

New #TexasToDo's for Fall 2015

Newly opened hotels, highly anticipated restaurants and hotels, and perfect fall weather. Here are just a few reasons why the Lone Star State is an exciting place to be. Add these top activities to your #TexasToDo list to experience Texas like never before!

New Stays



As Austin continues to grow and turn heads as a leading meeting and convention destination, 2015 promises to be a big year for the Lone Star State's capital city. Fresh off the [South Congress Hotel](#) opening in September, further downtown [Hotel Van Zandt](#) will open in the Rainey Street District in October. The 16-story Kimpton



property will feature 319 rooms including 12,000 South Congress Hotel square feet of meeting space. The new hotel will have an onsite restaurant, pool deck, exercise facility and three levels of underground parking.

In November, [Hotel Granduca Westlake Hills](#) will open its doors overlooking the Austin Hill Country. This Italian-inspired luxury hotel will spread over 38 acres and include 194 rooms, a 220-person (3,506 square feet) ballroom, 6,650 square feet of total meeting space, library, fitness center, pool, gardens and in-house restaurant featuring Northern Italian cuisine. The hotel will emphasize green building techniques and hybrid vehicles.

Later this fall, [Eleven](#) will open in the historic 11th Street of East Austin and will offer 14 rooms with city views, a bistro-style café and bar. This boutique-style hotel is located among many of Austin's most notable restaurants and bars, and is a short walk from downtown, the Texas Capitol and University of Texas.



In San Antonio, the esteemed Pearl Brewery is slated to open its newest addition, [Hotel Emma](#) in November. The 146-room independently operated boutique property will be perfectly situated in the 119-year-old brew house. Comfortable and unconventional, the hotel's architecture and interiors will intertwine the historic building's industrial aesthetic with South Texas luxury – all while capitalizing on its coveted River Walk location.

Guests of the [JW Marriott San Antonio Hill Country Resort & Spa](#) will soon experience a Texas-sized splash with the impressive expansion of the property's award-winning six-acre water park, River Bluff Water Experience. The park currently offers an adult infinity pool overlooking the Hill Country, three water slides including a 650 foot rapid river ride and a 1,100 foot lazy river. The newest features will include the addition of two acres to the already expansive area, two new body slides, an additional pool with expanded lounge areas, increased cabana space and 13,000 square feet of outdoor pavilion space, all set for completion in 2016.

New Eats

In Dallas, [The Joule](#) will soon have a new tenant with an upcoming Italian-inspired restaurant with an American twist. Americano will be a vibrant, casual Italian restaurant with an atmosphere inspired by '50s and '60s Italian cinema. Executive Chef Matt Ford created a menu comprised of contemporary takes on nostalgic comfort classics, such as brick oven pizzas, inventive and savory pastas and a bountiful wine list. With an outdoor patio space on a bustling sidewalk in downtown Dallas, it is sure to be a destination for a diverse and social audience this fall.

Matt McCallister, the chef and owner behind Dallas' Design District darling [FT33](#), has finally revealed his highly-anticipated new restaurant concept, [Filament](#). The casual Southern eatery will hit Deep Ellum this fall and "will honor simply prepared ingredients of the South," with both approachable and unexpected dishes. Expect an industrial feel with brick walls and exposed wooden beams as the space was originally a machinist shop in the 1900s. A horseshoe-shaped bar will seat 24 and feature 100+ bottles of wine, craft beer and seasonal drinks with a southern tilt curated by Jeff Gregory.

Liam Pham and Anh Mai, owners of Houston's swanky [Prohibition Supperclub & Bar](#), are opening an underground beer garden beneath their restaurant/burlesque venue. The garden, named Conservatory, will offer a wide variety of brews and will also house the city's first food hall of recent years. Houston foodies should expect a rotating list of food vendors serving a varied selection of cuisines this fall.

[The Blue Cat Cafe](#), Austin's first feline-devoted coffee shop, found its permanent location on the east side and is on track for a hopeful opening in October 2015. The Blue Cat Cafe will feature adoptable cats from local rescue organizations, coffee, food and plenty of feline events for patrons.

New Flights

As Texas is a popular destination for travelers, airlines are increasingly creating more flight routes to the Lone Star State. [Allegiant Air](#) has opened a direct route from Memphis to Austin for the fall and [Alaska Airlines](#) will start serving Austin from Portland with non-stop flights in November. It should come as no surprise that the state's largest city, Houston, is also making changes to accommodate the increase in air travel by opening a new five-gate international terminal at [Houston Hobby Airport](#) in mid-October.



Austin Alfresco

Taking place October 16-18 at Carson Creek Ranch, [Austin Alfresco](#) is culinary overnight escape where 300 glampers connect with the outdoor beauty of central Texas with the comforts and convenience of home. This glamping experience will feature more than 28 local Austin chefs, workshops and talents as well as spa treatments.



