downtown

SPRING 2009

CONNECTING YOU TO THE CENTER OF HOUSTON

WINDS OF CHANGE: HORIZON WIND ENERGY FOCUSES ON RENEWABLE ENERGY FROM ITS DOWNTOWN HEADQUARTERS

GOING GREEN
DOWNTOWN IS CENTER STAGE IN RECYCLING EFFORT

OLD IS NEW
The future of our historic architecture

Discovery Scene
Discovery Green turns one—A year in pictures

SPRING FORWARD

We’ll guide you through what to see, do & eat + shopping and more
ISABEL AND DANNY DAVID LIVE DOWNTOWN IN THE CENTER OF IT ALL.

7AM: ISABEL AND DANNY GET CENTERED AT A YOGA CLASS.

10AM: DANNY PICKS UP COFFEE AT JOE MUGG’S AT BOOKS-A-MILLION.

2PM: ISABEL ADDS TO HER WARDROBE AT BCBGMAXAZRIA.

4PM: DANNY MAKES RESERVATIONS FOR A ROMANTIC DINNER.

6PM: ISABEL AND DANNY WALK THE DOG AT DISCOVERY GREEN.

9PM: LATE DINNER AT MCCORMICK & SCHMICK’S SEAFOOD RESTAURANT.

MAKE A DATE WITH DOWNTOWN.

NOW OPEN XXI Forever Andalusia Tapas Restaurant & Bar BCBGMAXAZRIA The Board Room Books-A-Million Clique Salon Cork Wine Bar Foundation Room at House of Blues Guadalajara del Centro House of Blues McCormick & Schmick’s Seafood Restaurant Mia Bella Unity National Bank

OPENING SOON Bb Forks Steakhouse Au Bon Pain Hank’s Ice Cream Lucky Strike Lanes Marble Slab Pete’s Dueling Piano Bar Poli Street Pub Qatar Airways Yao Restaurant & Bar

RETAIL DINING ENTERTAINMENT OFFICE HOUSTON PAVILIONS THE CENTER OF IT ALL

1201 Fannin Street Houston, Texas 77002 832.320.1200 houstonpavilions.com
Happy birthday
Discovery Green turns one and we’ve put together a photo album to celebrate.

Old is new
Houston learns (finally) to keep an eye on history while looking toward the future. What you didn’t know about preservation in the nation’s fourth-largest city.

by David Bush
Spring has sprung.

Ah... spring. Flowers are blooming, the days are warm and lovely and downtown seems full of promise for tomorrow. People have always perceived our city as one with its eye on the future, but we’re taking a fresh look back at Houston’s history with this issue. As David Bush notes in this quarter’s feature about our city’s preservation efforts, sometimes it’s all about perspective. This city has preserved way more history than it ever gets credit for.

From the beautiful historic homes at Sam Houston Park to Allen’s Landing and the International Coffee Building now being redeveloped by Buffalo Bayou Partnership, it’s a lot easier to steep yourself in the past than you might think. Houston didn’t spring forth from the earth fully formed, after all. And there have always been plenty of people and agencies committed to safeguarding its fascinating past.

But we must admit that we love Houston’s penchant for creating new things as well, and we’d like to take this opportunity to wish Discovery Green a very happy first birthday. The city’s new central park has exceeded so many expectations and we encourage you to check out their spring programming schedule – which is chock full of festivals, events, classes and plenty of opportunities for just lazing about on the green.

With so much to see and do, we hope this magazine has become your “go-to” resource for all things downtown. We really do read your comments and suggestions so please keep them coming and thank you for your support.

Bob Eury
DOWNTOWN DISTRICT

Andrew Huang
HOUSTON DOWNTOWN ALLIANCE

p.s. When our cover model Elli Barnwell showed up with her new pup we tried mightily to incorporate him in our cover shot. Alas, Leon had other ideas. Still, we couldn’t resist sharing our favorite attempt.
New Urban Oasis

Market Square Park, located in the heart of downtown’s Historic District, is getting a much-needed makeover scheduled to begin fall 2009 for a late spring 2010 target completion.

Leaving nothing to chance, Lauren Griffith Associates has been tapped to redesign the new incarnation of Market Square Park and rounding out the team is Ray + Hollington Architects.

The philosophy of the new Market Square Park design is built upon three pillars: interpretation of the space’s history, creation of an active, urban green space, and conservation and exhibition of the existing artwork.

Anchoring the space will be a central lawn that will be placed where the old 19th century City Hall used to stand in order to evoke a sense of history.

A crescent-shaped dog run on the Milam (west) side will give pet lovers an active place to unleash their dogs. A kiosk complete with concessionaire, trellis providing shade, and a duel dining/performance area will stand on the Travis side (east). A double row of oak trees will line Preston (south) and extend to Sesquicentennial Park.

The new park will also include Lauren’s Garden, in honor of Lauren Catuzzi Grandcolas – a passenger on United Flight 93. A water feature will provide an intimate reflective setting. Seasonal flowers, shady trees, and a memorial to all victims of 9/11 will characterize the area located at the Congress (north) end of the central lawn.

New Property Key to Attracting Convention Business

After two years of planning, Houston-based American Liberty Hospitality plans to break ground in April on a 262-room, full-service Embassy Suites Hotel at Dallas at LaBranch adjacent to the George R. Brown Convention Center, the Hilton Americas and overlooking Discovery Green.

The 19-story property represents the first privately developed, full-service hotel built from the ground up in downtown in the past 25 years. It is also the first project to be financed since the city of Houston passed an ordinance to spur new hotel construction within walking distance of the convention center.

When Hurricane Ike stormed into downtown, some of the most visible victims of its wrath were the hundreds of trees that had been planted by the Downtown District over the last 10 years as part of their overall street-scape program.

But the District is committed to creating a green canopy over downtown and although 350 trees were lost, more than two thirds of them already have been replaced. All the trees are being planted as originally designed, and since experts recommend a variety of trees, downtown has an incredible diversity of species – from allee elms along Prairie and Main and laurel oaks along Texas and Travis to the Mexican sycamores along Preston and Congress and the red oaks north of Minute Maid Park. Every tree was chosen for its ability to grow quickly and produce a shady canopy.

Downtown’s speedy recovery was due in no small part to the District’s street team, which was on the ground working with the city of Houston and HPD crews within 48 hours.

They deserve our thanks!
THE STAGE  One of the most acclaimed ambassadors of American culture celebrates 50 years of using dance to explore the uniqueness of black cultural expression. Alvin Ailey American Dance Company, presented by Society for the Performing Arts, collaborates with Grammy Award-winning female a cappella ensemble, Sweet Honey in the Rock, at Jones Hall, for three historic days of dance, March 27–29. Cadillac Broadway Across America-Houston brings forth nostalgia and familiar tunes with The Wizard of Oz, April 7–19 at Hobby Center. Based on The Royal Shakespeare Company’s celebration of the 1939 MGM movie, this musical features breathtaking special effects (a twister, a twister!) and includes The Jitterbug (famously cut from the original film). Love, revolution and music highlight four-time Tony Award winner Tom Stoppard’s Rock ‘n’ Roll presented by Alley Theatre, April 24 through May 24. Stoppard’s sweeping and passionate play spans two countries, three generations and 22 turbulent years, at the end of which, love remains.

THE ARTS  London–based designer Kandis Cook brings a controversial queen to life when she lends her scenic and costume design skills to Houston Ballet’s world premiere of Stanton Welch’s Marie. As of press time, 926 costume items had been created, not including jewelry or hand props like fans. Marie also uses more wigs than most Houston Ballet productions, clocking in with 90 wigs total. Marie runs through March 8 at Wortham Theater Center. Andre Previn’s Brief Encounter makes its world premiere with the Houston Grand Opera, May 1–9. Based on David Lean’s classic film adaptation of a play by Noel Coward and music by Previn, it features a couple torn between love and honor. Backstage bit: This is a new build for HGO’s prop and wardrobe department and the need for a 1937 edition of The London Times sent them on quite a paper chase earlier this season. Luckily for us, and them, they found one. What you see on stage will look like the real newspaper; but the original had to be reduced. Although it is one of many tiny pieces that bring a production together, it is also a part of what makes it a “grand” opera.

THE STARS  Comedians and symphonic instruments don’t always seem to go together but on March 13 the Houston Symphony joins Bill Cosby for a night of music and comedy. Broadway stars and original cast members Adam Pascal and Anthony Rapp reprise their roles (Roger Davis and Mark Cohen, respectively) for the national tour of RENT with Theatre Under the Stars arriving in Houston on April 29 for only five days. It’s a family affair when Da Camera of Houston brings the Chiara String Quartet to Houston for a series of events in April. Violinist and HSPVA/Rice grad Rebecca Fischer and the Quartet are joined at their Menil Collection concert by Fischer’s father, cellist and Shepherd School professor Norman Fischer. They’ll premiere Thoughts Fly by family friend Richard Lavenda, also on the faculty at the Shepherd School. Known for playing chamber music “in any chamber,” the Quartet also has a show at funky lower Westheimer venue Avant Garden. Details at dacamera.com.

OTHER THEATER DISTRICT EVENTS  The Houston Theater District is not only lit at night. Every first Wednesday of the month Da Camera of Houston presents A Little Day Music concert in the grand foyer of the Wortham Center for free.

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As Houston’s longest-standing performing arts organization, where do you see the Houston Symphony’s place in Houston cultural life and where would you like to lead them?

It is true that the Houston Symphony has been, for a very long time, one of the pillars of the arts community in Houston, having been formed in 1913. We are approaching our centennial in four years, and this, along with a dramatic sense of renewal and refocus inside our organization, have brought some significant changes. First, despite being the oldest performing arts group in Houston, we constantly strive to be fresh and vibrant in all that we do and offer to Houston every week. Another big change has been to refocus and dedicate the Houston Symphony to the ideal of serving Houston and the surrounding communities in every way we can. We have such a talented group of orchestra musicians led by Music Director Hans Graf, and we must always be pushing ourselves to use our resources in the ways that create the greatest impact.

You are one of the youngest CEOs of a major symphony orchestra in the country. What was the path that led you to this point in your career?

I have been extremely fortunate in my career, first as a performer, and now as an arts manager. I have a deep love of music of all kinds, so it was important to me when I stopped performing professionally on the French horn to be certain I could stay involved in classical music and do it at the highest level possible. I consider what I do to be a great privilege, but also a big responsibility.

You are a musician yourself. How has that helped you as a leader of a symphony orchestra, trying to balance the artistic with the business aspects of running a multi-million dollar arts organization?

It’s always helpful to have direct experience in managing anything, and I think especially in my position. To me, having performed in an orchestra (though one not as prestigious as the Houston Symphony) gives me invaluable knowledge and perspective I use every day. It also helps in appreciating just how special our musicians are and what they do artistically.

Other than symphonic music, what’s on your iPod right now?

I have always been drawn to a lot of different types of music. In high school (Walkman, no iPods yet), I used to listen to Richard Strauss tone poems and Beethoven symphonies, but also R.E.M. and the Smiths. I am also a real sucker for the great singers from the ’40s, ’50s and ’60s. Sinatra is always a favorite, especially the classic Capitol Records period. On a recent trip to New York, I listened to all six Brandenburg Concertos by Bach, which we will perform in March at HBU, and also the new Coldplay album.

When you do occasionally get some free time, what do you and your wife like to do in Houston?

My wife and I love to cook and entertain in our home, especially since being the CEO for the Symphony means lots of nights out. We have become restaurant mavens here and in New York. In Houston, our favorites are 17 at Alden Hotel (which recently produced a most extraordinary birthday dinner for my wife and our friends), Da Marco and Café Annie.
The House of Blues, in new entertainment hot spot Houston Pavilions, offers party planners an array of options for rewarding employees, celebrating achievements or entertaining clients.

Indeed, the combination of a Big Easy-style restaurant and grand Music Hall make for an unforgettable soiree. Factor in multiple stage areas, bars throughout and the swank Foundation Room, swathed in Indian-inspired rich fabrics and textures, and office mates are sure to yell, “Party On!” when the night draws to a close.

Finally, for an anything-but-average weekend gathering, reserve spaces at the buffet style Sunday Gospel Brunch, where choir singers in robes bring the house down with ballads and encourage the audience to participate.

Office parties can be cool. Loosen up that tie, eschew boxed lunches in boardrooms and take the business gathering downtown. From happy hours to multi-media presentations and seated dinners, it’s time to explore what’s new in our city center.

by Allison Bagley

FROM chef Youssef Nafaa – who brought Houston foodies the Mia Bella eateries, Saffron and Cava Bistro – comes Cielo Mexican Bistro. The brand new upscale eatery features intimate seating areas including a semi-private table enclosed by wine racks, and several other configurations for small or large private gatherings. Connoisseurs will be wowed by the more than 40 tequilas on Cielo’s shelves, as well.

