

Route 66 and Texas Hill Country

Texas - Oklahoma - New Mexico



Dallas, Texas

Get your bearings in the city with a trip 470 feet (143 metres) up to the Reunion Tower GeO-Deck to enjoy 360-degree views of Dallas. Stay for dinner in the elegant Five Sixty Restaurant, which is 50 stories up. See the city with a free ride on one of the vintage M-Line trolleys, available at 40 stops around Dallas and running through Uptown and Downtown (watch for the vintage advertisements on the trolley). Set aside time to explore the Dallas Museum of Art, one of the largest art museums in the USA and featuring some 22,000 works from around the globe. Expand your cultural adventure with a stroll through the Bishop Arts District, home to more than 60 independent shops, galleries, restaurants, bars and coffee shops. *Accommodation:*

Dallas, Texas

Dallas, Texas, to Oklahoma City, Oklahoma

Two and a half hours north of Dallas is the serene and unspoiled Chickasaw National Recreation Area in Sulphur, Oklahoma. The area draws nature lovers and fishermen who enjoy outdoor recreation in the streams, springs and lakes here. Nearby, at the Chickasaw Cultural Center, learn about Native American culture and history in an expansive, interactive museum dedicated to Chickasaw life. The café serves traditional foods such as grape dumplings and fry bread. From Sulphur, head about 90 minutes north to Oklahoma City to browse through the National Cowboy & Western Heritage Museum, filled with Old West artefacts, or go modern with a trip to the Oklahoma City Museum of Art, home to one of the largest collections of Chihuly glass sculptures in the world. In spring, grab a seat at the National Circuit Finals Rodeo, one of the biggest events of the professional rodeo season. *Accommodation: Oklahoma City, Oklahoma*

Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, to Amarillo, Texas

Historic Route 66 winds past the majestic Capitol Building in Oklahoma City, where you can take a guided tour or explore the building on your own. Worthy of note, this is the only capitol building in the world that's surrounded by working oil wells. Stop for a home-style lunch of chicken-fried steak, Oklahoma's signature dish, at Ann's Chicken Fry House (look for the pink Cadillac and vintage police car parked outside). Stay on Route 66 to Hydro, Texas, and visit Lucille's Service Station. Built in 1929, this is one of only a few historic service stations remaining on Route 66 in Oklahoma. This popular sightseeing stop has been restored to its original condition; however, it's no longer an operating service station. Continue along Route 66 to the Oklahoma Route 66 Museum in Clinton. Here, you can see exhibits depicting the history and legends of the most famous highway in the USA. Visitors will also learn about a devastating period in American history when, in the 1930s, the Midwest states became known as the 'Dust Bowl'; more than two million people were eventually displaced by dust storms, poverty and lack of opportunity. Many headed west, away from drought and despair, and toward the hope of a brighter future. As you cross the state line into Texas, en route to Amarillo, Texas, this stretch of Route 66 is home to several vintage Mother Road icons, as well as glimpses of the Wild West. Long stretches of the old road remain, with the original concrete in many spots. *Accommodation: Amarillo, Texas*

Amarillo, Texas, to Santa Fe, New Mexico

Continue west along Route 66 to Adrian, Texas, and make a stop at the Midpoint Cafe. This is the midpoint of Route 66, where it's 1,139 miles (1,833 km) east to Chicago, Illinois, and 1,139 miles (1,833 km) west to Los Angeles, California. Cross into New Mexico and drive to Tucumcari to stop at one of the last remaining curio shops in New Mexico. Tee Pee Curios is not only a unique sight from outside, but inside too, with its Route 66 souvenirs, shirts and jewelry. Head west, then north on Route 84, which was also old Route 66, on the way to Santa Fe, where the scenery changes into desert with mountains and mesas. *Accommodation: Santa Fe, New Mexico*

Santa Fe, New Mexico

Enjoy a full day of leisure in Santa Fe. Start at the famous Canyon Road galleries, a collection of more than 100 art galleries, shops and restaurants. Continue to the Georgia O'Keeffe Museum to see the colourful work of this important American artist. Take a break with a meal at one of Santa Fe's many restaurants celebrating the most well-known local product, New Mexico chilli peppers. Save time to explore the Museum of International Folk Art, home to more than 125,000 objects from 100 countries, the largest collection of its kind in the world. Explore the ancient lives of the Puebloan people at Bandelier National Monument, where petroglyphs and cave dwellings can still be seen in the rock face. *Accommodation: Santa Fe, New Mexico*

Santa Fe to Carlsbad, New Mexico

Head south to Carlsbad, with a stop along the way at Roswell. It's the site of the 1947 Roswell Incident, which put Roswell on the map as the location of a possible UFO landing - and now home to the UFO Museum, attractions and shops. Continue to Carlsbad Caverns National Park, tucked beneath the scenic and rugged Chihuahuan Desert, in the rocky slopes and deep canyons of the Guadalupe Mountain range. The world's most-famous cave system has huge underground chambers filled with spectacular, varied cave formations, viewable on a self-guided tour. Visitors may choose to hike along the steep 1.25-mile (2 km) paved trail, entering through the cave's Natural Entrance, which leads them into the spectacular 1.25-mile (2 km) Big Room Trail. Or, simply take an elevator ride from the visitor centre directly to the Big Room Trail. *Accommodation: Carlsbad, New Mexico*

