

Treasures

OF

TEXAS





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Houston



RODEO

The Houston Rodeo is the world's largest live entertainment and livestock exhibition. Traditional trail rides, which start in different areas of Texas and end in Houston, precede the Rodeo events. The twenty day long event is full of excitement and entertainment including championship rodeo action, concerts, a carnival with rides and games, La Grande Wheel, which is the Western Hemisphere's largest portable Ferris wheel, shopping, barbecue, and the Rodeo Uncorked! International Wine Competition. The Livestock Show, big name entertainers, indoor fireworks and special events like the calf scramble and chuck wagon races are sure to keep anyone entertained. The Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo's educational program is a significant part of the Show's mission — benefiting youth, supporting education, and facilitating better agricultural practices through exhibitions and presentation. Since the Show's beginning in 1932, the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo has contributed more than \$330 million to scholarships, research, endowments, calf scramble participants, junior show exhibitors, School Art participants, and other educational and youth programs.





BAYOU BEND HOUSE & GARDENS

Miss Ima Hogg, legendary Texas collector and philanthropist, donated Bayou Bend to the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston in 1957, with the understanding that it would be converted into a house museum. For Miss Hogg, the collecting impulse lay at the heart of America's heritage. In 1920 she began acquiring furniture and other objects that would tell the history of colonial America, and would evolve into the Bayou Bend Collection, one of the nation's foremost holdings of American art and antiques dating from 1620 through 1870. The beauty of native trees and shrubs form a spectacular backdrop to the formal gardens surrounding the house at Bayou Bend. Eight gardens cover fourteen acres of land. They are the Clio Garden, Woodland Trails, Diana Garden, Euterpe Garden, Carla Garden, East Garden, Butterfly Garden, and White Garden. In 1934 Bayou Bend was included in Houston's first Azalea Trail, sponsored by the River Oaks Garden Club, and since then it has been a highlight of the annual event. Each year thousands of visitors flock to see the azaleas, camellias, tulips, magnolias, redbuds and a wide variety of other plants.



THE HOUSTON ZOO

Located in the heart of Houston's Herman Park and the City's famous Museum District, The Houston Zoo provides a fun, unique, and inspirational experience fostering appreciation, knowledge, and care for the natural world. The zoo offers over 6,000 permanent wildlife residents, 55 acres of lush zoological gardens, and special exhibits. Zoo exhibits you can visit include: the African forest, birds, carnivores, children's zoo, hoofed run, elephants, natural encounters, primates, reptiles & amphibians, sea lions and an aquarium.



THE ARTS

The Houston Theater District is an impressive cultural and entertainment center. Houston is one of only five cities with permanent professional resident companies in all of the major performing arts disciplines of opera, ballet, music, and theater. The district features nine renowned performing arts organizations, and many smaller ones, in four venues - Jones Hall, Wortham Theater Center, Alley Theatre, and Hobby Center for the Performing Arts. The Alley Theatre has received a Tony Award for best regional theatre. The Houston Grand Opera is the only opera company in the U.S. to win a Grammy, a Tony, and an Emmy. The Houston Ballet is the fifth largest ballet troupe in the country. The Houston Symphony, founded in 1913, is one of America's oldest performing arts organizations with a rich history for musical excellence. The Symphony performs more than 200 concerts throughout the world for more than 300,000 people each year. Theatre Under The Stars (TUTS) is the largest non-profit producer of musical theater in America.



ART CAR PARADE

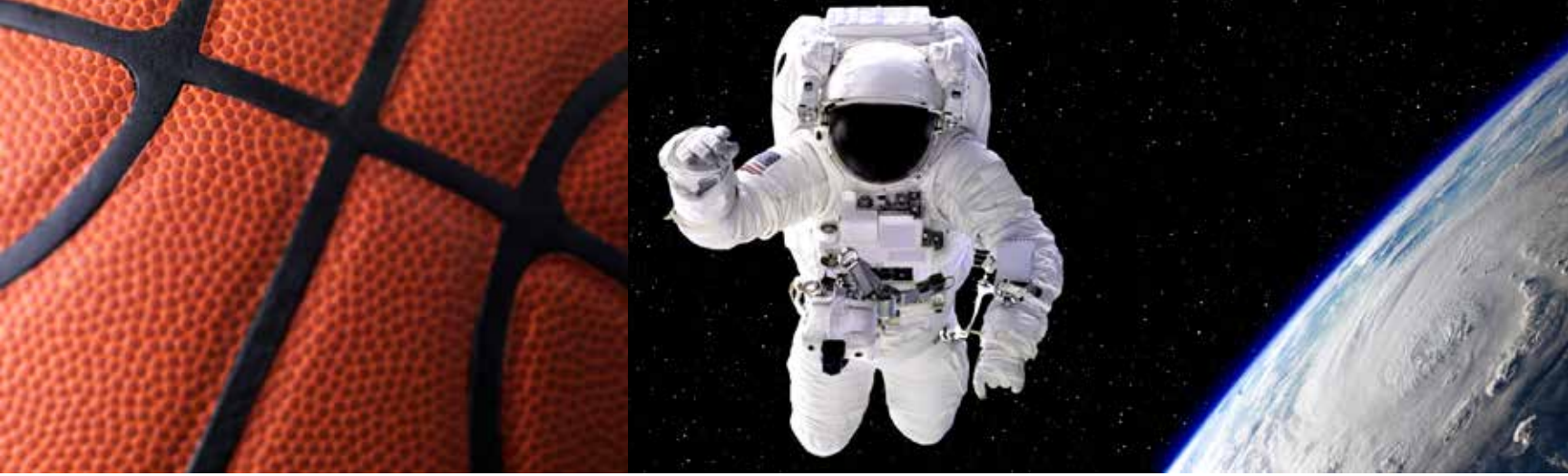
What began in 1988 with 40 decorated vehicles and a handful of onlookers is now the Worlds Largest and Oldest Art Car Parade. The event features over 250 Art Cars, 200,000 plus live spectators and media from all over the world with entries from around the country. Scores of lowrider, classic cars, costumed roller skaters, musicians on floats, art bicyclists, hot-rodgers, and elaborate rolling creations join in and shine in the spotlight.



