

**I**n the saga of Texas history, no era is more distinctive or accented by epic events than Texas' struggle for independence and its years as a sovereign republic. During the early 1800s, Spain enacted policies to fend off the encroachment of European rivals into its New World territories west of Louisiana.

As a last-ditch defense of what's now Texas, the Spanish Crown allowed immigrants from the U.S. to settle between the Trinity and Guadalupe rivers. The first settlers were the Old Three Hundred families who established Stephen F. Austin's initial colony. Lured by land as cheap as four cents per acre, homesteaders came to Texas, first in a trickle, then a flood. In 1821, sovereignty shifted when Mexico won independence from Spain, but Anglo-American immigrants soon outnumbered Tejanos (Mexican-Texans).

Gen. Antonio López de Santa Anna seized control of Mexico in 1833 and gripped the country with ironhanded rule. By 1835, the dictator tried to stop immigration to Texas, limit settlers' weapons, impose high tariffs and abolish slavery — changes resisted by most Texans.

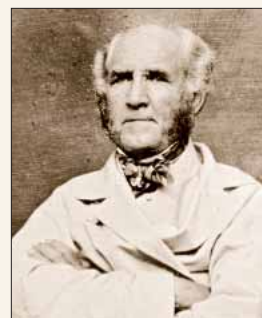


# The Texas Independence Trail



*The San Jacinto Monument towers over the battlefield where Texas forces defeated the Mexican Army.*

On March 2, 1836, after more than a year of conclaves, failed negotiations and a few armed conflicts, citizen delegates met at what's now Washington-on-the-Brazos and declared Texas independent. They adopted a constitution and voted to raise an army under Gen. Sam Houston.



*Gen. Sam Houston*

TEXAS STATE LIBRARY AND ARCHIVES

*Washington-on-the-Brazos  
State Historic Site  
focuses on Texas' formative  
1830s–40s period.*



TxDOT

Four days later, the Alamo fell to Santa Anna. Two weeks later, 342 Texans surrendered at Goliad and were executed. Women and other noncombatants fled from danger toward the safety of Galveston and the U.S. border at Louisiana, an uneasy episode known as the Runaway Scrape. Near Gonzales, Sam Houston challenged settlers to join the fight, with most recruits coming from sharpshooting Southern families. As he moved eastward, he gathered more troops, whom he ordered to burn whatever the advancing Mexican forces might utilize, including whole villages. On a marshy plain at the mouth of the San Jacinto River near present-day Houston, the Texan army encountered Santa Anna's encampment. The Battle of San Jacinto gave Texans a victory for independence.

Today, the Texas Independence Trail Region, known as the “Cradle of Texas Liberty,” comprises a 28-county area stretching more than 200 miles from San Antonio to Galveston. Armed with imagination — and this guide to the Texas Independence Trail Region — relive the era when Texas became its own country. Artifacts and interpretation at heritage sites across the region help visitors understand the interwoven lives and events that form this rich historical tapestry.



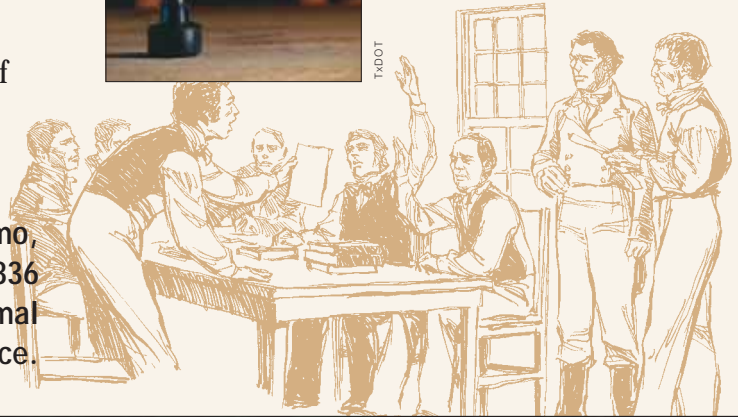
*March 2,*  
**TEXAS INDEPENDENCE DAY**

*Lured to Texas by pennies-per-acre land grants, the hopes of Anglo immigrants were soon dashed by Santa Anna's oppressive rule.*

At unforgettable battlefields, you can almost smell the blast of gunpowder. At stately Spanish missions, you can almost hear the footsteps of missionaries and soldiers. At historic towns, large and small, you can feel the presence of pirates and explorers, cowboys and sodbusters, railroad barons and mercantile magnates, Anglo-American and Tejano revolutionists, Southern plantation owners and enslaved Africans — all part of the colorful diversity of people who made the region what it is today.



TADOT



As Mexican soldiers laid siege to the Alamo, Texan delegates met March 2, 1836 at Washington-on-the-Brazos to draft a formal Declaration of Independence.



*Texas living history reenactors spark their cannon in mock battle to recall Col. James W. Fannin's March 1836 defeat near Goliad.*

# TEXAS INDEPENDENCE TIMELINE

1685–1700

**1685** Explorer Robert Cavalier, Sieur de La Salle establishes French colony near Lavaca Bay.

**1690** Spain builds outposts in East Texas to block French trespass.



*Robert Cavalier,  
Sieur de La Salle*

1701–1800

**1718–31** Spain concentrates its power in Texas at San Antonio.

**1749–54** Presidio and missions built at Goliad to guard Texas coastal plains.

1801–33

**1803** U.S. purchases Louisiana from France.

**1819** Adams-Onís Treaty clarifies boundaries for Spanish lands in North America.

**1812–19** American filibustering expeditions support separation from Mexico.

**1821** Mexico wins independence from Spain.

**1821** Stephen F. Austin begins colonization of region around lower Brazos and Colorado rivers.

**1824** Mexico adopts federalist constitution; Texas and neighbor Coahuila joined as a single state; Anglo immigration increases.

**1831–32** New tax and immigration laws cause clashes at Anahuac, Velasco and Nacogdoches.

**Oct. 1832** Texas delegates at San Felipe convention call for immigration reforms and separate statehood.

**April 1833** Delegates to convention at San Felipe pressed their appeals for government reforms.

1834–35

**1834** Gen. Antonio López de Santa Anna creates Mexican dictatorship and repeals 1824 Constitution. Stephen F. Austin jailed in Mexico City on charges of sedition.

**Oct. 2, 1835** First shots of Texas Revolution fired at Gonzales.

**Oct. 16, 1835** San Felipe delegates resolve against Santa Anna, vote for provisional Mexican state government and order Sam Houston to raise an army.

**Late 1835** General rebellion: Texans take Presidio La Bahía at Goliad and lay siege to San Antonio; U.S. volunteers begin arriving for the Texas fight.



*Juan Seguin, a prominent political and military figure of the Texas Revolution and Republic of Texas.*

TEXAS STATE LIBRARY AND ARCHIVES



*Goliad's restored Presidio La Bahía features historical exhibits and scheduled living history programs that reflect its 250-year history.*



1836-40

**Feb. 24, 1836** Siege of the Alamo begins.

**March 2, 1836** Texas Declaration of Independence presented at Washington-on-the-Brazos.

**March 6, 1836** The Alamo falls; Runaway Scrape begins.

**March 19-20, 1836** Mexican army surrounds Col. James W. Fannin's troops at Battle of Coleto. On March 27 the prisoners are executed.

**April 21, 1836** Texan surprise attack at San Jacinto defeats Santa Anna's army.

**May 14, 1836** Texas Republic period begins with peace treaties signed at Velasco.

**Oct. 22, 1836** Sam Houston sworn in as president of the Republic of Texas at Columbia.

**January 1839** Waterloo (Austin) chosen as new Texas capital.

1841-45

**March 1842** Centralist rebels try to reinstate Mexican law over Texas.

**Sept. 1842** Mexican Gen. Adrian Woll captures San Antonio; Texan volunteers engaged at the Battle of Salado Creek.

**Nov.-Dec. 1842** Texans try to avenge Mexican invasion with punitive expedition that evolved into the ill-fated Mier Expedition.