The menu features classic dishes like empanadas, enchiladas and ancho roasted chicken, served up in a modern way. Entrees like filet mignon, leg of lamb and open-faced tamales are already hits.

Manager Kenan Hester says downtown businesses are gravitating toward the comfortable, spacious Main Street setting for happy hour specials (appetizers are $1.95 and margaritas go for $2.50), after-hours relaxation or more formal dinners with a pre-set menu.

Brand new Italian draft house Angelo’s drew in A-Listers even before the doors opened last fall. The first private parties in the space were a massive seated dinner for Microsoft and an after-party for the Latin Grammy Awards.

The restaurant houses the former space of Mantra nightclub, at the base of the Capitol Lofts. Proprietor Angelo Soto was drawn to the 1914 building because of its history. “We hear a lot of stories from old timers who are walking by,” says the native Houstonian with Italian roots. He did a top-to-bottom redo of the
A unique office party is on tap at Houston’s Flying Saucer, where manager Jake Rainey says groups often begin or end a scavenger hunt with a stop at the Main Street bar. “The Saucer is filled with so much trivia,” he says, as is the surrounding area. “We’re viewed by a lot of people as the hub of the entertainment area downtown,” adding that groups often reward participants with a festive pub-style awards ceremony.

The Flying Saucer’s private upstairs Pub of Love accommodates more than 100 people and can be separated into multiple spaces. The bar is popular for impromptu office happy hours, as well as holiday parties and other celebrations.

Groups also can plan a party around a beer tasting, where a “Beer God” tutors the group on flights of brew. “Guess that beer” games are popular, Rainey says, pointing out that out-of-the-box activities like these make for “fun and unique team building.”

entire space and kitchen, and the result is a rich atmosphere of red walls, ornate gold mirrors, cozy booths and dramatic columned ceilings that “give guests a New Orleans kind of feel.”

In addition to wine and imported high-dollar liquors, Soto himself installed a state-of-the-art beer configuration system, designed to keep the 60 different types ice cold, from the kegs in the kitchen all the way to the tap. (The “viper heads” are frozen over, indication that his engineering worked.)

Off the main dining room, where a 50-foot granite bar and a brick pizza oven anchor the large space, a private room accommodates 20 with projector capability. Upstairs, a massive balcony overlooking Main Street is the perfect spot for a white tablecloth brunch or private acoustic parties, Soto says. The second level features a bar, plus rooms with mirrored walls and plush ivory leather couches that can be sectioned off for smaller affairs. The entire 10,000-square-foot interior can accommodate upwards of 2,000 people.

NOW HEAR THIS! SPRING 2009 PERFORMANCES ON SALE NOW

Verdi Rigoletto
April 17 – May 2, 2009
Conducted by Patrick Summers. Directed by Lindy Hume.

A bitter court jester pits himself against his master in a hopeless effort to protect his daughter’s virtue. Casts includes Scott Hendricks, Albina Shagimuratova, and Eric Cutler.

WORLD PREMIERE Provin and Caird Brief Encounter
May 1 – 9, 2009
Conducted by Patrick Summers. Directed by John Caird.

An honest and compassionate look at emotional infidelity, stars Elizabeth Futral, Nathan Gunn and Kim Josephson. Based on the play Still Life and the screenplay to the 1945 film Brief Encounter, both by Noé! Coward. Commissioned by Houston Grand Opera.

Chorus and Orchestra of Houston Grand Opera / Richard Bado, Chorus Master
www.HoustonGrandOpera.org 713-228-OPERA (6737)
In the five years since Houston hosted the 2004 Super Bowl, downtown’s Historic District is shrugging off the thumping clubby image and replacing it with a cool and authentic neighborhood vibe. A decidedly cosmopolitan collection of dining and entertainment destinations mixes with the classic, and sometimes quirky, spots that have been around for years.

Cielo MEXICAN BISTRO: The just-opened Cielo offers Mexican food with a modern twist. With exotic gourmet items like poblano-glazed sea scallops, chili-glazed pork ribs and chipotle chicken with cactus leaves dotting the menu, this is not your father’s Tex Mex. The airy aesthetic of Cielo’s interior coupled with one of the most ambitious tequila selections in the city only add to the bistro’s Latin luster. 300 Main Street, 713.229.9500 or cielomexicanbistro.com

BYRD’S MARKET & CAFE: Byrd’s Market – slated to open in April – combines the convenience of an upscale gourmet market with the simple pleasures of a classic urban lunch counter. Featuring an extensive wine selection, specialty groceries, artisan breads and pastries baked on-site, and basic household necessities, Byrd’s represents the changing face of life downtown. 420 Main Street, byrdsmarket.com

HOTEL ICON: This swank, luxury boutique hotel located in the historic Union National Bank building boasts 135 lavishly appointed guest rooms and nine signature suites. The aptly named Icon is also home to Chef Michael Kramer’s Voice Restaurant – ranked by Esquire Magazine as one of the country’s top 10 new restaurants of 2008. 220 Main Street, 713.224.4266 or hotelicon.com

Collin’s Chop House & Whiskey Bar: Although it shares a kitchen with sister restaurant Cielo next door, this old-school steak house and watering hole boasts an identity all its own – and is just what the doctor ordered – if the doctor lived in a bygone era. The steaks, chops and seafood are not for the faint of heart, and the whiskey collection is superlative. Added bonus points for the silent movie reels continuously beamed on the wall. 300 Main Street, 713.229.9504 or collinschophouse.com
THINK YOU KNOW HOUSTON? Test your knowledge of the city’s history by taking the Ultimate Downtown Walking Tour. Chock full of behind-the-scenes stories from local celebrities, the tour provides insight into historic gateways, offbeat sites and local watering holes while walking – yes walking – through Houston’s ever-evolving downtown. The audio tour is free and available for download at houstondowntown.com.

8

DEAN’S CREDIT CLOTHING: Where else but downtown Houston could you drink frozen cosmos and listen to DJ-spun acid jazz or live improvised music while buying local art and sifting through vintage clothes? Further cementing the venue’s hipster appeal, Dean’s showcases free screenings of award-winning Texas-made short films every first Thursday of the month. 316 Main Street, 713.227.3326

5

STATE BAR AND LOUNGE: The glory days of Houston’s oil boom aren’t quite over at State Bar – or at least they haven’t been forgotten. Located on the second floor of Post Rice Lofts – the site of the Old Capital of the Republic of Texas – State Bar remains a happy hour favorite among Houston’s good ole boy crowd as well as those looking for a little Lone Star history. 909 Texas Avenue Suite 2A, 713.229.8888 or thestatebar.com

6

ALDEN HOTEL: Alden is home to the award winning *17 Restaurant featuring modern American cuisine more than worthy of its luxurious surroundings. The hotel’s can’t-miss theme parties continue to attract the city’s glitterati, as evidenced most recently by the sold-out Saturday Night Love, Live at Alden Valentine’s Day party. 1117 Prairie Street, 832.200.8800 or aldenhotels.com

7

RED CAT JAZZ CAFÉ: Kenny G and his brand of elevator-friendly smooth jazz are not welcome here. Red Cat Jazz Café channels the unique sounds and flavors of New Orleans’ French Quarter with a soul pleasing combination of live jazz and blues entertainment, a hip bar and lounge scene, and the finest Cajun and Creole cuisine. 924 Congress Street, 713.226.7870 or redcatjazzcafe.com

9

TREEBEARDS: Treebeards has been cooking fresh Southern food in downtown Houston for more than 30 years. The flagship location overlooking Market Square Park offers up favorites such as red beans and rice, a variety of gumbo, jambalaya and shrimp étouffée. 315 Travis Street, 713.228.2622 or treebeards.com

10

LA CARAFE: Located on the north side of Market Square Park, La Carafe occupies Houston’s oldest commercial building – a former stagecoach station built in 1847. La Carafe features a terrific beer and wine selection (but no hard liquor) that compliments the cozy ambience and has made it a perennial favorite among locals. 813 Congress Street, 713.229.9399
When Horizon Wind Energy changed hands in July 2007, there was consideration given to moving it out of Houston. That idea was short-lived. The Houston-based company had originated here in 1998 and its new owners realized it was ideally situated. “The right place to be was here, in Houston,” said Antonio Martins da Costa, the company’s CEO. “Houston is the capital of energy.”

Although a good chunk of Houston’s energy is in oil, Martins da Costa said “energy is energy” and renewable energy has its place in the energy capital of the world.

“Energy has different dimensions, and one of them is renewable energy,” he said. “We are very proud of being in Houston. This city provides the infrastructure needed to develop our business and develop it well.”

Among that infrastructure is the talented labor pool with access to specialists in the energy industry, Martins da Costa said. And, if talking to the employees at Horizon Wind Energy is any indication, they’re glad the company decided to stay put, too.

“Houston has always been a place where things get done, and deciding to join Horizon Wind Energy in the energy capital of the world was an easy one for me,” said Jeff Bishop, special projects manager. “Horizon follows the meritocracy that is common among Houston businesses. Although wind is considered a “newer” technology, I love being part of a company that invests more than $1 billion a year throughout rural America.”

From its offices on the sixth and seventh floors of the architecturally distinctive Niels Esperson Building on Travis Street downtown, Horizon Wind Energy deals with the development, construction and operation of 15 wind farms in eight states. Also on staff are a team of meteorologists whose job it is to study the wind, and environmentalists who study land use and its effects on animal populations.

When Horizon Wind Energy develops a wind farm, it leases land and works with the owners in a partnership. Each of the wind farms is given a name and an accompanying logo, or brand, which embodies the community or land on which it exists, such as Rattlesnake Road in Oregon, Pioneer Prairie in Iowa and Lone Star in Texas.

From its Houston headquarters, it can keep track of the energy being produced at each of its farms across the United States. A typical Horizon Wind Energy wind farm has 50 turbines, each producing about two megawatts of energy.

Martins da Costa said it costs $2 million per megawatt to develop and build a wind farm. A typical 100 megawatt farm would be a $200 million investment.

Martins da Costa came to Horizon Wind Energy from Energias do Brasil, a subsidiary of Energias de Portugal, Horizon Wind Energy’s parent company. He said the United States is an ideal place for wind energy, with its large corridor of plains from the Canadian border down through Texas.

“When the wind energy industry in the United States reaches its full potential, it will be bigger than in Europe,” he said.

The difference between the European and American renewable energy market, he believes, is that in Europe, it is a top-down development, with government instructing businesses into compliance. In the United States, he said, it is working from the bottom up, with business and citizens calling for renewable energy legislation.

Despite an uncertain economy, Martins da Costa said renewable energy’s time has come in the United States. He is counting on Horizon Wind Energy’s plan for focused growth, risk avoidance and efficiency to bring that to fruition.

“I believe we are in the right business at the right time,” he said.

And, apparently, the right place for Horizon Wind Energy to do that business is in downtown Houston.
what color are you?

Downtown is undergoing a different kind of transformation these days as individuals and companies become serious about sustainability. People are finding that social responsibility is good corporate practice and surprisingly easy.

**Conserving energy** with little steps like turning off lights, installing compact fluorescent bulbs and powering down all of your gadgets like computers and stereos, even when they are not in use. Conserving energy, paper, water and other resources will cut waste and reduce your bills. Recycling, reusing, rethinking and renewing add to ways downtown can be a sustainable place.

**Recycling** is one of the easiest things you can do. We create more garbage, trash and municipal solid waste than ever before but many things being “trashed” can instead be reused or recycled.

You can make a difference by using mugs and glasses instead of disposable paper or Styrofoam cups at work. Print only when you must and use both sides of the paper. Recycle cans, plastic bottles and cartridges in addition to paper. If your landlord does not provide a recycling service, consider hiring a private company that provides both document destruction and recycling capability. You’ll preserve client confidentiality while providing an environmental service. [greenhoustontx.gov](http://greenhoustontx.gov)

**Benefits of Recycling:**

- Reduces the need for landfills and incineration.
- Prevents pollution caused by the manufacture of products from virgin materials.
- Saves energy.
- Decreases greenhouse gas emissions.
- Conserves natural resources such as timber, water and minerals.
- Helps sustain the environment for future generations.

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Some of your neighbors currently recycling include:

- Discovery Green
- Hilton Americas Hotel-Houston
- Houston Center
- Chevron
- ExxonMobil
- El Paso
- City of Houston
- Transwestern Commercial Services
- Shell Oil Company
- University of Houston-Downtown
- Allen/Cullen Center
- Chase Tower
- The Bank of America Building.

