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downtown

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ON 30 YEARS

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A NEW ATTITUDE

PROFILE
the new
downtown
OCTOBER 2008

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Polk Street Pub
Opium
Andalusia Tapas
Hank’s Ice Cream
The Office
Let them eat beans (and rice)

Treebeards’ Dan Tidwell and Jamie Mize dish a little downtown perspective and reveal their secret to 30 years of success. **BY DAVID THEIS**

Live in Houston

Critics have always battled over the city’s reputation for live music, but with new venues springing up downtown and the House of Blues opening in October, it looks like the times they are a-changing. **BY DAVID A. COBB**
Its all in the attitude.

We’re excited and we’re not embarrassed to say it. What you hold in your hands is the culmination of months of discussion, coordination and some impressive teamwork from two very different organizations.

The Downtown District and Houston Downtown Alliance may have different goals and responsibilities, but what we have in common is a dedication to the continued success of Houston’s city center. We want downtown to be a diverse, accessible, connected, vibrant place – whether you live, work or come here just to have fun.

We’ve watched downtown change dramatically over the past decade, with more than $4 billion worth of construction, including new sports and entertainment venues, a light rail line, hotels and most recently the opening of Discovery Green.

As downtown continues to grow, more people are choosing to live in and around downtown. New restaurants and an urban market/café will help the Historic District position itself as a unique destination. Main Street Square will get a boost with the opening of Houston Pavilions in October. And our Theater District continues to impress.

It’s time for a new attitude about downtown. That’s where Downtown Magazine comes in – a definitive guide to Houston’s bustling city center with a specific focus on downtown. Our goal is to help people celebrate, discover and get the most out of living in and visiting downtown.

Downtown Magazine is a quarterly publication, part city magazine, part guide. Readers will find interesting and topical features and profiles as well as a comprehensive dining guide and datebook. The look and feel is fresh, uncomplicated and always in-the-know.

We hope Downtown Magazine helps you go places you might have never tried, meet the people that live and work downtown or maybe just see things from a new perspective. Let us know what you think. We’re listening.
Live Downtown
HOME TOUR
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Purchase at downtownhouston.org or 713.658.8938.

Tickets will be available at Tour Headquarters for a $5 premium on day of event.

Event benefits the Houston Downtown Alliance, a broad-based civic organization of individuals, businesses, arts and entertainment organizations dedicated to promoting, advocating and participating in a vital and vibrant Downtown Houston.

HOUSTONDOWNTOWNALLIANCE
THE THEATER DISTRICT: Ready for Liftoff
New season for the arts and theater companies is sure to dazzle
BY ANDREW HUANG AND HEATHER PRAY

THE STAGE Theatre Under The Stars teams up with Breakfast Klub and Brennan’s to create a memorable experience with brunch or dinner and a musical package when Oprah Winfrey Presents The Color Purple through Sept 28… Costume Designer Alejo Vietti unleashes his imagination and designs four shows this season at the Alley Theatre, including the tale of soulful poet/philosopher Cyrano de Bergerac (Oct 3–Nov 2). Vietti gleaned inspiration by reading the play in French and then the English translation, as well as paintings from Cyrano’s 17th century France… If you missed Houston Grand Opera’s 36th world premiere, Christopher Theofanidis’s The Refuge, the opera has been released nationally on Albany Records… Houston Symphony kicked off the season and Young Professionals Backstage with a concert and after-party with Big Bad Voodoo Daddy. They’ll bring a different tune with Wayne Brady (Oct 10–12) singing song tributes to his inspirations Sammy Davis, Jr. and Sam Cooke and then present a true American pop music icon, Frankie Valli, on Oct 17.

THE ARTS Dust and noise befell the ears of theater patrons at Jones Hall for a few days this summer in order to clean artist Richard Lippold’s Gemini II sculpture hanging high above the ground floor and now featuring 2,300 sparkling, hand-cleaned, silver aluminum rods… Society for the Performing Arts brings their annual spring art contest to the fall this year in conjunction with Mariachi Los Camperos de Nati Cano’s performance on Dec 4. The contest gives children in kindergarten through 12th grade a chance to showcase their talents and win prizes while learning more about the performing arts… deadline to enter is Nov 14.

THE STARS Sarah Rothenberg, Da Camera of Houston’s artistic director, steps into the classroom as artist-in-residence at the University of Houston’s Mitchell Center for the...
You were recently elected as Chairman of Opera America. What does that mean to you personally having spent most of your career in Britain, and what do you hope to accomplish from this position?

I am incredibly flattered and honored to serve in this position, particularly as a foreigner who has only lived in the U.S. for two and a half years. However, my association with Opera America goes back many years as I have attended its annual conferences regularly since the early ’90s. Also as chairman of the board of Opera Europa (Opera America’s European counterpart), I have had the pleasure of working with Marc Scorca, Opera America’s president and CEO. I believe passionately in opera, opera in America, and Opera America. There has never been a more important time for Opera America to lead and represent the opera business and opera professionals and to promote and develop our art form.

HGO has made some dramatic changes since you have taken over the reins. What did you see as the major challenges and opportunities for HGO and how have you set about to impact them?

Houston Grand Opera is a world-renowned opera company, with a 54-year history and a magnificent foundation of excellence. My colleagues and I have been working hard to build upon that foundation to enable this wonderful company to evolve and develop. A year ago we completed a five-year strategic plan that seeks to define who we are and why we exist. I believe passionately that to thrive, HGO must be truly relevant to communities throughout our city. To this end, we have developed such initiatives as HGOco which takes the company out of the opera house into communities, and NEXUS which seeks to bring tens of thousands of people into the opera house for the first time.

Above all, our success is based upon our world-class artistic excellence and we have a truly great chorus, orchestra and studio (young artist training program) and in Patrick Summers one of the finest music directors in the world.

Houston’s thriving arts scene is sometimes a well-kept secret. Being new to Houston, what has been your reaction to the arts scene in Houston?

I was frankly surprised by the extraordinary breadth, depth and quality of the arts in Houston. It offers a variety of opportunities for us all to collaborate in order to offer an even better cultural service for everyone in Houston.

You were awarded the Order of the British Empire (OBE) from Queen Elizabeth II during her 2006 80th Birthday Honors. Tell us about that experience.

The news of my honor came as a complete surprise and reached me by mail, in my office in the Wortham, in a letter from 10 Downing Street. I must admit that at first I thought my friends in Britain were playing an elaborate hoax on me. When I realized it was real, I was thrilled and flattered.

What are some of your favorite places in Houston to meet friends and socialize?

Fung’s Kitchen particularly for their fantastic dim sum. I enjoy Hugo’s for outstanding, real Mexican food and Café Annie for special occasions. 😊
here are shoes lined up outside of Tamar Mendelssohn’s Hogg Palace loft. When she got home from work that day, she explains, she found the pairs and returned them to her next door neighbors who left barefoot after an impromptu party she threw over the weekend. “It’s like Melrose Place here. The people on my hall are my best friends – we all have keys to each other’s places. And we’re all Geminis.”

Tamar has lived downtown for a year. She leases a spacious loft in the renovated 1920s building where she showcases her vintage finds – a metal table shaped like a clover leaf from The Guild Shop, a weathered Louis Vuitton suitcase and belted shirtdresses.

The apartment’s open plan is centered around the living room, where mirrored side tables from West Elm mix with a distressed drink cart topped with liquor bottles – Tamar recently hosted a Pimm’s Cup party for her birthday. Almost all the art on the brick and cement walls is her own – tiny paint splatters are evident on the wood floors – and a series of glittered Michael Jackson stencils pay homage to her favorite musician. In the large bathroom, she leaves a bowl of chalk next to the soap in case guests are inspired to draw on the exposed cement column while powdering their noses. In the same space, she recently fostered a pair of ducklings until they were old enough to set free at a ranch in Hockley, Texas. And just outside the door, a built-in wood partition...
separates her bedroom from the rest of the loft. It doubles as an anchor for a metal clothing rack so her clothes can spill out of her small closet.

We caught up with the free-spirited style-maker to find out what it’s like to be a 24-year-old fashionista living downtown.

*Why do you call downtown home?* This area has so much character. I wanted to be able to walk everywhere, and I feel really safe here. Everyone’s very professional, which is a nice change from other places I’ve lived.

*What are some of your favorite spots?* I love Dean’s Credit Clothing, Warren’s Inn and La Carafe, which they say is the oldest bar in Texas. For restaurants, there’s good Thai here in the building, and Frank’s Pizza is great for the late night slice.

*What’s a misperception about living downtown?* That you have to work downtown to live here. Or that it’s stuffy. This building is definitely not stuffy.

*How would you describe your home’s décor?* I guess it’s modern eclectic.

*What about your own look?* Bright and funky, based on whatever mood I’m in. I might not have the same feeling on a Monday and a Saturday.

You’ve been at Tootsie’s for four years. What do you think sets the Houston retail scene apart? The women here are so nice – that’s different from other cities. Our store is like a big family. Everyone gets to know one another’s clients. It’s like a constant cocktail party where we’re all catching up all the time. Especially over the last year, I’ve become really close friends with a lot of my clients.

*Have you ever helped anyone famous?* I waited on Haylie and Hillary Duff once. They were fun! Hillary was really quiet, sweet and shy. She didn’t want to converse with me as much as her sister did, but anything I put in her dressing room, she bought.

*What other celebrity are you dying to style?* Karen O from the band Yeah Yeah Yeahs.

*How much of your wardrobe comes from the store?* Maybe 20 percent. The rest is all finds. I love thrift stores and always have. It’s fun to shop somewhere top secret – knowing that you’ve fought for an item that no one else has. And I make some of my jewelry. I used to be somewhat of a metalsmith. But now there’s no way to find a blowtorch when you just feel like designing something.

*What are some of your favorite clothing lines?* Phillip Lim and Naeem Khan. And L.A.M.B. is fun.

*What’s a must-have item for the fall?* Ombré is still big. (The color effect that shades fabric from light to dark is seen in high fashion).

*What’s a trend you’re ready to bid adieu?* I’m tired of seeing leggings. And anything sequined.

*What was your first big retail splurge?* As a kid, probably my first pair of Doc Marten’s. More recently, my Pucci ski jacket was a milestone. *Do you ski?* No – never have!  🏂

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Raising the Bars

Downtown Houston has long been home to an eclectic array of homegrown watering holes, dive bars, upscale lounges and swanky hotel hotspots. As the city’s urban core continues its 21st century evolution, our collective thirst for afterwork gathering places and pre-dinner libations is soaring like never before.

With more than a smattering of new restaurants, lounges and bars popping up throughout the area — and a whole new batch on the way — we thought a sampling of happy hour havens was in order. Between the classic standbys and the sophisticated new offerings, downtown’s cup runneth over.

BY MARK SULLIVAN

**THE TREEHOUSE**
Peacefully perched on the second-floor deck of The Grove with unobstructed views of the city’s skyline, The Treehouse is fast becoming downtown’s urban getaway of choice. With their unrivaled selection of tequilas on deck and an expertly edited appetizer selection, this just might be the happiest outdoor space in town.

**THE TREEHOUSE AT THE GROVE**
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713.337.7321
HOURS: THU AND FRI, 4 - MIDNIGHT
SAT, 2 - MIDNIGHT
SUN, 2 - MIDNIGHT

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**RESERVE 101**
For those who opt for Mad Men-style martinis over Mexican margaritas, Reserve 101 is a serious cocktail contender. Boasting a ridiculous selection of whiskeys and hand-selected scotch, this newcomer feels like Houston’s very own Cheers. Reserve 101 offers $6 martinis from 2 p.m. (gulp) until 7 p.m. with not a morsel of food on the menu.

**RESERVE 101**
1201 CAROLINE
713.655.7101
HOURS: 2 - 2
7 DAYS A WEEK

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**LONE STAR SALOON**
Putting the dive back in dive bar, Lone Star Saloon might be considered the workhorse of the spirits world. It remains as unassuming, unpretentious and uniquely Houston as ever and we hope it stays that way. The crowds continue to pour in — they don’t even need actual happy hour specials. No matter, Lone Star hours are equal opportunity happy.

**LONE STAR SALOON**
1900 TRAVIS
713.757.1616
HOURS: 2 - 2
7 DAYS A WEEK

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**VOICE RESTAURANT & LOUNGE**
The recently renovated restaurant and lounge at Hotel ICON is a refuge Sam Houston himself would frequent if he were still on the scene. With cowhide covered stools, a 360-degree bar and a wholly original menu of locally inspired signature cocktails, VOICE offers up comfortably cozy environs in spite of its decidedly cosmopolitan façade. The lounge features drink specials that change nightly, and the allure is sweetened with complimentary chef-selected mini appetizers Monday through Thursday from 5 p.m. - 7 p.m.

**VOICE RESTAURANT & LOUNGE**
220 MAIN STREET,
832.667.4470
HOURS: SUN - THU, NOON - MIDNIGHT
FRI AND SAT, NOON - 2

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**WARREN’S INN**
Almost 30 years and still going strong, Warren’s remains one of downtown’s indisputable institutions. With a dark wood interior, a bevy of regulars and an old-school jukebox with a song selection to match, Warren’s has an aura of authenticity that others envy. Factor in the taxi-worthy hard pour and proceed accordingly.