MUSEUMS

Houston has an abundance of museums, including the Houston Museum of Natural Science, Houston Museum of Fine Arts, Children's Museum of Houston, Menil Collection, Health Museum, Contemporary Arts Museum Houston, The Jung Center of Houston & many more. The Museum of Natural Science houses the Burke Baker Planetarium, Wortham IMAX® Theatre, Cockrell Butterfly Center and over a dozen permanent exhibit areas that examine astronomy, space science, Native Americans, paleontology, energy, chemistry, gems and minerals, seashells, Texas wildlife and more. In addition, the museum frequently presents traveling exhibitions on a variety of topics. The Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, is one of the largest art museums in America with two gallery buildings, a sculpture garden, visitors center, library, movie theater, gift shops, cafe, two art schools and two house museums.





SPACE CENTER HOUSTON

At Space Center Houston, guests can enjoy exciting exhibits, attractions, special presentations and hands-on activities. Space Center Houston is the only place in the world where visitors can see astronauts train for the International Space Station, touch a real moon rock, and take a behind-the-scenes tour of NASA. Guests can also enjoy the Space Center Theater, a gallery of the world's best collection of space suits, and the "Starship Gallery" including rocket models, actual space capsules, a lunar ROV, and the Apollo 17 command module. SCH has various education programs ranging from day camps to a five day space school.

SPORTS

The Houston Astros Major League Baseball team plays at Minute Maid Park, anchored by Historic Union Station and boasting impressive architecture with a retractable roof. The Houston Texans football team plays at Reliant Stadium, known as one of the nation's loudest pro football venues with 69,000 roaring fans and a retractable roof. Houston's NBA team, the Houston Rockets, and the AHL team, the Houston Aeros, play at the Toyota Center which offers fine dining at the Red & White Wine Bistro. The Houston Dynamo play at BBVA Compass Stadium. The team won consecutive MLS Cup championships in 2006-07 and has been one of the league's leading franchises since its inception. The WNBA Houston Comets claim four championship titles in the league's first 10 years and are sure to provide a fast-paced show at Reliant Arena.

THE GALLERIA

With its stunning architecture, exceptional store mix and distinctive style of entertainment, The Galleria has established itself as the #1 shopping and tourist destination in Houston. Set beneath spectacular glass atriums, The Galleria features more than 400 fine stores and restaurants, an impressive ice rink and two Westin hotels. This world-class shopping complex showcases the best names in retailing, including Neiman Marcus, Cartier, Gucci, Macy's, Tiffany & Co., Saks Fifth Avenue, The Sharper Image, Ralph Lauren Collection, Louis Vuitton and Nordstrom. Just outside the mall is The Water Wall; a 64 foot tall sculptural fountain shaped as a horseshoe of rushing water. It is often host to picnics, concerts and family outings.



Austin

A nighttime photograph of the Austin skyline. The sky is a deep blue. Several skyscrapers are lit up, with warm yellow lights from windows and streetlights. In the foreground, a bridge with a railing spans across a river. The bridge is illuminated with warm yellow lights, and the water below is dark. The overall scene is a vibrant city at night.

Austin is a hot spot for creativity and embraces its community of musicians, artists, entrepreneurs and progressive thinkers.

CAPITOL BUILDING



Taller than the US Capitol, the Texas State Capitol and Capitol Grounds are one of the most popular tourist attractions in the capital of Texas and a favorite spot for the locals as well. The Texas Capitol is an extraordinary example of late 19th century public architecture and is widely recognized as one of the nation's most distinguished state capitols. It was placed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1970 and designated a National Historic Landmark in 1986 for its "significant contribution to American history." The Capitol, a massive statehouse constructed of Texas pink granite, dominates the 46-acre, park-like area. Capitol Visitors Center is housed in the renovated General Land Office building constructed around 1857, the oldest state office building. Exhibits include a pictorial history of the Capitol's renovation and informational video, plus the history of the Texas General Land Office.