**1843-45** U.S. Congress debates the Texas annexation question. U.S. President John Tyler calls for statehood.

**Dec. 29, 1845** U.S. President James K. Polk signs annexation agreement to allow Texas into the Union as the 28th state. ★

*The Lone Star and a mockingbird, the state bird of Texas*



*The Alamo, San Antonio*

*Background photo: Daughters of the Republic of Texas Library at the Alamo*

## TEXAS MAIN STREET CITIES

Visitors can stroll the sidewalks and peruse shops in all of the region's 13 Texas Main Street Cities. Partnering with the Texas Historical Commission, these communities work to revitalize their historic commercial areas, which are often the heart of the towns. ★

- bay city
- brenham
- eagle lake
- elgin
- floresville
- freeport
- goliah
- gonzales
- la grange
- luling
- san antonio-midtown on blanco
- san antonio-southtown
- seguin



*Watermelon Thump, Luling*



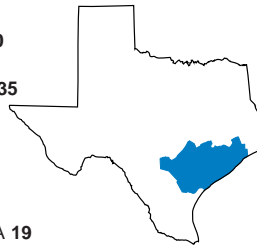
*Trade Days, downtown Seguin*

# The Texas Independence Trail Region



The following cities are highlighted in this regional heritage guide. The number in bold refers to the city's location in the map above.

- |                           |                              |                         |
|---------------------------|------------------------------|-------------------------|
| BASTROP <b>1</b>          | GOLIAD <b>26</b>             | ROUND TOP <b>8</b>      |
| BAY CITY <b>21</b>        | GONZALES <b>32</b>           | SAN ANTONIO <b>30</b>   |
| BAYTOWN <b>15</b>         | HALLETTSVILLE <b>37</b>      | SAN FELIPE <b>11</b>    |
| BELLVILLE <b>9</b>        | HELENA <b>27</b>             | SCHULENBURG <b>35</b>   |
| BRAZOSPORT AREA <b>18</b> | HOUSTON <b>13</b>            | SEALY <b>10</b>         |
| BRENHAM <b>5</b>          | INDEPENDENCE <b>4</b>        | SEGUIN <b>31</b>        |
| BURTON <b>3</b>           | LA GRANGE <b>2</b>           | SHINER <b>38</b>        |
| CHAPPELL HILL <b>7</b>    | LIBERTY <b>14</b>            | VICTORIA <b>24</b>      |
| CLEAR LAKE <b>16</b>      | LOCKHART <b>34</b>           | WASHINGTON <b>6</b>     |
| COLUMBUS <b>36</b>        | LULING <b>33</b>             | WEST COLUMBIA <b>19</b> |
| CUERO <b>40</b>           | PALACIOS <b>22</b>           | WHARTON <b>20</b>       |
| FANNIN <b>25</b>          | PANNA MARIA <b>28</b>        | YOAKUM <b>39</b>        |
| FLORESVILLE <b>29</b>     | PORT LAVACA <b>23</b>        |                         |
| GALVESTON <b>17</b>       | RICHMOND-ROSENBERG <b>12</b> |                         |



**INDEPENDENCE TRAIL**

Miles 0 5 10 20 30  
Km 0 5 10 20 30 40

- INTERSTATE HIGHWAY
- U.S. HIGHWAY
- STATE HIGHWAY
- NUMBERS ON MAP MATCH CITIES IN GUIDE
- FARM OR RANCH ROAD

TEXAS HISTORICAL COMMISSION  
TEXAS HERITAGE TRAILS PROGRAM

[www.thc.state.tx.us/travel](http://www.thc.state.tx.us/travel)  
[www.texasindependencetrail.org](http://www.texasindependencetrail.org)  
[www.traveltex.com](http://www.traveltex.com)

## BASTROP

This quaint town was named for flamboyant Dutchman and self-styled nobleman Baron de Bastrop, who helped Stephen F. Austin negotiate for Mexican land. Formed in 1829, this was part of Austin's last colony — a story told at the Bastrop County Museum, housed in an 1850s home. Bastrop boasts more than 100 historic landmarks representing 19th-century architecture from vernacular cabins to Victorian mansions. Downtown, the restored 1889 Bastrop Opera House depicts the Victorian age and showcases live music and theater productions year-round.



*Sandra Reed holds portraits of Lula and Beverly Kerr, two prominent African American community leaders in Bastrop.*

JESSE HORNBUCKLE

In nearby **Rosanky**, car buffs rev up their interests at the Central Texas Museum of Automotive History. More than 100 carefully restored vehicles include early-20th-century steam buggies, luxurious classics such as the 1933 Dusenber Roadster and 1960s automobiles.

Another nearby community, **Smithville**, boasts the Railroad Historical Park and Museum in an old depot, recalling the town's 1890s railroad boom.

## BAY CITY

Near here in 1836, a key Republic-era post called Fort Colorado protected settlers from Indian raids. In 1894, local voters selected Bay City as the county seat — replacing hurricane-ravaged Matagorda — even before a single building was constructed. Once railroads arrived in 1901, the town flourished and within two decades had a Neoclassical post office that now houses the Matagorda County Museum. Its signature exhibit features artifacts from the shipwreck the *Belle*, a vessel of 17th-century French explorer Robert Cavelier, Sieur de La Salle. The museum also covers ranching and farming heritage and features a hands-on children's museum set up like a historic town.

Established in the late 1820s, the community of **Matagorda** remains just south of Bay City. The grave of Samuel Rhoads Fisher, Republic of Texas secretary of the Navy and signer of the Texas Declaration of Independence, is located in the Matagorda Cemetery.



*Matagorda County Museum, Bay City*

## BAYTOWN

Patriot and one-time Texas president David G. Burnet operated an 1830s plantation near here. Just west of town, settler Nathaniel Lynch opened the Lynchburg Ferry in 1822. The ferry floated settlers, supplies and soldiers wounded at San Jacinto across the San Jacinto River. A modern ferry still carries people across the historic spot as a free service of Harris County. Housed in a former post office, the Baytown Historical Museum recounts the area's pioneer history.

A few miles east, where the Trinity River pours into Trinity Bay, Mexicans built a garrison/customs house in 1831 named **Anahuac** (an Aztec word for civilization). Fort Anahuac was the site of confrontations in 1832 and 1835 that fueled the Texas rebellion. Historical markers at Fort Anahuac Park tell the story. Nearby **Wallisville** was the 1756–72 location of Mission Nuestra Señora de la Luz de Orcoquisac and Presidio San Agustín de Ahumada. Visitors to the Wallisville Heritage Park can learn more about this story and peruse displays dedicated to local history.



*The Texas Independence Trail Region includes segments of the Great Texas Coastal Birding Trail.*

## BELLVILLE

Bellville honors Thomas B. Bell, an Old Three Hundred settler who donated land in 1846 for a county seat. South of town on Mill Creek is the 1887 Cumings Crypt, the burial site of Rebecca Cumings who, legend holds, was engaged to William B. Travis when he died at the Alamo. Other heritage sites include the 1897 Turnverein, a 12-sided German dancehall, and the 1896 Austin County Jailhouse Museum, where a staged jailbreak shootout occurs during the annual Heritage Gathering Festival, along with a longhorn cattle drive through town.

## BRAZOSPORT AREA

Nine cities clustered around the mouth of the Brazos River comprise the Brazosport area, a place rich in heritage. Near the **Jones Creek** community, several Old Three Hundred settlers rest in Peach Point Cemetery. In **Angleton**, the Brazoria County Historical Museum offers a major Austin Colony exhibit inside the 1897 Brazoria County Courthouse.

Historical interpretation goes high-tech at the **Lake Jackson** Historical Museum. Interactive exhibits chronicle the area's economic development, from plantations to the petrochemical industry. The museum also houses an original Windecker Eagle, a prototype plane built in the 1960s by a local inventor using early "stealth" technology. A simulator lets you "fly" the radar-eluding Windecker.

## BRENHAM

Founded in 1844, Brenham is named for Dr. Richard Fox Brenham, a Texas army surgeon who died in Mexico during the 1842 Mier Expedition, an ill-fated expedition into Mexico by Texas forces. Cotton and railroads made the town wealthy, a legacy found in Brenham's numerous restored 19th-century structures and historic bed-and-breakfasts.