**WARREN’S INN**
307 TRAVIS, 713.247.9207
HOURS: MON - FRI, 11 - 2
SAT, NOON - 2
SUN, NOON - MIDNIGHT

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From conservative suits to twenty-some-things in board shorts and flip-flops, Reserve 101’s crowd skew s eclectic.

Enjoy a signature Ginger Margarita at The Treehouse while taking in the breathtaking view of the downtown skyline.

Warren’s is a classic—when you order a drink you get your money’s worth!
thing is clear when you walk into the offices of Walter P Moore: meticulous engineers work here. Everything is in its place, in a stylish way, at the engineering firm’s new headquarters in downtown Houston.

The 77-year-old company moved from its location near Greenway Plaza to downtown last fall, taking three floors in the Fulbright Tower on McKinney. It was much like moving home, since the company played a role in the tower’s infancy.

“We love being downtown in an award-winning building that we engineered 25 years ago,” said Raymond F. Messer, president and chairman of Walter P Moore. “Moving to Houston Center has been one of our best business decisions.”

Walter P Moore’s engineering fingerprints are all over Houston, as well as many cities nationwide. You can see their work in stadiums for the Houston Texans, Indianapolis Colts, Dallas Cowboys and Arizona Cardinals. The company’s first domed stadium was, well, THE first domed stadium: the Houston Astrodome.

Airports, government buildings, health-care centers, parking garages, educational facilities, “green” building, infrastructure, traffic and transportation all fall under Walter P Moore’s business umbrella.

When the company moved downtown, it used all of that expertise to create a unique work environment.

Sure, there’s a conference room. But at Walter P Moore, it’s called a Visionarium. A sleek bamboo table rests in the center with a white erase board that runs the length of the room. On the opposite wall is a projection area touted as an IMAX theater for the design team. The Visionarium gives engineers, architects, clients and the builder a place to fit the pieces of a project together.

Because the new offices didn’t share the same floor of the building, there was a need to connect the floors internally. It’s a good thing there were some engineers handy to design a cantilevered staircase that seems to float in the space. Built similar to steps at a stadium, the steel, concrete and cable structure is more like artwork that happens to function beautifully as a staircase.

The company has received numerous awards for its structural and infrastructural solutions, most of which contain the phrase “engineering excellence.” But among the accolades are those from a variety of publications including Structural Engineer, CE News, Texas Construction and Texas Monthly citing it as one of the best places to work in the industry.

“Working for Walter P Moore allows for creativity. You don’t get to design stadiums and structures like this with a typical engineering firm,” said Marco Bernal, a senior associate who has been with the company seven years. “It’s a very good group of people to work with, very smart people. It’s always something new.”

A challenging work environment in a trendy loft-like office setting and a chance to work on some of the finest structures in the country are what employees at Walter P Moore experience every day. These things are hallmarks of the company’s brand goals: Creative, Competent, Cool.
When you’re on the cutting edge of fashion, sneakerers go with everything – workout gear, designer denim, dapper three-piece suits. Thomas Nauls is capitalizing on that notion with The Tipping Point. Along with funky clothes, accessories, hard-to-find footwear and limited-edition kicks, the owners have created a space where the experience extends beyond shopping.

“What we’ve seen is a demand for shopping downtown as a destination,” Nauls says of their sleek modern boutique, home to events that showcase local musicians and artists. Their innovative social gatherings benefit local non-profits. “You can shop, listen to music, and check out books and local magazines. We’re exposing people to stuff that might not be commercial and that they’ve never seen before. That’s our mission – to show an urban lifestyle side of Houston.”

The Tipping Point’s quick word-of-mouth success is due to the urban core concept that steps away from a traditional retail model. Part store, part lounge and always electric, Nauls says the hip hang-out attracts “well-traveled tastemakers and socialites – and a lot of international clientele.”

Just down Main Street, Macy’s houses nearly 400,000 square feet of merchandise. Over 60 years old, the storefront provided innovative underground tunnel access long before downtown built a network of tunnels. Today the mainstay’s expansive set-up provides the area’s residents, professionals and visitors alike with life’s necessities.

“We’re unique to the downtown shopping scene because we serve as a destination for business shoppers to get last-minute items, or to get some quick effortless shopping done during their breaks,” says Kamal Bosamia, regional public relations manager. “We’ve tailored our assortment to the needs of the Houston downtown customer, and we’re excited to be able to offer luxury merchandise of great quality at an affordable value.”
the new guys

Macy’s epitomizes traditional downtown shopping, but the opening in October of Houston Pavilions will again change the face of downtown.

The three-story, multi-use property promises to become a leisure destination for those who come downtown to work and play, for residents of surrounding areas and for visitors to the city. From Lucky Strike Bowling Lanes and the House of Blues restaurant to a two-story Books-A-Million complete with a coffeehouse and bakery, the Pavilions will bring more urban flavor to Houston’s city center.

“The Pavilions will bring not only a retail but an entertainment aspect to downtown,” says Shaun Smith, director of marketing. “You can shop, grab a cupcake or a glass of wine, or come for concerts and great dining.”

An anchor of the center is XXI, a new concept from the creators of Forever 21, a chain that translates looks from the runway to ready-to-wear.

“We are thrilled with the opening of the new store in Houston,” says marketing manager Meghan Bryan. “This is a great fit for us because it’s a wonderful city with customers who love great fashion at the greatest value.”

Another Pavilions stop, BCBG, will open its doors just in time to bring a high-quality fall collection says the megabrand’s creator Max Azria. “I love architecture and there was something very relevant to me about the juxtaposition of old and new – it feels very modern. The mood of the collection is ladylike, and the colors reflect that.”

“During times like this, customers are looking for value in their purchases,” Azria says. “This is why our clothes are consistently successful – we offer beautiful clothing that focuses on detail and exceptional quality.”

Color is something that is very closely tied to emotion – pastels feel romantic, darks feel more serious. I guess in that way the collection is very human, because it has a color palate evocative of the full spectrum of emotions.”

– Max Azria
Let Them Eat Beans {and Rice}

By David Theis

For 30 years Dan Tidwell and Jamie Mize have been serving what many consider the best Cajun food in the city.

The secret to their success? A combination of killer recipes, perfect timing and location, location, location.
This year Treebeards’ owners Dan Tidwell and Jamie Mize are quietly observing the beloved eatery’s 30th anniversary. During a recent lunch they remembered how much the area around them has changed – and how little their restaurant has.

Tidwell, 56, was the original owner while Mize, 54, trained as an accountant, kept the books and chopped onions. Tidwell wanted to open a restaurant on Travis because he remembered Market Square during its heyday in the early 1970s when live music dominated the scene.

But although Market Square had changed by 1978, as Mize recalls, it “was still complete.” It was surrounded on all sides by the original 19th century buildings and there was an electricity in the boomsdown air. “It was exciting down here,” says Mize. Houston’s celebrated skyline was going up fast and the national media was paying attention. Then the bust arrived.

Still, the downturn didn’t really hurt Treebeards. “We had opened just at the right time,” says Tidwell. “And we opened in just the right place,” near the Houston Chronicle, guaranteeing the young restaurant ample coverage.

The Cajun/Creole menu with its daily specials hasn’t changed since 1990, but Treebeards’ operating hours have. Tidwell and Mize now only serve lunch, although until 2000 they had a steady early dinner business. “Friday night was great,” Mize says. “People would drive down from the Heights for dinner.” The customers were partially attracted by the free after-6 p.m. parking, which still applies. According to Tidwell and Mize, downtown lost those customers during the massive street reconstruction program of the early 2000s. Street construction cost downtown not only its on-street parking spaces, but “its momentum,” Mize says, more philosophical than bitter.

One of the few disagreements between the two partners is over whether they should go back to opening at night. Mize is all for it if parking issues can be resolved. The partners would like to see metered parking enforced after 6 p.m. to...

Treebeards hums along and now seems eternal, by Houston standards. But that doesn’t mean Tidwell and Mize wouldn’t like to see changes in the neighborhood. They are longtime downtown residents and they yearn to see Market Square further developed, especially after they were teased with the false blush of redevelopment when the rail line opened and the 2004 Super Bowl approached.

“We’re jealous of Discovery Green,” says Tidwell, referring to the new development boom on the once-dormant east side of downtown. “And we feel like we have been left behind.”

“We take it a little personally,” Mize adds. “Because we didn’t throw in the towel when things got tough.”

But this doesn’t mean they’re unhappy. When asked if running a restaurant for 30 years doesn’t become a terrible grind, both men speak up. “We’re lucky and we appreciate what we have,” Mize says.

Both men talk about the satisfaction they take in working with very long-term employees. Lien Pham has managed the take-away branch at 700 Rusk (they have four locations in all) for 25 years, while Bonita Jackson has managed the tunnel location for 22 years. In fact, many of their 90-plus employees have been with them for a long time.

Mize says, “They like it here because we come in every day and participate. It becomes like an extended family.”

Mize and Tidwell also enjoy coming to work because of their rapport with their customers, some of whom have been eating at Treebeards for all those 30 years. “Most of our friends started as customers,” Mize says. “We feel a lot of gratitude that we’ve been able to further the cause of downtown. We’ll do this as long as we can.”

DISHING THE GOODS: MIZE STILL WORKS THE LINE. “WE’RE LUCKY AND WE APPRECIATE WHAT WE HAVE.”

Theatre Under The Stars

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DISCOVER DISCOVERY GREEN
When most people think of Texas music, Houston is likely not the first city that comes to mind. Austin’s blues and rock scenes cemented its reputation as a creative hot spot, and the Dallas/Fort Worth area’s successful artists often garner the majority of the Lone Star State’s attention. Houston’s musical past is rich with history, however, encompassing practically all genres – and downtown’s continuing growth brings with it the hope of something truly authentic when it comes to live music.

LOOKING FORWARD

From coffee shops, wine bars and pubs to Party on the Plaza, downtown festivals in local parks, and the city’s mid-sized music venues and intimate clubs, Houston offers more options for live music than most people realize.

With more people moving downtown and to surrounding areas, entertainment and nightlife are important elements of that momentum. One of the newest downtown projects is the House of Blues, part of the Houston Pavilions development, set to open in October. The complex includes retail stores, restaurants, bars and office space. But can it bring an additional shot in the arm to Houston’s burgeoning downtown area?

“I think [bigger venues] help draw decent bands in from out of town and that’s always a good thing,” says Jeff Balke of local rock band Orange Is In. “I think House of Blues will do the same. But I’m skeptical as to how much they help local musicians ... the people who go there are more band-specific than just plain old music fans that like the venue.”

Matt Sonzala, who was instrumental in bringing attention to and promoting Houston’s hip hop scene and now works for South By Southwest in Austin, agrees but says the revitalization of downtown in recent years has helped increase the quality of live music in Houston.

“Well, let’s keep it real: most of the downtown clubs are not about live music, they are cheesy as hell and cater to a kind of more club-centric clientele,” he says. “One thing we have been lacking for a long time is a central entertainment
district. It’s nice to have the venues in close proximity to each other, directly in center city. Warehouse Live, in and of itself, changed the game and the landscape in Houston almost single-handedly. They made everyone step their game up and gave us a genuinely great place to see live music. Before Warehouse Live, sound in Houston’s live music venues sucked almost all the way across the board. I think about downtown when I was young compared to now and it’s a whole different world.”

LOOKING BACK

Houston music has its roots firmly in the blues and country music scenes. During the late 1940s and early 1950s, Houston was a hotbed for early blues and independent country music. During the 1950s, Telephone Road in the city’s East End was equivalent to Austin’s 6th Street, says Andy Bradley of SugarHill Studios. “This was very important because within four or five blocks you could see B.B. King, Joe Sample and Chuck Berry ... You just walk down the street and see these great musicians.”

For decades, the Third Ward’s Eldorado Ballroom was an influential center for African-American musicians and played host to up-and-coming jazz and blues musicians as well as more popular, established acts. During the ’60s, Houston was the focal point for white rhythm and blues and the advent of Tex-Mex rock, and also was home to Independent Artists, the biggest independent psychedelic rock music label (best known for Roky Erickson’s The 13th Floor Elevators). Some of the best-known music from Houston came out of the resurgence of country music that happened here in the ’70s, with Freddie Fender’s “Before the Next Teardrop Falls” and the Urban Cowboy phenomenon taking center stage.

Houston is also home to the infamous ZZ Top, whose blues-infused rock hit big in the late ’70s and still continues 30 years later. Tejano music gained popularity locally during the late ’80s and ’90s and still thrives, as does hip hop, rap and R&B.

“I think diversity, without a question, is our greatest contribution,” Balke says. “The focus is so often on music in the rock and indie scene, but country, hip hop, Latin, jazz and blues have all thrived here for quite some time. On pretty much any night you can see great music from all of these, and that’s very typical of Houston.”

Houston continues to be a vibrant spot for musicians of all genres. From hip hop, blues, jazz and Tejano to indie rock, punk and hard rock, Houston-area musicians – both the famous (Beyonce Knowles, Paul Wall, Geto Boys, Blue October, Lyle Lovett) and the lesser-known (Hayes Carll, By
The End Of Tonight, Indian Jewelry, Jana Hunter) – help bring attention to the city and attract like-minded artists.

