

## Top #TexasToDo's Coming in 2017

As you unwind from your holiday festivities, it's time to start making plans for 2017! Each new year brings new experiences to the Lone Star State and 2017 will be no different. From Super Bowl hosts to huge renovations and anniversary celebrations, there will be plenty to enjoy in Texas all year.

- **Super Bowl 51**

In less than a year, football fans will pour into Houston for Super Bowl 51. The biggest single game in American sports will be played at Reliant Stadium in February 2017 bringing a multitude of visitors, unprecedented global media attention and tremendous economic impact to Houston. This is the third Super Bowl for Houston. The city last hosted the big game at [Reliant Stadium](#) in 2004. If you can't manage tickets to the big game, get in the spirit by catching the ongoing [Houston Super Bowl Touchdown Tour](#) or [Super Bowl Live](#) in Discovery Green park. Both events are free admission featuring fun for everyone!

- **Chisholm Trail 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary**

The Chisholm Trail was the major route in and out of Texas for livestock. Although it was used only from 1867 to 1884, the cattle driven north along it provided a steady source of income that helped the impoverished state recover from the Civil War. Youthful trail hands on mustangs gave a Texas flavor to the entire range cattle industry of the Great Plains and made the cowboy an enduring folk hero. Explore the Chisholm Trail as it celebrates the 150th anniversary of the first cattle that "headed north to Abilene." [Texas Historical Centers](#) invite you along to follow the trail as it crisscrosses Highway 81 from south Texas to Abilene, Kansas. Glimpse into the cowpokes' lives while visiting [trail museums](#). Enjoy today's local color in [local restaurants](#), [lodging](#) and [boutique stores](#) in between [historical locations](#) and breath taking panoramas

- **Texas State Aquarium Expansion**

The [Texas State Aquarium](#) in Corpus Christi is in the process of a \$50 million expansion. The expansion will be the largest in the Aquarium's 24-year history. Caribbean Journey is scheduled to be completed in the spring of 2017. The expansion will add 65,000 square feet and will double the aquarium's animal collection. Not only will the expansion include sharks and fish and everything that swims, but now it will have a large bird collection, mammal collection and a botanical collection that the aquarium has never had before. The aquarium's new wing will have three levels, with the first floor including fish tanks and a 100-seat 4-D theater. The second level will feature interactive jungle exhibits, while the top level will mostly be event space with windows providing sweeping views of the aquarium grounds and the Corpus Christi Ship Channel.

- **New Beaches**

[Galveston's beaches](#) will soon become bigger and better. The Galveston Park Board – in partnership with the City of Galveston and Texas General Land Office – began a \$19.5 million beach expansion and nourishment project this fall that will widen existing Seawall beaches between 12th and 61st streets. This four-mile stretch of beach will be replenished with up to 1 million cubic yards of beach

quality sand dredged from the Galveston Ship Channel. The project, which will widen these beaches by 100 to 150 feet, is expected to be complete by spring 2017, just in time for your summer vacation.

- **Middlelands Music Festival**

Insomniac and C3 Presents, the creators of Austin City Limits Music Festival, have announced the beginning of an unprecedented partnership with the launch of their brand new music and camping festival, [Middlelands](#). The new festival will be held in spring 2017 in Todd Mission, TX within the iconic Texas Renaissance theme park, the largest in the United States. A debut collaboration between the two industry-leading event companies will host Renaissance themed activities and three days of world-renowned artists from all genres. The festival also includes four nights of camping with 10 immersive camping options. The festival, roughly two hours from Austin, will be May 5 – 7.

- **Plano's Legacy West**

The first phase of [Legacy West](#), more than 300,000 square feet of restaurants and retail, will open in March 2017. The largest new urban destination in North Texas will be home to the first [Dean & DeLuca](#) in the state of Texas. In early 2017, the internationally known Dean & DeLuca will open its doors in the Plano mixed-use project bringing the world's best epicurean treats for cooking, eating and entertaining. Dean & DeLuca will join an already impressive list of restaurants and food providers at the \$3 billion dollar development including Del Frisco's Double Eagle Steak House, Fogo de Chao, Toulouse Café and Bar, Taverna, Tommy Bahama Restaurant, True Food Kitchen, Mesero, Shake Shack and the 55-thousand square foot food hall, Legacy Hall.