In a 1915 Classical Revival post office, the Brenham Heritage Center showcases the town's tales. Located next door, a rare 1879 Silsby steam-powered, horse-drawn fire engine turns heads on Market Street, a main thoroughfare leading to historic Fireman's Park and another rare sight — an early 20th-century working antique carousel, one of only eight of its kind in Texas.

As famous as Brenham's bed-and-breakfasts and bluebonnets is the town's ice cream. Founded in 1907, the Brenham Creamery Co. changed its name in 1930 to Blue Bell Creamery, named after the local blue bell flower. Today, you can see how the "best ice cream in the country" is made and sample the fare on weekday tours or at the facility's ice cream parlor and gift shop.



*One of only eight early 20th-century working carousels left in Texas.*

# 1844 HISTORIC BRENHAM

## BURTON

Traditional farm life persisted among Czech, German and African American families near Burton. That's why the town had a historic cotton gin still operating in the mid-1970s. Restored and once again operational, the 1914 Burton Farmers Gin is a National Mechanical Engineering Landmark. The gin's 125-horsepower Bessemer oil engine is a survivor of early automation that changed the face of cotton processing. Visitors can tour the gin and museum and attend the annual spring festival.



*Burton's restored 1914 cotton gin is a National Mechanical Engineering Landmark.*



*A rare 1879 Silsby steam-powered, horse-drawn fire engine on Market Street in Brenham*



## CHAPPELL HILL

Settled in the 1840s on a prairie overlooking the fertile Brazos River bottoms, Chappell Hill reflects bygone tranquility. Bed-and-breakfasts, galleries and antique shops beckon visitors to linger along Main Street. Review history at the Chappell Hill Historical Museum housed in a 1927 public school. The facility portrays plantation, Civil War and Reconstruction period history, plus the history of the two schools that occupied the site.

At nearby **Hempstead**, the 1853 Liendo Plantation — built by Texas Revolution supporter Leonard Waller Groce — represents one of the state's earliest cotton plantations. Noted Texas sculptor Elisabet Ney owned the plantation at one time and is buried under a spreading oak on the grounds. Liendo is now a private residence open for tours. Also nearby, Prairie View A&M University stands proud as the first state college for African American students.

## CLEAR LAKE AREA

For more than 100 years, vacationers have flocked to Galveston Bay's north shore for boating, sun and shrimp. Clear Lake empties into the bay, and visitors can dine on seafood while watching a non-stop boat parade pass restaurants and shops at **Kemah's** boardwalk. Nearby, **Seabrook** adds more shopping into the visitor mix. Clear Lake's top attraction looks skyward, not seaward. NASA's Johnson Space Center remains home base for America's astronauts. Its visitors center, Space Center Houston, dramatically details the history and science of NASA's manned space flight program.



*A restored 1850s stagecoach inn and 25 other historic landmarks greet visitors in quaint Chappell Hill.*

## COLUMBUS

Columbus is yet another Old Three Hundred settlement in the Texas Independence Trail Region. Sam Houston and his army camped here on the Colorado River and then burned the town during the Runaway Scrape. One of the homes, the Alley Log Cabin, was rebuilt after the settlers' flight and remains a centerpiece of downtown.

Other downtown heritage sites include: the restored 1886 Stafford Opera House; the Colorado County Courthouse with its unique stained glass interior dome; the venerable oak where the first court of the Republic of Texas' Third Judicial District convened in 1837; and the United Daughters of the Confederacy Museum, housed in a round fire department water tower built in 1883. Columbus' "talking house" tour features historic homes outfitted to broadcast their histories to visitors' car radios.

## CUERO

The restored 1896 Romanesque Revival DeWitt County Courthouse dominates downtown Cuero. A century ago, Cuero was the "Turkey Capital of the World," where raisers herded gobblers through town to packinghouses. Locals parlayed the event into an annual Turkey Trot, bringing thousands of visitors to Cuero. Folks still flock to the Trot's descendent, the annual TurkeyFest, which pits Cuero's prize turkey, Ruby Begonia, against one from Worthington, Minnesota in the Great Gobbler Gallop race. For the turkey truth, turn to the Cuero Heritage Museum, located in a 1915 post office. Exhibits also cover the area's cattle heritage, plus a local World War II military flight training school.



*Cuero Heritage Museum's exhibits cover everything from the famous Turkey Trot to the Chisholm Trail.*

## FANNIN

In March 1836, Col. James W. Fannin and several hundred volunteers retreated eastward from Goliad after the Alamo fell. At today's community of Fannin, they encountered the Mexican army and fought valiantly on an open plain, but eventually surrendered. A handsome monument at the 13-acre Fannin Battleground State Historic Site pays homage to that furious struggle. Complications within the Mexican high command resulted in the nullification of surrender terms, and Fannin and most of his troops were executed.

## FLORESVILLE

Rich grasslands attracted Canary Island immigrants here in the 1730s. A state historic site recalls that era at the stabilized ruins of Rancho de las Cabras, a ranching outpost that served one of San Antonio's missions. Once called Lodi, the town was named Floresville in honor of an early Canary Island family and became the seat of Wilson County. The 1884 Italianate courthouse designed by noted architect Alfred Giles sits on the downtown square, along with a huge peanut statue honoring the local agri-product.

# ★ ★ 1900 ★ ★ ★ GALVESTON ISLAND



Galveston Island State Park

*On June 19, 1865, the Emancipation Proclamation was announced in Galveston, officially ending slavery in Texas. The city celebrates the milestone with an annual Juneteenth parade.*

*Far right: Moody Mansion in Galveston*



TXDOT

## GALVESTON

Pirate Jean Lafitte made this narrow barrier island his headquarters in 1817. It was a Mexican port of entry in 1825 and the last retreat for the Republic of Texas government before victory at nearby San Jacinto. After the revolution, Galveston became a wealthy seaport through which Texas cotton shipped out, and immigrants and manufactured goods shipped in.

Step back in time aboard the 1877 three-masted sailing barque, *Elissa*. This restored, seaworthy vessel once called on Galveston's port and now serves as a floating nautical museum docked at the Texas Seaport Museum. The museum chronicles the golden age of sailing and offers a computerized database on early immigrants entering Texas at Galveston.

By the 1880s, Galveston was Texas' largest and most prosperous city. Its business district, the Strand, buzzed as "The Wall Street of the West." Today, the Strand is one of the nation's finest concentrations of restored 19th-century, iron-front buildings, now filled with shops and eateries.

Galveston was also the site of America's worst natural disaster, the 1900 hurricane that virtually leveled the island and killed more than 6,000 people. Visitors relive the tragedy through a dramatic multimedia show, "The Great Storm," airing daily next to the Texas Seaport Museum. To lessen damage from future storms, Galveston built a 17-foot-high seawall in 1902. Visitors now travel between the tourist town's seawall-beach area and its Strandport area via nostalgic, fixed-rail trolleys.



Amazingly, some of Galveston's finest homes survived the 1900 storm and are open for tours. Most notable is the ornate 1886 Walter Gresham Home (Bishop's Palace), famous for show-place furnishings and an elaborate staircase. The 1859 Ashton Villa exudes Italianate splendor and houses the Galveston Historical Foundation visitors center. Other homes include: the 1892 Moody Mansion, with 42 rooms of carved wood and ornate plaster details; the Creole plantation-style Samuel May Williams Home, built in 1839 and restored to its 1854 appearance; and Galveston's oldest house, the 1838 Greek Revival home of Michel B. Menard, a signer of the Texas Declaration of Independence. Another survivor is the opulent 1894 Grand Opera House —which now hosts national traveling shows year-round.

The island's rich history comes alive at the Galveston County Historical Museum, located in a 1919 bank building. A key display features a massive lens from the 1916 South Jetty Lighthouse.

It's "All Aboard!" at the Galveston Island Railroad Museum and Terminal. Located in the Art Deco Santa Fe Union Station, the museum displays a working model railroad layout of Galveston's port. It also boasts the unusual "People's Gallery," with dozens of life-sized figures (some "speak" to visitors) replicating a busy 1930s waiting room. The museum sponsors occasional train rides, via Amtrak passenger cars, from the terminal to Houston and other cities.

