Heritage Traveler

Guide to Historic Sites in Texas

Bishop’s Palace
Located in the center of Galveston’s historic Broadway Street, this castellated limestone and granite mansion was built in 1887 by Victorian architect Nicholas Clayton for attorney and railroad entrepreneur Walter Gresham. Sixty-minute guided tours through the ornate home showcase a Santo Domingo mahogany fireplace, a silver-lined fireplace, and bronze dragon sculptures. Galveston: (409) 762-2473 or www.galveston.com/bishopspalace

Casa Navarro State Historic Site
Located in downtown San Antonio, this half-acre site features the restored home of tejano merchant and statesman, José Antonio Navarro (1795-1871). Guided tours lead through the limestone main house, office, and store, containing period antiques and copies of Navarro’s history of Texas, and the detached carriage-block and adobe kitchen featuring typical early-Texian front and rear porches. San Antonio: (210) 226-4001 or www.thc.state.tx.us

Fannin Battleground State Historic Site
On March 27, 1836, General Santa Anna executed Colonel James Fannin, Jr. and his 342 Texans following his victory at the Battle of Coleto during the Texas War of Independence. This 14-acre site commemorates the battle and massacre with a 28-foot grey-granite obelisk and museum containing artifacts excavated from the site, such as cannonballs. Fannin: (361) 491-0732 or www.thc.state.tx.us

Fort Concho National Historic Landmark
Built in 1867 to protect frontier settlements from Indian raids, this fort served as the headquarters of Benjamin Grierson, William “Pecos Bill” Shafter, and the commanders of all four Buffalo Soldier regiments. Deactivated in 1889, the fort today includes 25 original structures, including the enlisted men’s barracks, post headquarters, hospital, and chapel, which house exhibits on Texas frontier history. San Angelo: (325) 481-2466 or www.fortconcho.com

McFadden-Ward House
This 1906 Beaux-Arts-style mansion, once home to wealthy cattle and oil baron William McFadden and his wife, Ida Caldwell, now contains a collection of more than 20,000 manuscripts, photographs, and period literature representing the 150 years the family lived here. Ninety-minute tours through the period-furnished parlor, music room, kitchen, breakfast room, and carriage house are preceded by a 10-minute video on the history of the McFadden family. Beaumont: (409) 832-2134 or www.mcclintondwark.org

Fort Davis National Historic Site
In 1854 companies from the Eighth U.S. Infantry established this fort, named after Secretary of War and future Confederate president Jefferson Davis, to protect the San-Antonio–El Paso Pass from the Kiowa, Comanche, and Apache tribes. Visitors can tour 24 original buildings on the 174-acre site, including the commander’s quarters, lieutenant’s quarters, kitchen, commissary, and barracks. Fort Davis: (432) 826-3221 or www.nps.gov/fodn

Mission Tejas State Park
Located in this 364-acre park, the reconstructed, pine-timber Mission San Francisco de los Tejas, established in 1690, was the first Spanish mission in Texas and a stopover on the El Camino Real de los Tejas, “the Royal Road” that ran through San Augustine, Austin, and San Antonio during the 18th and 19th centuries. A half-mile walk southwest of the mission leads to the restored three-room 1829 Rıc Family Log House, used in the

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6. Galveston Island Convention & Visitors Bureau: Galveston is a romantic island tucked deep within the heart of South Texas. It possesses all the charm of a southern town, yet 50 minutes from Houston. 888-GAL-BLLE (888-425-4753), www.GalvestonCVB.com

7. Visit Nacogdoches – The Oldest Town in Texas: Nacogdoches has something for everyone, including landmark architecture, antique shopping along historic brick streets, nature trails, distinctive gardens and more! 888-OLDEST-TOWN, www.VISITNAG.COM

8. The Sixth Floor Museum at Dealey Plaza: www.jfk.org


U.S. Travel and Tourism


11. Gettysburg, PA: Relive the history; experience the passion of Robert Rogers and the Conquest of America’s First Frontier www.Gettysburg.com


Health

13. Morris County Tourism Bureau: 300 years of history that shaped America, only 30 miles from New York City; home of Morris County National Historic Park, our nation’s first designated national park. 973) 631-5151, www.montonitourism.org

14. Palm Beach County Convention & Visitors Bureau: The Palm Beaches, America’s First Resort Destination, has been drawing rave vacation review for over 100 years. Discover more at PalmBeachFL.com, (800) 554-7256


Education

16. The History Channel: www.History.com


Publications


22. War on the Run: Visit www.warontherun.com for more information about War on the Run: The Epic Story of Robert Rogers and the Conquest of America’s First Frontier by John F. Ross

Health


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The Alamo

In March 1836, the 18th-century mission served as the site where James Bowie, William Travis, and 200 Texan freedom fighters stood against Mexican general Santa Anna’s 13-day siege. A 20-minute presentation by docents recounts the story of the site’s origin as a Catholic mission, its role as a hospital and cavalry post, and its tactical role during the siege. On the four-acre grounds sits the Long Barracks Museum, which features weapons and letters from Alamo defenders and an 18th-century well with a courtyard.