- **Hotel Openings**

Scheduled to open in 2017, [the luxurious Omni Frisco property](#) will be one of the only full-service upscale hotels in the area, and serve as a cornerstone of the mixed-use development, which will be anchored by the [Dallas Cowboys World Headquarters](#) and the Ford Center. Located 20 minutes north of downtown Dallas and 25 minutes from both DFW International and Love Field Airports, Omni Frisco Hotel will feature 300 guest rooms, meeting space and a ballroom, along with several food and beverage experiences, including a rooftop pool deck. The hotel will serve meeting groups, as well as business and leisure travelers alike, including visitors attending Cowboys training camp, as well as the many events and activities hosted at the multi-use events and sports facility. Guests can also enjoy the retail and dining establishments that will be adjacent to the hotel.

In the capital city, a towering icon will stand within a vibrant Central Business District as [Fairmont Austin](#) is uniquely located amid the lush greenery of Palm Park and Waller Creek and directly connected to the Austin Convention Center. Opening summer 2017, the 37-story luxury hotel will feature richly appointed guestrooms and suites with picturesque vistas of Lady Bird Lake, a dramatic cityscape and the State Capitol. Fairmont Austin guests will indulge in exquisite dining, a pampering spa and state-of-the-art meeting facilities. Fairmont Austin will engage guests with the city's famed music scene as well as the area's celebrated cuisine and diverse artistic lifestyle.

Just a few hours east in Houston, a much-anticipated new hotel project will help anchor the mixed-use GreenStreet development Downtown. Hotel Alessandra will be a tall, narrow tower at Fannin and Polk streets with 223 rooms. Valencia Group is spending \$67 million on the 20-story project that will include 5,000 square feet of meeting space as well as an indoor/outdoor event deck and a restaurant and bar. Completion is slated for early 2017.

Z Resorts, the management company responsible for Hotel ZaZa, has partnered with MetroNational Corp. to bring the sophisticated boutique hotel brand to Memorial City Mall at the intersection of Interstate 10 and Bunker Hill Road. Hotel ZaZa Memorial City will provide 158 creative and exciting guest rooms including seven specialty concept suites, over 22,000-square-foot of event and meeting spaces, social events fit for 6 – 600 people, and romantic personal getaways. Amenities will include an outdoor poolside experience with neighboring pool bar, ZaSpa, and a fine dining restaurant and nightlife-oriented lounge. The hotel is slated to open in summer 2017.

A vacant, historic downtown Houston office building will be renovated to become an upscale hotel with a rooftop pool, outdoor sundeck, restaurant and bar. The Melrose building, originally constructed in 1952, is being redeveloped as a Le Méridien, a Starwood Hotels and Resort luxury hotel brand. The Le Méridien will feature 225 guest rooms and 8,000 square feet of meeting space in its 21-story design. The building was Houston's first modern-style skyscraper, and is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Completion is expected in Fall 2017.

- **Grand Texas Amusement Park**

In late 2017, the largest city in Texas, Houston, will open the area's largest amusement park, [Grand Texas](#). In addition to a factory outlet mall, Grand Texas in Houston will feature a 150-acre theme park, 40-acre water park, 83-acre Sportsplex, 30-acre Speedsportz Racing Park, RV park with 144 lots, four hotels and 450,000 square feet of retail and dining in a "Downtown Texas" area once completed.

- **SeaWorld San Antonio's Wave Breaker**

A new generation of coaster, the first of its kind in North America, combining the thrill of the sea, the adrenaline rush of a multi-launch roller coaster and the inspiration of animal rescue is coming to [SeaWorld San Antonio](#). Wave Breaker: The Rescue Coaster boasts variety of features inspired by the reality of jet skiing across a body of water. The unique jet ski-style car design is the first such coaster design in North America and engages riders in a straddled seating position. The design will allow riders to lean into a series of banked and serpentine turns, and grip the handle bars as they race over hills designed for maximum airtime, and a pair of high acceleration launches. Inspired by the Emmy® award-winning program, Sea Rescue®, the coaster enables riders to feel what it's like to race alongside SeaWorld's heroic animal care team and veterinarians as they spring into action at a moment's notice to help rescue animals in distress.

Reaching heights of up to 61 feet, most of the coaster's 2,600-foot track will be directly over water, creating the sensation that riders are surging across the park's Ski Lake. With a minimum height requirement of 48 inches, Wave Breaker promises to be a dynamic coaster experience for the whole family.

- **San Antonio Zoo Jaguar Habitat Expansion**

The [San Antonio Zoo](#) announced plans in November 2016 to raise funds to renovate and expand the jaguars' habitat. Construction costs are estimated to range between \$1 million and \$2 million for a "one-of-a-kind experience." New structures will include an overhead catwalk that will go over guests' heads to link the jaguars' current home with a nearby habitat. With these new features, the San Antonio Zoo will be the only zoo in the country to offer this unique cat walk and the expansion comes after the recent addition of two jaguar cubs.