Earth Day Houston, a green living festival, will debut at Discovery Green on Saturday, April 11 from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. The festivities kick off with the Mothers for Clean Air Earth Day 5K at 8 a.m. followed by a daylong celebration with family entertainment, environmental education and much more.

The free one-day celebration will focus on the merits of sustainable living while encouraging Houstonians to preserve, conserve and enhance our city and the Earth.

Planned activities include interactive activities, a farmers market with locally-grown produce and flowers, an Environmental Education Zone with art activities for kids using recycled materials, the latest in hybrid transportation, six-foot tall Cool Globes and representative agencies of the Citizens Environmental Coalition. Live music, a Kids’ Earth Zone and plenty of food and beverage on site will round out the day’s events.

Proceeds benefit the Galveston-Houston Association for Smog Prevention/Mothers for Clean Air.
One of Houston’s best kept secrets is the very cool and Houston-centric pontoon boat tours down Buffalo Bayou. You are transported to a different place—you’d never think you were in the middle of the big city. Our favorite is the Waugh Bridge Bat Colony Boat Tour that takes place every second Friday of the month (you must make reservations, and best to do it a few weeks in advance). Guests will get an up-close view of the Mexican free-tailed bats’ dusk emergence from Waugh Bridge, where over 250,000 bats make their home. Visit buffalobayou.org or call 713.752.0314 for more info.

Nothing says spring like a game at Minute Maid Park on a cool April evening with the roof open, a cold brewski and our home-town boys, the ‘Stros. Even better, catch the home opener on Monday, April 6 against the Cubs. The next night will also be a treat; prior to the first pitch, the Astros will honor players from ballpark history and celebrate the previous nine seasons at the venue in a special pregame ceremony. Happy 10th! houstonastros.com
MAKE YOUR SPECIAL OCCASION
A WALK IN THE PARK
What a year it’s been for Discovery Green, which celebrates its first birthday this spring. The overwhelmingly positive response by the community has more than exceeded our wildest dreams. Families, couples, dogs, kids, tourists – all come to visit or just to hang out. More than 400 events have taken place over the past year in the park. From silent films to cultural arts groups, from yoga to Latin-inspired, hip-shaking Zumba, there’s something for everyone.

We can’t wait to see what you have in store for us this year. Here are some of our favorite snapshots. Enjoy!

destination discovery green

McGovern playground appeals to kids of all ages (and sizes).
The Ice at Discovery Green was a huge hit, attracting more than 40,000 skaters.

Opening Day drew thousands of visitors to the new park; festivities were kicked off by Nancy Kinder and Mayor Bill White.

Children’s Discovery Series take place every Saturday with fun interactive activities for the whole family.
AT LONG LAST HOUSTON SEEMS TO BE MAKING HISTORY WITH A VARIETY OF EFFORTS AND INITIATIVES DESIGNED TO HELP PROTECT AND PRESERVE THE CITY’S ARCHITECTURAL ROOTS.

By david bush

It’s not that there isn’t history here. The city is almost 175 years old and a lot has happened on the banks of Buffalo Bayou since 1836. It’s just the part about preserving things that seems to give us trouble.

In some ways it’s a matter of perspective. A preservation consultant from Florida visited recently. Her response after touring downtown Houston? “It must be nice to work in a city with so many historic buildings. I wish Tampa had saved this much.”

It was an eye-opening comment. It’s easy to forget that it is possible to live and work downtown without setting foot in a building constructed after 1930 for days at a time.

Part of the problem is the way we look at architecture today. Historic buildings were designed for pedestrians, not drivers. To really appreciate old buildings, you have to get out of your car. Where it’s permitted, a step inside can be very rewarding.

Restored buildings pop up in unexpected places downtown. Antioch Baptist Church, completed in 1895, stands amid the skyscrapers in Allen Center. The former Palace Hotel (1903) peeks out beside a parking garage. UH-Downtown’s conference and exhibit center is in the Willow Street Pump Station (1902), the heart of Houston’s first sewer system. Even Minute Maid Park has a preservation component – the Ballpark at Union Station.

The waiting room in Union Station (1911) is one of several impressive historic spaces downtown. It was designed by Warren & Wetmore, the architects of New York’s Grand Central Terminal. Just up Texas Avenue, the 1893 sanctuary of Christ Church Cathedral contains Houston’s only authenticated Tiffany Studios window.

The Julia Ideson Building broke ground in January on its long-awaited south wing. The design team is using the original Ideson blueprints so the architectural integrity of the building will stay intact.
BANKING ON PRESERVATION

Some of the best spaces are in former bank buildings constructed in the days when banks looked like banks. The Doric columns inside the former Union National Bank (1912) define Hotel Icon’s Voice Restaurant. Across the street, The Corinthian event facility takes its name from the massive columns supporting the double height banking hall built by First National Bank in 1925. In 1929, the Art Deco design of the National Bank of Commerce, now Chase Bank, made a bold statement. Chase is justifiably proud of the building, which includes the last historic downtown banking hall still used for its original purpose. Visitor guides are available at the security desks. Enter at 712 Main Street during regular business hours to view the frescoes in the lobby. The painting called Modern Houston suggests the excitement, and some of the strangeness, of a city in transition. The central figures are a flapper and what looks like a gaucho petting a German shepherd while a zeppelin flies overhead.

Prospects are good for the Citizen’s Bank Building (1925). The Downtown Redevelopment Authority (DRA) has approved a façade rehab assistance agreement with the owner, who is renovating the building with offices and ground floor retail. The reimbursement agreement requires the developer spend money to get money.

“Our goal is to help owner/developers with the exterior rehabilitation of their historic buildings,” said DRA Chair Jamie Mize, co-owner of Treebeards Restaurant on Market Square. “These smaller historic structures often provide housing and other services that downtown otherwise wouldn’t have.”

BYRD’S OF A FEATHER

DRA also assisted Bob Fretz, Jr. when he was developing Byrd’s Lofts. In 1934, his grandfather’s construction company built Byrd’s Department Store on Main at Prairie. The sleek Art Moderne building had suffered years of neglect when Fretz purchased and restored the property in 2005.

“There is such a positive synergy in place about downtown’s potential that we were confident it would be an excellent long-term venture,” said Fretz, now a full-time downtown resident.

Byrd’s Market, on the first floor of Byrd’s Lofts, is benefitting from the Houston Downtown Management District’s expanded Retail Incentives Grant Program. The grants support “independent destination retailers” that serve as cornerstones for neighborhood development and spur additional retail leasing. The market received a grant to help build out its unfinished space.

When it opens this spring, Byrd’s Market will be an urban grocer along the lines of Dean & Deluca in New York and Fox & Obel in Chicago. Jerrell “Rusty” Powers assembled the team of stakeholders backing the endeavor.

“Byrd’s Market will be a cross between a casual restaurant and a neighborhood grocer, with a strong emphasis on prepared foods,” said Powers. “We do not see Byrd’s as just another restaurant; it must be a destination for downtown and a place people love to walk to and hang out.”

The Downtown District also has approved incentive grants for two new projects by Yousef Nafaa/Bella Restaurants: Cielo
Mexican Bistro and Collin’s Chop House in the Sterne Building (1916). The restaurant group already has a strong presence in the historic district with Mia Bella Trattoria in the Kiam Building (1893) and Cava Bistro in the Sweeney, Coombs & Fredericks Building (1889).

The restaurants should attract a mature audience that will bring more stability to the north end of Main Street than the clubs that flourished briefly after the Super Bowl. It’s an up and down cycle that began when Market Square first became the center of Houston nightlife in the late 1960s and early 1970s. The area had been the hub of commercial activity throughout the 19th century. As the business district expanded, it swallowed surrounding residential areas, but left intact blocks of commercial buildings dating from the Civil War through the 1930s.

THE WAY WE WERE

“IT was a very different neighborhood then, full of wonderful 19th-century buildings,” said Bart Truxillo, owner of the historic Magnolia Ballroom since 1969. “Lots of activity. Lots of people. It was as close as you could get to the French Quarter in Houston.”

Longtime Houstonian Martha Peterson discovered the area after moving from Beaumont. “My absolute favorite place was called The Galleria before the Galleria mall had even been thought of,” she said. “It featured singers from Houston Grand Opera. They waited tables and took turns singing light opera tunes. They could put down your drink and stand right by your table while they sang. I found it thrilling.”

Love Street Light Circus Feel Good Machine, a psychedelic outpost overlooking Allen’s Landing, was thrilling for a different reason.

“I found Love Street scary,” said Peterson. “But we all have to take an occasional walk on the wild side.”

Love Street is just a memory, but its former home, the International Coffee Building (1910), is finding new life. Buffalo Bayou Partnership is rehabilitating the property as a multi-purpose building and recreational destination.

“An ideal day at the International Coffee Building would be to have downtown residents sitting in the courtyard drinking coffee, reading the newspaper and people-watching,” said BBP Executive Director Anne Olson. “At the same time, families would be renting kayaks to take a trip down the bayou. Inside, a small arts organization would be hosting a reception as part of an exhibit.”

Historic preservation dovetails neatly with BBP’s conservation ethic and Houston’s growing “green” movement.

“We say the greenest building is one that is already built,” said Ramona Davis, executive director of Greater Houston Preservation Alliance. “Preservation is not about freezing time. It’s about managing change to create sustainable communities.”

RAZING THE ROOF

In 1983, the Main Street/Market Square Historic District was listed on the National Register of Historic Places, the roster of historic resources the federal government deems worthy of preservation. No laws require National Register properties be maintained, much less restored. Nevertheless, the last paragraph of the Market Square nomination notes that even the slightest hint of regulation was prompting some owners to tear down their buildings. Eventually the district lost almost a quarter of its historic structures, including all the buildings on the west and south sides of Market Square. The low point came in 1988, when Guardian Savings razed the Bethje-Lang Building (1868), the much-loved original home of Warren’s Inn. The demolition took place late one Sunday night without the required permits.

Although a National Register listing does not in itself prevent demolitions, it is a very important tool for preserving historic buildings. Income-producing properties must be listed in the Register to qualify for federal preservation tax credits. These incentives can mean the difference between restoring a historic commercial building or demolishing it.

“We would have lost the Rice Hotel without the federal tax credits,” said GHPA’s Davis. “The incentives made the project possible and, in some ways, better. The lobby and Crystal Ballroom were restored as a result of the tax credit negotiations.”

LONG-LASTING PROTECTION

In preservation, the strongest protections are local protections. Houston’s municipal government was late getting involved even by the standards of sprawling Sunbelt cities. Los Angeles enacted its preservation ordinance in 1962; Phoenix established its Historic Preservation Commission in 1986. City Council passed Houston’s first preservation ordinance in 1995. At the same time, it designated Main Street/Market Square one of the first city historic districts. The ordinance encourages preservation by authorizing tax incentives for approved rehabilitation projects, although it also permits the demolition of designated landmarks after a 90-day waiting period.

In 2005, under Mayor Bill White’s administration, the preservation ordinance was strengthened to include a category of protected landmarks. Owners who have their historic commercial buildings designated as protected landmarks can apply for city property tax exemptions. If a protected landmark is demolished without city approval, the owner must pay all of
the taxes from the time the building was designated.

“We’ve tried to craft solutions that incentivize renovation and restoration,” said White. “The good news is people recognize that preserving their architectural history enhances their own investments and the economic vitality of their neighborhoods. Self-interest and public interest don’t have to be at odds.”

To date, the owners of six historic downtown properties have had their buildings designated as protected landmarks. Three have very familiar names: La Carafe, Warren’s Inn/Duke of Hollywood Tailors and Magnolia Ballroom should all be around for a long time.

PARTNERS IN PRESERVATION

Public/private partnerships continue to play significant roles in many projects. Julia Ideson Preservation Partners and the City of Houston are working together to restore and expand Houston Public Library’s Julia Ideson Building (1926). The library was meant to be part of a five-building, Spanish Renaissance-style civic center, but the city couldn’t afford to build the rest of the complex or the library’s planned south wing. Eighty-three years later, the Ideson Building has earned its wing.

On January 12, JIPP and the city broke ground for a new archival addition on the site of the never-built south wing. The extension will provide state-of-the-art facilities for the Houston Metropolitan Research Center and its irreplaceable collection of rare books and historic documents, photographs and maps. Architects with Gensler designed the extension using the original Ideson blueprints from HMRC’s extensive collection of architectural drawings.

A comprehensive restoration of the historic building should begin in 2010. After the research facilities and collection storage move to the new wing, the restored rooms in the original building will host exhibits, meetings and special events.

“We want to provide a welcoming environment for Houstonians and visitors by creating new gardens and restoring the public spaces to their original grandeur,” said Phoebe Tudor, chair of JIPP. “The Ideson is truly one of Houston’s historic gems.”