North of Galveston, **Texas City** harbors two historical distinctions: the city remains the nation's 11th largest seaport, and it's also the site of America's worst industrial catastrophe — a 1947 chain-reaction explosion that killed 600 people, nearly one-third of the town's population.

## GOLIAD

After "Remember the Alamo," the Texas Revolution's most potent battle cry was "Remember Goliad." A charming community on the San Antonio River now sits where, in 1836, Mexican forces executed Col. James Fannin and his men. Some were killed along roads near Goliad's historic Presidio La Bahía. Others, including Fannin, were executed inside the fort, which had been constructed in 1749 to protect the nearby Mission Espíritu Santo.

The Catholic Diocese of Victoria now operates the walled Presidio La Bahía, a National Historic Landmark. Fannin and his troops are buried beneath the Fannin Memorial Monument, located next to the fort. Also nearby is the adobe birthplace of Gen. Ignacio Zaragoza, a Mexican hero honored by Cinco de Mayo celebrations for his May 5, 1862 victory over French troops in Puebla, Mexico.

Goliad State Park maintains a reconstruction of the Nuestra Señora del Espíritu Santo de Zuniga mission, complete with artifact exhibits. The park also interprets the ruins of the 1754 Nuestra Señora del Rosario mission, located a few miles away.

More Goliad history unfolds downtown at the Market House Museum, located in an 1871 meat market. The museum overlooks the restored 1894 Second Empire-style Goliad County Courthouse, designed by Alfred Giles.

A short drive away, **Refugio** has historic ties to Goliad. In 1836, troops from Fannin's Goliad encampment came here to defend residents during the Battle of Refugio. Most of the Texans were executed, both here and at Goliad. Earlier, Refugio also had a mission — Mission Nuestra Señora del Refugio, built in 1795 as Spain's last Texas mission. Traces of the mission remain beneath Our Lady of Refuge Catholic Church.



*Carved doors of Galveston's Texas Seaport Museum*

*Goliad's Mission Espíritu Santo and nearby Presidio La Bahía comprise one of North America's most outstanding examples of a Spanish mission complex.*



## GONZALES

Situated at the confluence of the San Marcos and Guadalupe rivers, Gonzales was settled in 1825 by American empresario Green DeWitt as part of his first land grant colony. The Mexican government laid out the town around traditional plazas. Century-old buildings — including the restored 1894 Romanesque Revival Gonzales County Courthouse — still ring the plazas.

Gonzales became the “Lexington of Texas” when the Texas Revolution’s first skirmish happened here. Colonists flying a flag bearing “Come and Take It” repelled Mexican efforts to seize the village cannon. What is believed to be that famous cannon now resides in the Gonzales Memorial Museum, a stately limestone structure built in 1936 to celebrate the centennial of the Texas Revolution. Nearby is the 1840s Eggleston Log Cabin.

Gonzales Pioneer Village interprets the settlement era with a replica village of 10 historic structures — including an 1892 Greek Revival house museum, blacksmith shop and broom factory, 1830s and 1840s log homes, smokehouse and the 1870s Hamon Church.

## HALLETTSVILLE

John Hallett settled here in 1831 on a land grant from Stephen F. Austin. After Hallett’s death in 1836, his wife Margaret donated land for a townsite. As seat of Lavaca County since 1852, the town is known for its 1897 Romanesque Revival courthouse and for its annual state fiddling and domino championships. Local baseball legends loom large at the Lavaca Historical Museum. Housed in a 19th-century home, the museum also recounts the immigration of German and Czech settlers to the area.

## HELENA

Helena was once a boisterous county seat on the Chihuahua Road, or Ox-Cart Trail, from San Antonio to the coast. Later, the area’s first railroad bypassed the town, establishing a depot at nearby Karnes City, which took over as county seat. Helena became a virtual ghost town. Few folks live here today, but the Karnes County Museum complex keeps Helena’s story alive.



*Above: Representing the first shot of the Texas Revolution, the Come and Take It cannon is displayed in the Gonzales Memorial Museum.*

*Far right: The 570-foot San Jacinto Monument overlooks the battleground where Texas won its independence from Mexico.*

*Right: The Gonzales Pioneer Village interprets life in the 1800s.*



TPWD

## HOUSTON

Historical markers across Houston chart the advance of Texas Revolutionary armies toward San Jacinto. Santa Anna burned an early Anglo-American settlement here called Harrisburg. Following Santa Anna's defeat, speculators John and Augustus Allen re-established the town and named it after the victorious Gen. Sam Houston. From 1837 to 1839, Houston served as the republic's capital.

The fledgling town centered on a natural turning basin where Allen's Landing Memorial Park now sits. The surrounding neighborhood is called Old Market Square and features restored and relocated 19th-century buildings filled with restaurants and entertainment spots. Nearby, Sam Houston Park is home to the 19-acre Heritage Society museum complex. Restored historic structures include the 1823 log cabin of Austin colonist John R. Williams, the 1870 home of civil rights activist John Yates and the 1905 mansion of oil pioneer Henry Staiti.

Southwest of downtown is the Freedman's Town Historic District, a 40-block residential area platted for freed slaves in 1867 along Buffalo Bayou. Also known as Fourth Ward, it became the city's most prominent early African American enclave.

Another historically black neighborhood, Third Ward boasts an innovative community-building project called Project Row Houses. These 22 renovated historic shotgun-style houses provide studio and exhibit space for local and traveling artists. Project organizers also refurbished the nearby Eldorado Ballroom, a 1930s mecca for blues and jazz greats.

Third Ward adjoins Houston's Museum District, which boasts art, history and science museums with a world-class reputation. The district includes the Buffalo Soldiers National Museum, which provides a detailed accounting of African American military experience from the American Revolution to the Persian Gulf War. The museum spotlights the all-black regiments known as Buffalo Soldiers, who defended the Texas frontier after the Civil War.

Buffalo Bayou meanders from downtown to the opulent Mediterranean-style mansion of Miss Ima Hogg, daughter of the first Texas-born governor, James S. Hogg. Her philanthropic gifts of art, antiques and architecture are preserved here in the Bayou Bend Collection.

East of Houston near **Deer Park**, the San Jacinto Monument towers over the battlefield where Texas won independence on April 21, 1836. Badly outnumbered but impassioned by losses at the Alamo and Goliad, Gen. Sam Houston's army surprised Gen. Santa Anna's encamped Mexican forces and overpowered them in an 18-minute battle. At the monument's base, the San Jacinto Museum of History interprets early Spanish and Texas history, and the multimedia show "Texas Forever!!" vividly outlines the revolution.

The monument's observation deck offers a bird's-eye view of the battleground. Also visible is the *Battleship TEXAS*, the last battleship to serve in both World Wars. Now a National Historic Landmark and state historic site, it's anchored in the Houston Ship Channel.



*Sam Houston Park juxtaposes restored historic homes and buildings against Houston's contemporary skyline.*



*The Buffalo Soldiers, established in 1886 as black regiments, were respected for their loyalty and bravery.*



## INDEPENDENCE

Founded in 1835 as part of Austin's colony, the town was a religious and educational center for the republic. Old Baylor Park marks the site where the forerunner of Waco's Baylor University and Belton's Mary Hardin-Baylor University once stood.

Organized in 1837 and rebuilt in 1872, the Independence Baptist Church is the state's third oldest Baptist church. The Texas Baptist Historical Center adjoins the church. Across the street is the burial site of Houston's wife, Margaret Lea, whose 1863 home sits nearby.

Cherished possessions brought by early Texas pioneers invariably included their favorite roses. Antique roses (varieties introduced before 1867) are the stock and trade of a popular local attraction — the Antique Rose Emporium, a five-acre garden on a pioneer homestead that sports an original 1855 stone kitchen.

## LA GRANGE

Militia from Fayette County rushed to the defense of the republic in 1842 to expel Mexican forces from San Antonio. Monument Hill State Historic Site, where a 48-foot stone and bronze memorial overlooks La Grange, honors the casualties from their encounters. The monument also names victims of the retaliatory raid into Mexico (Mier Expedition) who were captured and forced to draw beans — a white bean meant imprisonment, a black bean, death.