LAKES

As the gateway to the Texas Hill Country, rolling hills and sparkling waterways abound in Austin. Three of the main lakes in the Austin area are Lake Travis, Lake Austin, and Lady Bird Lake, formerly known as Town Lake. Lake Travis starts in Austin and winds its way northwest through the Texas Hill Country for over 60 miles and is very popular for boating and fishing. Lake Austin is also a boating and fishing haven with an excellent stock of large-mouth bass. The high cliffs along the shore provide shelter from the wind, as well as amazing views. The cliffs are dotted with expensive homes overlooking the lake. Lady Bird Lake is ideal for canoeing, kayaking or paddle boating. Its banks are bounded by hike & bike trails, which are some of the most popular in the city.



NIGHTLIFE





MUSIC



Austin is known as the Live Music Capitol of the World with nearly 200 live music venues showcasing every genre imaginable. 6th street is Texas' best known street as the city's entertainment center. Its historical buildings now house bars, live entertainment venues, tattoo parlors, art galleries, casual cafes, upscale restaurants, and the elegant Driskill Hotel. The Austin City Limits Music Festival is an annual three-day music and art festival in Austin, Texas' Zilker Park. The Festival brings together bands including rock, country, folk, indie, Americana, hip-hop, reggae, and bluegrass, and attracts a crowd of over 70,000 visitors each day. It is one of the United States' premier rock festivals.

Dallas



Dallas' slogan "Live Large. Think Big." fits well with the idea that everything is bigger in Texas. Located in North Texas, this richly diverse city offers a thriving culinary scene, leading arts district, countless luxury accommodations, professional sports, trendy entertainment districts, nightlife and endless shopping opportunities.

SPORTS

The Dallas Cowboys, long known as "America's Team", are one of the most successful teams in the history of the National Football League (NFL) with five Super Bowl Championships. Catch the excitement of a Dallas Cowboys game at Texas Stadium in one of 63,855 covered seats or 296 exclusive sky boxes. Tours of the stadium are available.

The Texas Rangers play Major League Baseball from April through October at Ameriquest Field in Arlington — recognized as an architectural tribute to America's pastime. The open-air stadium was built with tradition and fan comfort in mind. The ballpark complex includes a baseball museum, children's learning center, office building within the ballpark, youth baseball park, 12-acre lake and a park area.

The American Airlines Center, home to the Dallas Mavericks basketball team, is the most technologically advanced sports arena in the country. The energy and excitement of the game can be enjoyed with a host of comforts and amenities.

FC Dallas is the area's Major League Soccer franchise, playing in the soccer-specific Pizza Hut Park from April to October.

ENTERTAINMENT

The State Fair of Texas, a 24-day showcase of entertainment, exhibits and competition, has been presented in Dallas each fall since 1886 in historic Fair Park, a 277-acre complex recognized for its beautiful landscaping and unique collection of art deco architecture. The Fair consistently offers its visitors a first look at the newest and best in products and performances.

Deep Ellum is the Dallas headquarters for live music. In the early 1900's, it was the hotbed of blues and of African-American life and culture. Today, in addition to blues, the area swings with everything from jazz to alternative beats. Among the 42 clubs and numerous restaurants are shops and galleries where clothing and jewelry often double as original works of art. Trendy and hip, it has been described as a little New Orleans and Southern SoHos.

The Arts District in the northern section of downtown is home to several art venues including an art museum, symphony center, performing arts center, opera house, ballet theater, asian arts & sculpture centers and a children's theater.

SHOPPING&DINING

The 55-acre West End Historic District is the center of tourist activity. More than 80 stores and 40 restaurants reside in the restored, redbrick warehouses including the West End MarketPlace. Dallas is known for its barbecue, authentic Mexican, and Tex-Mex cuisine.



