

Family Adventures

SUMMER DESTINATION SERIES

South Padre Island

Take a relaxing beach trip to South Padre Island. There are tons of hotels and large condos for families of all sizes to stay in, many within walking distance to the white-sand beaches. The ocean brings with it a range of activities, including jet skiing, fishing, surfing and dolphin watching. For a more high-energy activity, check out Schlitterbahn, a huge water and amusement park with slides, rides, and on-site lodging and eateries.

Dallas

This enormous city has it all, from theme parks to great shopping to every type of restaurant anyone could ever dream of. Six Flags Over Texas is a fun day trip with rollercoasters, fair treats and arcade games for all ages. Cross the road to catch a Texas Rangers baseball game. For a relaxing day, take a picnic to the expansive Dallas Arboretum and Botanical Garden, which has more than 66 acres to explore and a kid-sized pioneer village.

San Antonio

Take a leisurely trip downstream on one of the boats on the San Antonio Riverwalk, then stop by one of the bordering restaurants for an authentic Tex-Mex meal. The Alamo is a great place to explore and learn about Texas history. San Antonio also has quite a few unique attractions: families can go on a 400-acre safari at the Natural Bridge Wildlife Ranch as well as dine and get 360-degree views of the city from 750 feet up at the Tower of the Americas.

Houston

Houston boasts some of Texas' best family-friendly attractions. Stop by the Space Center to meet an astronaut, see real space gear, and visit Mission Control. The Downtown Aquarium doubles as an amusement park and also features a restaurant surrounded by a 150,000-gallon aquarium. The Houston Museum of Natural Science is also great for kids, and its butterfly center in a simulated rainforest is a must-see for all ages.

Marfa

Leave behind the bustling city and take a vacation in Marfa. An adventure in Big Bend National Park alone could occupy you for weeks, with horseback riding, bird watching, hiking, rafting and camping. At night, keep an eye out for the Marfa lights, mysterious orbs that occasionally light up the night sky. Scientists are yet to provide conclusive answers on this strange phenomenon. If camping is a bit too primitive and your family prefers a hotel, stay at the luxurious and historic Hotel Paisano.

Austin

Austin is great for introducing the little ones to live music, but there's so much more to do here. If the weather is nice, which it is for most of the year, swim at Deep Eddy Pool, Barton Springs Pool, or find a personal oasis along the Greenbelt. A kid's train runs around Zilker Park, and food trucks around the city please every palate.

Fort Worth

Though it is located close to Dallas, Fort Worth is a town all of its own and one of the most family-friendly Texas vacation spots. The Fort Worth Stockyards features a taste of old Texas with two daily cattle walks led by real cowboys, along with shops, rodeos and restaurants. The Fort Worth Zoo is one of the best in the state, hosting close to 7,000 exotic animals. The Fort Worth Museum of Science and History is also worth a visit for all ages, with an IMAX dome, planetarium, and a variety of exhibits inside.

Grapevine

Grapevine is not, as some may think, just an extension of Dallas and Fort Worth; it has its own unique attractions, like LEGOLAND Discovery Center, which features rides and playscapes. The Parr Park Sprayground is a 31-acre park with plenty of dry and water-based playgrounds and picnic areas. Hop aboard the Grapevine Vintage Railroad for a one-of-a-kind adventure in a 1920s train that travels from Grapevine to Fort Worth.

Galveston

Just off the Gulf Coast near Houston is Galveston. Have a retro day at the Galveston Island Pleasure Pier with rides, games and a variety of restaurants to choose from. Learn about the history of railway transportation at the Galveston Railroad Museum, which hosts different events and exhibitions throughout the year. View some sea life at the Rainforest Pyramid, a glass pyramid with a 1.5 million-gallon aquarium, or in the wild at East Beach.

Amarillo

For a true Texas vacation, visit the historic Route 66 on the way to Amarillo in North Texas. Cadillac Ranch, an art installation that welcomes graffiti from visitors, is one of North Texas' strangest and most iconic sites. Visit Bill's Backyard Classics to see old cars, including collectible hot rods. Then take a journey to the Palo Duro Canyon, also known as the 'Grand Canyon of Texas,' with huge cliffs and 60-foot ravines you can explore on foot or by horseback, bike or car.

Texas Hill Country

Part road trip, part journey back through time, the Texas Hill Country is a beautiful oasis of greenery and rolling hills in Central Texas. There are multiple wineries for the adults throughout, but Fredericksburg is a great pit stop for the whole family, with homey B&Bs, racing and live music. Swimming, fishing and boating are also plentiful in the area at places such as Lake Whitney and Aquilla Lake.



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