On the north end of downtown, Harris County is polishing one of its own historic jewels: the 1910 Harris County Courthouse. Workers have removed unsympathetic changes made in 1953. The restoration will include rebuilding granite staircases, reconstructing historic courtrooms and opening the rotunda. The county hopes to complete the project by 2011, the 100th anniversary of the courthouse’s dedication.

Bob Fretz, Jr. is watching it all unfold with a sense of anticipation. “Having lived my entire life in the suburbs, there is an excitement to downtown living that cannot be described. Every time you take an evening walk, you see something new and different,” said Fretz. “We can pick from some of the city’s best restaurants every night, all within walking distance. The Astros are down the street. The Theater District is a five-minute stroll. What more could you want?”
A family affair

With a philosophy of “the heart is what cooking is really about,” Josephine’s Italian Ristorante has been serving traditional Italian favorites since 1988. This family-owned restaurant is a warm, welcoming place to enjoy good food and wine with your friends and family. 1209 Caroline St. 713.759.9323. josephinesitalian.com

NEW Angelo's Italian Draughthouse With a menu inspired by traditional Southern Italian cuisine, the specialty of the house is their hand-tossed pizzas baked in the brick oven located behind the 50-foot bar. From the pasta to the sauce to the bread, everything is made fresh to order. With over 50 beers on tap this bistro- meets-tavern concept will surely become a local favorite. [angeloshouston.com](http://angeloshouston.com). 711 Main, 713.225.3500. L, D & LN Daily. $$

★ Artista American Artista offers inspirational contemporary American cuisine and theatrical ambiance with high ceilings, glass walls and sweeping views of the Houston downtown skyline. [cordua.com](http://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, 1700 Smith, 713.495.7854. L, B & D 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 outdoor seating area provides great people watching. [azumajapanese.com](http://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. [innatetheballpark.com](http://innatetheballpark.com). Inn at the Ballpark, 1520 Texas Avenue, 713.228.1520. B & L Daily. $  

NEW Banzai Japanese/Sushi Count on Banzai Sushi at Bayou Place for the freshest sushi, sashimi and specialty rolls. If sushi isn’t your thing, try their vegetable tempura, Chilean sea bass, Korean ribs or specialty rolls. If sushi isn’t your thing, try their vegetable tempura, Chilean sea bass, Korean ribs or specialty rolls. [cabomixmex.com](http://cabomixmex.com). 419 Travis, 713.225.2060. L & D Mon-Sat; LN Mon-Sat. $$

Bells & Whistles Café Homestyle This homestyle spot offers a menu of American favorites made fresh daily. 1501 Texas Avenue, 713.224.1501. Mon-Fri. Extended and weekend hours on game days and during large downtown events (call ahead). $

Benihana of Tokyo Japanese While some restauranteurs 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. [benihana.com](http://benihana.com). 3138 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. [birraрестаurant.com](http://birraрестаurant.com). 500 Louisiana, 713.224.9494. L, D & LN Daily. $$

★ 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. [thelancaster.com](http://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 Fast Food A burrito bar with tons of ingredients and sides that allow you to create the burrito of your dreams. [bourays.com](http://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. $$

NEW Brown Bag Deli Fast Casual Located in the former Antone’s space in the Houston Club building, Brown Bag Deli serves up tasty, fresh sandwiches “just like you like it.” Known for their fluffy, soft bread you won’t be disappointed and neither will your wallet. [thebrownbagdeli.net](http://thebrownbagdeli.net). 810 Capitol, 713.224.7000. L Mon-Fri. $  

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. [cabolomexic.com](http://cabolomexic.com). 419 Travis, 713.225.2060. L & D Mon-Sun; LN Mon-Sat. $$  


NEW Café Adagio Southern Gourmet Located in downtown’s historic Market Square, Café Adagio serves up gourmet southern-style food in a comfortable yet elegant space. Live music will be a staple making this the perfect spot. [cafeadagiolive.com](http://cafeadagiolive.com). 809 Congress, 281.889.0541. L, D & LN Daily. $$

These listings are not reviews but are a guide to downtown dining spots. “Recommended” restaurants are selected by Downtown Magazine editors and are based on food quality, menu selection, service, ambiance and value.  

★ RECOMMENDED  

NEW JUST OPENED  

AVERAGE PRICE OF AN ENTRÉE  

- $ - 10 or less  

- $ - $1-$19  

- $ - $20-$29  

- $$$ - $30+  

For a searchable database of downtown Houston restaurants by cuisine, location and price, visit [houstondowntown.com](http://houstondowntown.com) and click on Dining.  

★ 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. [cafeexpress.com](http://cafeexpress.com). 650 Main, 713.237.9222. B Mon-Fri; L & D Mon-Sat. $  

★ 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, ahi tuna, short ribs, gnocchi and whole red snapper. An impressive wine list, great service and affordable prices make this bistro unique. [bellarestaurants.com](http://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. [chipotle.com](http://chipotle.com). 909 Texas, 713.225.6633. I & Early D Mon-Fri. $  

NEW 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. [bellarestaurants.com](http://bellarestaurants.com). 300 Main, 713.229.9500. L & D Mon-Sat; LN Fri & Sat. $$

NEW Collin’s Chophouse & Whiskey Bar American An upscale, intimate dining experience in an elegant environment 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 lamb, cedar plank salmon and double pork chops. A cozy bar features an array of high-end whiskies and a wide assortment of wines. bellarestaurants.com. 304 Main, 713.229.9500. D Mon-Sat. $$$

**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. cornerbakery.com. 1000 Main, 713.651.0673. B & L Mon-Fri. $

**Craiganales Italian Deli Italian Deli** A family-owned Italian-styled deli located close to Minute Maid Park and the Courthouse District. Craiganales features a tasty and affordable selection. craiganalesdeli.com. 415 Caroline, 713.237.0000. L Mon-Fri. $

**Decaf Fast Casual** Located in the lobby of the Hyatt Regency, visit this marketplace cafe anytime, day or night, when you are craving something delicious. Decaf offers brick oven pizza, deli sandwiches, salads, homemade pastries and, of course, an entire selection of your favorite coffee beverages. Hyatt Regency Hotel, 1200 Louisiana, 713.654.1234 x 4088. B, L, D & LN Daily. $

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

**Don Diego Coffee House** The perfect place for that early, mid morning or afternoon meeting. On the breakfast menu be sure to try the BLT or smoked salmon panini. The empanadas are homemade and served all day with delicious fillings such as beef, spinach, or bacon and egg. Free WiFi access. dondiego.com. 208 Travis, 713.228.3560. B & L Mon-Fri. $

**Don Patron Bar & Grill Mexican** Good Mexican food and margaritas, Don Patron is great for lunch and a good spot for an after-work happy hour. Available on weekneds for private parties. donpatron.com. 500 Dallas, One Allen Center. B, L & D Mon-Fri. $$$

**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. aquariumrestaurants.com. 410 Bagby, 713.223.3474. L & D Daily. $$

**Downtown Donuts Bakery** This little shop puts out a large assortment of breakfast goodies. Daily fresh baked choices include glazed, iced or filled donuts, bear claws, cinnamon rolls and turnovers and they also have kolaches – be sure to try the spicy boudin kolache. 1207 Prairie, 713.236.0500. B & L Mon-Fri. $

**Downtown Hunan Café 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 tacos and is open late on weekend nights for night owls craving a Cuban sandwich. elreytaqueria.com. 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, D & LN 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. beerknurd.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. frankspizza.com. 417 Travis, 713.225.5656. L & D Daily; LN Fri & Sat. $

**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. grovehouston.com. Discovery Green, 1611 Lamar, 713.337.7321. 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-Sat. $

**Guadalajara del Centro 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. guadalajarahacienda.com. Houston Pavilions, 1201 San Jacinto, 713.650.0101. L & D Daily. $$$

**Hard Rock Café Classic American** What do you get when you mix a music-themed diner with an All-American menu? Hard Rock is a great family-friendly spot serving up items such as burgers, nachos and chicken varieties. hardrock.com. Bayou Place, 570 Texas, 713.227.1392. L, D & LN Daily. $$

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**Treebeard’s Bread Pudding with Whiskey Sauce**

This recipe will make a bread pudding lover out of anyone. The whiskey sauce makes it even harder to resist. Serve warm or at room temperature.

1 (1 lb) loaf soft French bread
½ cup chopped pecans
2 cups half-and-half
½ cup raisins
2 cups milk
1 tbsp + 1 tsp vanilla
3 eggs, lightly beaten
1 ½ tsp cinnamon
2 cups sugar
¼ cup butter, melted

Tear or cut bread into 1-inch pieces and place in a large bowl. Add half-and-half and milk. Let mixture stand 10 minutes. In a bowl, mix eggs, sugar, pecans, raisins, vanilla and cinnamon. Add to bread mixture and gently mix. Pour butter into a 13 x 9-inch baking pan and tilt pan to coat evenly. Spoon pudding mixture into the pan. Bake at 325° for 55 to 60 minutes or until pudding is firm. Cut into pieces or serve from the baking pan. Serves 12.

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**Whiskey Sauce**

½ cup butter, melted
½ cup half-and-half
1 cup sugar
2 tbsp whiskey

In a saucepan, mix butter, sugar and half-and-half and cook over medium heat until sugar dissolves. Bring to a boil, reduce heat and simmer 5 minutes. Remove from heat, add whiskey and stir. Spoon whiskey sauce over bread pudding. Makes 1½ cups.

If you like this recipe then you’ll love Treebeard’s Cookbook – their new edition is available now at treebeards.com or at any of their downtown locations.

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Home Plate Bar & Grill **Classic American** A great hangout spot before or after an Astros ballpark game. Enjoy American food with all menu items (except for sampler platters) less than $10. [homeplategrill.com](http://homeplategrill.com) 1800 Texas, 713.222.1993. L & D Daily (may close earlier during off-season so call first). $ 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. $ House of Blues **Southern Classic** HOB serves Southern-inspired signature classic dishes such as voodoo shrimp, Tennessee baby back ribs and the Cajun classic, Creole jambalaya. Praise the Lord and pass the biscuits, you can’t miss House of Blues’ famous Sunday Gospel Brunch. [hob.com](http://hob.com) Houston Pavilions, 1204 Caroline, 888.402.5837. L & D Daily. $$

**NEW**

Hubcap Burger Grill **American Classic** Small but quaint burger joint. 1111 Prairie, 713.223.5883. 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. $$

**NEW**

Irma’s **Mexican** Irma Galvan has been crowned Houston’s “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. $$

**NEW**

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. [irmassouthwest.com](http://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 chill recipe has stayed the same, but new menu additions include Polish sausage, a Chicago-style dog and a New York-style dog. [jamesconeyisland.com](http://jamesconeyisland.com) 1142 Travis, 713.652.3819. B, L & D Mon – Sat. $ Jason’s Deli **Deli** Order to please, Jason’s will make your sandwich or salad exactly how you like it. [jasonsdeli.com](http://jasonsdeli.com) 901 McKinney, 713.650.1500. B & L Mon – Fri. $

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. [josephinestitalian.com](http://josephinestitalian.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 burgers, Kobe beef hot dogs, salads, shakes, wine and beer. Located on Kinder Lake, there is a large patio where you can watch model boat races across the water or listen to some live music from the nearby amphitheater stage. [thelakehousehouston.com](http://thelakehousehouston.com) Discovery Green, 1611 Lamar. L & D Tue – Sat. $

**NEW**

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. $

**NEW**

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. [lastconcert.com](http://lastconcert.com) 1403 Nance, 713.226.8563. L Mon – Thu; D Tue – Sun; LN Fri – Sat; Bar & Live Music Tue – Sat. $

**NEW**


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. [littlenapoli.net](http://littlenapoli.net) 1001 Texas, 713.225.3900. L, D & LN Daily. $$

**NEW**

Live Sports Cafe **American** Live offers a variety of events that make every night an adventure. The cafe 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. [livessportscafe.com](http://livessportscafe.com) 407 Main, 713.228.5483. L, D & LN Daily. $

Longhorn Cafe **Homestyle** Longhorn offers up a Texas-style experience. Old-fashioned burgers, sandwiches and fries contribute to the down-south feel of the cafe. [longhorncafe.com](http://longhorncafe.com) The Shops at Houston Center, 1200 McKinney, 713.751.0021. L Mon – Sat; D Mon – Fri. $

Mandarin **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. $

**NEW**

Market Square Bar & Grill **American** This Chicago-style neighborhood hangout is a local favorite. Roasting a handful of “fire-powered” 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. [marketsquarehouston.com](http://marketsquarehouston.com) 311 Travis, 713.224.6133. L, D & LN Mon – Sat. $