San Antonio

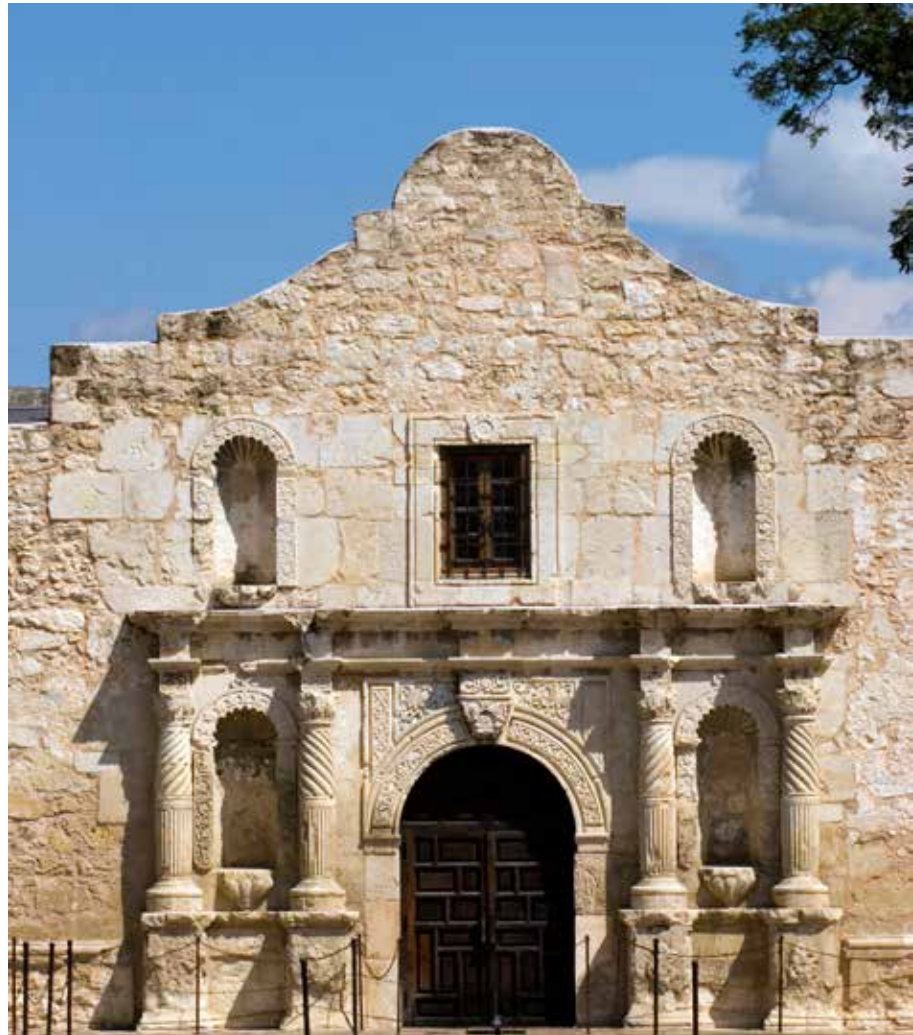


THE RIVER WALK

Twenty feet below street level and steps from the famed Alamo, is the Paseo del Rio, better known as the River Walk. Aside the meandering San Antonio River, stone pathways connect shops, restaurants, hotels and museums with a blend of historic and modern architecture. Along these walkways, visitors and shoppers are greeted with the sounds of mariachis serenading diners and river taxis carrying guests across the spring-fed river that has attracted people to this region for centuries. The River Walk connects some of San Antonio's other major tourist destinations such as the Alamo, the San Antonio Museum of Art, Rivercenter Mall, Arneson River Theatre and the Pearl Brewery. Over twenty events take place on the River Walk each year.

THE ALAMO

The Alamo, located in downtown San Antonio, represents nearly 300 years of history. Three buildings house exhibits on the Texas Revolution and Texas History: the Shrine, Long Barrack Museum and Gift Museum. Exhibits on display include artifacts associated with the Alamo Heroes: Travis' ring, Crockett's buckskin vest, a flintlock rifle used in the battle; a period Bowie knife, and more. An arrangement of flags represent the states and nations from which the defenders came. Visitors are also welcome to stroll through the beautiful Alamo Gardens. The Alamo Defenders have come to symbolize courage and sacrifice for the cause of Liberty. The memories of James Bowie, David Crockett, and William B. Travis are as powerful today as when the Texan Army under Sam Houston shouted "Remember the Alamo!" as it routed Santa Anna at the battle of San Jacinto on April 21, 1836. The Alamo has been managed by the Daughters of the Republic of Texas since 1905.





SEA WORLD & SIX FLAGS

From Shamu to dolphins, sharks, seals, sea lions, penguins and much more, SeaWorld San Antonio is the world's largest marine life park. From animals and shows to water rides and roller coasters, there's sure to be plenty of fun. Try Great White, Texas' first inverted steel roller-coaster or the Steel Eel for a bout of weightlessness. Journey to Atlantis is part roller-coaster, part water ride. For the kids, enjoy Sesame Street Bay of Play, an attraction featuring Elmo, Big Bird and all their friends.

Six Flags Fiesta Texas is nestled within majestic 100 ft. quarry walls and celebrates the culture and history of Texas with thrilling rides, award-winning shows, Looney Tunes characters and a free water park. Roller-coaster rides range from mild for the family to diving dips, dark twisting tunnels and racing at speeds of over 50 mph.





BIG BEND

National Park

President Franklin Roosevelt signed the bill authorizing Big Bend National Park on June 20, 1935. Big Bend National Park was set aside and protected for its scenic and recreational values. Big Bend features broad expanses of desert shrubland and grassland interspersed with smaller areas of high-elevation woodland, wetland areas along the Rio Grande, and springs throughout the park. Deep canyons along the river are some of the park's most striking features. Once a remote and seemingly inhospitable area reached only by miles of dirt road, Big Bend has become one of the most popular vacation destinations in the state of Texas, visited by an average of 300,000 people each year. Scenic vistas, diverse wildlife, historical sites, and the border culture all rank among the features that visitors enjoy in Big Bend, but the primary reason that many visitors give for visiting the park is the opportunity for outdoor recreation.

Over 800,000 acres of open land invite you to explore, wander, and linger. Over 150 miles of dirt roads and about 200 miles of hiking trails wind through the park, providing almost limitless opportunity for hiking, camping, mountain biking, horseback riding, and other backcountry adventures. Additionally, the Rio Grande borders the park for 118 miles, giving the option of floating canyons or open water by raft, canoe, or kayak. Some of the animals that can be

found within the park are black bears, mountain lions, javelina, bats, turtles, frogs, toads and 450 species of birds. The park is also designated as a Dark Sky Park, thought to have one of the darkest measured skies in the lower 48 states making it excellent for star gazing and astronomical study.