In addition to Houston’s downtown area music venues [see sidebar], the music scene in Houston has also been enhanced by online resources such as music-related blogs, magazines and booking collectives that make it a priority to help promote both local and national acts playing in Houston.

According to The Skyline Network’s Ryan Clark, there are excellent acts in the Houston area, regardless of genre. “People who think that there isn’t anything worth hearing probably aren’t going to be into music that much anyways,” he says.

“For a while now the question I was constantly asking myself is, ‘Where are the kids? Where are those hungry early twenty-somethings starting bands and booking shows and making things happen?’ It was a big relief to see bands like Young Mammals and Cop Warmth start to break out and do good things. Now we’ve got folks like Elaine Greer, Papermoons, Powerhouse! and the Wild Moccasins in the mix too ... The kids are key, because if there aren’t kids playing in decent bands, there aren’t likely to be kids at shows.”

Clark says he also thinks that the bigger downtown venues have in some ways helped attract more popular bands to the area. “Clubs like that have deeper pockets than independent bookers like Super Unison and Pegstar, so they can push out the marketing needed to bring the people in the door and make the shows feasible from an economic perspective.”

A recent article in the Houston Press bemoaned the state of Houston’s independent music scene, labeled local bands as mediocre and focused on how a lot of national acts choose to skip Houston as opposed to Dallas and Austin.

“No matter what anyone thinks and might complain about, the scene has gotten better over the past few years,” Price says. Sonzala agrees. “That’s been said for years and I think it’s sort of true and sort of not. There’s talent, but there’s way more ... to wade through to find it. In rap, rock, whatever. I don’t think all Houston bands are mediocre, but yes, many are. They lack a certain edge, and always have. That being said, the ones who shine, really shine bright.”

Wondering where to go for live music in Houston? From dingy clubs and trendy bars to restaurants, warehouses and high-capacity arenas, music fans can find a variety of music styles and atmospheres. Here are many of the places you can catch local bands and national acts on stage in the downtown and midtown areas nearly every night of the week.

Big Top Lounge (3714 Main)
The Continental Club (3700 Main)
Dean’s Credit Clothing (316 Main)
House of Blues (1204 Caroline, Houston Pavilions-opens October)
Jet Lounge (1515 Pease)
Last Concert Café (1403 Nance)
The Meridian (1503 Chartres)
The Mink/Backroom (3718 Main)
Notsuoh (314 Main)
The Real Sammie’s (71 Franklin)
Red Cat Jazz Café (924 Congress)
Rocbar (530 Texas, Bayou Place)
Sambuca Jazz Cafe (909 Texas)
Sammy’s at 2016 Main (2016 Main)
Super Happy Fun Land (3801 Polk)
Toyota Center (1510 Polk)
Verizon Wireless Theater (520 Texas, Bayou Place)
Walters On Washington (4215 Washington)
Warehouse Live (813 St. Emanuel)
The Devil’s in the details

The Grove’s Executive Chef Ryan Pera has crafted a tasty American rustic menu featuring tantalizing appetizers such as the sinfully eggs-cellent Yard Deviled Eggs! Discovery Green, 1611 Lamar, 713.337.7321/www.thegrovehouston.com
17 Restaurant New American  Found in the lobby of the luxurious Alden Hotel, this lush
and lavish destination oozes elegance. Detailed
American cuisine and smart service make this a
$$$$

Antone’s Po’ Boys & Deli Deli  Known for their
delicious po’ boys and sandwich selection,
Antone’s is a great stop for lunch. 810 Capitol,
713.224.4679. L Mon– Fri. $

Artista American  Artista offers inspirational
contemporary American cuisine and theatrical
ambiance with high ceilings, glass walls and
sweeping views of the Houston downtown sky-
line.  www.cordua.com. Hobby Center, 800 Bagby,
713.278.4782. L Mon–Fri; D Mon–Sat (Open for L
& D on Sunday only if a theater performance is
scheduled). $$$

Atrium Lobby Lounge Contemporary  Located
inside the Doubletree Hotel overlooking Allen
Center courtyard. Relax after a busy day and
enjoy your favorite beverage or a bite to eat
while you catch up on the day’s news on the
wide screen TV. Doubletree Hotel, 400 Dallas,
713.759.0202. L, D & LN Daily. $$

Azuma Sushi & Robata Bar Japanese/Sushi
Voted “Best sushi in Houston” by
Citysearch.com, this new–age Japanese
restaurant is anything but typical. The ambience
is terrific, the sushi is innovative and fresh and
the outside seating area provides great people
watching.  www.azumajapanese.com. 909 Texas,
713.223.0909. L Mon–Fri; D Mon–Sun; LN Fri &
Sat. $$

Ballpark Café American  Enjoy the all–American
cuisine and a nostalgic atmosphere for breakfast,
lunch or dinner. Just across the street
from Minute Maid Park, Ballpark Café is a great
place to have a pre/post-game meal.
www.innattheballpark.com. Inn at the Ballpark,
1520 Texas Avenue, 713.228.1520. B & L Daily.
$

Bells & Whistles Café Homestyle  This homestyle
spot offers a menu of American favorites made
fresh daily. The family–style breakfast offered
on weekdays is a hit with downtowners and it’s
just minutes from Minute Maid Park. 1501 Texas

Ben & Jerry’s Ice Cream  Ben & Jerry’s is the spot
for oh–so–fabulous ice cream, ice cream cakes,
sundaes, shakes and fresh fruit smoothies. Also
a PartnerShop, HoustonWorks USA owns and
operates this location and uses the scoop shop
to teach young people job and entrepreneurial
skills. Give in to your cravings and give back to
the community all at the same time.
www.benjerry.com/downtownhouston. 909 Texas
@ The Post Rice Lofts, 713.223.0791. Daily. $

Benihana of Tokyo Japanese  While
some restaurants allow their guests to
view the kitchen, this Japanese grill brings
the kitchen to you. Benihana chefs set up
shop right in front of your table. The meal
is made from scratch, and you can witness
the entire session. The show is amazing and
the food is excellent.
www.benihana.com. 1318 Louisiana,
713.659.8231. L & D Daily. $$$

Birraporetti’s Italian  This Italian restaurant/
Irish bar is a Theater District staple. Their
delicious pizzas continue to hit the spot,
while items such as the chicken picatta
and La Dolce Vita have become standouts.
Enjoy a signature dessert to finish the meal.
www.birrarestaurant.com. 500 Louisiana,
**Bistro Lancaster** New American  Located in the historic Lancaster Hotel, this cozy getaway is a great place to dine before catching a show in the Theater District. Their new seasonal menu continues Bistro Lancaster’s commitment to local, fresh ingredients of the highest quality. You’ll find hearty soups, sizzling steaks and savory seafood.  [www.thelancaster.com](http://www.thelancaster.com). Lancaster Hotel, 701 Texas Ave, 713.228.9502. B, L & D Daily. $$$$

**Bon Jour Café Deli**  Offering soups, sandwiches and salads, 945 Capitol, 713.237.0419. B & L Mon-Fri. $$

**Bouray’s Burrito Bar**  A burrito bar with tons of ingredients and sides that allow you to create the burrito of your dreams. www.bourays.com. 609 Clay, 713.652.5999. L Mon-Fri. $$

**Brazos Restaurant** American Upscale seafood and casual American fare come together in a Texas-chic atmosphere. Newly refurbished, black booths and white tablecloths offer elegance and décor not typically found in hotel restaurants. Crowne Plaza Hotel, 1700 Smith, 713.495.7854. B, L & D Daily. $$$$

**Brickhouse Subs & Nestle Tollhouse Café Fast Food**  You can’t beat a freshly made sub and chocolate chip cookie. 700 Main, 713.229.0882. L Mon-Sat. $$

**Burger King** Fast Food  810 Capitol, 713.223.4114. B & D Mon-Sat; L Daily. $$

**B.U.S. Sports Grill and Bar** American The ultimate hangout spot before or after a ballgame. Come and enjoy your favorite cold beverage or bite to eat while cheering the home team to victory. B.U.S. is also a great place to catch the latest sporting event on the big screen! Two locations. Before/after Rockets games, 1410 Bell. Before/after Astros games, 1800 Texas. $-

**Cabo Mexican** The “Mix-Mex” grill is a spicy blend of South and Central American flavors. A fun downtown spot with the ultimate outdoor balcony for dining overlooking the streets of downtown. www.cabomixmex.com. 419 Travis, 713.225.2060. L & D Mon-Sun; LN Mon-Sat. $$


**Cafe Express Fast Casual**  Need to grab a quick lunch? Cafe Express is an informal yet sophisticated choice. One of the originals in the fast casual restaurant category, you can always find a variety of delicious entrees, salads and sandwiches.  [www.cafe-express.com](http://www.cafe-express.com). 650 Main, 713.237.9222. B & L Mon-Fri. $$

**Cava Bistro** American Bistro Enjoy a diverse menu when dining at this rustic eatery situated on Main Street in downtown’s Historic District. Menu items include escargot, leek tart, ahí tuna, short ribs, gnocchi and whole red snapper. An impressive wine list, great service and affordable prices make this bistro unique. www.bellarestaurants.com. 301 Main, 713.223.4068. L Mon-Fri; D Mon-Sat. $$

**China Garden Chinese** A popular Chinese restaurant, China Garden has been serving downtown for more than 30 years. Their egg rolls and lemon chicken have become favorites. Friendly service and a nice atmosphere are additional reasons this spot is a must. 1602 Leeland, 713.652.0745. L Mon-Fri; D Daily. $$

**Chipotle Mexican** Known for their large portions, this Mexican fast casual spot offers a variety of wholesome menu items. Chipotle is an affordable choice and with patio seating available, guests can enjoy their meal al fresco.  [www.chipotle.com](http://www.chipotle.com). 909 Texas, 713.225.6633. L & Early D Mon-Fri. $$

**Cielo Mexican**  This new upscale Mexican bistro offers patrons Latin American favorites in a sophisticated, urban setting. Cielo has a fantastic bar and happy hour menu for late nights, also a large patio for al fresco dining. Tequila and wine tasting dinners will be offered monthly.  [www.bellarestaurants.com](http://www.bellarestaurants.com). 300 Main, 713.229.9500. L & D Mon-Sat; LN Fri & Sat. $$ Opening October.

**Corner Bakery** Fast Casual  A bakery cafe, offering fresh breads, salads, sandwiches, soups and sweets in a casual atmosphere. Located right on Main Street Square, you can’t beat the people watching or just relax and watch the rail line and Main Street Square’s jumping fountains.  [www.cornerbakery.com](http://www.cornerbakery.com). 1000 Main, 713.651.0673. B & L Mon-Fri. $-

**Craignales Italian Deli** Italian Deli  A family-owned Italian-styled deli located close to Minute Maid Park and the Courthouse District. Craignales features a tasty and affordable selection.  [www.craignalasedi.com](http://www.craignalasedi.com). 415 Caroline, 713.237.0000. L Mon-Fri; D Daily. $-

**Decafe Fast Casual**  Located in the lobby of the Hyatt Regency, this market place cafe anytime, day or night, when you are craving something delicious. Decafe offers brick oven pizza, deli sandwiches, salads, homemade pastries and, of course, an entire selection of your favorite coffee beverages. Hyatt Regency

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![Plate](https://example.com/plate)
Hotel, 1200 Louisiana, 713.654.1234 x 4088. B, L, D & LN Daily. $  

**Domino’s Pizza** 804 Main, 713.227.3030. $  


**The Downtown Aquarium** Seafood The menu features a huge variety and offers something for everyone. While dining guests are surrounded by a 150,000 gallon aquarium. Enjoy the sights and a great meal at this family-friendly spot. www.aquariumrestaurants.com. 410 Bagby, 713.223.3474. L & D Daily. $$$

**Downtown Hunan Cafe** Chinese Fast casual spot offering all your Asian favorites. 613 Clay, 713.759.0515. L. Mon–Fri. $  

**Droubi Bro. Mediterranean Grill Mediterranean** This authentic Mediterranean grill offers up a quick and satisfying spot for lunch. Pita sandwiches are popular. 507 Dallas, 713.652.0058. L. Mon–Fri. $  

**Eats Mesquite Grill Classic American** Craving a burger downtown? Popular for their juicy burgers and great–tasting fries, Eats makes for a great lunchtime stop. Guests can make their burgers exactly how they like them. 804 Milam, 713.223.3287. L. Mon–Fri. $  

**El Rey Taqueria Cuban/Mexican** This fast casual Cuban and Mexican eatery is home to tasty plantains and juicy roasted chicken. El Rey opens early for those craving breakfast tasty plantains and juicy roasted chicken. El Rey opens early for those craving breakfast. 233 Main, 713.225.1895. B, L & D Mon–Sat; LN Fri & Sat. $  

**Falafel Frenzy Mediterranean** This quaint spot serves up all your Mediterranean favorites, including beef and chicken kabobs, hummus and of course falafel. 914 Prairie, 713.237.8987. L. Mon–Sat. $  

**Flying Saucer Pub Fare** Offering more than 200 beers, almost half on draft, Flying Saucer is a beer-drinker’s paradise. Excellent staff and tasty eats give the place an identity all its own. www.beerkrum.com. 705 Main, 713.228.7468. L, D & LN Daily. $  

**Frank’s Pizza** Pizza Home of the “late-night slice,” Frank’s Pizza has built a quality reputation for itself serving up delicious food in a great atmosphere. Not only can you grab a slice of pizza, Frank’s also serves up darn good hamburgers, Philly cheesesteak sandwiches, Buffalo wings, lasagna and salads. www.frankspizza.com. 417 Travis, 713.225.5656. L & D Daily; LN Fri & Sat. $  

**Gibson’s Beef & Bird American** An upscale, intimate dining experience in an elegant environment, Gibson’s evokes the memory of a private supper club where you dine while enjoying the sounds of Sinatra and Fitzgerald. Chop house favorites include steaks, rack of lamp, cedar plank salmon and double pork chops. A cozy bar features an array of high-end whiskies and a wide assortment of wines. www.bellarestaurants.com. 304 Main, 713.229.9500. L & D Mon–Sat. $$$$ Opening October.

