

# The National Register Regional Travel Itineraries

Patty Sackett Chrisman

*Mission Nuestra Señora de la Purísima Concepción; the Espada Aqueduct; the Alamo; King William Historic District; the Ursuline Academy; the Quadrangle; Palo Alto Battlefield; Padre Island National Seashore; Fort Leaton; Fort Davis; La Villita Historic District...*

**T**hese are just a few of the exciting historic sites listed in the National Register of Historic Places and included in the South Texas National Register regional travel itinerary—one of five travel itineraries currently being developed by the National Register of Historic Places.

As part of the commemoration of the recent Quincentennial anniversary of Columbus' voyages, the National Park Service designated 38 national parks related to Spanish exploration and settlement as "Columbus Quincentennial Parks." Many of these parks have been used as stepping stones to create five travel itineraries that focus on America's history of exploration and settlement, cultural diversity, and Spanish heritage.

Although the Columbus Quincentennial was the impetus for the development of these itineraries, they are intended to have lasting educational value and to benefit communities in the vicinity of historic places and the parks. Understandably, the Quincentennial stirred mixed feelings in our citizens. One positive effect of the discussion that occurred during the Quincentennial year may be a greater appreciation and understanding of our history as we learn more about the diversity of peoples and cultures that have always been a part of our nation.

The designated Quincentennial Parks, other national parks, National Historic Landmarks, and properties nominated by state and federal agencies are listed in the National Register of Historic Places—America's official list of places important in our history. The parks are linked with other places listed in the National Register that illustrate the variety of cultures and traditions embodied in our nation. Properties included in the South Texas regional travel itinerary represent many epochs of Texas history including Texas' Native American heritage, Spanish exploration, the mission era, battles for independence, the era of statehood, the eventual settlement of the Texas frontier and the resulting hostilities between the native inhabitants and the settlers.

The end product will be a fold-out brochure with descriptions of historic properties keyed to a map. It is our hope that the routes will inspire park visitors to include these and other historic places in their travel plans. The routes are planned so tourists can visit historic districts, mission ruins, homesteads, and other sites, while visiting national parks.

In addition to South Texas, four other regions have been included in this heritage tourism project: Coastal Georgia and Florida, the California Coast, America's

Southwest, and Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands. The itineraries will be distributed through national parks, state tourism offices, and State Historic Preservation Offices.

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## Teaching with Historic Places Lesson Plans Available

The National Park Service's National Register of Historic Places and the National Trust for Historic Preservation have developed an exciting new program, Teaching with Historic Places, which offers classroom-ready lesson plans. These lesson plans:

- use properties listed in the National Register of Historic Places
- link the dramatic story of the place to larger themes in history, social studies, and other subjects
- encourage basic and critical thinking skills
- include activities guiding students to their own community's history
- can be adapted for use by different grade levels.

Lesson plans on diverse topics such as westward expansion and World War II are available from the Preservation Press for \$5.95 per lesson plan plus shipping and handling (orders of five or more lesson plans are discounted 20%).

For a free *Teaching with Historic Places* brochure and an order form describing available lesson plans, please write to:

The Preservation Press  
National Trust for Historic Preservation  
1785 Massachusetts Avenue, N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20036

or call, toll free: (800) 766-6847