Depending on how long someone has to spend in Big Bend, there are a variety of things to enjoy. A drive to the Chisos Mountains will provide spectacular mountain views. The Chisos Basin Visitor Center offers exhibits on the wildlife that can be found in the mountains. In this area the Window View Trail, Window Trail, and Lost Mine Trail will all show off the mountain scenery. A trip along the Ross Maxwell Scenic Drive will give a good feel for the Chihuahuan Desert and will lead to the Rio Grande. There are many scenic overlooks and exhibits along the way. Sotol Vista, Mule Ears Overlook, and Tuff Canyon are all good stops. Santa Elena Canyon is one of Big Bend's most scenic spots. The bluff overlooking the Rio Grande at the end of the Rio Grande Village Nature Trail is also a particularly beautiful spot for a sunset view. The Boquillas Canyon Trail will take you to the entrance of this spectacular canyon. There are many places to accommodate camping and lodging just outside of the park and a few places inside the park as well.

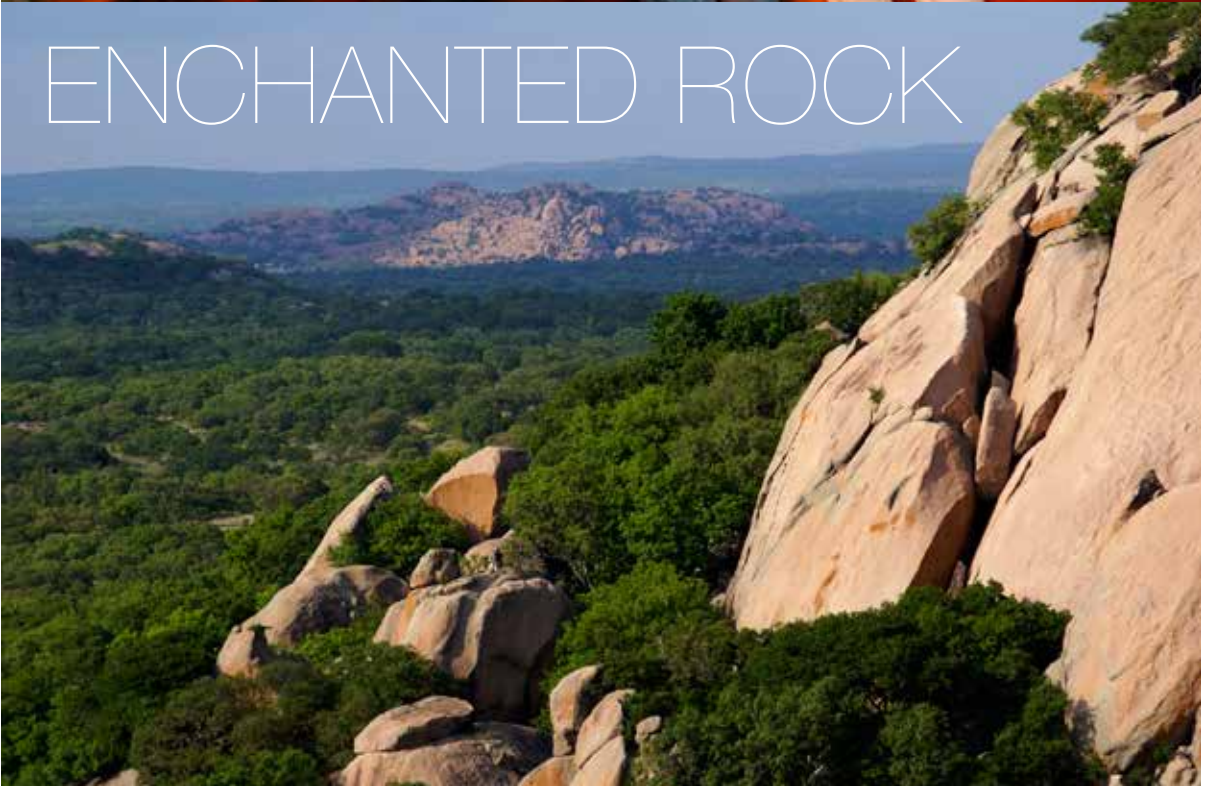
HILL COUNTRY



PEDERNALES FALLS



GRUENE HALL



ENCHANTED ROCK



FRIO RIVER

Pedernales Falls State Park is an area just outside of Austin with a clear, spring-fed river flowing down gently sloping limestone to create the falls. Activities include camping, picnicking, hiking, river swimming, tubing, wading, mountain biking, fishing, bird watching, and horseback riding.

Gruene Hall is the oldest continually running dance hall in Texas. It has served as a starting point for some of the most prolific talent in America including George Strait, Lyle Lovett and Hall Ketchum.

Enchanted Rock State Natural Area is a 425 foot pink granite dome that attracts rock climbers, hikers and campers near Fredricksburg.

