Vista Brewing, Driftwood
512-766-1842
vistabrewingtx.com

Westcave Cellars, Round Mountain
512-431-1403
westcavecellars.com

Whitestone Brewery, Cedar Park
512-765-4828
whitestonebrewery.com

Woodrose Winery, Stonewall
830-644-2539
woodrosewinery.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
806-634-3854
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
bartlettsdistillery.com

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
281-731-5466
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
redroadvineyard.com

Southern Star Brewing Co., Conroe
936-441-2739
southernstarbrewing.com

Tahwahkaro Distilling Co., Palestine
903-231-5464
tahwahkaro.com

True Vine Brewing Co., Tyler
903-600-0124
truevinebrewing.com

PRAIRIES AND LAKES

903 Brewers, Sherman
903-487-0910
903brewers.com

AFT Distillery, Luling
830-875-5019
aftdistillery.com

Arché, Saint Jo
214-536-6330
archewines.com

Armadillo Ale Works, Denton
940-580-4446
armadilloaleworks.com

Balcones Distilling, Waco
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