

# HOUSTON

A vertical photograph of the Houston skyline at night. The city's skyscrapers are illuminated with various lights, reflecting on the water of a river in the foreground. A wooden bridge with a metal railing and warm-toned lights spans across the river. The sky is a deep, clear blue. The overall scene is a blend of urban architecture and natural elements.

The Official  
Pocket Guide





Located along the Texas Gulf Coast, Houston strikes a perfect balance of business and pleasure. It is the 4th largest city in the United States and is home to **NASA Headquarters**, the **Texas Medical Center**, an internationally-recognized **Theater District**, a walkable **Museum District**, and more. Houston also offers travelers a mild winter climate that's conducive to biking, hiking and golfing, 365 days a year.

From the time they arrive until the time they leave, visitors to Houston can expect to find a culturally diverse destination filled with award-winning cuisine, top-notch accommodations and world-class entertainment—all backed by the southern charm that's standard in Texas.

# HOUSTON



## TRANSPORTATION

Traveling to Houston is easier than ever with more than 6,000 flights arriving to Houston weekly—from Bush Intercontinental Airport and William P. Hobby Airport—domestic and international travelers can choose from multiple airline carriers and take advantage of competitive flight pricing. With direct service from 191 destination cities, the Houston Airport System is one of the largest of its kind in North America. It is an international passenger and cargo gateway to the South Central U.S. and a primary gateway to Latin America.

Once visitors arrive, they can rent a car, take a cab or catch a shuttle to get around town or ride the **METRORail**. The 23-mile rail system connects **Downtown**, **Midtown**, the **Museum District**, the **Texas Medical Center** and the **East End**.





## SHOPPING

Houston remains a fashion superstar on the nation's retail scene. At **The Galleria**—Texas' largest shopping complex—more than 400 fine stores and restaurants come together in a multi-level, eye-catching center. For designer deals, don't miss the 145 shops at the **Houston Premium Outlets**, or local shopping at **Rice Village**—home to *Project Runway* winner Chloe Dao's namesake boutique. South of Houston, the single-level, open-air **Tanger Outlets** features over 80 outlets with discounted merchandise from some of the world's largest brands in fashion. International shoppers can also take advantage of **Tax-Free Shopping**.



## SPORTS

In Houston, loyal sports aficionados have professional teams to cheer on year-round, including the **Houston Rockets** basketball, **Houston Astros** baseball, **Houston Texans** football and the two-time Major League Soccer Cup-winning **Houston Dynamo**.

Having four stadiums located in or around Downtown enables Houston to draw major sporting events like the World Series, All-Star Games, the NCAA Final Four and the 2017 Super Bowl. All of the city's sporting events are accessible via **METRO**Rail, making transportation to games convenient for visitors.







## ART + CULTURE

Houston is serious about the arts, boasting one of the United States' largest museum districts and serving as one of the few U.S. cities with resident professional companies in ballet, opera, symphony and theater.

Within the 17-block **Theater District**, the **Houston Grand Opera**, **Alley Theatre**, **Houston Symphony** and **Houston Ballet** draw a faithful following for Grammy, Tony and Emmy award-winning performances.

Southwest of **Downtown**, in the pedestrian-friendly **Houston Museum District**, more than 6.6 million annual visitors explore the cultural institutions that make up the tree-lined neighborhood. The district's anchor and the nation's sixth-largest art museum—the **Museum of Fine Arts, Houston**—spotlights paintings, sculptures and photography dating to the antiquities. Save time to explore other offerings at the **Houston Museum of Natural Science**, **Children's Museum of Houston** and the **Menil Collection**, among many others.



## HOUSTON'S WALKABLE DOWNTOWN

A resurgence in the city's Central Business District is giving visitors more reasons to head Downtown. Parks, restaurants, world-class theater and professional sporting events mean that fun is only footsteps away.

Houston's **Discovery Green** park—across from the George R. Brown Convention Center—provides FREE year-round activities. Expect happy hour concerts, movies on summer nights and ice skating in the winter. Score casual comfort food at the park's **Lake House** restaurant. Or, for a see-and-be-seen vibe, there's **The Grove**—an upscale American dining option.

Nearby, **GreenStreet** continues to settle into the area. The **House of Blues** concert venue lives alongside other entertainment and retail shops including **Lucky Strike Lanes**, **BCBGMAXAZRIA** and a **XXI Forever** flagship.