Carved into the cool recesses of Monument Hill bluff, Kreische Brewery State Historic Site preserves the ruins of an early-day German brewery. Records and exhibits dealing with county history are nearby at the Fayette Heritage Museum and Archives.

Local heritage is cause for celebration in nearby **Flatonia**. Visitors flock here each October to celebrate Czech heritage at the Czhilspiel Festival.



*Monument Hill/Kreische Brewery State Historic sites at La Grange*

## LIBERTY

Liberty traces its roots to a mid-1700s Spanish outpost called Atascosito. After the revolution, Sam Houston opened a law office on one of the town's traditional plazas. Memorabilia from Houston and other Texas notables await visitors and researchers at the Sam Houston Regional Library and Research Center. The 110-acre, park-like complex includes the Gov. Price and Jean Daniel home, two restored historic homes and an 1898 church.

## LOCKHART

Think Lockhart and think barbecue. The Texas legislature even named it the "Barbecue Capital of Texas." It's also known for a nine-block historic district centered on the elaborate 1894 Second Empire-style Caldwell County Courthouse. A historical marker on the square recounts the 1840 Battle of Plum Creek, in which a volunteer army ended a nearby Comanche uprising, pushing the warriors westward.

## LULING

Once a cattle and cotton railhead, Luling became an oil patch boomtown in the early 1920s. The Central Texas Oil Patch Museum, housed in an 1885 mercantile store, bears witness to that legacy of wealth, along with the transient lifestyles of roughneck families. Luling is preserving another local legacy, the Zedler Mill on the San Marcos River. Built in 1874 as a grist and sawmill, the picturesque site remained in continual operation by the Zedler family until the 1960s.



*Central Texas Oil Patch Museum, Luling*

## PALACIOS

In 1822, part of Stephen F. Austin's Old Three Hundred colony sailed into Matagorda Bay and settled the area. The Mexican governor of Texas at the time was José Felix Trespalacios, for whom a bay was named. Located on the bay, the town of Palacios followed suit when established around 1900.

Matagorda Bay also was where the Texas Historical Commission discovered French explorer La Salle's ship the *Belle*. A half-scale seaworthy replica, *La Petite Belle*, is being constructed at the port of Palacios, home of a large shrimp fleet.

## PANNA MARIA

In this pastoral setting, a sprawling oak stands beside the restored 1877 Immaculate Conception Church. Panna Maria ("Virgin Mary" in Polish) is where Silesian immigrants in 1854 held the first Catholic Mass in their new home, making it the first permanent Polish settlement in the U.S. The story of this cultural touchstone is told through displays in the 1858 St. Joseph's School. Other town features include the 1875 Pilarczyk Store (now a visitors center) and the 1855 Snoga Store and one-room post office, still in use.



*The restored 1877 Immaculate Conception Church in Panna Maria*

## PORT LAVACA

South of town, the French explorer La Salle landed in 1685 and set up the central Texas coast's first European colony, Fort St. Louis. Today, a 25-foot granite statue of the explorer rises from Magnolia Beach in **Indianola**, once a prime entry point for immigrants to Texas. When hurricanes in 1875 and 1886 destroyed much of Indianola, nearby Port Lavaca became a prominent port.

Recalling the area's nautical past, the 1858 Halfmoon Reef Lighthouse sits beside Port Lavaca's chamber of commerce and heritage information center. Next to the county courthouse, the Calhoun County Museum displays a diorama of Old Indianola's port, plus items from La Salle's shipwreck and the massive lens from the Matagorda Island Lighthouse. On weekends, visitors can travel by boat from **Port O'Connor** to the refurbished 1852 Matagorda Island Lighthouse, now part of Matagorda Island State Park.



*A center for sport and commercial fishing, Port Lavaca succeeded the early-day ports of Indianola and Linnville.*



1894



*Polish-Texan docents at Panna Maria greet visitors with local arts, crafts and tales from local history.*

*Lockhart's elegant 1894 Caldwell County Courthouse was fully restored and rededicated in 2000.*

## RICHMOND-ROSENBERG

Some of Stephen F. Austin's earliest settlers populated this area between the Brazos and San Bernard rivers. Richmond's Fort Bend Museum shows how locals experienced the revolutionary, plantation, Civil War, ranching and sugar industry eras.

South of Richmond, the 480-acre George Ranch Historical Park gives history a personal touch through year-round living history programs at an 1830s farmstead, 1890s Victorian mansion and 1930s working ranch. Texian Market Days, held here each October, celebrates heritage and history through folk life demonstrations, reenactments and historic homes tours.

In Rosenberg, visitors learn the history of rail in Fort Bend County at the Railroad Museum. At the **Kendleton** community, founded after the Civil War by former slaves, markers describe the historic Annie B. Green House and the Powell Point School.

Before becoming a famous Confederate officer, Benjamin F. Terry helped start Texas' first railroad and then bought a sugarcane plantation in 1853 at present-day **Sugar Land**. By 1908, Sugar Land was a company town of the Imperial Sugar Company and today remains the company's headquarters.

The town's Museum of Southern History is housed in a building patterned after Thomas Jefferson's Virginia retreat, Poplar Forest. The museum traces Southern heritage, especially the Civil War era, and includes a display on the famed local Confederate unit, Terry's Texas Rangers.



*George Ranch Historical Park, Richmond*

GEORGE RANCH HISTORICAL PARK

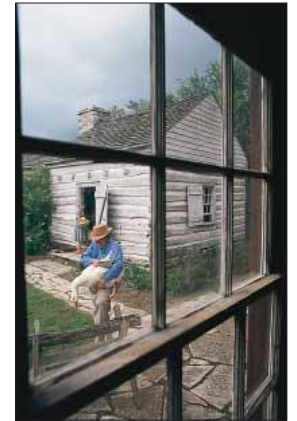
## ROUND TOP

Round Top is one of Texas' smallest cities, but three heritage-rich attractions draw visitors worldwide. On Round Top's charming town square, a village museum called Henkel Square features relocated structures built by Anglo- and German-Texan pioneers (1820s-1870s). World-class classical music fills the hall at renowned pianist James Dick's International Festival-Institute during concerts and workshops year-round. To accommodate visitors, Round Top is rife with historic bed-and-breakfasts.

Donated to the University of Texas at Austin by philanthropist Miss Ima Hogg, the Winedale Historical Center preserves a 19th-century farm community for study of Texas history and culture. Its Shakespeare at Winedale program, held in an 1880s hay barn, presents student productions every summer.

Just down the road is the state's oldest German settlement, **Industry**, established in 1831.

In Ernst Memorial Park, visitors tour a post office that is believed to be from the Republic of Texas era.



*Near Round Top, the Winedale Historical Center preserves a 19th-century Texas farmstead.*



*San Antonio's famed River Walk links many Alamo City historic attractions.*

*A statue of José Antonio Navarro, a signer of the Texas Declaration of Independence; discover the Mexican history and heritage of Texas at his 1850s home in San Antonio.*



## SAN ANTONIO

San Antonio embodies the centuries-long evolution of Texas as a Spanish colony, Mexican state and independent republic. The city's many heritage sites allow visitors to experience pivotal eras in meaningful ways.

Beginning in the early 1700s, Spain consolidated its Texas interests by constructing five missions, all of which survive along the San Antonio River (site of the city's popular River Walk). In 1731, Spain also created a villa for Canary Island immigrants, who built San Fernando Cathedral. San Fernando still holds services as America's oldest cathedral sanctuary. From its belfries during the Alamo siege, Mexican troops waved the flag of "no quarter."

The most notable of the five Spanish missions is the 1718 Mission San Antonio de Valero. Better known as the Alamo, the site is the revered spot where Texan soldiers fell on March 6, 1836 in defense of Texas independence. The Daughters of the Republic of Texas, state-appointed custodians since 1905, maintain the site as a memorial and museum. At Rivercenter's IMAX Theatre, a 45-minute docudrama called "Alamo — The Price of Freedom" underscores the heroism of that 13-day siege and battle.

Downstream, the National Park Service manages four mission compounds, with other Spanish-Texas landmarks, along the well-marked San Antonio Missions Trail. A visitor center at the elegant 1720 Mission San José interprets the era.