**The Grove American Rustic** This two–story, ultra–urban restaurant is found at Discovery Green, downtown Houston’s newest park. The menu features rustic American cuisine such as Gulf Coast seafood, steaks and signature rotisserie dishes. The Tree House roof deck bar features casual bar snacks and a see–and–be–seen atmosphere for cocktails. www.grovehoustontx.com. Discovery Green, 1611 Lamar, 713.373.7321. L Daily; D Tue–Sun. $$$$  

**Grum Bar & Grill Classic American** A casual dining and nightlife spot with a traditional bar and grill menu including pizzas, sandwiches, burgers and steaks. Comfortable atmosphere with walls featuring work by local artists, a wide selection of beers, good food and friendly staff make this a place you want to check out. 306 Main, 713.224.6448. L. Mon–Sat; D. Thu–Sun. $  

**Guadalajara Hacienda Mexican** This family–owned restaurant consistently serves up tasty food in a welcoming, authentic hacienda environment. It’s the perfect place to bring the family or a large group of co–workers or friends. Great happy hour specials. www.guadalajarahacienda.com. Houston Pavilions, 1201 San Jacinto. L & D Daily. $  

**Hard Rock Cafe Classic American** What do you get when you mix a music–themed diner with an All–American menu? The Hard Rock Cafe. Hard Rock is a great family–friendly spot serving up items such as burgers, nachos and chicken varieties. Ideal for a group gathering or a place just to hang out. www.hardrock.com. Bayou Place, 570 Texas, 713.227.1392. L, D & LN Daily. $$$ Opening October.

**Havana Latin Grill & Bar Latin** A colorful and engaging destination, Havana provides its guests with an exciting dining experience. Dishes infused with Cuban, Latin and Caribbean influences are sure to make for a tasty meal. At night, the restaurant gives way to a dance floor, so bring your dancing shoes. www.havanalatin.com. 818 Travis, 713.222.2254. L.Tue–Fri; D. Tue–Sat; LN Fri & Sat. $$$$  


**Hong Kong Diner Chinese** A favorite of downtown locals, Hong Kong Diner will not disappoint with its expansive menu and delicious chef’s specials. Be sure to try their dumplings. 909 Franklin, 713.236.1688. L & D Mon–Sat. $  


**Houston Tamales Factory Mexican** Family recipes made with fresh ingredients. Great breakfast tacos and of course the tamales are the specialty of the house. www.houstontamalesfactory.com. 1205 Travis, 713.802.1800. B & L Mon–Fri. $  

**Hubcap Burger Grill American Classic** Small but quaint burger joint. 1111 Prairie, 713.222.5885. L. Mon–Fri. $  

**Humble Cafe American** The Humble Cafe is a full–service restaurant serving up breakfast and dinner in a casual atmosphere. Courtyard by Marriott, 916 Dallas, 832.366.1600. B & D Daily. $  

**Hunan Downtown Chinese** You’ll be impressed by the elegant décor and their Chinese cuisine is as impeccable as the restaurant itself. Guests can indulge in traditional favorites or try new creations. 812 Capitol, 713.227.8999. L. & D Mon–Sat. $$  

**Irma’s Mexican** Irma Galvan has been crowned Houston’s Tex–Mex goddess. This authentic spot is a longtime favorite among Houston politicos and downtown business people. Traditional, home–cooked Mexican cuisine is served for breakfast and lunch on weekdays. 22 North Chenevert, 713.222.0767. B & L Mon–Fri. $  

**Irma’s New Southwest Grill Mexican** Irma’s second location is a hip spot to satisfy a Mexican food craving. Enjoy tasty foods and great drinks for lunch or dinner. Only a few short blocks from Minute Maid Park. www.irmassouthwest.com. 1314 Texas, 713.247.9651. B & L Mon–Fri. Open on Astros baseball game days and nights three hours before first pitch. $$
James Coney Island  
**Fast Food**  
This local favorite has been serving delicious hot dogs to downtown Houston patrons since 1923. The chili recipe has stayed the same, but new menu additions include Polish sausage, a Chicago-style dog and a New York-style dog.  
www.jamesconeyisland.com. 1142 Travis, 713.652.3819. B Mon-Fri; L Mon-Sat; D Fri-Sat; Bar & Live Music Tue-Sat. $$

**Jason’s Deli  Deli**  
Order to please, Jason’s will make your sandwich or salad exactly how you like it.  

Josephine’s Ristorante  
**Italian**  
Enjoy traditional favorites made from scratch at this family-owned eatery. Great service and a cozy, casual atmosphere make you feel right at home.  
www.josephinestalian.com. 1209 Caroline, 713.759.9323. L Mon-Fri; D Mon-Sat. $$

**The Lake House  Fast Casual**  
The Lake House offers family-friendly food, featuring Kobe beef hot dogs, salads, shakes, wine and beer. Located on Kinder Lake, there is a large patio where you can watch model boats race across the water or listen to some live music from the nearby amphitheater stage.  

**La Palapa  Fast Food**  
A Courthouse District favorite, there’s always a line at this free-standing pink concession stand for breakfast tacos and hamburgers. 1110 Preston, 713.228.9620. B & L Mon-Fri. $  

**Last Concert Cafe  Mexican**  
Tucked away in the Warehouse District, this Tex-Mex cafe was born in 1949 and still supplies tasty food and local music today. Spend some time on the leafy back patio and you’ll swear you’re in your neighbor’s backyard throwing back a cold one. Insiders know that to get in you have to knock on the red door.  
www.lastconcert.com. 1403 Nance, 713.226.8563. L Mon-Thu; D Tue-Sun; LN Fri-Sat; Bar & Live Music Tue-Sat. $  

**Les Givral’s Kahve  Vietnamese**  
Winner of the 2006 “City’s Best” award for Vietnamese restaurants in Houston, Les Givral’s offers up a delicious menu and great service. Located in downtown’s historic Market Square.  
www.lesgivrals.com. 801 Congress, 713.547.0444. B Mon-Fri; L Mon-Sat; D Fri & Sat. $  

**Little Napoli  Italian**  
Offering southern Italian items in a casual setting, you can opt for indoor seating or take a spot on their large patio right on Main Street. Their healthy options, such as whole wheat pizza crust and low-fat cheeses are a nice touch.  

**Live Sports Café  American**  
Live offers a variety of events that make every night an adventure. The café offers some tasty items, and the standout view upstairs makes the place unique. Lots of big-screen TVs make it the spot for sports watching—from baseball to ultimate fighting.  

**Longhorn Café  Homestyle**  
Longhorn offers up a Texas-style experience. Old-fashioned burgers, sandwiches and fries contribute to the down-south feel of the café.  

**Market Square Bar & Grill  American**  
This Chicago-style neighborhood hangout is a local favorite. Boasting a handful of “fire-pow- ered” burgers, Market Square offers plenty of reasons to stop by for a meal or drink. The backyard patio, friendly staff and full bar add flavor.  

**Mandarin Hunan Restaurant  Chinese**  
This upscale eatery gives its guests an engaging experience in Chinese cuisine. Located in the Skyline District, Mandarin’s floor-to-ceiling glass windows provide a great view of the streetscape. 777 Walker, 713.224.1212. L & D Mon-Fri. $  

**Morton’s The Steakhouse  Seafood**  
An upscale and elegant restaurant offering a fine selection of American and seafood cuisine. Superior service and a great dining atmosphere allow guests to enjoy a memorable experience.  
www.mortons.com. 1160 Smith, 713.650.0837. L Mon-Fri; D Mon-Sat. $$

**Mona’s Restaurant  Seafood**  
Like its sister restaurant, you can count on superior service and a great dining atmosphere. Conveniently located close to the convention center and Toyota Center, it’s a great spot for lunch and dinner.  
www.monas.com. The Shops at Houston Center, 1331 Lamar, 713.655.9100. L Mon-Fri; D Mon-Sat. $$$

**McCormick & Schmick’s  Seafood**  
The extensive menu changes daily depending on each day’s fresh seafood deliveries. With more than 80 preparations on the menu each day, every guest is sure to find something to satisfy their palate.  

**McDonald’s  Fast Food**  
808 Dallas @ Milam, 713.651.9449. B & L Daily; D Mon-Fri. $  

**Mia Bella  Italian**  
Located in the heart of the Historic District, you’ll enjoy an eclectic variety of Italian cuisine blended with a Mediterranean feel. A long-time favorite, this intimate little bistro’s simple, yet appealing décor, makes it a downtown standout.  

**Mingalone  Italian Bar & Grill**  
A dedication to authentic Italian cuisine makes Mingalone a special place. Just seconds away from all the major theaters, Mingalone is the perfect spot to enjoy dinner before or after a show.  

**Molly’s Pub  Pub Fare**  
A good ol’ Irish bar with tasty food to soak up the beer. Your standard pub fare – sandwiches, dogs and pretty much anything that’s not good for you.  

**Monsoon Wok & Lounge  Asian Fusion**  
Monsoon features a unique combination of Asian-Fusion cuisine, a chic cocktail lounge and appealing architectural design. Always busy at lunch but a great happy hour spot. Try it for dinner before or after a downtown event. The Shops at Houston Center, 1200 McKinney, 713.571.7253. L & D Mon-Fri. $  

**Morton’s The Steakhouse  Steak House**  
This award-winning steakhouse offers an outstanding menu. The downtown location features their new bar concept, Bar 12-21, which includes an impressive wine and mar-

Murphy’s Deli Deli Indulge in a variety of sandwiches and salads. Hot or cold, Murphy’s specializes in creating your sandwich any way it’s ordered. 601 Jefferson, 713.652.4939. 1021 Main, 713.275.1912. 440 Louisiana, 713.247.9122. B & L Mon-Fri all locations. $ New Orleans Cajun Po-Boy Fast Food A great place to grab a fried shrimp or crawfish po-boy. 648 Polk, 713.750.0007. L Mon-Fri. $ New York Pizzeria Pizza 604 Polk, 713.759.9800. L Mon-Fri; D Tue-Fri. $ Pappas BBQ Barbecue Voted one of Houston’s best year after year, this barbecue joint offers an excellent selection with Texas-sized portions. Traditional favorites such as brisket, ribs, sausage and ham are served with Pappas’ flare. Delivery and take-out are available. 1217 Pierce, 713.659.1245. L & D Daily. 1100 Smith, 713.759.0018. L & D Mon-Fri. $ Paul’s Snack Shop Deli Sandwiches, salads and snacks to-go. 1213 Prairie, 713.224.4701. B & L Mon-Fri. $ Perbacco Italian An adorable little spot located at street level of one of Houston’s skyscrapers, Perbacco serves up Italian cuisine in a modern and fresh atmosphere. Catering to downtown workers and the theater crowd, you always get quick and friendly service and tasty food. 700 Milam, 713.224.2422. L Mon-Fri; D Thu-Sat. $ Picazo Bar & Grill International Picazo’s very diverse menu features everything from pizza and salad to prime steaks and signature martinis. With free downtown delivery and full-service catering, Picazo can accommodate any need. www.picazodowntown.com. 1421 Preston, 713.236.1300. B & L Mon-Fri; D Mon-Sat. $$ Plaza Bistro Fast Casual Kick back at Jones Plaza and enjoy a quick bite to eat. Plaza Bistro also serves up treats during scheduled Jones Plaza events. 600 Louisiana, Jones Plaza, 713.236.8850. L Mon-Fri. Also open for plaza events. $ Ponte Vecchio Ristorante Italiano Italian Don’t let the cafeteria-style service at Ponte Vecchio fool you, everything is prepared from scratch. You’ll find many delicious, healthy selections on the menu at this luncheon eatery, all at a reasonable price. www.alponentevchio.com. 507 Dallas, 713.659.9400. L Mon-Fri. $ Popeye’s Fast Food 1116 Travis, 713.571.8600. L & D Mon-Sat. $