Dining options at GreenStreet abound with nine restaurants to choose from including **Guadalajara del Centro, III Forks Steakhouse** and **McCormick & Schmick's Seafood Restaurant**.



## NIGHTLIFE

### DOWNTOWN

Pubs like the **Flying Saucer Draught Emporium** are popular with beer lovers, while **La Carafe**, Houston's oldest wine bar, is a romantic date spot. Listen to top musicians perform at the **House of Blues**, or relax and listen to live jazz at **Sambuca**.

### MIDTOWN

Check out nightlife spots such as **Front Porch Pub**, **Celtic Gardens**, and **Christian's Tailgate**. Or if you're looking for something more eclectic, have a glass of wine at **13 Celsius**, housed in a classic 1920s space.

### UPTOWN AND GALLERIA

The Uptown Houston District near the Galleria is Houston's shining star for shopping and dining. **Arcodoro**, **Arturo's** and **Uptown Sushi** are all outstanding dining options. Uptown's fashionable evening scene includes **RDG + Bar Annie**, and **The Tasting Room**.

### WASHINGTON AVE

Only five minutes from Downtown, this area is packed with local restaurants, wine dives and great live music venues. Favorite watering holes include **Taps House of Beer**, **Porch Swing Pub** and **Pearl Bar**. **Absolve Wine Lounge** and **Max's Wine Dive** attract wine lovers from around the city.

# DOWNTOWN HOUSTON



## NAVIGATING HOUSTON

Getting around H-Town is easier than ever! A short walk will take you from the convention center to some of Houston's best downtown destinations, and with a newly expanded light rail system the fourth largest city in the US becomes a whole lot smaller.

## METRORAIL LINES

- ..... Green Line / East End Line
- ..... Purple Line / Southeast Line
- ..... Red Line / Main Street

## DOWNTOWN HOTELS

1. Club Quarters
2. Courtyard by Marriott Downtown
3. Crowne Plaza Houston Downtown
4. Doubletree Hotel Houston Downtown
5. Embassy Suites Hotel
6. Four Seasons Hotel
7. Hilton Americas Houston
8. Holiday Inn Express
9. Hotel Icon
10. Hyatt Regency Houston
11. Lancaster Hotel
12. JW Marriott
13. Magnolia Hotel
14. Residence Inn Houston
15. Sam Houston Hotel
16. Westin Houston Downtown
17. Marriott Marquis - 2016
18. Springhill Suites - 2015



# HOUSTON NEIGHBORHOODS

Like many major cities, Houston's charm lies in its distinct neighborhoods. Wondering where to start? Read on for a snapshot of the area's most-loved areas.

HOUSTON INNER LOOP  
HOUSTON CITY LIMITS



TO GEORGE BUSH INTERCONTINENTAL AIRPORT



METRORAIL  
RED LINE  
(MAIN ST.)



Founded in 1891, the **Houston Heights** unfolds in a mix of historic architecture, local boutiques and cozy restaurants. To really appreciate The Heights, visit the 19th Street shops.

**River Oaks**, Houston's most glamorous neighborhood, boasts the city's most exclusive real estate. Multi-million dollar homes and fine dining add to the area's appeal.

**Houston Heights**

Houston's **East End** is a melting pot for the Germans, Italians and Mexican Americans that settled in areas near the Port of Houston. It's also where fans will find the new **BBVA Compass Stadium**, home of the **Houston Dynamo**.

One of six historic wards of Houston, **Third Ward** is rich in culture and history. Located near the **Texas Medical Center**, the area is the center of Houston's African American community.

**East End**

**Third Ward**

DOWNTOWN  
CONVENTION CENTER



MUSEUM DISTRICT

TEXAS MEDICAL CENTER

Known for its eccentricity, **Montrose** brings tattoo parlors and thrift stores together with high-end dining and art galleries. The pedestrian-friendly Westheimer Curve sits in the heart of the neighborhood.

**Montrose**

TO CHINATOWN

With at least 80 languages spoken by more than 250,000 residents, **Chinatown** lies at the center of financial trading, heritage, cultural and religious activities for Houston's Asian-American community.

[VisitHouston.com/Chinatown](http://VisitHouston.com/Chinatown)

Less than an hour from Downtown, visitors can soak up the Gulf Coast in **Bay Area Houston**. Located just north of **Galveston**, the Bay Area is home to five distinct cities—Kemah, League City, Nassau Bay, Seabrook and Houston.