Garner State Park is a summer ritual for so many families that now some represent the fifth generation to have spent part of their vacation on the Frio River. During the day, enjoy tubing in the cool waters under the cypress trees and at night the park hosts the oldest outdoor dance in Texas with jukebox music filling the valley.

Schlitterbahn Waterpark Resort covers 65 acres and has been rated the #1 waterpark in the world by the Travel Channel. The park is located on the banks of the spring-fed Comal River in New Braunfels, just North of San Antonio. With more than 40 family attractions, Schlitterbahn has something for everyone, including tube chutes, water slides, uphill water coasters, pools, hot tubs, kiddie water playgrounds and shady picnic grounds.

Natural Bridge Caverns are the largest known commercial caverns in the state. This beautiful and historical cavern system offers fun for explorers and family alike. Visitors can pan for precious stones, go caving on one of the adventure tours or watch as millions of bats spiral into the sky for their nightly hunt.



SCHLITTERBAN



NATURAL BRIDGE CAVERNS

Wildflowers





Texas is home to some of the most beautiful wildflower displays anywhere in the world. The springtime brings photographers from far and wide to capture the display of entire fields covered in patterns of color. The most common sighting is the state flower, the bluebonnet, but hundreds of other types of wildflowers thrive in the area such as indian paintbrush, black-eyed susan, mexican hat, Texas thistle, poppies & wine cups. Wildflowers can be found all over the state but are most prevalent in Central Texas (Brenham, Chappell Hill, Cuero, Fayetteville, Round Top, Warrenton, & Washington-on-the-Brazos State Park) and the Texas Hill Country (Boerne, Comfort, Fredricksburg, Johnson City, Kerrville, Marble Falls, New Braunfels, & Wimberley). The Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center is located in Austin, Texas. The Center's gardens display the native plants of the Central Texas Hill Country while the Plant Conservation Program protects the ecological heritage of Texas by conserving its rare and endangered flora. The Native Plant Information Network is a database of more than 7,200 native species available online.

Bluebonnets are named for their color and their resemblance of their petals to a woman's sunbonnet. The Mexican Hat looks like a Mexican sombrero. They are yellow-orange to deep reddish orange. Indian Paintbrush vary in color from orange and scarlet to cream and yellow. Black Eyed Susans are bright yellow flowers with a chocolate brown to black center. Pink Evening Primrose are often called buttercups. They have broad petals that may be pink, light pink or almost white with yellow centers. Texas Dandelion are common over the eastern half of the state. They have lemon-yellow flower heads and when dried look like puffs of white that many people like to blow apart as the seeds scatter everywhere. Drummond's Phlox is another common Texas wildflower. It grows in fields and along roadsides and can be red, pink, blue, purple or white.



Coastlines





Coastlines of Texas range down the Southeastern part of the state with many beaches and cities scattered along the way. Some of the most popular places along the shore are Galveston, Corpus Christi, and South Padre. Galveston has a number of beaches where people play in the sun and waves and also a stretch of shopping and dining known as The Strand. The Strand was the heart of Galveston in the late 1800s and early 1900s and still has the beautiful architecture and charm of the time. High curbs, overhanging canopies and horse drawn carriages still surround the buildings inspired by the golden ages of the Greeks or the Victorians. During the first weekend in the month of December, The Strand is transformed for Dickens on the Strand, Galveston's Victorian Christmas Festival. It has been named one of the Top 100 Events in North America. A full weekend of activities includes The Queen's Parade, Pickwick's Lantern Parade, Dickens Costume Contest, petting zoos and pony rides, elephant rides and puppet shows, a royal victorian wedding ceremony and many musicians, hypnotists, acrobats and performers of all types. A vast array of costumed vendors join the year-round shops of The Strand. Another popular event in Galveston is the American Institute of Architects (AIA) Sandcastle Contest. Houston area architects, designers, engineers and contractors come out the first part of June each year and compete in one of the world's largest sandcastle competitions. Firms begin months in advance generating ideas, developing designs, and assigning duties. On the day of the event, the teams stretch along the beach meticulously sculpting their sand piles and working non-stop for five hours. Many of the designs are so intricate and complicated that some teams use large formwork systems, mechanized tampers, and water pumping systems. The judging of the sandcastles is rated on originality of concept, artistic execution of the concept, technical difficulty, carving technique, and utilization of the site.





CORPUS CHRISTI

Corpus Christi is full of a variety of visitor attractions as the largest city on the Texas coast and sixth largest port in the nation. The Municipal Marina is the focal point of the city and protected from the Gulf of Mexico by sandy barrier islands off the Texas Coast. Heritage Park & Cultural Center, one of the eleven homes of Heritage Park, operates in the 100-year-old Galvan House, the national award winning center showcasing the artistic and cultural diversity of Corpus Christi and South Texas. The USS Lexington is another popular site to tour. The Texas State Aquarium is educationally enriching and entertaining as it practices environmental conservation and wildlife rehabilitation. The Great Texas Coastal Birding Trail is a coastal highway that links 310 birding sites and offers kiosks, observation platforms and helpful information to visitors searching for various birds. The Corpus Christi Botanical Garden is also a tranquil escape with a collection of gardens and walking trails.