Chamal National Memorial

The 55-acre park commemorates the Chamal Convention of 1933, which resulted in a century-old border dispute with Mexico. Three museum galleries feature displays on U.S.-Mexican culture and local wildlife. Two miles of walking trails circle the site. Visitors can cross the border on the Bridge of the Americas and see the memorial’s Mexican counterpart, Parque Chamal.

San Jacinto Battleground State Historic Site

The 578-foot-tall commemorative stone monument sits on the site of the decisive 18-minute battle of April 21, 1836, during which General Houston’s Texans routed Santa Anna’s Mexican army and paved the way for Texas independence. The 1,208-acre site also encompasses the San Jacinto Museum of History, which houses more than 400,000 books, documents, and artifacts. Visitors can tour the 1911 New York class battleship Texas, the only remaining battleship to have served in both World War I and II. The visitors center, located on the southwest corner of the 300-acre park, features a 15-minute introductory video, War on the Rio Grande exhibitions and exhibits. Visitors can see monuments, historical markers, a replica dog-trot cabin, and exhibits in the J.J. Josey Store Museum.

Indian/Spanish/Mexican

late 19th century as a stagecoach depot. Park interpreters are available year round upon request. Grapeland (936) 687-2394 or www.tpwd.state.tx.us

Palo Alto Battlefield National Historical Park

On this site in May 1846, Brig. Gen. Zachary Taylor’s 2,400 troops defeated Gen. Mariano Arista’s 5,400 Mexicans in the first battle of the Mexican War. The visitors center, located on the southwest corner of the 300-acre park, features a 15-minute introductory video, War on the Rio Grande and exhibits that reveal both U.S. and Mexican perspectives. A half-mile walking trail winds past the battlefield and contains interpretive panels describing the battle. Brownsville (956) 541-2785 or www.nps.gov/paal

Port Isabel Lighthouse State Historic Site

This 72-foot, 1852 lighthouse on Texas’ southernmost tip operated until 1903. Port Isabel (956) 943-7602 or www.portisabellighthouse.com

San Felipe de Austin State Historic Site

Founded in 1823 by Stephen Austin and the 297 American families that followed him, this town was the social, economic, and political center of Texas, and site of the heated conventions of 1832 and 1833 and the Consultation of 1835 that led to the 1836 Texas Declaration of Independence. Visitors can see monuments, historical markers, a replica dog-trot cabin, and exhibits in the J.J. Josey Store Museum. San Felipe (877) 519-6184 or www.thecitesta.us

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Mission Espíritu Santo State Historic Site

Located within Goliad State Park, the 1749 Franciscan mission was Texas’s first large-scale livestock operation and an important supplier for American troops during the Revolutionary War. Visitors can take self-guided tours of the stone church, the adjacent museum with exhibits on the mission’s history, and the surrounding grounds. Goliad (361) 645-2403 or www.tpwd.state.tx.us

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San Antonio Missions National Historical Park
This 819-acre park encompasses four 18th-century Franciscan missions—San José, Concepción, San Juan Capistrano, and Espada. Visitors can see the sites for oneself, but tours are offered by permit only.

San Antonio City Hall
Completed in 1749, the San Fernando Cathedral was expanded in the Gothic-Revival style in 1873. It is the oldest building in San Antonio and houses the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception.

San Antonio Missions National Historical Park
The San Antonio Missions National Historical Park consists of four missions that were established by the Spanish in the 18th century. The missions were established to convert Native Americans to Christianity and to establish a presence in the region.

Spindletop-Gladys City Boomtown Museum
Located one mile from the site of the famous 1922 oil gusher, the museum features exhibits of the period, including a recreation of the old Gladys City boom town, including the headquarters and the Presidio of San Antonio de Béjar.