**NEW**

Massa’s **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. [massas.com](http://massas.com) 1160 Smith, 713.650.0837. L Mon – Fri; D Mon – Sat. $$

**NEW**

Massa’s **Seafood Grill** 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. [massas.com](http://massas.com) The Shops at Houston Center, 1331 Lamar, 713.655.9100. L Mon – Fri; D Mon – Sat. $$

**NEW**

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. [mccormickandschmicks.com](http://mccormickandschmicks.com) Houston Pavilions, 1201 Fannin. L & D Daily. $$

**NEW**

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

**NEW**

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. bellarestaurants.com 320 Main, 713.237.0505. L & D Daily; LN Fri & Sat. $$

Mingalone Italian Bar & Grill Italian 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. mingalone.com. Bayou Place, 540 Texas, 713.223.0088. L & D Mon-Sun. $$

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. mollyspubs.com. 509 Main, 713.222.1033. L, D & LN Daily. $

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 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 martini menu along with their specially priced “bar bites.” mortons.com. 1001 McKinney, 713.659.3700. D Mon–Sun. $$

Murphy’s Deli Deli Indulge in a variety of sandwiches and salads. Hot or cold, Murphy’s specializes in creating your sandwich anyway 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. 1237 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. $


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. alpontevacchio.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 ambiance for guests. Located in the Four Seasons Hotel, Quattro is one of downtown’s best restaurants. Four Seasons Hotel, 1300 Lamar, 713.652.6250. B, L & D Daily. $$$

your meal with a selection from Red & White’s two 1,500 bottle wine towers. houstontoyotacenter.com. 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. redcatjazzcafe.com. 924 Concerts, 713.226.7870. D & LN Daily. $  

★ Sambuca 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, Sambuca is Houston’s ultimate supper club. sambucarestaurant.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. $  

Shay McElroy’s Pub Fare This authentic Irish pub offers up a menu of appetizers, sandwiches, salads and soups. mcelopeyspub.com. 909 Texas, 713.223.2444. L Mon–Fri. $  


★ Shula’s American Steak House Steak House Dark wood, sports memorabilia and menus hand-painted on official NFL game footballs make Pro Hall of Famer Don Shula’s Steak House stand out from the rest. Become a member of the 48oz Club by finishing a 48-ounce Shula Cut. donshula.com. Hyatt Regency Hotel, 1200 Louisiana, 713.375.4770. B, L & D Daily. $$$

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. 713 Texas, 713.571.0509. B & L Mon–Fri. $  

★ Spaghetti Warehouse Italian Making its home in an old warehouse, this Italian-American eatery offers up 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. spindletopathyatt.com Hyatt Regency Hotel, 1200 Louisiana, 713.654.1234. D Tue–Sun. $$$$  

State Bar Pub Fare Located on the second floor of Post Rice Lofts with a beautiful balcony overlooking Texas Ave., this upscale lounge also serves appetizers and hearty sandwiches with your martinis and margaritas. thestatebar.com. 909 Texas, Suite 2A, 713.229.8888. Mon–Sat. $  

★ 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. striphouse.net. The Shops at Houston Center, 1,200 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. $  

NEW 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 $11 or less. district7grill.com. 720 Fannin, 713.227.4800. B Mon–Sun; L & D Mon–Sat. $  

NEW Thai Brick Café Thai Located in the Warehouse District, the cafe serves up Thai dishes with a home-cooked flair. Sto in Monday through Saturday for lunch and enjoy inexpensive lunch specials that include soup, salad and egg roll. BYOB. 1302 Nance, 713.222.7772. L & D Mon–Sat. $  

Thephidida Thai Thai Located at the ground level of the loft residence Hogg Palace, Thephidida 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. timpanochophouse.net. 610 Main, 713.223.2622. L Mon–Fri; D Mon–Sun; LN Fri & Sat. $$$$  

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. treebeards.com. 315 Travis, 713.228.2622. Cloisters at Christ Church Cathedral, 1117 Texas, 713.229.8248. L Mon-Fri. $ 

**Trofi Restaurant Continental** Trofi’s menu is described as Continental with a Mediterranean and Latin flair and the ambience is casual simple yet sophisticated. Lunch buffets are available Monday through Friday. 400 Dallas, Doubletree Hotel, 713.739.0202. B, L & D Daily. $$$

**Vic & Anthony’s Steak House** This world-class steak house is one of the most elegant dinning 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. vicandanthonys.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. hotelicon.com. Hotel Icon, 220 Main, 832.667.4470. B Daily; L & D Mon–Sat. $$$$$

**Warren’s Inn Fast Casual** The good 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; LN Daily.$

**Wimpy’s Hamburgers Fast Food** Wimpy’s 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. yatrabrasserie.com. 706 Main Street, 713.224.6700. L Mon–Fri; D Mon–Sat. $$$

**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. 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. $
House of Blues brings the funk to downtown (and R&B, rap, punk, rock, hip-hop, heavy metal and more).

For their spring lineup see page 34 or go to hob.com
THEATER

CHITTY CHITTY BANG BANG

Through Mar 7 Cadillac Broadway Across America
Sensational sets, stunning special effects and an
unforgettable score, including memorable classics
like Truly Scrumptious, Hushabye Mountain, and, of
course, the Oscar®-nominated title song. Tickets
$21–$70. Hobby Center, 800 Bagby. 713.629.3700.
ticketmaster.com

THE MAN WHO CAME TO DINNER

Through Mar 22 Alley Theatre
In this hilarious romp, Sheridan Whiteside, theater critic, lecturer
and radio personality arrives to dine at the home of
the prominent Stanley family in a small Midwestern
town, slips on their doorstep and injures his hip. A
tumultuous six weeks of confinement follow. Tickets
alleytheatre.org

LES MISÉRABLES

Mar 24–Apr 5 Theatre Under The Stars
Against a backdrop of the French Revolution, Les Misérables
reminds us that we are each part of the same human
family – that whatever our outward differences may be,
our longing for individual liberty and peace is the
same. Tickets $32–$95.50. Hobby Center, 800 Bagby.
713.315.2525.

THE WIZARD OF OZ

Apr 7–19 Cadillac Broadway Across America
The entire family will be captivated as they travel
down the Yellow Brick Road and beyond with
Dorothy, Toto and their friends in this lavish
production featuring breathtaking special effects,
An unforgettable score, including memorable classics
Sensational sets, stunning special effects and an
unforgettable story of a group of young artists
learning to survive, falling in love, finding their
voices and living for today. Tickets $26–$60.
Hobby Center, 800 Bagby. 713.558.8887. tuts.com

CHILDMAN OF EDEN

Apr 10–18 Masquerade Theatre
Stephen Schwartz
of Wicked and Godspell presents a heartfelt and frank
look at the age-old conflict between parent and
child set against the backdrop of two of humanity’s
most treasured stories: the creation of the Garden
of Eden and the Flood. Tickets $30–$50. Hobby
Center, 800 Bagby. 713.315.2525.
masqueradetheatre.com

MAURITIUS

Apr 10–May 3 Alley Theatre
The title, Mauritius, refers to an island off the coast of Africa from which
a now highly collectible stamp was issued in the
age of Victoria. The Mauritius stamp is the object
of desire for an assortment of shady characters.
Recommended for mature audiences. Tickets
alleytheatre.org

RIGOLETTO

Apr 17–May 2 Houston Grand Opera
A bitter court jester pits himself against his master in a hopeless
effort to protect his daughter’s virtue. Patrick
Summers conducts Verdi’s distinguished tragedy.
Tickets $20–$205. Wortham Center, 501 Texas.
713.228.6737. houstongrandopera.org

ROCK ‘N’ ROLL

Apr 24–May 24 Alley Theatre
It’s August 1968, and
Russian tanks are rolling into Prague. Jan, the Czech
student, lives for rock music. Max, the English
professor, lives for Communism and Esme, the
flower child, is high. By 1990, the tanks are rolling
out, the Stones are rolling in and idealism has hit the
wall. Recommended for mature audiences. Tickets
alleytheatre.org

WWE

Smackdown!

WrestleMania Art - April 1 at Julia Ideson
Building
WWE’s 2nd annual art event will feature
the artistic works of Superstars & Legends and local Houston artists.
The evening will feature food, drinks, an art exhibition and
a live and silent auction with the pro-
ceeds benefitting the Houston Public Library
Foundation. Tickets $50 general admission,
$150 VIP.

WrestleMania Axxess – April 2-5 at Reliant Center
In celebration of WrestleMania 25 don’t miss your chance to experience WrestleMania Axxess live at the Reliant Center April
2 - April 5. See live matches, get superstar autographs, create your
own ring entrance, call a classic WWE match, take a picture with a
WWE superstar, walk the tunnel of history and more! Tickets $29,
$49 VIP and kids under 3 free.

WWE Hall of Fame – April 5 at Toyota Center
Make plans to join the WWE Superstars, Divas & Legends for one of
the most memorable nights in WWE history as the class of ’09 is
enshrined into the WWE Hall of Fame, including “Stone Cold” Steve
Austin. Tickets $55.

The 25th Anniversary of Wrestle-
Mania – April 5 at
Reliant Center
Called one of the Greatest Spectacles–join all the WWE Superstars
for this milestone event; a quarter of a century in the making.
Tickets $40-$755.

Monday Night RAW – April 6 at Toyota Center
Don’t miss the fallout from the 25th Anniversary of WrestleMania
as Monday Night Raw comes to Toyota Center. Tickets $20-$60.

For tickets and more smackdown scoop, visit wwe.com
FIDDLER ON THE ROOF
May 26–June 7 Cadillac Broadway
Across America Fiddler on the Roof has been lauded by critics again and again, and won the hearts of people all around the world. Filled with a rousing, heartwarming score, which includes Tradition, Matchmaker and If I Were a Rich Man, Fiddler on the Roof is a timeless classic. Tickets $23–$61. Hobby Center, 800 Bagby. 713.629.3700. ticketmaster.com

PERFORMING ARTS
MARIE
Through Mar 8 Houston Ballet
Inspired by the life story of Marie Antoinette, artistic director Stanton Welch creates a new full-length ballet about the French monarch whose life culminated in the violent events of the French Revolution. Tickets $17–$150. Wortham Center, 501 Texas. 713.227.ARTS. houstonballet.org

A LITTLE DAY MUSIC
Mar 4 Da Camera of Houston
Downtown workers, schools, seniors and day care centers are among the many who enjoy Da Camera’s free lunchtime concerts. Bring your lunch and enjoy the wide variety of artists and ensembles presented this season. Free. Wortham Center, 501 Texas. 713.524.5050. dacamera.com

ANCIENT AIRS AND DANCES
Mar 4 Houston Chamber Symphony
Marc Teicholz, guitarist extraordinaire, once again joins the Houston Chamber Symphony in Zilkha Hall. Tickets $15–$30. Hobby Center, 800 Bagby. 713.315.2525. houstonchambersymphony.org

SIR JAMES GALWAY, FLUTE
Mar 4 Society for the Performing Arts
Sir James Galway is widely regarded as both a supreme interpreter of the classical flute repertory and a consummate entertainer. He will be joined by Christopher O’Riley, groundbreaking pianist and host of National Public Radio’s popular classical music show From the Top. Tickets $22–$67. Jones Hall, 615 Louisiana. 713.227.4SP A. sapphirehouston.org

MUSIC OF THE BEATLES
Mar 6–8 Houston Symphony
Take a ride in a yellow submarine as the group Classical Mystery Tour, featuring original members from the Broadway sensation Beatlemania, sing, play and perform beloved Beatles tunes. Tickets $29–$110. Jones Hall, 615 Louisiana. 713.224.7575. houstonsymphony.org

JOE GOODE PERFORMANCE GROUP
Mar 6 Society for the Performing Arts
The fearlessly innovative choreographer Joe Goode brings his San Francisco-based company to Houston in two works for an evening of riveting dance theater. San Francisco-based company to Houston in two innovative choreographer Joe Goode brings his

MASTERS OF MOVEMENT
Mar 12–22 Houston Ballet
Houston Ballet introduces three important works into its repertoire. Leaves are Fading is a lyrical study in wistful dreaminess by famed English choreographer Antony Tudor. The Vertiginous Thrill of Exactitude is all Forsythe, sexy and energetic. Jiří Kylián’s Soldiers’ Mass is a poignant commentary on the destruction and devastation of war. Tickets $17–$150. Wortham Center, 501 Texas. 713.227.ARTS. houstonballet.org

