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Exploring Texas: Four ways

Our guide to four very different, but equally captivating ways to see the Lone Star State



By [Ella Alexander](#) Jan 2, 2019



Texas has two defining traits – its size and its otherness. Every state in the US is different with a singular identity and character, but Texas didn't earn its nickname the Lone Star State for nothing. Its solo star represents a defiant independence and if it were still a sovereign republic would be the 40th biggest country in the world. To put this into context, its mammoth 269,000 square-foot expanse is big enough to fit the UK inside nearly three times over. Alaska is the only state that dwarfs it in terms of size.

Texans are very proud of their home and that proud independence is still inextricably part of its spirit – in fact, the New York Times cited a 2014 poll in which mere 27 per cent of statewide respondents identify themselves as Texans first and Americans second. There's a lot to be proud about – the changing landscape that morphs from deserts peppered with tumbleweeds to Big Bend mountain roads and unrelenting skies; the romanticised cowboy folklore, interpreted as contemporary stoic knights who have swapped metal armour for a plaid shirt, jeans and cowboy boots; the country music which unites communities of different ages and backgrounds; and then there's that famous Texan hospitality. Texans love visitors – they want you to have the best time possible because they want you to see what they see about their home.



Given its size, there is a lot to explore in Texas, so we've narrowed it down to four very different ways to see it depending on your disposition. The route is a very doable road trip, with the longest journey lasting two hours.



For high quality Texan meats, turn to Cured at Pearl – a stylishly designed restaurant that specialises in flavoursome charcuterie boards with rare, cured meats produced by local farmers. Everything is made in house, whether whipped pork butter or cured foie gras, with a farm-to-table ethos at its heart. Housed in the administration building of the old Pearl brewery, Cured also takes its influence from New Orleans so expect to see gumbo and oysters too. There’s also a winning cocktail menu – the classic Cured cocktail with lemon and thyme is particularly good.