The MATCH Building \$25 Million Community Arts Complex

Ground broke in May 2014 on the new [Midtown Arts and Theater Center Houston](#) (MATCH), which will serve as home base for several of Houston's small and mid-sized visual and performing arts organizations. The \$25 million complex will include four theaters, two rehearsal/ classroom spaces, gallery space and office space.

Dallas Museum of Art Jason Pollock Exhibition

On November 20, the [Dallas Museum of Art](#) will present what experts have deemed a "once-in-a-lifetime" exhibition, the largest survey of Jackson Pollock's black paintings ever assembled. This exceptional presentation will include many works that have not been exhibited for more than 50 years, and several which were considered missing. Jackson Pollock: Blind Spots offers critical new scholarship on this understudied yet pivotal period in the artist's career and provides radical new insights into Pollock's practice. The exhibition at the DMA will serve as the exclusive U.S. presentation and will remain on view through March 20, 2016.

State Fair of Texas

It's that time of year again, the [State Fair of Texas](#) is here and bringing back fairgoer's favorites to Dallas, plus a few new additions too! Fair food fanatics will love the newest addition to the Fair's list of daily discount programs – Thrifty Thursdays. Participating food vendors are offering one of their signature menu items at a reduced price, ranging from mini versions to regular-size items. Other new additions include the Lone Star Horse Spectacular featuring professional riders on horseback performing in coordination with the historical narrative, a revamped Mattress Firm Illumination Sensation with dancing waters and twice the pyro than ever before, ZuZu African Acrobats, and Big Tex's Farmyard is back with more activities and new learning opportunities.

Fall Festivals

The merry men and maidens at the [Texas Renaissance Festival](#) in Todd Mission have announced a few new additions to the park for 2015 ahead of its October opening. The 41st annual Texas Renaissance Festival kicks off Saturday, October 10 with Oktoberfest weekend and remains open for the next seven weekends through November 29, Celtic Christmas weekend. On top of additional food options and bringing in more artisans and merchants to the ground, organizers have expanded its nighttime offerings with [TRF After Dark](#), a 21-and-up gala held each Friday and Saturday night during the season. Drinks, dancing and plenty of food are on the docket each weekend, and as always, guests are encouraged to appear in costume



Fall Shopping

Work has begun on a \$250 million redevelopment initiative that will bring more high-end retail to Houston's famed [Galleria](#). Galleria III is being demolished to make room for a new, more pedestrian-friendly space that will provide room for about 35 new luxury stores including The Webster and Celine as well as a brand new Saks Fifth Avenue. The redevelopment is slated for completion in mid to late 2015.

[The Shops at Legacy](#) in Plano are expanding in a big way. 'Legacy West', a new 240-acre, \$2 billion development is underway this fall and some of the country's top restaurant operators are heading its way. The development will feature a one-of-a-kind food hall building with a market area, specialty food vendors and room for live entertainment. A few of the predicted restaurants include Taverna, Bistro 31 and Toulouse. The project includes 280,000 square feet of retail and restaurant space, plus a 300-room, \$82 million Renaissance Hotel.

Performing Arts

[Dallas Summer Musicals](#) and [Performing Arts Fort Worth](#) will come together to co-present their 2015-2016 Broadway seasons allowing patrons across North Texas ample opportunities to experience the Best of Broadway. The two performing arts groups will kick off the highly anticipated 2015-2016 season on November 3 with the North Texas debut of a brand-new stage adaptation of *The Sound of Music*. The season will continue with the hilarious tale of a modern day Christmas, *Elf The Musical*, followed by the musical romance, *The Bridges Of Madison County*, DSM's production of Disney's *The Little Mermaid* and Broadway's biggest blockbuster, *WICKED, The Musical*.

Escape to [Neverland](#) in a whole new way with the spectacular, innovative live stage production of *Peter Pan* that combines intimate theater-in-the-round and overhead surround CGI projection; with actors in dazzling flying sequences forty feet in the air and whimsical puppets that bring J.M. Barrie's classic tale to life, creating a truly unique environmental theatrical experience. This remarkable production takes place in the one-of-a-kind Threesixty Theatre, a state of the art 100 foot high structure that is part tent, part luxurious world-class theatre and part monumental immersive environment. With over 15,000 square feet of hi-resolution projection both cast and audience are immersed in a virtual Neverland in Houston all October long and then in Dallas in November.



Emancipation Park

Houston's 10-acre [Emancipation Park](#), which has long held special significance for the city's African American community, is being completely reimagined. The Park was purchased by four former slaves in 1872 and served as a location to celebrate Juneteenth, the date in 1865 that marked the emancipation of African Americans in Texas. Today, architects with the Freelon Group have designed a new Emancipation Park as an inter-woven tapestry of buildings and landscape celebrating the park's rich history and embracing the present and future of its community. The project includes refurbished landscapes and play grounds, renovation of the two historic buildings and the addition of a new building and plaza. Site design began with aggregating similar program elements to create various activity zones within the park. The old recreation center will be repurposed as a Community Center and the Pool House will be renovated and expanded. A new Recreation Center completes the quad to create a formal Entry Plaza. The project is slated for completion later this year.