BRONFMAN’S BRAHMS’ SECOND
Mar 12–15 Houston Symphony
Brahms’ magnificent second concerto is grander in scale than his four symphonies as well as any concerto written before its time. Hear German romanticism at its greatest depth and excitement. Tickets $27–$107. Jones Hall, 615 Louisiana. 713.224.7575. houstonsymphony.org

BILL COSBY
Mar 13 Houston Symphony
One of the most influential stars in America today, Bill Cosby has captivated audiences for decades with his uncanny ability to point out the humor in our lives and touch our hearts. Don’t miss this night of stand-up comedy with the incomparable Bill Cosby. Tickets $45–$110. Jones Hall, 615 Louisiana. 713.224.7575. houstonsymphony.org

SALZBURG CHAMBER SOLOISTS
Mar 14 Society for the Performing Arts
Straight from the musical heart of Austria comes this ensemble of first-rate international young musicians who perform orchestral chamber music with the freedom of soloists. Tickets $22–$47. Wortham Center, 501 Texas. 713.227.4SP A. sapphirehouston.org

BROADWAY BABIES
Mar 17 Bayou City Performing Arts
Act I features Gay Men’s Chorus of Houston performing the very best of the Broadway belters: Dreamgirls, Take Me or Leave Me from RENT and more. Tickets $22–$55. Jones Hall, 615 Louisiana. 713.521.7464. bayoucityperformingarts.org

MICHIELLE ELLSWORTH: THE OBJECTIFICATION OF THINGS
Mar 20 & 21 DiverseWorks
University of Colorado at Boulder dance professor Michelle Ellsworth has been described as hilarious, neurotic, quirky and, dare we add, brilliant. In her newest piece, she uses everything from a miniature green screen to shadow puppets to study life from a very different, scientific perspective. Tickets $15–$8. DiverseWorks, 1117 East Freeway. 713.223.8346. diverseworks.org

TCHAIKOVSKY’S PATHETIQUE SYMPHONY
Mar 20–22 Houston Symphony
The Houston Symphony presents a rising star in the international conducting world; Kirill Karabits will make his North American conducting debut. The featured work will be Tchaikovsky’s famed Symphony No. 6 in B minor. Tickets $27–$107. Jones Hall, 615 Louisiana. 713.224.7575. houstonsymphony.org

BAROQUE MEDITATION
Mar 20 Mercury Baroque
For this unique chamber music concert, Antoine Plante trades in his baton for the viola da gamba. Buxtehude’s Membra Jesu Nostri leads off an intimate evening of German vocal works featuring Canadian singing group Les Voix Baroques. Tickets $20–$47. Wortham Center, 501 Texas. 713.533.0080. mercurybaroque.org

ROY HARGROVE QUINTET
Mar 21 Da Camera of Houston
Waco native trumpeter Roy Hargrove has firmly established himself as one of the premier players in jazz and beyond. He returns to Da Camera after burning up the stage in his appearance with Directions in Music and adds, brilliant. In her newest piece, she uses everything from a miniature green screen to shadow puppets to study life from a very different, scientific perspective. Tickets $15–$8. DiverseWorks, 1117 East Freeway. 713.223.8346. diverseworks.org

LIGHTING THE WAY
Mar 21 Musiqa
Musiqa and Stages Repertory Theatre collaborate on a program that includes music by Mary-Ellen Childs, George Crumb and Pierre Jalbert, a world premiere music-and-light show by Anthony Brandt and lighting designer Christina Giannelli and a theatrical presentation created to celebrate the Pulitzer Prize. Tickets $18–$32. Hobby Center, 800 Bagby. 713.315.2525. musiqa.houston.org

Are you ready to paddle?
Every year they take to the waters of Buffalo Bayou for Texas’ largest canoe and kayak race. This year’s 37th annual Buffalo Bayou Regatta is certain to draw water enthusiasts from around the state. The 15–mile race, scheduled for Saturday, March 7, begins at San Felipe and Voss and ends downtown at Sesquicentennial Park. Those who don’t want to compete can be part of the excitement by cheering on the contestants or just enjoying the scene. Activities will include live music and food and drinks at the Finish Line.

713.752.0314
buffalobayou.org
PINK AT THE BROWN
Mar 26  Pink Ribbons Project will return for its sixth benefit performance gala of music, dance, drama and art entitled Pink at the Brown. For the first time the city’s premier arts organizations from the Houston Theater District will join forces on the same stage to raise funds for breast cancer. Tickets $50–$1,000. Wortham Center, 501 Texas. 713.524.7465. pinkribbons.org

ST. LAWRENCE STRING QUARTET: DREAMS AND PRAYERS
Mar 27 Da Camera of Houston The St. Lawrence String Quartet’s electrifying performances have dazzled audiences all over the world. The Quartet returns to Da Camera joined by two close friends: American opera star, soprano Heidi Grant Murphy, and clarinet virtuoso Todd Palmer. Tickets $22–$38. Wortham Center, 501 Texas. 713.524.5050. dacamera.com

ALVIN AILEY AMERICAN DANCE THEATER
Mar 27–28 Society for the Performing Arts Join the celebration as Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater marks its 50th anniversary of bringing African–American artistic expression to the world’s stages. Tickets $22–$62. Jones Hall, 615 Louisiana. 713.227.4SPA. spahouston.org

A LITTLE DAY MUSIC
Apr 1 Da Camera of Houston Downtown workers, schools, seniors and day care centers are among the many who enjoy Da Camera’s free lunchtime concerts. Bring your lunch and enjoy the wide variety of artists and ensembles presented this season. Free. Wortham Center, 501 Texas. 713.524.5050. dacamera.com

TERESA CHAPMAN & LESLIE SCATES: THE CONVENIENT WOMAN
Apr 2–4 DiverseWorks Houston choreographers Teresa Chapman and Leslie Scates create a dance theater performance that takes a satiric look at feminine ideals and the current culture of dissatisfaction. The Convenient Woman explores plastic surgery, virtual living, the obsessive behaviors of purchasing items from QVC and the culture of self-improvement. Tickets $15–$8. DiverseWorks, 1117 East Freeway. 713.223.8346. diverseworks.org

JOHN WILLIAMS AND RACHMANINOFF
Apr 2–5 Houston Symphony You can hear John Williams’ lifelong love of the horn in his concerto, which was written as he was completing the music to the third Harry Potter film. Imagine your own picture to the concerto’s movements – Angelus, The Battle of the Trees, Pastoral, The Hunt and Nocturne. Tickets $27–$107. Jones Hall, 615 Louisiana. 713.224.7575. houstonsymphony.org

DANFIS PRIETO QUINTET
Apr 3 Da Camera of Houston The New York Times has compared the arrival of Danfis Prieto in the U.S. to the landing of an asteroid. His groundbreaking drumming techniques have had a powerful impact on both the Latin and jazz music scenes, locally and internationally. Tickets $26–$45. Wortham Center, 501 Texas. 713.524.5050. dacamera.com

SIMÓN BOLIVAR YOUTH ORCHESTRA
Apr 3 Houston Symphony The Houston Symphony hosts conductor Gustavo Dudamel and the Simón Bolívar Youth Orchestra in a program including Tchaikovsky’s Symphony No. 4, Ravel’s Daphnis and Chloe Suite No. 2 and Latin encores. Tickets $31.75–$121.75. Jones Hall, 615 Louisiana. 713.224.7575. houstonsymphony.org

CROSSROADS OF AMERICA
Apr 7 Project Divisi VOX: The Rob Seibl Singers join forces with Project DIVISi to deliver a night of homegrown entertainment you won’t find anywhere else. Join soloist Ron Raines as these two ensembles lead you through a musical history of our country. Tickets $21.25–$38.25. Hobby Center, 800 Bagby. 713.315.2525. projectdivisi.org

DANCE SALAD FESTIVAL
Apr 9–11 Among those coming to Houston for Dance Salad Festival are The English National Ballet; The Royal Danish Ballet; Mats Ek and Ana Laguna; Gothenburg Opera Ballet; SemperOper Ballet; and Staatsballett Ballet. Tickets $19–$47. Wortham Center, 501 Texas. 877.772.5425. dancesalad.org

THE TEN TENORS
Apr 9 Society for the Performing Arts Australia’s hottest tenor export makes its Houston debut with an eclectic program drawing from the classical tenor repertoire, Neapolitan ballads and rock classics. Formed in 1995 while studying for careers in opera, the Ten Tenors leapt to international attention in 2002. Tickets $22–$62. Jones Hall, 615 Louisiana. 713.227.4SPA. spahouston.org

LEILÀ JOSÉFOWICZ PLUS BRAHMS’ FIRST
Apr 17–19 Houston Symphony Composer John Adams says the violin commands “incredible lyric intensity and has a fantastic capacity to deliver a white-hot message.” The second movement of his concerto was inspired by the Pachelbel Canon. Tickets $27–$107. Jones Hall, 615 Louisiana. 713.224.7575. houstonsymphony.org

MONUMENTAL
Apr 17 Society for the Performing Arts One of Australia’s leading dancers/choreographers, Ros Warby, makes her Houston debut with her latest award-winning solo dance work. Profoundly moving and richly layered, Monumental embodies two of ballet’s most iconic figures: the swan and the soldier. Tickets $22–$42. Jones Hall, 615 Louisiana. 713.227.4SPA. spahouston.org

BEN STEVENSON ACADEMY SPRING SHOWCASE
Apr 24–25 Houston Ballet Students today, stars tomorrow. In two stellar performances, the gifted young artists of Houston Ballet’s professional training program showcase their brilliance. This is your chance to see the up-and-coming dancers perform works created especially for them. Tickets $20–$42. Wortham Center, 501 Texas. 713.315.2525. dwdt.org

LEADING LADIES OF THE SILVER SCREEN
Apr 24–26 Houston Symphony The Houston Symphony and special guest vocalists will bring you face to face with five leading ladies of classic film in their most iconic roles. Meet Audrey Hepburn in Breakfast at Tiffany’s, Ingrid Bergman in Casablanca, Elizabeth Taylor in Cleopatra, Vivien Leigh in Gone With the Wind and Judy Garland in The Wizard of Oz. Tickets $29–$110. Jones Hall, 615 Louisiana. 713.224.7575. houstonsymphony.org

ALADDIN AND THE ARABIAN NIGHTS
Apr 25 Houston Symphony Take a magic carpet ride with Aladdin and experience a whole new world of music. Rimsky-Korsakov’s Scheherazade will tell you stories from The Arabian Nights. You’ll also hear Flight of the Bumblebee and favorite melodies from the Disney movie Aladdin. Tickets $12–$19. Jones Hall, 615 Louisiana. 713.224.7575. houstonsymphony.org

WOLFGANG AMADEUS MOZART
Apr 30–May 2 Houston Symphony Theater The much-anticipated Houston premiere of Walsh’s Mozart trilogy featuring Wolfgang for Webb performed by Sarasota Ballet of Florida, Amadeus for Anita performed by Dominic Walsh Dance Theater and Mozart performed by both companies. Tickets $35.25–$48.25. Hobby Center, 800 Bagby. 713.315.2525. dwdt.org

SLATKIN’S BEETHOVEN EIGHTH
Apr 30–May 3 Houston Symphony Leonard Slatkin premiered the Sierra Missa Latina at the Kennedy Center and now brings it to Houston with the same soloists. The Washington Times called the new work “quite simply, shockingly brilliant.” Tickets $27–$107. Jones Hall, 615 Louisiana. 713.224.7575. houstonsymphony.org

AFTER BACH
May 2 Da Camera of Houston When the romantic composers discovered Bach, their own music was forever changed. Liszt’s powerful late masterpieces, Viva Cresc! , a unique religious work for solo piano and chorus, receives a rare performance. Tickets $22–$38. Wortham Center, 501 Texas. 713.524.5050. dacamera.com

SOUNDS OF JOY

AN EVENING OF ROMANTIC CONCERTOS
May 4 Houston Chamber Symphony You are sure to enjoy this concert of luxurious romantic concertos. Zilkha Hall will be filled with the beautiful music of Weber’s Clarinet Concerto No. 2 and the highly revered Violin Concerto of Tchaikovsky. Tickets $15–$30. Hobby Center, 800 Bagby. 713.315.2525. houstonchamberorchestra.com

VIDA DEL BAILE
May 5 Dance Houston A Latin Dance Festival on Cinco de Mayo. Wortham Center, 501 Texas. 713.526.1049. dancehoustongrün

YO-YO MA
May 5 Houston Symphony The multi-faceted career of Yo-Yo Ma testifies to his search for ways to reach audiences. Whether performing a new concerto, revisiting a familiar work, or exploring non-western cultures, Ma finds connections that stimulate the imagination. Tickets $80–$150. Jones Hall, 615 Louisiana. 713.224.7575. houstonsymphony.org

A LITTLE DAY MUSIC
May 6 Da Camera of Houston Downtown workers, schools, seniors and day care centers are among the many who enjoy Da Camera’s free lunchtime concerts. Bring your lunch and enjoy the wide variety of artists and ensembles presented this season. Free. Wortham Center, 501 Texas. 713.524.5050. dacamera.com

BEETHOVEN’S VIOLIN CONCERTO
May 8–10 Houston Symphony When the Bartók Concerto was premiered in 1944, legendary Boston
Funky, folksy, fun, outlandish, wild, wonderful – Houston’s Art Car Weekend seems to defy conventional description. From the mini Indy racer transformed into a growling alligator complete with glowing eyes to the vehicle covered in lush, green, growing grass, art cars have become an indelible part of the city’s art scene. Each spring, artists from around the world bring their creations to downtown Houston for a parade unlike any other. This year’s art spectacle is scheduled for Saturday, May 9 and the weekend always includes plenty of opportunities to see the cars. The annual parade and associated events fall under the auspices of the Orange Show Center for Visionary Arts – the 3,000-square-foot folk art environment dedicated to, well, the orange. Check out their Web site to learn more about the unique history of the Orange Show and some of their whimsical projects, such as the Beer Can House and Eyepener Tours.