HOBBY AIRPORT



TO BAY AREA & GALVESTON





## DINING

Described by *The New York Times* as a city with a “world-class food scene and a rising generation of culinary stars,” Houston is a hotbed for epicurean endeavors, which explains why Houstonians dine out more often than any other city in the United States.

More than 10,000 restaurants, representing cuisine from more than 35 countries and American regions, ensure that the city’s food scene remains as ethnically diverse as its many residents. From signature Tex-Mex and top-notch barbecue to burgers, sushi and everything in between, foodies find award-winning fine dining and local establishments with cuisines that rival some of the world’s top culinary cities.





## ATTRACTIONS

Want to save money and still pack in the sightseeing? Pick up a Houston CityPASS. The booklet, which provides discounted access to five must-see attractions, is available online at [VisitHouston.com](http://VisitHouston.com).

Whether you're experiencing a space shuttle landing at **Space Center Houston** or going wild with one of the 6,000 animals at the **Houston Zoo**, Houston's attractions offer endless adventure. Witness the wonder of the underwater world at the **Downtown Aquarium** or ride the thrill rides atop the **Kemah Boardwalk**. To learn about the other CityPASS attractions, log on to [VisitHouston.com/CityPass](http://VisitHouston.com/CityPass).



## CRUISES

Visitors looking to take a cruise from Houston have two cruise ports to choose from, both within an hour from **Downtown Houston**.

The **Bayport Cruise Terminal** offers travelers efficient and world-class service before and after their cruise. The 96,000-square-foot state-of-the-art facility combines passenger convenience and accessibility to the open sea. For cruise schedule information, log on to [PortofHouston.com/Cruise](http://PortofHouston.com/Cruise).

The **Port of Galveston** is a popular port for travelers, offering Caribbean service with several major cruise lines. Located just one block from Galveston's Historic Downtown District, many vacationers opt for **Galveston Island** excursions before or after their voyage. For cruise schedule information, log on to [GalvestonCruises.com](http://GalvestonCruises.com).



## OFF THE BEATEN PATH

Some of Houston's most-loved gems remain under-the-radar for many loyal visitors. Want to explore the city's offbeat offerings? Don't miss these standouts.

Dubbed Garage Mahal, the **Art Car Museum** is the only place you'll find a rolling cast iron bathtub or a Honda motorcycle that's been transformed into a rolling stiletto heel.

Rice Military's **Beer Can House** remains one of H-Town's most-loved folk art creations, covered in more than 50,000 flattened beer cans.

Discover more than 100 years of Texas history at the **George Ranch Historical Park**. The 480-acre living history museum gives visitors a hands-on experience working on a ranch.

At the **National Museum of Funeral History**, guests can peek inside a 1920s hearse made of six types of wood and see a dozen brightly colored "fantasy coffins."

It took more than 20 years for Jeff McKissack to finish his maze-like **Orange Show** monument. The 3,000-square-foot folk-art space makes room for a pond, stage, museum and gift shop.

For more local sites, log on to [VisitHouston.com/CityFile](http://VisitHouston.com/CityFile).



## OUTDOOR

With more than 300 miles of trails, 174 public and private golf courses and 50,632 acres of parkland, Houston offers endless opportunities to soak up the great outdoors. Thanks to the area's mild winter temperatures, it's easy to appreciate H-Town's outdoor offerings year-round, too.

Paddle **Buffalo Bayou** on a canoe tour, hike the Houston Arboretum, jog Memorial Park or rent a bike from **Houston's B-cycle** program and explore the city on two wheels. Minutes from Downtown, in Hermann Park, **Miller Outdoor Theatre** offers professional (and free) ballet, theater and music performances.

For more things to do, log on to [VisitHouston.com/Outdoors](http://VisitHouston.com/Outdoors).





## GETTING STARTED

Let the Greater Houston Convention and Visitors Bureau help you plan your trip to Houston, Texas.

In addition to providing destination marketing services and materials, the GHCVB can assist with itinerary ideas, tour reservations, ground operators, entertainment suggestions, dining options and much more.

For more information or to start planning a trip to Houston, log on to [VisitHouston.com](http://VisitHouston.com).

**GHCVB DESTINATION SERVICES  
DEPARTMENT**  
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