★ Quattro Contemporary Italian Vivid colors, creative lighting and a unique design create a sophisticated and inviting ambience for guests. Located in the luxurious Four Seasons Hotel, Quattro is one of downtown’s best restaurants. While dining at the chef’s table, guests can view the kitchen in action. Four Seasons Hotel, 1300 Lamar, 713.652.6250. B, L & D Daily. $$$

Quizzo’s Fast Food 811 Rusk, 713.227.7702. L & D Mon-Fri. 1119 Commerce, 713.228.9000. L Mon-Sat; D Mon-Fri. 1001 Texas, 713.226.8265. L Mon-Sat; D Mon-Fri. $ Rachel’s Sandwich Shop Deli A good little sandwich shop. 421 San Jacinto, 713.223.3913. B & L Mon-Fri. $

Red & White Bistro International A Chef’s Table buffet features a variety of world cuisines and an assortment of delectable desserts. Compliment your meal with a selection from Red & White’s two 1,500 bottle wine towers. Toyota Center, 1510 Polk, 713.758.7534. Open 90 minutes prior to the start of Toyota Center events; call ahead for reservations. $$$ Red Cat Jazz Café Cajun Cajun style blends with Houston flavor at the Red Cat. Indulge in the distinct ambiance, cuisine and sounds offered at this laid-back spot. Live music nightly. www.redcatjazzcafe.com. 924 Congress, 713.226.7870. D & LN Daily. $$

Samba Jazz Café New American A hip, trendy and upscale restaurant right in the mix of Main Street. The menu includes a wide variety of favorites and combined with the live music, Samba is Houston’s ultimate supper club. www.sambacarestaurant.com. 909 Texas, 713.224.5299. L Mon-Fri & Sun; D & LN Daily. $$$

SG’s Express Vietnamese Vietnamese You’ll find all your Vietnamese favorites here: vermicelli bowl, the sandwich, egg drop soup, egg rolls and many different smoothie flavors. 1225 Travis, 713.659.0200. L & D Tue-Fri. $


★ Shula’s American Steak House Steak House Dark wood, sports memorabilia and menus hand-painted on official NFL game footballs makes Pro Hall of Famer Don Shula’s

looking for a new recipe to try out on friends and family? Here’s a great idea for an easy and flavorful meal! 

Mushroom Soup “Cappuccino”
Ingredients:
3T vegetable oil
2 large onions, 1/2” dice
3lb mushrooms and scraps (criminis, portabella, shitake)
3T garlic chopped
2C white wine
Chicken stock
3C cream
Salt and pepper

4 EASY STEPS:
1. In a large saucepot over medium, heat oil until hot.
2. Add onions and lightly caramelize. Next add mushroom scraps and sweat thoroughly, about 5 minutes. Add garlic and cook for another 2 minutes, and then add white wine.
3. Reduce wine by 75% and add enough chicken stock to cover mixture by about a 1/2". Bring to a simmer for 15 minutes, add cream and simmer another 5 minutes.
4. In a small batches blend soup with blender or hand blender. Strain through a medium strainer.

Truffle Foam
(You’re going to look like a superstar!)
Ingredients:
2T truffle oil
1/2C whipping cream
1tsp kosher salt

For truffle foam, beat truffle oil and cold whipping cream until peaks are stiff. Season with salt. Place a dollop of cream on top of hot soup.

Voice Restaurant & Lounge
Hotel Icon, 220 Main
832.667.4470

Houston Downtown

**Skyline Bar & Grill American** Enjoy a breathtaking view of downtown from this contemporary getaway. High on the 24th floor of the Hilton Americas hotel, Skyline offers a variety of unique cuisines along with a full bar for an after-work or late-night cocktail. Hilton Americas, 1600 Lamar, 713.739.8000. D Tue-Sat. $$$$  

**Skyline Deli Deli** With their freshly baked bread, Skyline makes a great deli sandwich. 717 Texas, 713.571.0509. B & L Mon-Fri. $  

**Spaghetti Warehouse Italian** Making its home in an old warehouse, this Italian-American eatery offers large portions for lunch and dinner. Traditional menu items such as spaghetti and meatballs, lasagna and pizza allow the Spaghetti Warehouse to cater to all ages and appetites. 901 Commerce, 713.229.0009. L & D Daily. $  

**Spencer’s for Steaks and Chops Steak House** An ideal location to enjoy a great steak, Spencer’s offers top-quality beef and boasts an extensive wine list. The atmosphere is light, engaging and conducive to conversation. Hilton Americas, 1600 Lamar, 713.577.8325. L Mon-Fri; D Mon-Sat. $$$$  

**Spindletop American** Located in the heart of the Skyline District, Spindletop holds the title as the only restaurant in Houston with a revolving rooftop dining room. High atop the Hyatt, the view is spectacular and the cuisine is quite good. Hyatt Regency Hotel, 1200 Louisiana, 713.654.1234. D Tue-Sun. $$$$  

**Strip House Steak House** Only minutes from the convention center and Toyota Center, Strip House’s mouth-watering steaks are accompanied by a seductive ambiance. Red walls and carpet give this steak palace a unique interior. An international collection of wines puts the finishing touches on the restaurant. [www.striphouse.com](http://www.striphouse.com). The Shops at Houston Center, 1200 McKinney, 713.659.6000. L Mon-Fri; D Daily; LN Fri & Sat. $$$$  

**Subway Fast Food** 405 Main, 713.227.4700. 805 Dallas, 713.651.1331. Daily. $  

**Table 7 Bistro American** With their classic American menu, the eatery is the perfect place to enjoy everything from salads and burgers to blackened mahi mahi and turkey meatloaf lasagna. The best part—every item on the menu costs $10 or less. 720 Fannin, 713.227.4800. B Mon-Sun; L & D Mon-Sat. $  

**Teahouse Tea & Pastries** Across the street from University of Houston Downtown’s campus, the Teahouse is a great spot to study or just to hang out. Try one of their bubble teas or a delicious pastry. 104 Main, 713.228.3063. Mon-Fri. $  

**Theptithdaa Thai Thai** Located at the ground level of the loft residence Hogg Palace, Theptithdaa is a traditional Thai restaurant. The warm and cozy atmosphere offers a great setting for a dinner escape and is a local favorite. 401 Louisiana, 713.225.4900. D Daily. $  

**Timpano Chophouse & Martini Bar Steak House/Italian** Reminiscent of the classic restaurants and clubs of Chicago and New York, Timpano Chophouse & Martini Bar embodies the big-city dining experience with flavorful steaks, chops and pasta in a sophisticated setting. [www.timpanohouse.net](http://www.timpanohouse.net). 610 Main, 713.223.2622. L Mon-Fri; D Mon-Sun; LN Fri & Sat. $$$$  

**TOPZ Healthier Burger Grill Classic American** TOPZ offers a healthy alternative to fast food cravings. Menu offerings include lean Black Angus, turkey and garden burgers, air baked fries and onion rings and salads. TOPZ also offers fruit smoothies made with real fruit and ice cream. [www.topz.com](http://www.topz.com). 914 Main, 713.655.8679. L Mon-Fri. $  

**Travis Chinese Restaurant Chinese** All your favorites at affordable prices. 1122 Travis, 713.655.8787. L Daily. $  

**Treebeards Cajun Homestyle** A downtown institution for more than 30 years, Treebeards offers tasty Cajun dishes that are sure to satisfy. Favorite menu items include the chicken and shrimp gumbo, red beans and rice and étouffée. For dessert, try their famous butter bar. [www.treebeards.com](http://www.treebeards.com). 315 Travis, 713.228.2622. Cloisters at Christ Church Cathedral, 1117 Texas, 713.229.8248. L Mon-Fri. $  

**Trefo Restaurant Continental** Trefo’s menu is described as Continental with a Mediterranean and Latin flair and the ambiance is casual simple yet sophisticated. Lunch buffets are available Monday through Friday. 400 Dallas, Doubletree Hotel, 713.759.0202. B, L & D Daily. $  

**Vic & Anthony’s Steak House** This world-class steakhouse is one of the most elegant dining locations in Houston. It boasts rich mahogany woodwork and one-of-a-kind hospitality. Located in the heart of the Ballpark District and across from Minute Maid Park, Vic & Anthony’s is the ideal spot for entertaining business clients, a special celebration or for a pre/post-game dinner. [www.vicandanthony.com](http://www.vicandanthony.com). 1510 Texas, 713.228.1111. L Fri; D Daily. $$$$$  

**VOICE Restaurant & Lounge Modern American** Located in the historic lobby of Hotel Icon’s landmark bank building, VOICE offers guests an exquisite fine dining experience. The intimate dining room is extravagant, and the food speaks for itself with items from the Gulf Coast and South Texas and an emphasis on fresh ingredients. A contemporary lounge offers downtown patrons a modern setting for cocktails and an elegant after-work meeting place. [www.hotelicon.com](http://www.hotelicon.com). Hotel Icon, 220 Main, 832.667.4470. B Daily; L & D Mon-Sat. $$$$  

**Warren’s Inn Fast Casual** The goods times roll with a killer jukebox, excellent drinks, and a fun, bohemian environment. Quick sandwiches and other items are served during the day; you can order in from nearby restaurants at night if you have the munchies. 307 Travis, 713.247.9207. L Mon-Fri. $  

**Wimpys Hamburgers Fast Food** Wimpys serves up a pretty good burger but they also have many other down-home favorites. 632 Polk, 713.652.0123. B & L Mon-Fri. $  

**YAPA Kitchen Café Fast Casual** Known for its fresh foods, YAPA specializes in great food for dine-in or take-out. Good service and a great atmosphere combine to give guests a pleasurable experience. 917 Franklin, 713.227.7076. L Mon-Fri. $  

**Yatra Brasserie Indian Fusion** Indian dishes as well as some new recipes are found at downtown’s new Indian-fusion restaurant. Sample everything from Indian-inspired burgers to curried chicken at this atmospheric hotspot. [www.yatrabrasserie.com](http://www.yatrabrasserie.com). 706 Main Street, 713.224.6700. L Mon-Fri; D Mon-Sat. $  

**Zero’s Sandwich Shop Deli** A great little spot for a freshly made deli sandwich. [www.zerossandwichshop.com](http://www.zerossandwichshop.com). 809 Dallas, 713.650.3333. 1110 Lamar, 713.655.7722. 507 Dallas, 713.739.9955. L Mon-Fri. $  

**Zula New American** This eclectic restaurant is memorable with its 25-foot ceilings, mirrors and elaborate color scheme. The menu offers traditional favorites along with new, innovative items. [www.zulahouston.com](http://www.zulahouston.com). 705 Main, 713.227.7052. L Mon-Fri; D Mon-Sat. $$$$  

**Zydeco Louisiana Diner Cajun** This cafeteria-style Cajun joint brings Louisiana dishes to the Hospital District of downtown Houston. Traditional Cajun items such as po-boys, jambalaya and gumbo make Zydeco a great lunch stop. A casual atmosphere adds to the enjoyment. 1119 Pease, 713.759.2001. L Mon-Fri. $
The unforgettable and inspiring story of a woman named Celie, who finds the strength to triumph over adversity and discovers her unique voice in the world. With a joyous Grammy®-nominated score featuring gospel, jazz, pop and the blues, The Color Purple is about hope and the healing power of love.
THEATER

ONEGIN
Through Sept 14 Houston Ballet  As multifaceted as the poem that inspired it, John Cranko’s Onegin has been referred to as one of the finest narrative ballets of the late 20th century. Tickets $17–$150. Sun 2, all other nights 7:30. Brown Theater, Wortham Theater Center, 501 Texas. 713.227.2787/ www.houstonballet.org

DISNEY’S GEPPETTO & SON
Sept 12-13 Theatre Under The Stars (TUTS) Combining the much–loved characters and songs of the classic Disney cartoon Pinocchio with the popular Drew Carey television film Geppetto, this new take pulls a few fresh strings for the most famous puppet in the world. Tickets $26–$31. Fri 7:30, Sat 1:30 & 7:30. Hobby Center, 800 Bagby. 713.558.8887/ www.tuts.com

DVOŘÁK’S NEW WORLD SYMPHONY

FIESTA FOLKLORICA

THE COLOR PURPLE

GIL SHAHAM PLUS MOZART

CLASSICALLY MODERN

LEGENDARY LOVERS

FOLK MUSIC OF THE DESERT
Sept 21 Indo-American Association This concert features the best of the Mangniars and the Langas—the two clans that are torch bearers of folk music of Rajasthan. Tickets $22–$77. Sun 6. Cullen Theater, Wortham Theater Center, 501 Texas. 281.648.0422/ www.iaa houston.com

MOZART AND SHOSTAKOVICH
Sept 26-28 Houston Symphony You’ll experience the rare chance to hear Yevtuashenko read his poetry and then hear the powerful music it inspired. Tickets $27–$107. Fri & Sat 8, Sun 2:30. Jones Hall, 615 Louisaina. 713.224.7575/ www.houston symphony.org

MAN OF LA MANCHA
Sept 26-Oct 5 Masquerade Theatre This classic allegory of the struggle of good versus evil is highlighted by the sometimes comedic, sometimes dramatic attempts of Don Quixote to right all the wrongs in the world. Ticket prices vary. Sun 2, all other nights 8. Hobby Center, 800 Bagby. 713.861.7045/ www.masqueradetheatre.com