# ★ ★ ★ 1720 ★ ★

## MISSION SAN JOSE



*Mission San José is one of four San Antonio Spanish missions preserved by the National Park Service.*

Visitors also stand in history's footsteps at the 1749 Spanish Governor's Palace, once the seat of Spanish rule in Texas. The 10-room, adobe-walled residence is on Military Plaza, not far from other downtown heritage attractions including: the Casa Navarro State Historic Site, which includes the 1850s house complex of José Antonio Navarro; La Villita (Little Village), an arts and crafts community near the River Walk; and the 1929 Majestic Theater, one of America's most ornate vaudeville-era movie palaces.

San Antonio celebrated its 250th birthday in 1968 with HemisFair, the Southwest's first international exposition. HemisFair's former Texas Pavilion now houses the University of Texas at San Antonio's Institute for Texan Cultures. The large museum underscores cultural diversity with exhibits on 26 ethnic groups. Food, music and dance take center stage at the Institute's annual Texas Folklife Festival.

History, science and cultural exhibits fill the Alamo City's Witte Museum. Opened in 1926, the Witte now boasts a signature dinosaur display, a hands-on science center, and live historical performances on Buffalo Soldiers, Hispanic vaqueros (cowboys) and ancient Texas rock art.

The Alamo's mission farm once sprawled across a 25-block area south of downtown that includes what is now the King William Historic District. Here, German merchants created the city's most elegant residential area in the late 1800s. Open for tours is the district's 1876 Steves Homestead, a graceful three-story limestone mansion with an early natatorium (indoor swimming pool), carriage house and servants quarters.

East of San Antonio is the community of **St. Hedwig**. The Gothic spire of the 1868 Annunciation Church testifies to European immigrants who settled here and named the town for the patron saint of Silesia (now Poland). The church cemetery features gravestones carved with Polish surnames.



*The 1881 Buckhorn Saloon and Museum in downtown San Antonio*

## SAN FELIPE

On the eve of the revolution, San Felipe ranked second behind San Antonio as a commercial center. Founded in 1824 where the Old San Antonio Road crossed the Brazos River, San Felipe de Austin was named to honor both a patron saint of Mexico and empresario Stephen F. Austin. This “Birthplace of Anglo-American Settlement” was Austin’s home and his colony’s first capital.

Nothing remains of the original town. It was burned during the Runaway Scrape but rebuilt after victory at San Jacinto. One of the resurrected town’s structures is the 1847 J. J. Josey General Store. It remains on the original townsite at the 12-acre San Felipe State Historic Site, part of the larger Stephen F. Austin State Park. The townsite also features a replica of Austin’s log home, a statue honoring the “Father of Texas,” plus monuments commemorating the town’s role in the revolution.

South of San Felipe, 19th-century Czech immigrants settled the rich farmlands around the communities of **Frydek** and **Wallis**, where descendants still attend historic churches.



*A bronze statue of Stephen F. Austin, the Father of Texas, presides over his namesake park at San Felipe.*

## SCHULENBURG

This German-Texan town was established in 1873 and named for a resident who gave land for the rail depot. In the 1930s, two other locals — hobbyists-turned-entrepreneurs Victor and Joe Stanzel — became early model aircraft builders. They spent seven decades manufacturing model airplane toys at a local factory. That factory, plus early control-line models and the brothers’ other inventions, are among 30 displays and interactive exhibits at the Stanzel Model Aircraft Museum.



Surrounding Schulenburg, rolling blacklands are home to the “painted churches” of **Dubina**, **High Hill**, **Praha** and **Annaville**. Nineteenth-century German and Czech settlers employed traditional fresco and mural techniques to give the interiors of their churches the look of European cathedrals.

## SEALY

Sealy began as a railway stop named for George Sealy, financier of the Galveston, Colorado and Santa Fe Railroad. It became a commercial powerhouse when locals began turning agricultural products into manufactured products. Broom straw became household brooms at the Engleking Brothers Broom Factory. Cotton was compressed into bedding at the Haynes Mattress Factory, predecessor to Sealy Mattresses. Sealy’s chamber of commerce offers self-guided tour maps to these and other heritage sites.



*An Art Nouveau box cover from Shiner's 1895 Ehlers Cigar Factory*

# PAINTED CHURCHES



## SEGUIN

One of Texas' oldest towns, Seguin was founded in 1838 by frontier rangers and named for Juan N. Seguin, sometimes called the "Paul Revere of Texas," because he warned Texans of the advancing Mexican army during the Runaway Scrape. A 17-foot-high bronze statue downtown immortalizes the Tejano who fought with the Texas Army at San Jacinto.

Also downtown is a Texas-size pecan, a concrete statue honoring this valuable local product. All of the state's agri-products are honored at Seguin's Texas Agricultural Education and Heritage Center.

Other heritage sites include: a hand-carved dollhouse, a calaboose (jail), one of Texas' oldest Protestant churches and Los Nogales — a pioneer adobe home and a log cabin occupied by the same family for a century. Seguin's landmark Sebastopol State Historic Site preserves an 1850s Greek Revival mansion built with an early experimental form of concrete called limecrete.

## SHINER

This town's namesake was Henry B. Shiner, who gave land to the San Antonio and Aransas Pass Railroad when it came through in 1887. The town grew as a trade center for area Czech and German farmers. To quench local European thirsts, Shiner built a brewery in 1909, headed by brewmeister Kosmos Spoetzl. As Texas' oldest independent brewery, Spoetzl Brewery still brews Shiner Beer using Bavarian traditions and offers weekday tours and tastings.

Other heritage sites show facets of Shiner's past, including: the 1895 Ehlers Cigar Factory, which made "Katy Lee" and "Good Company" brands; the 1853 William Green Home, the restored cabin of an early businessman; and a later merchant's 1915 home, which now houses exhibits of the Edwin Wolters Memorial Museum.



## VICTORIA

Near Victoria in 1685, French explorer La Salle set up Fort St. Louis on the west bank of Garcitas Creek. The ill-fated colony lay abandoned by 1689 when rival Spanish troops discovered the ruins, upon which they later built their own presidio. This struggle between France and Spain unfolds in impressive exhibits at the Museum of the Coastal Bend on the campus of Victoria College. The museum's centerpiece exhibit boasts seven of eight cannons discovered by Texas Historical Commission archeologists at the Fort St. Louis site.

In 1824, Martín de León settled 41 Mexican families here and named the town Guadalupe Victoria to honor the first president of the Republic of Mexico. After Texas' independence, Anglos renamed the settlement Victoria. The town's sprawling Evergreen Cemetery bears the graves of many pioneers, including members of the de León family.

In nearby **Edna**, the Texana Museum displays eclectic relics, including a mastodon's jaw, a cowboy's chuck box and a working piano shipped in 1860 from New England to Texas.

## WASHINGTON

Established where La Bahía Road crossed the Brazos River, Washington was Gen. Sam Houston's headquarters in 1835. In 1836, Texas leaders came here to sign the Texas Declaration of Independence, write the Constitution of the Republic of Texas and set up an interim government. During the republic era, Washington, known through the years as Old Washington or Washington-on-the-Brazos, became a riverport, but dwindled after rail lines bypassed it before the Civil War.



Above: Washington-on-the-Brazos State Historic Site

Left: Victoria County Courthouse

Today, the 293-acre Washington-on-the-Brazos State Historic Site interprets Washington's heyday with interactive exhibits at a new visitors center. The park also features a replica of Independence Hall (site of the declaration signing) on the original townsite. Exhibits at the Star of the Republic Museum display 20,000 arti-facts telling the fascinating story of the republic. The park's Barrington Living History Farm brings the plantation era to life through costumed interpreters who tend fields, cook meals and raise stock, 19th-century style. Barrington is built around the 1848 home of Anson Jones, the last president of the republic.

## WEST COLUMBIA

West Columbia was called Columbia when it was the first official capital of the Republic of Texas in 1836. It now features a replica of the cabin where Texas' first Congress convened. A diorama at the Columbia Historical Museum depicts the town in the 1820s as an important river crossing. Near West Columbia, the restored Varner-Hogg Plantation State Historic Site vividly interprets life on an 1800s sugar plantation. After 1900, former Gov. James S. Hogg owned the plantation, which had been established by Martin Varner, one of Stephen F. Austin's Old Three Hundred.