SOUTH PADRE ISLAND

South Padre is located at the tropical tip of Texas. The beaches of South Padre Island are the number one attraction for many visitors. The waters surrounding the barrier Island provide surfing, swimming, fishing, dolphin watching, sailing, snorkeling, scuba diving, jet skiing, wind surfing, kite boarding and many more opportunities. Padre Island is the longest undeveloped barrier island in the world and stretches for 110 miles along the Texas Gulf Coast. The sand dunes north of the city limits are the perfect getaway to enjoy a private stretch of beach. Camping is allowed and free. It is a great place to experience the beautiful sunsets over the Laguna Madre, sunrise over the surf, and a perfect spot to relax and look at the stars. Another popular sight is the South Padre Island Birding and Nature Center, 50 acres of rich habitat where many common and endangered bird species can be found for viewing.

Hummingbirds



Texas is considered one of the most hummingbird-diverse states in the country. Location, geography and the wonderfully diverse habitat we enjoy across the state, contribute greatly to the number of hummingbirds that can be found. Millions of hummingbirds will travel more than 1,000 miles from Central America and Mexico to get here. Most often hummingbirds will be seen in the spring and fall when their migration patterns take them north or south. At least two species of hummingbirds can be found in each county, with some regions of the state hosting as many as 18 species. The type of hummingbird you'll see in Texas depends on where you live. East of Interstate 35, residents will most likely see the Ruby Throated hummer, while those west of I-35 will probably see the Black Chinned hummer. Austin-area residents can see both. In South Texas, the Buff Bellied hummingbird is common; in West Texas, the aptly named Blue Throated and Magnificent hummingbirds are seen more frequently.

During the Fall migration, bird lovers flock to Rockport on the Texas coast for the Texas Hummingbird Festival. The four day event draws visitors who come for bird-watching events, guided bus tours, speakers and classes on identification, gardening and photography. Some sites around town can have swarms of 100-200 birds at a time.

In the air, hummingbirds maneuver like no other birds – they can fly forward, backward, shift to either side and stop in mid-air. The beat of their wings is so fast that a “humming” sound occurs, giving them their name. The iridescent color of their feathers has long been a delight to bird watchers. Hummingbirds live on a combination of flower nectar and minute insects. Putting out feeders and planting a garden with their favorite flowers is the ideal way to attract these tiny birds to your house for viewing in your own backyard.



Texas Wildlife



MOCKINGBIRD

The mocking bird was adopted as the state bird of Texas in 1927. They are best known for the habit of mimicking the songs of other birds, often loudly and in rapid succession. Mockingbirds can also expertly reproduce the sounds of other animals, as well as some man-made devices such as musical instruments, warning bells, and creaky hinges. Classified as songbirds, mockingbirds measure approximately ten inches in length and are grey in color, with white patches on the wings. Mockingbirds are found throughout most of North America, including parts of Canada and Mexico; they are most abundant in the southern United States. These skilled vocalists are often found in open areas and near people, such as in suburban neighborhoods where they perch on rooftops to sing. During the spring, mockingbirds – particularly “bachelor males” – may sing for hours on end, even during the night.



ARMADILLO

The small Texas state mammal is the armadillo. Armadillo is a Spanish word meaning “little armored one” and refers to the bony plates that cover the back, head, legs, and tail of most of these odd looking creatures. Armadillos are the only living mammals that wear such shells. They vary widely in size and color, from the 6-inch-long, salmon-colored pink fairy armadillo to the 5-foot-long, dark-brown giant armadillos.



WHOOPING CRANE

Whooping cranes begin their fall migration south to Texas in mid-September and begin the spring migration north to Canada in late March or early April. These majestic white birds are the tallest in North America, standing nearly 5 feet tall with a wingspan of 7.5 feet. They are named for their whooping sound and call and live in family groups frequenting marshes, shallow lakes, and lagoons. Cranes feed by foraging with their bills and gobbling up plants, shellfish, insects, fish, and frogs. The whooping crane was declared endangered in 1971 mainly because of habitat loss and is still one of the rarest birds in North America.

Ranching



No history of the cattle industry can be told without beginning with Texas and the Texas Longhorn, the large state animal. Texas was the original home of ranching and became the major blending pot for the evolution of the history-making Texas Longhorn breed of cattle. The first thing that people usually think of when they imagine animals from Texas is cows. Cows certainly aren't just in Texas, but at one time they were one of the state's biggest exports.