The Orange Show Center for Visionary Arts
713.926.6368 orangeshow.org

IL TRIONFO DEL TEMPO
May 10 Ars Lyrica Handel’s first oratorio, in which the characters Beauty and Pleasure – at the instigation of Time and Disillusion – dazzlingly dispute each other’s primacy. Tickets $31.25–$41.25. Hobby Center, 800 Bagby. 713.315.2525. themobbycenter.org

RESPIGHI’S PINES OF ROME
May 14–17 Houston Symphony Colorful and evocative, The Pines of Rome will spur your imagination with images of the Borghese Gardens filled with children playing, a Roman temple under the stars and a Roman legion’s thundering march along the Appian Way. Tickets $27–$107. Jones Hall, 615 Louisiana. 713.224.7575. houstonsymphony.org

LULLY’S ARMIDE
May 16 Mercury Baroque Mercury Baroque recreates the grandeur of 17th century France with Lully’s masterpiece Armide. French artists join the ensemble to resurrect this stunning opera for its first Houston performance. Tickets $20–$47. Wortham Center, 501 Texas. 713.533.0080. mercurybaroque.org

AROUND THE WORLD WITH MUSICIA
May 16 Musiqia The whole family is invited to Musiqia’s acclaimed educational concert Around the World with Musiqia, awarded a 2008 Access to Artistic Excellence Grant from the National Endowment for the Arts. Every child who attends receives a free DVD of the program. Tickets $18–$32. Hobby Center, 800 Bagby. 713.315.2525. musiqahouston.org

BEHIND THE IRON CURtain
May 19 Project Divisi For almost half a century the world was divided in two halves. Composers had to temper their musical manifestations with the ideals of Communism in order to remain on friendly terms within the political sphere. Project Divisi brings these composers to the stage. Tickets $16.25–$28.25. Hobby Center, 800 Bagby. 713.315.2525. projectdivisi.org

DANCING WITH THE SYMPHONY
May 22–24 Houston Symphony Professional dancers and local celebrities will pair up as the Houston Symphony and Principal Pops Conductor Michael Krajewski lead a competitive romp through the ballroom dance styles of the tango, waltz, foxtrot and the cha cha. Come cast a vote for your favorite couple. Tickets $29–$110. Jones Hall, 615 Louisiana. 713.224.7575. houstonsymphony.org

OF AN ERA
May 28–June 7 Houston Ballet Three talented choreographers. Three exquisite works. Christopher Wheeldon’s Dances at a Gathering is pure romance, a whirling tribute to the Richard Rodgers iconic musical. Spanish choreographer Nacho Durato’s first work, Jardi Tancat, is still considered one of his finest. Concluding the program is Stanton Welch’s Nosotros, a brilliant display of talent in a magical, starlit setting. Tickets $17–$150. Wortham Center, 501 Texas. 713.227.ARTS. houstonballet.org

SPEAKER SERIES & BOOK CLUBS

INPRINT MARGARETT ROOT BROWN READING SERIES PRESENTS RICHARD PRICE
Mar 9 Richard Price, the award-winning scriptwriter for HBO’s The Wire, is author of seven novels, including his latest, Lush Life. Price will read from his work, followed by an on-stage interview and book sale and signing. Tickets $5, free for students and seniors. Mon 7:30 Alley Theatre, 615 Texas. 713.521.2026. inprinthoustion.org

AN EVENING WITH ...
STEPHANIE ELIZONDO GRIEST
Mar 12 Stephanie Elizondo Griest will read from her latest novel, Mexican Enough. This novel chronicles her journey, from the narco-infested border town of Nuevo Laredo to the highlands of Chiapas. Free. Thu 7–9. Central Library, 500 McKinney. 832.393.1313. houstonlibrary.org

HILL/FINGER LECTURE: VINCE’S BRIDGE
BY C. DAVID POMEROY, JR.
Mar 19 Local historian and author C. David Pomeroy, Jr. will speak on the history of the Pasadena area and Vince’s Bridge, which was a critical tactic in the Battle of San Jacinto. Free. Thu noon–1. Heritage Society Tea Room, 1100 Bagby. 713.655.1912. heritagesociety.org

STEWART CADILLAC BROWN BAG LUNCH SPEAKER SERIES
Mar 26 A great opportunity for downtown workers and residents to bring their lunch and hear the perspectives of individuals behind organizations that are making things happen in the city of Houston. Free. Thu noon–1. 2 Houston Center Auditorium F2 Level, 909 Fannin. 713.658.8938. downtownhouston.org

INPRINT READING ON THE GREEN
Apr 8 Katherine Center reads from her new novel, Everyone Is Beautiful, and Emily Fox Gordon reads from her debut novel (and third book), If It Will Come to Me. A night of wit and laughter by two talented and humorous Houston authors. Free. Wed 7. Discovery Green, 1500 McKinney. 713.400.7336. discovergreen.com

HILL/FINGER LECTURE: GLENWOOD CEMETERY
BY MARTHA PETERSON

INPRINT MARGARETT ROOT BROWN READING SERIES PRESENTS BILL BRYSON
Apr 20 Bill Bryson is the best-selling author of a number of wildly diverse non-fiction works. Bryson will read from his work, followed by an on-stage interview and a book sale and signing. Tickets $5, free for students and seniors. Mon 7:30. Wortham Center, 501 Texas. 713.521.2026. inprinthouston.org

EMERGING LEADERS LUNCHEON TO GROW ON
Apr 21 Spend your lunch learning tips for inter-office conflict resolution. Craig Price will tell you how to make the workplace a more peaceful and happy place. Tickets $7 members/$9 nonmembers (pre-registration required; includes lunch). Tue noon–1. Haynes and Boone LLP, 1221 McKinney, Suite 2100. 713.658.8938. downtownhouston.org
AN EVENING WITH LESTER BROWN
Apr 28
Lester Brown pioneered the field of sustainability. In 2001 he created Earth Policy Institute whose mission is to provide a vision of what an environmentally sustainable economy will look like and how to get there. Tickets $14–$74. Wortham Center, 501 Texas. 832.251.0706. progressiveforumn.org

HILL/FINGER LECTURE: REVIVAL OF A GREAT CITY BUILDING – THE PARNSWORTH-CHAMBERS BUILDING, HOUSTON’S PARKS & RECREATION DEPARTMENT HEADQUARTERS BY JOE TURNER
May 21

Pocket Full of Soul celebrates music’s most portable instrument. The evolution of the harmonica from a toy that fits in your pocket to bona fide musical instrument is the fascinating subject of this documentary featuring some of the legends of the genre. Get a sneak peek at the film and hear its musicians perform live on Saturday, April 4 at Discovery Green. Pocket Full of Soul Music and Film Festival at Discovery Green 713.400.7336 discoverygreen.com

LITWITS BOOK CLUB
Every 2nd Tue of the month
If you like to read and discuss literary fiction written in the last 50 years or so, please join the club. Free. noon–1 (bring your lunch). Central Library, 500 McKinney. 832.393.1313. houstonlibrary.org

MYSTERY BOOK CLUB
Every 3rd Tue of the month
If you like to read and discuss mystery fiction, this club’s for you. Free. noon–1 (bring your lunch). Central Library, 500 McKinney. 832.393.1313. houstonlibrary.org

FACT OR FICTION BOOK CLUB
Every 4th Tue of the month
Can’t decide between a fiction or nonfiction book club? If you enjoy the flexibility of discussing books based on a broad topic, stop by. Free. noon–1 (bring your lunch). Central Library, 500 McKinney. 832.393.1313. houstonlibrary.org

URBAN FICTION BOOK CLUB
Every 2nd Thu of the month
If you enjoy reading fiction with an edge to it, head to the library. Free.7. Central Library, 500 McKinney. 832.393.1313. houstonlibrary.org

EXHIBITS & VISUAL ARTS
CREATING SPACE CITY, USA
Through Apr 26
The Heritage Society presents an exhibition that focuses on the early years of the space program, from the creation of NASA in 1958 to the naming of the first class of space shuttle astronauts in 1979. Free. Heritage Society Museum, 1100 Bagby. 713.655.1912. heritagesociety.org

SOLUTION
Mar 6–Apr 18
Solution poses questions about the nature of progress and offers theoretical solutions intended to head off the potential for self-destruction. Each artist confronts human-kind’s relationship to progress and the ability to respond to change. Curated by Janet Phelp. Free. DiverseWorks, 1117 East Freeway. 713.223.8346. diverseworks.org

NEW ART IN AUSTIN: 20 TO WATCH
May 1–June 13
DiverseWorks’ third in a triennial exhibition showcasing emerging Central Texas artists whose work stretches the boundaries of contemporary art. Free admission. Diverse-Works, 1117 East Freeway. 713.223.8346. diverseworks.org

CONCERTS
THE DEREK TRUCKS BAND
Mar 5
Tickets $23.50–$55. House of Blues, Houston Pavilions, 1204 Caroline. 888.402.5837. hob.com

BIG HEAD TODD & THE MONSTERS
Mar 6
Tickets $25–$50. House of Blues, Houston Pavilions, 1204 Caroline. 888.402.5837. hob.com

ONE NIGHT WITH QUEEN: A TRIBUTE TO QUEEN
Mar 7
Tickets $23.50–$50. House of Blues, Houston Pavilions, 1204 Caroline. 888.402.5837. hob.com

LISA HANNIGAN
Mar 15
Tickets $15. House of Blues, Houston Pavilions, 1204 Caroline. 888.402.5837. hob.com

ELTON JOHN & BILLY JOEL FACE 2 FACE TOUR
Mar 19
Tickets $25–$50. House of Blues, Houston Pavilions, 1204 Caroline. 888.402.5837. hob.com

KATY PERRY WITH ALPHA BEAT
Mar 20
Tickets $18–$20. House of Blues, Houston Pavilions, 1204 Caroline. 888.402.5837. hob.com

ANDREW BIRD W/ HEARTLESS BASTARDS
Mar 21
Tickets $20–$25. House of Blues, Houston Pavilions, 1204 Caroline. 888.402.5837. hob.com

TASTE OF CHAOS TOUR FEATURING THURSDAY
Mar 21

HOLLYWOOD UNDEAD & SENSES FAIL W/ HASTE THE DAY, BROKENCYDE
Mar 24
Tickets $19.50–$25. House of Blues, Houston Pavilions, 1204 Caroline. 888.402.5837. hob.com

JOAN SEBASTIAN
Mar 29
Toyota Center, 1510 Polk. 713.4HOU.TIX. toyotacentertix.com

BRITNEY SPEARS THE CIRCUS W/ SPECIAL GUESTS THE PUSSYCAT DOLLS
Mar 30
Toyota Center, 1510 Polk. 713.4HOU.TIX. toyotacentertix.com

MORRISSEY
Apr 11
Tickets $37.50–$47.50. Jones Hall, 615 Louisiana. 713.629.3700. ticketmaster.com

NICKELBACK
Apr 16
Toyota Center, 1510 Polk. 713.4HOU.TIX. toyotacentertix.com

CELTIC WOMAN
Apr 17
Toyota Center, 1510 Polk. 713.4HOU.TIX. toyotacentertix.com

FLEETWOOD MAC
May 2
Toyota Center, 1510 Polk. 713.4HOU.TIX. toyotacentertix.com

FLIGHT OF THE CONCHORDS
May 6
Tickets $38.50. Jones Hall, 615 Louisiana. 713.629.3700. ticketmaster.com

FRANK CALIENGO
May 30
Tickets $39.75. Verizon Wireless Theater, 520 Texas. 713.230.1600. livenation.com

SPORTS
2009 ROCKETS BLACKTOP BATTLE
Mar 21 & 22
The streets around Toyota Center will turn into a street ball haven with more than 35 courts and 300 teams. Enjoy an interactive kid’s zone, food and entertainment along with appearances and an autograph session from the Houston Rockets Power Dancers and Clutch. Free. Sat 8:30–4, Sun 8:30–2. Toyota Center, 1510 Polk. rockets.com

HOUSTON ROCKETS
Through Apr
Tickets $10–$350. Toyota Center, 1510 Polk. 866.4HOU.TIX. rockets.com

HOUSTON AEROS
Through Apr
Tickets start at $12. Toyota Center, 1510 Polk. 713.974.7825. aeros.com

HOUSTON ASTROS
Home Opener Apr 6
Tickets start at $7. Minute Maid Park, 501 Crawford. 877.927.8767. astros.com

HOUSTON DYNAMO
Through fall
Tickets $20–$52. University of Houston Robertson Stadium, 4800 Calhoun. 713.276.7500. houstondynamo.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, $6.5 seniors (note: if you park in the Theater District garage, they will deduct from your ticket price but you must bring parking ticket with you). Bayou Place, 510 Texas. 713.225.1470. angelikafilmscenter.com

FIRST THURSDAYS AT DEAN’S
Mar 5, Apr 2 & May 7
Every first Thursday of the month you can check out the screening of an 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

KUHF CLASSIC FILM CONCERTS: DESTINY
Mar 6
KUHF presents a unique film presentation featuring Fritz Lang’s 1921 German silent film, Destiny with an original soundtrack performed live by Austin’s The Invincible Czars. Free. Fri 7.