## WHARTON

Settled in 1846, Wharton boasts a downtown historic district centered around the 1889 Wharton County Courthouse. The Wharton County Historical Museum recalls local history and features memorabilia of the town's notable natives, Pulitzer Prize-winning dramatist Horton Foote and veteran CBS anchor Dan Rather.

A short drive away, the community of **Danevang** is considered the "Danish Capital of Texas." The tiny burg began as a church colony and continues to preserve Danish culture at the Danevang Lutheran Church and the Danish Heritage Museum.

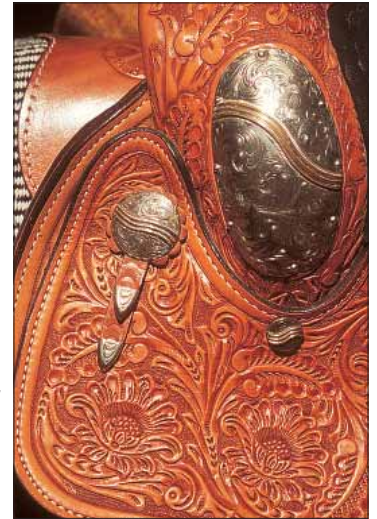
*Varner-Hogg  
Plantation State  
Historic Site,  
West Columbia*



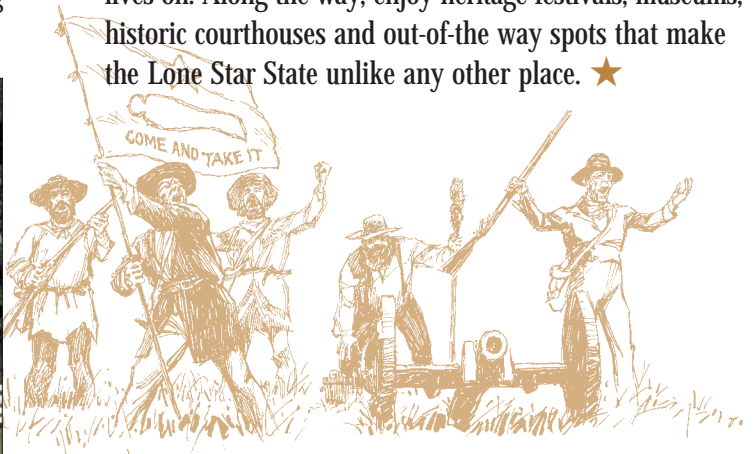
## YOAKUM

This area, and most of the region, was used by cattlemen in the late 1800s as a gathering ground for cattle headed to market along the Chisholm Trail. With arrival of the San Antonio and Aransas Pass Railroad in 1887, a town was established and named after rail manager Benjamin F. Yoakum. In the early 1900s, a productive hide tanning and leathercraft industry developed. Railroad and rawhide exhibits are at the Yoakum Heritage Museum. Housed in a 1912 residence, the museum contains a large collection of memorabilia and photos about the San Antonio and Aransas Pass Railroad. Its Leather Room covers early tanneries and exhibits fine-tooled saddles and other leather goods.

*Learn how saddles  
are crafted at the Yoakum  
Heritage Museum.*



Although Texas' struggle for independence from Mexico ended nearly 170 years ago, today's travelers can experience the heroic legacy in monuments, historic settlements, battlefields and in the small towns where the Texan spirit lives on. Along the way, enjoy heritage festivals, museums, historic courthouses and out-of-the way spots that make the Lone Star State unlike any other place. ★



**L**ong before Texas' struggle for independence, French explorer Robert Cavalier, Sieur de La Salle, tried to secure French dominion along the Gulf Coast. In the 1680s, he overshot his destination, the Mississippi River, and eventually set up a colony named Fort St. Louis near Matagorda Bay. After one of his ships, the *Belle*, wrecked in 1686, the adventurer began an overland trek that ended when his own men murdered him in East Texas. Nearly two years later, a Karankawa Indian attack left the fort abandoned. Spanish troops later found the French ruins and built their own presidio on top of the French site.

In landmark work during the 1990s, Texas Historical Commission archeologists discovered both the *Belle* (submerged in Matagorda Bay) and Fort St. Louis (on Garcitas Creek near present-day Victoria). The hull of the shipwreck is being conserved at Texas A&M University. Many of the ship's one million artifacts — plus key artifacts from Fort St. Louis and the subsequent Spanish fort and mission — are on display at seven coastal communities. Collectively known as the La Salle Odyssey, museums in the towns chronicle this pivotal episode in early Texas history.

Visit [www.thc.state.tx.us](http://www.thc.state.tx.us) for more information on museum locations.

## The La Salle Odyssey



## REGIONAL TRAVEL RESOURCES

For more information on the sites in this brochure, use the *Texas State Travel Guide* as a reference or call the sources listed below for site locations and hours, as well as details about events and other local attractions. Many information centers are closed weekends; please contact in advance. To obtain a free *Texas State Travel Guide*, call 800.TRAVELTEX or visit [www.traveltex.com](http://www.traveltex.com).

- **ANAHUAC**  
Chamber of Commerce  
409.267.4190
- **ANGLETON**  
Chamber of Commerce  
979.849.6443
- **BASTROP**  
Chamber of Commerce  
512.321.2419  
[www.bastropchamber.com](http://www.bastropchamber.com)
- **BAY CITY**  
Convention & Visitors Bureau  
800.806.8333  
[www.baycity.org](http://www.baycity.org)
- **BAYTOWN**  
Chamber of Commerce  
281.422.8359  
[www.baytownchamber.com](http://www.baytownchamber.com)
- **BELLVILLE**  
Chamber of Commerce  
979.865.3407
- **BRAZOSPORT**  
Convention and Visitors Council  
888.477.2505  
[www.tourtexas.com/brazosport](http://www.tourtexas.com/brazosport)
- **BRENHAM**  
Washington County Convention  
& Visitors Bureau  
800.225.3695  
[www.brenhamtexas.com](http://www.brenhamtexas.com)
- **BURTON**  
Burton Cotton Gin & Museum  
979.289.3378
- **CLEAR LAKE**  
Chamber of Commerce  
281.488.7676  
[www.clearlakearea.com](http://www.clearlakearea.com)
- **CLUTE**  
Convention & Visitors Bureau  
979.265.2508  
[www.tourtexas.com/southernbrazoria](http://www.tourtexas.com/southernbrazoria)
- **COLUMBUS**  
Convention & Visitors Bureau  
979.732.8385  
[www.columbus-texas.org](http://www.columbus-texas.org)

- **CUERO**  
Chamber of Commerce  
361.275.2112  
[www.cuero.org](http://www.cuero.org)
- **DEER PARK**  
Chamber of Commerce  
281.479.1559  
[www.deerpark.org](http://www.deerpark.org)
- **EAGLE LAKE**  
Chamber of Commerce  
979.234.2780  
[www.visiteaglelake.com](http://www.visiteaglelake.com)