SING FOR HOPE – AN EVENING OF ART SONGS AND ARIAS

TWO BODIES AND ONE SOUL

PATTI LABELLE

THE ESSENCE OF MERCURY
Oct 3 Mercury Baroque Experience the genius of Handel’s Opus 6, considered by many to be the peak of his instrumental work. Tickets $22–$50. Fri 8. Cullen Theater, Wortham Theater Center, 501 Texas. 713.533.0080/ www.mercurybaroque.org

COMPAÑÍA FLAMENCO JOSÉ PORCEL
Oct 4 Society for the Performing Arts Direct from Spain, the stunning José Porcel and his company of drop–dead gorgeous dancers represent the best in classic, traditional flamenco while flawlessly melding contemporary styles and moves. Tickets $20–$60. Sat 8. Jones Hall, 615 Louisaina. 713.227.4772/ www.spahouston.org

MOZART IN VIENNA

HOMELAND: LAURIE ANDERSON

WAYNE BRADY

DR. SEUSS’ GREEN EGGS & HAM

THE ULTIMATE STRING JUGALBANDI

BEETHOVEN 2 & TCHAIKOVSKY’S ROCOCO

TITUS ANDRONICUS
Oct 16-18 Dominic Walsh Dance Theatre Walsh offers a chilling abstract take on Shakespeare’s revenge tragedy set to an original score composed and performed by Two Star Symphony. Tickets $23.25–$83.25. Thu–Sat 7:30. Zilkha Hall, Hobby Center, 800 Bagby. 713.315.2525/ www.dwdt.org
CAVALLERIA RUSTICANA & PAGLIACCI
Oct 17, 24, 26, 29 & Nov 1 Houston Grand Opera
Betrayal, jealousy and revenge—the perfect partners for an evening of irresistible theater. Tickets $20–$250. Opening night 7, Sun 2, all other nights 7:30. Brown Theater, Wortham Theater Center, 501 Texas. 713.228.6737/www.houstongrandopera.org

FRANKIE VALLI & THE FOUR SEASONS
Oct 17 Houston Symphony
Hear Frankie Valli and the Four Seasons together with the Houston Symphony as they perform all the favorites. Tickets $35–$125. Fri 7:30. Jones Hall, 615 Louisiana. 713.224.7575/www.houstonsymphony.org

CHOPIN IN PARIS: EPGRAPH FOR A CONDEMNED BOOK
Oct 18 Da Camera
A unique tapestry of sight and sound, Sarah Rothenberg’s Epigraph for a Condemned Book reveals the daring genius of Chopin’s piano works. Tickets $22–$50. Sat 8. Cullen Theater, Wortham Theater Center, 501 Texas. 713.524.5050/www.dacamera.com

GLOBAL DRUMS
Oct 19 Indo-American Association

FROST/NIXON
Oct 21-22 Broadway Across America
Frost/Nixon tackles the question: How did David Frost, a famous British talk show host with a playful reputation, elicit the apology that the rest of the world was waiting to hear? Tickets $18–$50. Tue–Fri 6, Sat & Sun 2 & 7:30. Hobby Center, 800 Bagby. 713.315.2525/www.broadwayacrossamerica.com

SECRET ORDER
Oct 24-Nov 23 Alley Theatre
Fueled by pharmaceutical money, personal ambition and media frenzy, Bob Clyman’s provocative Secret Order will have special appeal for anyone with a secret love of science. Tickets $40–$35. Tue–Thu 7:30, Fri 8, Sat 2 & 8, Sun 2:30 & 7:30. Neuhaus Stage, Alley Theatre, 615 Texas. 713.220.5700/www.alleytheatre.org

THE KENNY BARRON TRIO
Oct 25 Da Camera
Kenny Barron’s unmatched ability to mesmerize audiences with his elegant playing, sensitive melodies and infectious rhythms have inspired others with his elegant playing, sensitive melodies and infectious rhythms have inspired others. Tickets $22–$50. Sat 8. Cullen Theater, Wortham Theater Center, 501 Texas. 713.524.5050/www.dacamera.com

BEATRICE AND BENEDICT
Oct 30, Nov 2, 8, 12 & 14 Houston Grand Opera
In Berlioz’s light—hearted opera—based on Shakespeare’s Much Ado About Nothing—two stubborn people use verbal jousting to mask their true feelings for each other. Tickets $20–$250. Sun 2, all other nights 7:30. Brown Theater, Wortham Theater Center, 501 Texas. 713.228.6737/www.houstongrandopera.org

TCHAIKOVSKY’S SECOND PLUS JON KIMURA PARKER
Nov 13, 15 & 16 Houston Symphony
Tchaikovsky’s joyous Second Symphony develops enchanting Ukrainian folk songs with energy and technical mastery—all to a dazzling effect. Tickets $27–$107. Thu 8, Sat 2 & 8. Jones Hall, 615 Louisiana. 713.224.7575/www.houstonsymphony.org

MUSIC OF THE EAGLES
Nov 14 Houston Symphony
This tribute to one of America’s most beloved bands will combine the Houston Symphony, singer Randy Jackson from Zebra and a full rock band for an unforgettable evening. Tickets $25–$95. Fri 7:30. Jones Hall, 615 Louisiana. 713.224.7575/www.houstonsymphony.org

CHAVA ALBERSTEIN
Nov 20 Society for the Performing Arts
Singing folk songs in Hebrew, Yiddish and English, Alberstein is as much a singer of the world as a singer of her beloved country Israel. Tickets $20–$50. Thu 8. Cullen Theater, Wortham Theater Center, 501 Texas. 713.227.4772/www.spahouston.org
THE MUSIC MAN
Nov 20-30 Masquerade Theatre Follow the exploits of Harold Hill, fast-talking salesman extraordinaire, as he cons the people of River City, Iowa into forming a youth band. Ticket prices vary. Sun 2, all other nights 8. Hobby Center, 800 Bagby. 713.861.7045/ www.masqueradetheatre.com

JONAH BOKAER - THE INVENTION OF MINUS ONE
Nov 21-22 DiverseWorks Making its regional debut, Jonah Bokaer’s Invention of Minus One infuses technology into an exhibition that propels dance and motion. $15 general admission, $10 members, $8 students. Fri & Sat 8. DiverseWorks Theater, 1117 East Freeway. 713.223.8346/ www.diverseworks.org

THE SONG AND DANCE ENSEMBLE OF WEST AFRICA
Nov 22 Society for the Performing Arts This extraordinary group of musicians and dancers mesmerize with astonishing performances inspired by the traditions of Mali and infused with the personality of the ensemble. Tickets $20-$45. Sat 8. Jones Hall, 615 Louisiana. 713.227.4772/ www.spahouston.org

SPEAKER SERIES
JUNOT DIAZ
Sept 15 The season kicks off with this year’s Pulitzer Prize-winning novelist, Junot Diaz, as he reads from his novel, The Brief Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao. $5 general admission, free for students and seniors. Mon 7:30. Zilkha Hall, Hobby Center, 800 Bagby. 713.521.2026/ www.inprinthouston.org

HOUSTON AND HARRIS COUNTY’S HISPANIC HERITAGE
Sept 18 Commissioner Sylvia R. Garcia was elected to Harris County Commissioner’s Court in November 2002 and was the first Hispanic and first woman to be elected in her own right to the office. Free. Thu noon–1. The Heritage Society Tea Room, 1100 Bagby. 713.655.1912/ www.heritesociety.org

STEWART CADILLAC LUNCH SERIES:
Sept 19 Learn about what’s happening downtown. Bring your own lunch or purchase lunch at the event. Free. Fri noon–1. 2 Houston Center Auditorium, 909 Fannin, P2 Level. 713.658.8938/ www.downtownhouston.org

AN EVENING WITH MARKOS MOULTSAS
Sept 22 Founder and editor of Daily Kos, the most widely read political blog in the world, Moulitsas is a pioneer in transforming the Internet into a major force in America politics. Tickets $14-$54. Mon 7:30. Cullen Theater, Wortham Theater Center, 501 Texas. 832.251.0706/ www.progressiveforumhouston.org

ANN PATCHETT & ANNE ENRIGHT
Oct 6 Prize-winning author Ann Patchett and Irish novelist and Man Booker Prize-winner Anne Enright will read from their works. $5 general admission, free for students and seniors. Mon 7:30. Zilkha Hall, Hobby Center, 800 Bagby. 713.521.2026/ www.inprinthouston.org

NATASHA TRETWEH & JOHN EDGAR WIDEMAN
Nov 10 Pulitzer Prize-winning poet Natasha Trethewey and National Book Award finalist John Edgar Wideman will read from their works. $5 general admission, free for students and seniors. Mon 7:30. Neuhaus Stage, Alley Theatre, 615 Texas. 713.521.2026/ www.inprinthouston.org

Making an Inprint on the Community
Inprint Brown Reading Series, now in its 28th season and presented in association with the Alley Theatre, Brazos Bookstore and the UH CWP, features the world’s great writers on stage, at little or no cost to the public. Through the years the series has featured over 300 writers, including four Nobel Prize winners, 41 Pulitzer Prize winners, and 42 National Book Awards. All of the authors give on-stage readings, followed by an interview and a book sale and signing where audience members can meet the authors. Many of the visiting writers also give craft talks which are free and open to the public. All readings are free for students and senior citizens.
EXHIBITIONS
INTERWOVEN TRADITIONS: THE SPIRITUAL JOURNEY FROM AFRICAN TO AFRICAN-AMERICAN
Through Sept 28
This exhibit discusses how Africans were able to use their spiritual beliefs to survive slavery and create their own unique African-American culture. Free. Tue-Sat 10-4, Sun 1-4. The Heritage Society, 1100 Bagby. 713.655.1912/ www.heritagesociety.org

BEN DESOTO – UNDERSTANDING POVERTY
Sept 12 - Nov 1

WHAT’S COOKIN’? TWO CENTURIES OF AMERICAN FOODWAYS
Oct 7 - Jan 4
For most of us food is more than fuel for our bodies. What we choose to eat depends upon our family traditions, ethnic heritage, and regional customs. The fascinating traveling exhibit discusses these food related issues. Free. Tue-Sat 10-4, Sun 1-4. The Heritage Society, 1100 Bagby, 713.655.1912/ www.heritagesociety.org

THRIVE
Nov 14 - Dec 20
This powerful and thought-provoking exhibition explores feminist themes over three decades, tying together the history of the women’s movement, its impact and its lasting influences in today’s creative community. Free. Wed-Sat noon-6. DiverseWorks Main Gallery, 1117 East Freeway. 713.223.8346/ www.diverseworks.org

CARLOS MENCIA
Sept 19
Mencia’s comedy, which is often involves issues of race, culture and social class, will be setting out on his 2008 At Close Range Tour. Tickets start at $45.50. Fri 8. Toyota Center, 1510 Polk. 866.446.8849/ www.houstontoyotacentertix.com

GUITARS & SAKES
Sept 20
A formulated consortium of various jazz musicians featuring Gerald Albright, Jeff Golub, Jeff Lorber and Peter White. Sat 8. Verizon Wireless Theater, 520 Texas. 713.230.1600/ www.verizonwirelesstheater.com

FLOGGING MOLLY
Sept 25
The seven members of Flogging Molly draw on the hardships and joys of their own lives and a musical history ranging from old world Celtic to modern day punk rock. Tickets $25. Thu 8. Verizon Wireless Theater, 520 Texas. 713.230.1600/ www.verizonwirelesstheater.com

CITIZEN COPE SOLO ACOUSTIC PERFORMANCE
Oct 11
Simple melodies and soul-stirring grooves, Cope goes acoustic in this unique and intimate performance. Tickets $27.50. Verizon Wireless Theater, 520 Texas. 713.230.1600/ www.verizonwirelesstheater.com

LUIS MIGUEL
Oct 12
Undoubtedly one of the most beloved and successful international artists of today. Tickets TBD. Sun 8. Toyota Center, 1510 Polk. 866.446.8849/ www.houstontoyotacentertix.com

NEIL DIAMOND
Oct 14
With a four-decade long career that has seen more than 125 million records sold worldwide, Neil Diamond remains one of the most vital and innovative forces in modern music. Tickets start at $55. Tue 8. Toyota Center, 1510 Polk. 866.446.8849/ www.houstontoyotacentertix.com

NEW KIDS ON THE BLOCK
Oct 16
Five now fully-grown men who forever defined what the modern boy band would look and sound like — are back together for one stage. Tickets $25.50-$50. Tue 7:30. House of Blues, Houston Pavilions, 1204 Caroline. 888.402.5837/www.hob.com

THE BLUES BROTHERS
Oct 18
This event is invitation-only except for auction on ticketmaster.com. Sat 8. House of Blues, Houston Pavilions, 1204 Caroline. 888.402.5837/www.hob.com

JANET JACKSON
Oct 21
Jackson has undeniably influenced pop culture with more than 100 million albums sold, countless hit singles, awards and accolades. Tickets start at $49.75. Tue 7:30. Toyota Center, 1510 Polk. 866.446.8849/ www.houstontoyotacentertix.com