Texas Cowboy Hall of Fame
Housed in the former horse and mule barn of the Fort Worth Stockyards Historic District, this museum currently honors the achievements of Texas cowboys and cowgirls. It also features permanent exhibits that showcase the contributions of the rodeo and western lifestyle in Texas. Highlights include the Stetson Wall Collection, which contains over 1,000 hats, boots, saddles, and silts, as well as an 1898 Back-to-Back Wagon and a 1912 Standard Oil Tank Wagon. The John B.woman's name: 

Cowboys/Old West

Buffalo Soldiers National Museum
This museum is dedicated to preserving the history of the Buffalo soldiers, a unit of African American soldiers who served in the American Civil War. The museum features exhibits on the soldiers' experiences, including their uniforms, equipment, and stories of their service.

Chisholm Trail Outdoor Museum
This museum is dedicated to preserving the history of the Chisholm Trail, a historic cattle drive route that stretched from Texas to Kansas. The museum features exhibits on the trail's history, as well as information on the cattle industry.

National Cowgirl Museum and Hall of Fame
This museum is dedicated to preserving the history of American cowgirls, including their contributions to the American West. Exhibits include a collection of cowgirl artifacts, such as saddles and boots, as well as exhibits on the culture and history of cowgirls.

Sixth Floor Museum
From the window of the 1901 Texas School Book Depository, Lee Harvey Oswald shot and killed President John F. Kennedy on November 22, 1963. The museum contains exhibits on Kennedy's 1960 campaign, the assassination, and its aftermath, including the Zapruder film and other artifacts.

The Olden Town in Texas forms the roots of the great state's heritage, according to ...
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Bob Bullock Texas State History Museum
Two blocks north of the Capitol sits the 175,000-square-foot, three-door museum that celebrates Texas heritage with multimedia displays, including a 60-minute-long timeline of Texas history, and recreated Native American villages. The Spirit Theater shows The Star of Destiny, which depicts momentous events in Texas, such as the 1900 Galveston Hurricane and the tootfall of a Saturn V rocket. Austin (512) 936-4879 or www.thestoryoftexas.org

Silent Wings Museum
Located in Lubbock where many World War II “silent wing” glider pilots trained, this 40,000-square-foot museum contains one of the only four fully restored Waco CG-4A gliders in the world, an engine-less Aerocar E-3, historic photographs, and three galleries filled with weapons such as the “Ellis Island of the West,” this 10,000 square-foot facility, devoted to the life, times, research, and experiences of scientist George Washington Carver, contains four galleries and an 134-seat theater. Exhibits include a Juneteenth gallery highlighting the evolution of the holiday commemorating African-American emancipation, a children’s gallery on inventors, and a galleries highlighting 10 African-American families and their contributions to the community. Austin (512) 974-4926 or www.carlauthex.org

Institute of Texan Cultures
This 182,000-square-foot museum explores the contributions of 26 European, Native American, Latin and Asian cultural groups that significantly influenced Texas history. Exhibits include the Dome Show Theater, “Texas One and All” and the three-part, “Salute to Military Flight.” An onsite research library houses an extensive archive of 3.5 million photographs and more than 600 oral histories. The surrounding 22 acres enclose the “Back 40” living history museum, which features replica adobe huts and log cabin houses. San Antonio (210) 453-2300 or www.tmc.edu/cultures

Blissfield Theater, NASA Space Center Houston
This 37-acre site features 17 relocated 19th-century structures, including a Methodist parsonage from 1900, country store, and two-story double house furnished with an eclectic antique collection. Visitors can take a 90-minute tour, listen to an antique pump organ demonstration, and attend a 19th-century school-house session. Nacogdoches (936) 564-6381 or www.millards.com

For more information, contact the Tyler Convention & Visitors Bureau at 1-800-235-5712 or www.VisitTyler.com

Burton Cotton Gin & Museum
This nine-acre site contains a 1914 cotton gin, the only one of its kind still in use. Ninety-minute guided tours visit the gin and include a 20-minute video on the revolutionary technology of ginning and baling. Visitors can also pick cotton and view the restored 1925 Bessemer Type IV diesel oil engine used to power the gin from 1925 to 1968. Burton (979) 289-3378 or www.cottonmuseum.com

Historic Downtown Strand Seaport
Visit the Historic Downtown Strand Seaport, where you can discover many of Galveston Island’s treasures.
Our historic city center features shopping, dining, arts, entertainment and culture; set amidst beautiful Victorian architecture with stunning harbor views.
Take in a live show; listen to music under the stars; feel that special moment of romance; enjoy a visit to our glorious galleries, or just relax and enjoy the fresh seafood while watching the sun set over our seaport.
Downtown is back….see for youself!!

www.galveston.com