*Unfurling the flag at one of Bastrop's many historic sites.*

- **EDNA**  
Jackson County Chamber of Commerce  
& Agriculture  
361.782.7146  
[www.ykc.com/jccc](http://www.ykc.com/jccc)
- **EL CAMPO**  
Chamber of Commerce  
979.543.2713  
[www.elcampochamber.com](http://www.elcampochamber.com)
- **ELGIN**  
Chamber of Commerce  
512.285.4515  
[www.elgintx.com](http://www.elgintx.com)
- **FLATONIA**  
Chamber of Commerce  
361.865.3920  
[www.flatonia-tx.com](http://www.flatonia-tx.com)
- **FLORESVILLE**  
Chamber of Commerce  
830.393.0074
- **FREEPORT**  
Visitor Information Center  
979.233.3306  
[www.freeport.tx.us](http://www.freeport.tx.us)
- **GALVESTON**  
Visitors Center  
888.425.4753  
[www.galvestoncvb.com](http://www.galvestoncvb.com)
- **GOLIAD**  
Chamber of Commerce  
361.645.3563  
[www.goliadcc.org](http://www.goliadcc.org)
- **GONZALES**  
Chamber of Commerce  
830.672.6532  
[www.gonzalestexas.com](http://www.gonzalestexas.com)
- **HALLETTSVILLE**  
Chamber of Commerce  
361.798.2662  
[www.hallettsville.com](http://www.hallettsville.com)
- **HEMPSTEAD**  
Chamber of Commerce  
979.826.8217
- **HOUSTON**  
Convention & Visitors Bureau  
800.4HOUSTON  
[www.visithoustontexas.com](http://www.visithoustontexas.com)
- **KARNES CITY**  
Chamber of Commerce  
830.780.3112
- **KEMAH**  
Kemah Boardwalk  
281.334.9880  
[www.kemahboardwalk.com](http://www.kemahboardwalk.com)
- **LA GRANGE**  
Chamber of Commerce  
800.524.7264  
[www.lagrangetx.org](http://www.lagrangetx.org)
- **LA PORTE-BAYSHORE**  
Chamber of Commerce  
281.471.1123  
[www.laportechamber.org](http://www.laportechamber.org)
- **LIBERTY**  
Liberty-Dayton Chamber of Commerce  
936.336.5736  
[www.libertydaytonchamber.com](http://www.libertydaytonchamber.com)

- **LOCKHART**  
Chamber of Commerce  
512.398.2818  
[www.lockhart-tx.org](http://www.lockhart-tx.org)
- **LULING**  
Chamber of Commerce  
830.875.3214  
[www.lulingcc.org](http://www.lulingcc.org)
- **MOULTON**  
Chamber of Commerce  
361.596.7205  
[www.moultontexas.com](http://www.moultontexas.com)
- **PALACIOS**  
Chamber of Commerce  
800.611.4567  
[www.palacioschamber.com](http://www.palacioschamber.com)
- **PORT LAVACA**  
Calhoun County Chamber of Commerce  
361.552.2959  
[www.portlavacainfo.com](http://www.portlavacainfo.com)



*Several historic African American freedman communities are found along the Texas Independence Trail Region.*

- **REFUGIO**  
Refugio County Chamber of Commerce  
361.526.2835
- **RICHMOND-ROSENBERG**  
Chamber of Commerce  
281.342.5464  
[www.roserichchamber.com](http://www.roserichchamber.com)
- **ROUND TOP**  
Round Top Area Historical Society  
979.249.5058
- **SAN ANTONIO**  
Convention & Visitors Bureau  
800.447.3372  
[www.sanantoniovisit.com](http://www.sanantoniovisit.com)



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■ **TEXAS CITY-LAMARQUE**  
Chamber of Commerce  
409.935.1408

■ **VICTORIA**  
Chamber of Commerce  
361.573.5277  
[www.victoriachamber.org](http://www.victoriachamber.org)

■ **WASHINGTON**  
Brenham/Washington County  
Chamber of Commerce  
888.273.6426  
[www.brenhamtexas.com](http://www.brenhamtexas.com)

■ **WEST COLUMBIA**  
Chamber of Commerce  
979.345.3921  
[www.westcolumbia.org](http://www.westcolumbia.org)

■ **WHARTON**  
Chamber of Commerce  
979.532.1862  
[www.whartontexas.com](http://www.whartontexas.com)

■ **WINNIE**  
Chamber of Commerce  
409.296.2231  
[www.winnietexas.com](http://www.winnietexas.com)

■ **YOAKUM**  
Chamber of Commerce  
361.293.2300  
[www.yoakumareachamber.com](http://www.yoakumareachamber.com)

The Texas Historical Commission promotes the highest national standards for historic preservation and does not endorse the relocation of historic structures without thorough documentation of the building on its original site. The professional processes required for such action are intended to record and preserve historic properties for the full enjoyment and education of present and future generations.

Photo credits for this travel guide:  
Randy Mallory, R.W. Parvin

*Texas Revolution reenactments take place throughout the 28-county region.*

TxDOT

[www.thc.state.tx.us/travel](http://www.thc.state.tx.us/travel)  
[www.texasindependencetrail.org](http://www.texasindependencetrail.org)  
[www.traveltex.com](http://www.traveltex.com)

*Numerous Texas communities boast painted churches including Dubina, High Hill, Praha, Ammansville and Shiner.*

■ **SCHULENBURG**  
Chamber of Commerce  
(Painted Churches Trail)  
979.743.4514  
[www.schulenburgchamber.org](http://www.schulenburgchamber.org)

■ **SEALY**  
Convention & Visitors Bureau  
979.885.3222  
[www.sealy-tx.com](http://www.sealy-tx.com)

■ **SEGUIN**  
Convention & Visitors Bureau  
830.379.6382  
[www.visitseguin.com](http://www.visitseguin.com)

■ **SHINER**  
Chamber of Commerce  
361.594.4180

■ **SMITHVILLE**  
Chamber of Commerce  
512.237.2313  
[www.smithvilletx.org](http://www.smithvilletx.org)

■ **SUGAR LAND**  
Fort Bend Convention & Visitor Services  
281.491.0800



## STATE PARKS AND STATE HISTORIC SITES

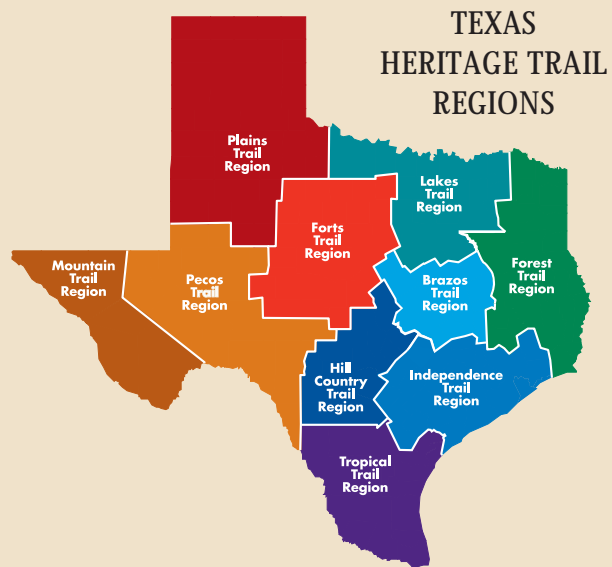
Travelers to the Texas Independence Trail Region can visit the area's beautiful parks and historic sites owned and operated by Texas Parks and Wildlife. For more information on the following sites, please call 800.792.1112 or visit [www.tpwd.state.tx.us](http://www.tpwd.state.tx.us).

- Bastrop State Park, Bastrop
- Battleship *TEXAS* State Historic Site, La Porte
- Brazos Bend State Park, Needville
- Buescher State Park, Smithville
- Casa Navarro State Historic Site, San Antonio
- Fannin Battleground State Historic Site, Fannin
- Galveston Island State Park, Galveston
- Goliad State Park, Goliad
- Lockhart State Park, Lockhart
- Monument Hill/ Kreische Brewery State Historic Sites, La Grange
- Palmetto State Park, Gonzales
- San Jacinto Battleground State Historic Site, La Porte
- Sebastopol State Historic Site, Seguin
- Sheldon Lake State Park, Houston
- Stephen F. Austin State Park, San Felipe
- Varner-Hogg Plantation State Historic Site, West Columbia
- Washington-on-the-Brazos State Historic Site, Washington

## FOR MORE INFORMATION

The Texas Historical Commission offers free travel brochures on the real people and real places that shaped Texas history.

To request copies, visit [www.thc.state.tx.us/travel](http://www.thc.state.tx.us/travel), [www.texasindependencetrail.org](http://www.texasindependencetrail.org) or call 877.55.TRAIL.



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The Texas Historical Commission, the state agency for historic preservation, administers a variety of programs to preserve the archeological, historical and cultural resources of Texas.

**The Texas Heritage Trails Program**

The Texas Historical Commission is a leader in implementing and promoting heritage tourism efforts in Texas. The Texas Heritage Trails Program is the agency's top tourism initiative.



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# TEXAS INDEPENDENCE TRAIL

R E G I O N



**DEADLY BATTLES, HEROIC DEEDS  
AND A HISTORY SHAPED  
BY A DESIRE FOR FREEDOM**