ALL TIME LOW
Oct 22

RAY LAMONTAGNE WITH LEONA
Oct 23
LaMontagne is touring in support of his much-anticipated third album, Gossip In The Grain. Tickets $27. Thu 8. Verizon Wireless Theater, 520 Texas. 713.230.1600/ www.verizonwirelesstheater.com

ALANIS MORISSETTE
Oct 24
Alanis Morissette remains not only an endurably popular artist, but one whose success stems from a fierce commitment to authenticity and to an equal extent, vulnerability. Tickets $34-$70. Fri 8. Jones Hall, 615 Louisiana. 713.629.3700/ www.ticketmaster.com

JASON MRAZ
Oct 25
Mraz is an eclectic artist with multiple and varied stylistic influences, including pop, rock, folk, jazz, country and hip hop. Tickets $30. Sat 8. Verizon Wireless Theater, 520 Texas. 713.230.1600/ www.verizonwirelesstheater.com

VICENTE FERNÁNDEZ
Oct 26
Vicente Fernández, the undisputed king of Mexico’s traditional ranchera music is a nominated Grammy Award performer. Tickets start at $50. Sun 7. Toyota Center, 1510 Polk. 866.446.8849/ www.houstontoyotacentertix.com

BLACKEST OF THE BLACK FEATURING DANZIG & DIMMU BORGIR
Oct 28
The darkest, most extreme bands all on one stage. Tickets $25.50-$50. Tue 7:30. House of Blues, Houston Pavilions, 1204 Caroline. 888.402.5837/www.hob.com

LOS LONELY BOYS W/ALEJANDRO ESCOVEDO
Oct 30
Texas trio that appeal to the American and Texican spirit. Special Guest soulful songwriter Alejandro Escovedo. Tickets $35.50-$75.50. Thu 8. House of Blues, Houston Pavilions, 1204 Caroline. 888.402.5837/www.hob.com

WILLIE NELSON
Nov 1
One of America’s most beloved and notorious country music singers is on the road again. Tickets $63.50-$135. Sat 9. House of Blues, Houston Pavilions, 1204 Caroline. 888.402.5837/www.hob.com

JOE SATRIANI U.S. TOUR ‘08
Nov 4
Widely considered a guitar god, Satriani has played with many of the very best. Tickets $35.50-$85.50. Tue 7:30. House of Blues, Houston Pavilions, 1204 Caroline. 888.402.5837/www.hob.com
*got the blues?

Riley “B.B.” King has been called the “King of the Blues” and indeed he’s reigned across the decades as the genre’s most recognizable and influential artist. His half-century of success owes much to his hard work as a touring musician who consistently logged between 200 and 300 shows a year. Through it all he’s remained faithful to the blues while keeping abreast of contemporary trends and deftly incorporating other favored forms - jazz and pop, for instance - into his musical overview.

You can see B.B. at Houston’s newest music venue House of Blues on Nov 21. www.hob.com

KATHY GRIFFIN


MINUS THE BEAR


COBRA STARSHIP


MADONNA

Nov 17 Pop-star icon Madonna will be stopping in Houston on her Sticky & Sweet tour. Tickets start at $55. Mon 7:30. Minute Maid Park, 501 Crawford./ www.ticketmaster.com

COLDPLAY

Nov 18 This Grammy Award-winning band hits the road with their Viva La Vida North American Tour in support of their new album of the same name. Tickets start at $49.50. Tue 7:30 Toyota Center, 1510 Polk. 866.446.8849/ www.houstontoyotacentertix.com

THE BLACK CROWES


B.B. KING

Nov 21 Named the third-greatest guitarist of “the 100 greatest guitarists of all-time” by Rolling Stone magazine. Tickets $70.50–$125. Fri 8:30. House of Blues, Houston Pavilions, 1204 Caroline.

888.402.5837/ www.hob.com

FILM

ANGELIKA FILM CENTER

Ongoing Stylish cinema playing an eclectic mix of art films and commercial movies from major studios. $9 adults, $7 matinee, $6.25 kids, $6.50 seniors (note: if you park in one of the Theater District underground parking garages, Angelika will reimburse you for your parking; you must present ticket at time of purchase). Bayou Place, 510 Texas. 713.225.1470/ www.angeliakfilmcenter.com

KUHF CLASSIC FILM CONCERTS


FIRST THURSDAYS AT DEAN’S

Oct 2 & Nov 6 Every first Thursday of the month you can check out the screening of award-winning, Texas-made short film entries from the Houston Film Commission’s Texas Filmmakers Showcase or from other film festivals. Free. Thu 8:30. Dean’s Credit Clothing, 316 Main. 713.437.5249

FESTIVALS & SPECIAL EVENTS

THANK YOU, HOUSTON: A CELEBRATION OF GULF COAST VOICES, MUSIC AND FOOD

Sept 13 Houston’s Katrina community commemorates the third anniversary of the hurricane and shares some of the rich traditions they brought with them to Houston. Free. Sat 7. Discovery Green, 1500 McKinney. 713.400.7336/ www.discoverygreen.com

THE THETA CHARITY ANTIQUES SHOW

Sept 18-21 The 56th annual show presents more than 50 premier antique dealers from around the globe. $10 general admission. Thu–Sat 11-6, Sun 11-5. George R. Brown Convention Center, 1001 Avenida de las Americas. www.thetaantiquesshow.com

DISTRICT I BACK TO SCHOOL FAMILY DAY

Sept 20 City Councilman James Rodriguez invites families to celebrate the fresh start of a new school year. The event features cultural performances, games, fun activities, community representatives with resource information for families, special appearances and a free showing of Bee Movie at 7:30. Free. Sat 3. Discovery Green, 1500 McKinney. 713.400.7336/ www.discoverygreen.com

2008 PUERTO RICAN & CUBAN FESTIVAL

Oct 20 & 21 Party down at the hottest festival of the year right here in Houston. $12 general admission. Sat & Sun 10-10. Hermann Square & Tranquility Park, 901 Bagby @ Walker. www.prcfestival.com

HOUSTON TURKISH FESTIVAL

Oct 4 A taste of Turkey without traveling 8,000 miles. This is a fun family event. $5 general admission. Sat noon-10. Jones Plaza, 600 Louisiana. www.atahouston.org

NATIONAL NIGHT OUT


29TH ANNUAL ASIAN AMERICAN FESTIVAL


HIGH SCHOOL FOR THE PERFORMING AND VISUAL ARTS (HSPVA) AT DISCOVERY GREEN

BAYOU CITY ART FESTIVAL
Oct 18 & 19. More than 300 artists from around the U.S. and world hit the streets of downtown for one of the premiere art festivals in the country. $10 for adults and free for kids 12 & under. Sat & Sun 10-6. Hermann Square & Sam Houston Park, 901 Bagby @ Walker. www.bayoucityartfestival.com

HOUSTON WOMEN’S FESTIVAL

INTERNATIONAL QUILT FESTIVAL
Oct 30-Nov 2. Shop, take classes, listen to lectures, see demos and best of all, see more than 2,000 quilts, dolls and gorgeous pieces of wearable art. $10 general admission, $8 seniors & students, free for kids 10 and under with paying adult. Thu-Sat 10-7, Sun 11-5. George R. Brown Convention Center, 1001 Avenida de las Americas. 713.781.6864/ www.quilts.com

THE ART GUYS SILVER JUBILEE TRIBUTE ALBUM CONCERT AND VARIETY SHOW EXTRAVAGANZA
Nov 7. In 25 years of making art, the Art Guys have collaborated with amazing musicians and artists. This concert honors that sense of collaboration and fun. Free. Fri 7. Discovery Green, 1500 McKinney. 713.400.7336/ www.discoverygreen.com

DOWNTOWN HOME TOUR
Nov 15. View downtown residences (currently occupied, for sale and for rent) and the lifestyle of downtown’s movers and shakers. Tickets $25. Sat noon-5. Tour headquarters: Post Rice Lofts, 909 Texas. 713.658.8938/ www.downtownhouston.org

VIA COLORI
Nov 22. A very cool street painting festival that benefits the Center for Hearing and Speech. More than 175 artists will transfer their original masterpieces directly onto the streets in and around Sam Houston Park. Free. Sat & Sun 10-8. Sam Houston Park, 1000 Bagby. www.houstonviacolori.com

OUTDOOR ART & CONCERTS
ART IN THE PARK
Thursdays. The Community Artist Collective gives you a chance to be the artist in the park. Supplies provided, bring your creativity. Every Thu 5. Discovery Green, 1500 McKinney. 713.400.7336/ www.discoverygreen.com

CONCERTS ON THE GREEN
Thursdays. Schedule: KPFT program Sept 18; The Gourds Sept 25; Disco Expressions Oct 2; Big Sam’s Funky Nation Oct 9; The Suspects Oct 16; Paul Minor & the Texas Tycoons Oct 23; Skyrocket Oct 30; Randy Weeks Nov 6; Cumbia Rock Latin Pop Revue Nov 13; KPFT presents Wazobia Nov 20. Free. Every Thu 6:30. Discovery Green, 1500 McKinney. 713.400.7336/ www.discoverygreen.com

SUNDAYS IN THE PARK
Sundays. Afternoon concerts and activities to entertain children of all ages make for an idyllic Sunday in the park. Bring a blanket and a picnic and make a day of it. Free. Sun 3. Discovery Green, 1500 McKinney. 713.400.7336/ www.discoverygreen.com

FRESH FRIDAYS

SCREAM on the Green!
A new citywide Halloween party and costume contest. KPFT presents scary-oke plus prizes for best dog, kids and adult costumes along with music and Halloween movies. Great prizes! Free. Oct 31, festivities start at 5. Discovery Green, 1500 McKinney. 713.400.7336/www.discoverygreen.com

VETERANS DAY PARADE
Nov 11. Join the City of Houston as they honor, thank and support our veterans and our servicemen and servicewomen. Free. Tue 11:30-12:30. Smith St. between Texas and Lamar. www.houstontx.gov

HOUSTON ARTS ALLIANCE SHOWCASE
Sept 20, Oct 25 & Nov 22. This series features the excellence and diversity of Houston’s performing arts community. Free. Sat 3. Discovery Green, 1500 McKinney. 713.400.7336/www.discoverygreen.com

A new age is dawning for Houston’s performing arts – literally. Driven to cultivate fresh audiences, organizations have created professional groups that appeal to younger fans and help cultivate the patrons of tomorrow.

ALLEY THEATRE 1ST ACT
1st Act cultivates future leaders while providing a great opportunity to enjoy outstanding theater with a dynamic group of people. 1st Act members get invitations to pre-show receptions, special events and parties. www.alleytheatre.org

DA CAMERA
By its very nature Da Camera appeals to a diverse audience. With its eclectic schedule, Da Camera always draws newcomers to the theater experience. www.dacamera.com

HOUSTON GRAND OPERA O.N.
Opening Nights for Young Professionals is building a new audience for the Houston Grand Opera. Members attend opening night performances and special events. www.houstongrandopera.org

HOUSTON SYMPHONY YOUNG PROFESSIONALS BACKSTAGE
Twenty- and thirty-somethings interested in behind-the-scenes access and up front support of the Houston Symphony can join YPB and take advantage of pre-concert mixers, special backstage events and more. www.houstonsymphony.org

HOUSTON YOUNG PEOPLE FOR THE ARTS
This Houston Downtown Alliance committee advocates and promotes the art scene to young supporters by doing a sampling of the arts each season. Check out their blog. It’s a great way to get an insider’s view. www.houstonarts.org

NITESPA
Society for the Performing Arts’ NiteSPA brings the world’s best to downtown’s nightlife. Shows are carefully selected and each NiteSPA performance has an exciting accompanying event. www.spahouston.org

UP@TUTS
A poetry slam, cast parties, contemporary shows and backstage tours are some of the events on tap for Theatre Under The Stars’ Urban Professionals group. UP@TUTS, is made up of young arts activists and hip theater-lovers dedicated to the theater experience. www.tuts.com
CULTURE COLLISION
Oct 8 The third year of bringing together arts groups and Houston’s young professionals and urbanites for a one- of -a-kind happy hour event with performances, light bites and cash bar. Free. Wed 5–7:30. Discovery Green, 1500 McKinney. 713.658.8938/www.downtownhouston.org

HOUSTON BALLET II LUNCHEON CONCERT
Oct 14 Take a break from your busy day and revel in culture and beauty. Free. Tue noon. Discovery Green, 1500 McKinney. 713.400.7336/www.discoverygreen.com

TENERIFE DANZA LAB
Oct 18 Tenerife Danza Lab is an exciting dance company that focuses on collaborative choreography. Free. Sat 7. Discovery Green, 1500 McKinney. 713.400.7336/www.discoverygreen.com

ODEIPUS REX - SLAMMED!
Oct 25 Prairie View A & M’s acclaimed troupe of Charles Gilpin Players brings this Greek tragedy alive in the spoken word style. Free. Sat 7. Discovery Green, 1500 McKinney. 713.400.7336/www.discoverygreen.com

KID’S & FAMILY EVENTS

YOUNG WRITERS WORKSHOP IN THE PARK
Saturdays Houston’s only open, free writing workshop for kids presented by Writers in the Schools in conjunction with HPL Express. Free. Sat 10:30–11:30. Discovery Green, 1500 McKinney. 713.400.7336/www.discoverygreen.com

CHILDREN’S DISCOVERY SERIES
Saturdays Houston Public Library (HPL) Express at Discovery Green presents free, weekly, family-oriented workshops. Free. Sat noon–1. Discovery Green, 1500 McKinney. 713.400.7336/www.discoverygreen.com

THE COLOR PURPLE
Sept 6 Learn a gospel theater song and dance from the award-winning musical with instructors from TUTS. Free. Sat 2. Discovery Green, 1500 McKinney. 713.400.7336/www.discoverygreen.com

SHARKEY WEEKEND
Sept 13–14 Family fun with shark feeding and demonstrations, arts and crafts, sidewalk sales, live entertainment and more. $5 exhibit tickets & $5 upgrade to All Day Pass. Sat & Sun. Downtown Aquarium, 410 Bagby. 713.223.3474/www.discoverygreen.com

2nd ANNUAL DUCK RACE
Sept 20 Hundreds of rubber ducks will race down Buffalo Bayou, powered by wind and current, toward the finish line. Sat 1. Downtown Aquarium, 410 Bagby. 713.223.3474/www.discoverygreen.com

MARTHA SPEAKS!