Wineries

&

Vineyards

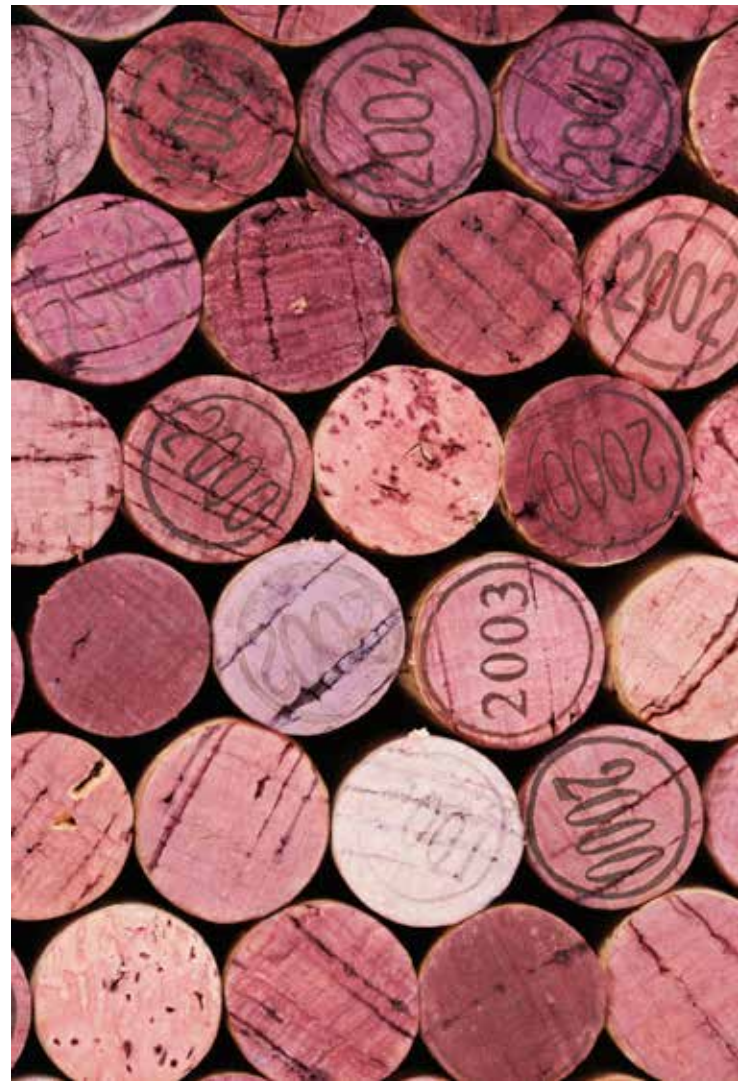
The best way to visit a group of wineries is to pick a Texas wine trail in the area of the state you want to visit. Texas has more than 220 family-owned vineyards covering 3,700 acres. Texas grapes include Cabernet Sauvignon, Chardonnay, Sauvignon Blanc, Chenin Blanc, and Merlot. Texas wineries are also doing great work with grapes such as Sangiovese, Syrah, Riesling, Blanc du Bois and Viognier.

Texas Winery Wine Trails

Cross Timbers Wine Trail | Dallas Wine Trail | Dallas Town and Country Wine Trail | Dripping Wine Trail
Fredericksburg Wine Road 290 | Grapevine Wine Trail | Guadalupe Valley Wine Trail
Munson Wine Trail | Piney Woods Wine Trail | Red River Wine Trail | San Gabriel Wine Trail
Texas Bluebonnet Wine Trail | Texas High Plains Wine and Vine Trail | Texas Hill Country Wine Trail
Thirsty Oaks Wine Trail | Top of the Hill Country Wine Trail | Way Out Wineries



Some of the top Texas wineries are scattered throughout the state. Messina Hof Wine Cellars, a family-owned and operated winery with 200 years of wine-making tradition, is located in Bryan, Texas. Val Verde Winery, Texas' oldest winery, begun in 1883 by Italian immigrant Frank Qualia, is still operated today under the direction of third generation vintner Thomas Qualia. Fall Creek Vineyard, one of the state's largest wineries with a 65 acre vineyard, overlooks Lake Buchanan. Grape Creek Vineyards is located in the rolling hills east of Fredricksburg. At Bell Mountain Vineyards, wines are aged a second time after bottling to create more complex vintages. Sister Creek Vineyards, winner of the North American International Wine Competition Silver medal for its 1990 Cabernet Sauvignon/Cabernet Franc blend and for its 1995 Muscat Canelli, is hidden away in the tiny town of Sisterdale with population of 25. West Texas boasts Cap Rock's imposing mission-styled facility and Llano Estacado Winery, one of Texas largest and best known wineries. It has been called "the most successful winery in the state, both artistically and commercially" by The Wine Spectator. Also in west Texas is Pheasant Ridge Winery, so named for the wild birds that habitually roam the vineyards. It is one of the state's oldest vinifera vineyards and specializes in producing blends based on centuries-old French tradition. It has been complimented by well-respected wine critic Robert Parker as having a Cabernet Sauvignon that is "lush, intense, ... with plenty of character that can compete in quality with anybody."





C-Ray Media is a full service marketing company specializing in graphic design, 3D modeling & animation, tradeshow management, web design, market planning, event planning and promotional sales. Service is our priority and unique well defined marketing is our goal. We are committed to customer satisfaction and will go the extra mile to make marketing affordable for all companies, large or small. C-Ray Media will provide results-oriented marketing designed to meet our clients' objectives by providing strong concepts and excelling at customer service. This is possible through our culture of highly professional and dedicated employees. To contact us please call 281.564.7000 or email us at marketing@c-raymedia.com.



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tradeshow giveaways | promotional products | corporate gifts | event planning