Carlsbad, New Mexico, to Fredericksburg, Texas

Get an early start and head into Texas Hill Country to Fredericksburg, where walking tours illuminate the area's German heritage. Afterwards, sample local culinary favorites and brewing at the town's bistros, bakeries and beer gardens. Hill Country also takes pride in its barbecue tradition, with mesquite coals lending a signature flavour to meat, including tender brisket. Seek out an iconic barbecue restaurant such as Backwoods BBQ. *Accommodation: Fredericksburg, Texas*



The Alamo, San Antonio, Texas

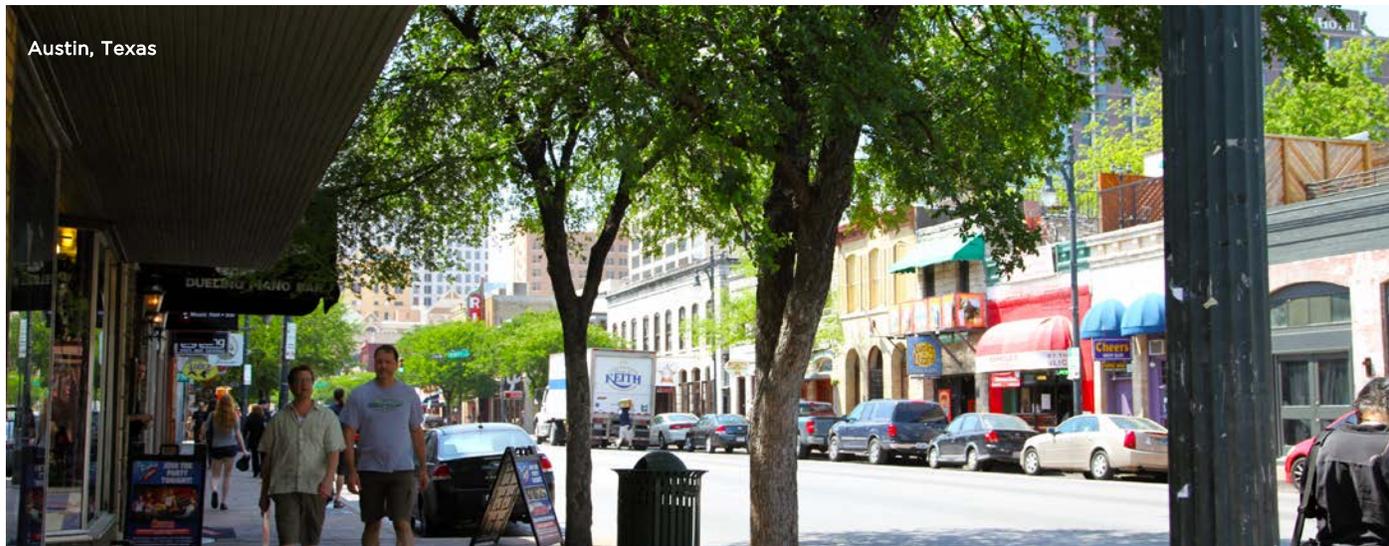
Fredericksburg to San Antonio, Texas

Drive Scenic Highway 16 from Fredericksburg to Kerrville, the unofficial capital of Texas Hill Country. Take time to visit its excellent museums, galleries and shops before continuing on to San Antonio. Explore San Antonio's 18th-century Spanish Catholic missions, including Misión San Antonio de Valero (known as The Alamo), which collectively were named a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Nearby, the River Walk is a paved path along the city's namesake river. Follow it to restaurants with open-air patios, or take a boat tour. In this gateway to Latin America, Mexican-made clothing and artisan wares make unique souvenirs, and the cuisine is in a class of its own. Tex-Mex, as it's called, blends Mexican and American culinary traditions. Sample tasty enchiladas at a family-owned restaurant or fresh fish tacos from a small taqueria. *Accommodation: San Antonio, Texas*

San Antonio to Austin, Texas

Today, take more time to explore Texas Hill Country on the way to Austin. Pause to cool off in the area's natural springs: Krause Springs, Blue Hole and Hamilton Pool are local favourites. Austin earns its reputation as a live music capital with some 250 venues. Slip into a retro bar such as The Continental Club for Rockabilly, Country and Swing shows, or get tickets to Austin City Limits Live at The Moody Theater, a venue that hosts concerts of all genres and the taping of Austin City Limits, the USA's longest-running televised music series. You may know Austin for its springtime South by Southwest Music Festival. However, you can find music festivals almost any time of the year, so listen up when you're in town. From breakfast tacos stuffed with farm-fresh eggs and avocados to top-shelf margaritas, Austin is also revered for its take on Tex-Mex. Try ordering from one of the city's popular food trucks or trailers.

Accommodation: Austin, Texas



Austin to Fort Worth, Texas

Depart Austin and head to Fort Worth, an easy 30-minute drive west of Dallas, Texas, and a modern city that honours its cowboy roots. Start at the always-bustling Stockyards National Historic District for Old West shops selling cowboy boots and hats, many saloons offering live entertainment, and lots of barbecue and other dining options. Learn about the strong women who shaped the American West with a visit to the National Cowgirl Museum and Hall of Fame, which is packed with artwork and stories from women such as artist Georgia O'Keeffe and singer Patsy Cline. Take a walk around the 35 blocks of Sundance Square downtown, a large shopping, dining and entertainment district. *Accommodation: Fort Worth, Texas*



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