TIGER WEEKEND
Sept 27-28 Downtown Aquarium, home to four stunning white tigers – Nero, Marina, Coral and Reef— is full of tiger activity this weekend with games, crafts and more. Sat & Sun. Downtown Aquarium, 410 Bagby. 713.223.3474/www.aquariumrestaurants.com

BOO ON THE BAYOU

HERITAGE FAMILY DAY: SETTING THE TABLE - HOW FOOD HAS CHANGED IN AMERICA

OPERATION TO GO

HEALTHY LIVING

PILATES IN THE PARK
Tuesdays Classic flexibility and strength training. Free. Every Tue 6–7. Discovery Green, 1500 McKinney. 713.400.7336/www.discoverygreen.com

ZUMBA!
Wednesdays Inspired by Latin dance and music, you’ll sweat, sculpt, tone and feel great. Free. Every Wed 6–7. Discovery Green, 1500 McKinney. 713.400.7336/www.discoverygreen.com

TAI CHI IN THE PARK
Thursdays Reduce stress, increase focus and gain strength through Tai Chi. Taught by Frank Murry, a student of Tai Chi master George Ling Hu. Free. Every Thu noon–1. Discovery Green, 1500 McKinney. 713.400.7336/www.discoverygreen.com

BOOT CAMP
Thursdays Boot Camp is a challenging workout you won’t forget. Free. Every Thu 7–8. Discovery Green, 1500 McKinney. 713.400.7336/www.discoverygreen.com

DOWNTOWN GREEN MARKET: CENTRAL CITY CO-OP AT DISCOVERY GREEN
Thursdays A year-round co-op and farmers market offering the freshest organic produce and products. Free. Every Thu 4–7:30. Discovery Green, 1500 McKinney. 713.400.7336/www.discoverygreen.com

YOGA IN THE PARK

RECYCLING SATURDAYS
Saturdays Downtown’s recycling drop-off spot. The first Saturday of the month enjoy environmentally friendly product demos and hands on recycling activities. Free. Every Sat 10–2. Discovery Green, 1500 McKinney. 713.400.7336/www.discoverygreen.com

2nd ANNUAL MEMORY WALK
Sept 13 Free, no registration required. Sat 8. Buffalo Bayou Trail beginning at Hobby Center, 800 Bagby. www.alztx.org

ANNUAL HOUSTON KIDNEY WALK

KOMEN RACE FOR THE CURE

HOUSTON HALF MARATHON RACE AND RELAY
Oct 26 Advance registration required. Sun 7. Sam Houston Park, 1100 Bagby. www.houstonhalf.com

MOONLIGHT RAMBLE
Oct 26 More than a family bike ride – it’s a rolling party. Two routes: an 8-mile and a 20-mile. Advance registration preferred. Sun 2 a.m. $25. George R. Brown Convention Center, 1001 Avenida de las Americas. www.bikehouston.com

HMFA CLASSICAL 25K
Nov 9 Advance registration required. Sun 7. Wortham Theater Center, Fish Plaza, 501 Texas. www.houstonmasters.org

SPORTS

HOUSTON ROLLER DERBY CHAMPIONSHIP BOUT

BATTLE ROYALE
Oct 3-5 The top 12 roller derby teams in the western region will battle it out for the regional title. 1-day ticket $25, 3-day ticket begins at $65. Verizon Wireless Theater, 520 Texas. 713.230.1600/www.houstonrollerderby.com

HOUSTON ASTROS
Fall schedule Home games: Chicago Sept

HOUSTON ROCKETS
Pre-season Home games: Memphis Tue Oct 7; San Antonio Thu Oct 9; Sacramento Fri Oct 17; all games 7:30. Fall schedule Home games: Memphis Wed Oct 29; Oklahoma City Sat Nov 1; New Orleans Nov 15; Dallas Nov 19; game times TBD. Tickets $10–$350. Toyota Center, 1510 Polk. 866.446.8849/www.rocks.com

HOUSTON AEROS
Fall schedule Home games: Chicago Oct 11, Sat 7:35; Milwaukee Oct 13, Mon 7:05; San Antonio Oct 18, Sat 7:35; Iowa Oct 28, Tue 7:05; Providence Oct 31, Fri 7:35; Scranton Nov 2, Sun 4:05; Bridgeport Nov 16, Sun 4:05; Worcester Nov 22, Sat 7:35; Hamilton Nov 23, Sun 5:05. Tickets start at $12. Toyota Center, 1510 Polk. 713.974.7825/www.aeros.com

HOUSTON DYNAMO
Fall schedule Home games: San Jose Sept 20, Sat 7:30; D.C. United Oct 12, Sun 6; Los Angeles Oct 18, Sat 7:30; Tickets $20–$52. University of Houston Robertson Stadium, 4800 Calhoun. 713.276.7500/www.houstondynamo.com

HOUSTON TEXANS

TOURS
SECOND SATURDAY BUFFALO BAYOU BOAT RIDES
Sept 13, Oct 11 & Nov 15 These 30–minute pontoon boat cruises are a great way to spend the afternoon with your family and friends. First come first serve, no reservations, 20 person max per trip. $7 adults, $5 for kids 4–12. Sat 10–2. Sabine Promenade at Sabine St. 713.752.0314/www.buffalobayou.org

KAYAK TOURS
Sept 21, Oct 19 & Nov 23 Kayak adventures through Houston’s stunning urban wilderness are guided by outfitter Larry Mason with North Lake Conroe Paddling Co. Reservations required, cancellations must take place 48 hours prior to the tour. $50 adults. Sat 10–noon & 1–3. Allen’s Landing (Main & Commerce). 713.752.0314/www.buffalobayou.org

HISTORY TOURS

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HISTORY TOURS

BAT TOURS
Every Friday Night through Nov Learn more about these magnificent flying mammals that share the city with us. Reservations required, cancellations must take place 48 hours prior to the boat tour. $35 adults, $20 for kids 4–12. Allen’s Landing (Main & Commerce). 713.752.0314/www.buffalobayou.org

DISCOVER HOUSTON TOURS
Ongoing Ghost tours, tunnel walk and rail tours, architecture tours and more are available. Ticket prices vary. 713.222.9255/www.discoverhoustontours.com

EXPERIENCE HOUSTON WALKING TOURS
Ongoing Downtown tours include the downtown tunnel system, historic places and panoramic views from the city’s best observation spots. Ticket prices vary. Visitors Center, 901 Bagby, 1st floor. 713.465.7415/www.visitdowntown.com

HERITAGE SOCIETY HISTORIC HOMES TOUR
Ongoing Nestled in 19 acres in the heart of downtown Houston, The Heritage Society boasts eight historic structures dating from 1823 to 1905. Each historic structure is authentically restored to reflect its original magnificence. $6 adults, $4 seniors & free for kids under 18. Tue–Sat 10, 11:30, 1 & 2:30, Sun 1 & 2:30. 1100 Bagby. 713.665.1912/www.heritagesociety.org

MINUTE MAID PARK TOUR

TOYOTA CENTER BACKSTAGE TOUR
Ongoing The one-hour backstage tour will take you behind the scenes of Houston’s premier destination for sports and entertainment. $7 adults, $5 for kids 12 and under & seniors. Toyota Center, 1510 Polk. 713.758.7715/www.toyotacenter.com

FREE SELF-GUIDED AUDIO WALKING TOURS
Available beginning Oct Experience two new ultra-modern tours that aren’t just for tourists–The Ultimate Downtown Tour and The Museum District Walk and Roll Tour. Free and downloadable to a iPod /MP3 player at www.houston downtown.com

DISCOVERY GREEN AUDIO WALKING TOUR
Available beginning Oct Discover Discovery Green, downtown’s new backyard. Now you can take an audio walking tour and learn all about it. Free and downloadable to a iPod / MP3 player at www.discoverygreen.com or www.houstondowntown.com

*custom holiday cards
holiday party invitations
3306 s. shepherd 77098
10–6 mon - fri 11–5 sat
713.522.8861
www.phdesignshop.com/phscoop
www.houstondowntown.com 35
THE List
OUR ABSOLUTE MUSTS FOR FALL

2 ZUMBA!
Zumba! is not a workout – it’s a party. Inspired by Latin dance and music, you’ll sweat, sculpt, tone and generally feel great. This class is Discovery Green’s most popular offering, with more than 100 people typically working out on the lawn. Be prepared to get in the spirit. Whooping and hollering is not only encouraged, but expected. In fact, fans are so dedicated that they insisted the free class continue in the summer heat.
Every Wed 6-7, Discovery Green, 1500 McKinney, 713.400.7336/ www.discoverygreen.com

3 Madge in Texas
There’s only one place to catch Madonna’s Sticky and Sweet Tour in Texas this fall – Minute Maid Park. Alden-Houston is making the most of the Material Girl’s appearance with a grand pre-party on the second-floor veranda, complete with everything Madge. Music, videos and a look-alike contest kick off the evening. After the concert check out the party in the hotel’s stylish lounge, a+. If you want to completely submerge yourself in the event, take advantage of the hotel’s “so material girl” package and book a room for the weekend.
Sun, Nov 16, Alden Hotel, 1117 Prairie, 832.200.8843/ www.aldenhotels.com

4 RELAX POOLSIDE
Sunday Special
Ahhhh......make Sundays Your Sun Day at the Four Seasons Hotel. Book any two Spa Tapas treatments and get full access to their lush, resort-style pool for the day – significant since the pool is typically for guests only. Indulge in soothing treatments like their tropical Hand/Foot Smoother, Mango Mini Massage or S.O.S. Soother, which is designed to relieve sunburned skin. All Spa Tapas treatments can be enjoyed from a comfy chaise lounge or a private patio for those booked in poolside rooms.
Every Sun, the Four Seasons Hotel, 1300 Lamar, 713.650.1300/www.fourseasons.com

5 TAKE A TOUR
URBAN ENVY
Satisfy your curiosity about living a true urban lifestyle during the annual Downtown Home Tour. You can check out some of the coolest downtown residences – from trendy lofts to luxury condos – and see units that are occupied, for sale and for rent. Even better, you get to take a peek at the lifestyles of some of downtown’s movers and shakers.
Tickets are $25.
Sat, Nov 15, noon-5, tour headquarters: Post Rice Lofts, 909 Texas, 713.658.8938/ www.downtownhouston.org

GET GOOGLY EYED
Art Guys concert
Celebrate a truly unique vision with The Art Guys Silver Jubilee Tribute Album Concert and Variety Show Extravaganza (whew!). In their 25 years of pushing boundaries, the “guys” have worked with amazing musicians and artists. The concert will honor that sense of collaboration and fun with a show that will be nothing short of amazing. Music by Brave Combo, the original nuclear polka band from Denton and performances by other musicians from their CD will no doubt capture the spirit of The Art Guys.
Fri, Nov 7, Discovery Green, 1500 McKinney, 713.400.7336/ www.discoverygreen.com

PARTY LIKE A ROCKSTAR
36fall 2008 downtown
Houston is where ZZ Top was formed. It's our home.

Houston's music scene is an interesting fabric—it goes way, way back. Ray Charles once said, "If you want to put a great band together, go to Houston, Texas." Plenty of our songs were inspired by things that happened in Houston or as I like to call it, "H-town."

Billy Gibbons
Musician, ZZ Top

Most cities have a music scene. In Texas and especially in Houston, you'll find fresh, new talent from pretty much every genre of music—that's special.

The city's got flavor—great food, great people and great places for fun. If someone were to ask me why Houston, I would say, "Why go anywhere else?"

Dusty Hill
Musician, ZZ Top

Houston's a great sports town. I love to catch a game at Reliant Park—cool stadium. I really like the fact that you can golf year-round on great courses.

Frank Beard
Musician, ZZ Top

For the rest of ZZ Top's thoughts and to find out what others are saying, log on to VisitMyHouston.com
Birthday card.
Latté. Lunch.
All in one place.