KUHF presents a unique film presentation featuring Fritz Lang’s 1921 German silent film, Destiny with an original soundtrack performed live by Austin’s The Invincible Czars. Free. Fri 7.
Discovery Green, 1500 McKinney. 713.400.7336. discoverygreen.com

HOUSTON GRAND OPERA MOVIE NIGHT: ANDRE PREVIN
Mar 28 As part of its salute to Andre Previn, HGO screens (in the park) Gigi (1958), a film that takes place in a park. Andre Previn served as music director for this award-winning film. Free. Sat 7. Discovery Green, 1500 McKinney. 713.400.7336. discoverygreen.com

REEL TEEN FEST
Mar 28 The Houston Public Library is hosting a Teen Film Festival. Teens ages 13–18 will have a chance to showcase their original works to an audience. Featured film categories include Narrative/Documentary/Mockumentary, Broadcast/Animation(short)/Music Video and PSA/Commercial. Free. Sat 1. Central Library, Teen Room, 500 McKinney. 832.393.1313. houstonlibrary.org

FILM PREMIERE: SPEEDING MOTORCYCLE
Apr 5 The Catastrophic Theatre presents the first public showing of Tim Thomson’s film version of the nationally acclaimed rock opera Speeding Motorcycle. This event, a celebration of the life and work of Cary Winscott, features live music by The McKinney. 832.393.1313.

discoverygreen.com

DIVINAS 2009: A 2009 TEXAS SOR JUANA FESTIVAL EVENT
Mar 1 The National Museum of Mexican Art, in partnership with Discovery Green, is proud to present the Divinas Concert as part of the 2009 Texas Sor Juana Festival. The Divinas concert is a stellar event that showcases three high-profile Mexican women artists on one stage. Free. Sat 7. Discovery Green, 1500 McKinney. 713.400.7336. discoverygreen.com

GUARANTY BANK TOUR DE HOUSTON
Mar 22 Mayor Bill White and 3,000 cyclists ride through the city promoting clean air and a healthy lifestyle. After-party at the park with free food and drinks, staged entertainment and information booths. Free. Sun 7–1. Discovery Green, 1500 McKinney. 713.400.7336. tourdehouston.org

DOWNTOWN HOME TOUR 2009
Mar 20 A fun-filled day whether you are looking for a new place to call home or just curious to see how the urban half live. Featured properties include One Park Place, Commerce Towers, Post Rice Lofts and Hogg Palace. Tickets $15 members/ $20 non-members (advance purchase price; additional $5 premium at door). Sat noon–5. Post Rice Lofts, 909 Texas. 713.658.8938. downtownhouston.org

HOUSTON CHILDREN’S FESTIVAL
Apr 4 & 5 It’s a child’s dream world with a stellar entertainment lineup, family adventure zones, music and fun. Check Web site for ticket prices.10:30–6:30. Hermann Square and Tranquility Park @ City Hall. houstonchildrensfestival.com

POCKET FULL OF SOUL MUSIC AND FILM FESTIVAL
Apr 4 The first-ever music and film festival featuring a sneak peak of the film Pocket Full of Soul: The Harmonica Documentary along with several musicians from the film performing live in the park. Free. Sat 5:30–10. Discovery Green, 1500 McKinney. 713.400.7336. discoverygreen.com

HOUSTON INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL
Apr 18 & 19, 25 & 26 The Houston International Festival (Fest) spotlights Ireland as the country of honor for the 2009 festival. Its influence will infuse the entire festival, from the music and main stages to the educational exhibits. Check Web site for ticket prices. Sat noon–10, Sun noon–9. Sam Houston Park. fest.org

UH SCHOOL OF THEATRE AND DANCE PRESENTS SHAKESPEARE AT THE GREEN
Apr 24–26 Celebrate William Shakespeare’s birthday with UH Theatre and Dance students presenting Macbeth and As You Like It. Free. Discovery Green, 1500 McKinney. 713.400.7336. discoverygreen.com

BAYOU BASH

9TH ANNUAL HOUSTON DRAGON BOAT FESTIVAL
May 2 The 9th annual Houston Dragon Boat Festival offers a full day of diverse cultural performances, pan-Asian and festival cuisine, arts and crafts, Kids’ Zone, and of course, an exciting dragon boat competition with teams from leading corporations and community organizations. Free. Sat 8:30–4:30. Allen’s Landing, Commerce @ Main. 281.381.7154. texasdragonboat.com

LULAC CINCO DE MAYO PARADE

ART CAR SNEAK PEEK
May 8 Get your first peek at the amazing art cars the day before the 22nd annual Houston Art Car Parade. Check out illuminated cars, live music, performances, presentations and surprises galore. Organized by the Orange Show Center for Visionary Art. Free. Fri 7–10. Discovery Green, 1500 McKinney. 713.400.7336. discoverygreen.com

ART CAR PARADE
May 9 More than 250 wildly

Seeing Houston from the seat of your bike gives a whole new perspective to the nation’s fourth largest city.

This year’s race is scheduled for Sunday, March 22 and begins and ends downtown at Discovery Green.

The Guaranty Bank Tour de Houston began with an idea from a state legislator who had participated in a five boroughs ride in New York City. State Sen. Rodney Ellis brought the idea to Mayor Bill White, who thought a citywide bike tour would give Houstonians a unique way to experience the city. The Tour de Houston was born.

Riders have three routes to choose from – a 70-mile ride, a 40-mile ride and a 20-mile ride. Enjoy a party in the park after the big event, which will be kicked off by White and Ellis.

For more information and to register visit tourdehouston.org
decorated cars fill the streets in this mind-bending parade presented by the Orange Show. Free. Sat Parade rolls at 1. Allen Parkway between Sam Houston Park and Taft. orangeshow.org

LIGHT AS AIR
May 28–31 Light as Air is an outdoor exhibition of inflatable sculptures by nationally recognized artists featuring Sharon Englestein, Pat Oleszko, Susan Robb and others at Discovery Green. Performances and workshops will be offered during this special exhibit. Free. 6–11. Discovery Green, 1500 McKinney. 713.400.7336. discoverygreen.com

EXPOS
34TH ANNUAL FISHING SHOW
Mar 4–8 The latest in all types of fishing boats and equipment from manufacturers around the world. Tickets $8/$2 for kids 6–12. Wed–Fri noon–9, Sat and Sun 10–6. George R. Brown Convention Center, 1001 Avenida de las Americas. houstonfishingshow.com

CORVETTE EXPO
Mar 7 & 8 The largest indoor Corvette and Chevy event in the Lone Star State. Tickets $15, 10–6. George R. Brown Convention Center, 1001 Avenida de las Americas. corvettechevyexpo.com

HOUSTON HOME SHOW
Mar 20–22 This show has something for every part of your home including innovative remodeling ideas, decorating tips, creative backyard additions and productive organization solutions. George R. Brown Convention Center, 1001 Avenida de las Americas. texashomeandgarden.com

CREATING KEEPSAKES SCRAPBOOK CONVENTION
Apr 24–25 Visit the Vendor Fair and stock up on all the hottest and hard-to-find scrapbook supplies. Classes are also available. Tickets $9/$7 for seniors and free for kids under 9. Fri 10–6, Sat 9–5. George R. Brown Convention Center, 1001 Avenida de las Americas. creatingkeepsakes.com

RECREATION & HEALTHY LIVING
PILOTES IN THE PARK
Tuesdays Classic flexibility and strength training, only better. Instructor from the TUTS Humphreys School for Theatrical Arts. Free. 6–7. Discovery Green, 1500 McKinney. 713.400.7336. discoverygreen.com

TAI CHI
Thursdays Reduce stress, increase focus and gain strength through Tai Chi, meditation through movement. Free. noon–1. Discovery Green, 1500 McKinney. 713.400.7336. discoverygreen.com

YOGA IN THE PARK
Saturdays Inspired movement, under the trees. Free. 9:30–10:30. Discovery Green, 1500 McKinney. 713.400.7336. discoverygreen.com

alive fits
Saturdays Houston’s first open workout class for children. Free. 11:30–noon. Discovery Green, 1500 McKinney. 713.400.7336. discoverygreen.com

YOGA IN THE PARK
Saturdays Inspired movement, under the trees. Free. 9:30–10:30. Discovery Green, 1500 McKinney. 713.400.7336. discoverygreen.com

HIP2BFit
Saturdays Houston’s first open workout class for children. Free. 11:30–noon. Discovery Green, 1500 McKinney. 713.400.7336. discoverygreen.com

NIA MOVES
Sundays Have you given up the quest for perfect inner thighs to pursue the goal of inner peace? Music, dance and movement in the great outdoors. Free. 1–2. Discovery Green, 1500 McKinney. 713.400.7336. discoverygreen.com

BIKE REPAIR WORKSHOP
Saturdays Free bicycle repair lessons by Nicholas Auger. 10–2. Discovery Green, 1500 McKinney. 713.400.7336. discoverygreen.com

GREENWORKS DOWNTOWN
RECYCLING SATURDAYS PRESENTED BY BIOLAGE
Saturdays Downtown’s recycling drop-off location. Bring your paper, glass, plastic and cans. On the first Saturday of the month, Acenture’s Eco-Team organizes a Recycling Fair with environmentally friendly product demonstrations, workshops and hands on recycling activities. Free. 10–2. Discovery Green, 1500 McKinney. 713.400.7336. discoverygreen.com

CENTRAL CITY CO-OP DOWNTOWN GREEN MARKET
Sundays A year-round co-op and farmer’s market offering the freshest organic produce and products made from local, organic ingredients. Free. noon–4. Discovery Green, 1500 McKinney. 713.400.7336. discoverygreen.com

EARTH DAY HOUSTON PRESENTED BY GHASP/MOTHERS FOR CLEAN AIR
Apr 11 Families will enjoy interactive conservation awareness activities highlighting land, air, water, and renewable energy, a farmers’ market, recycled art activities for kids, the latest in hybrid transportation and more. Live music with local and regional entertainment, a Kids’ Energy Zone and plenty of food and beverage on site will round out the day’s events. Free. Sat 9–6. Discovery Green, 1500 McKinney. 713.400.7336. earthdayhouston.org

ONGOING SERIES
YOUNG WRITERS WORKSHOP IN THE PARK
Saturdays Houston’s only open, free writing workshop for kids. Free. 10:30–11:30. HPL Express at Discovery Green, 1500 McKinney. 713.400.7336. discoverygreen.com

CHILDREN’S DISCOVERY SERIES PRESENTED BY WELLS FARGO
Saturdays HPL Express at Discovery Green presents weekly, family-oriented workshops. Free. Check web site for times and topics. Discovery Green, 1500 McKinney. 713.400.7336. discoverygreen.com

HOUSTON ARTS ALLIANCE SHOWCASE
Mar 21, Apr 18 & May 18 This series features the excellence and diversity of Houston’s performing arts community. Free. 3–5. Discovery Green, 1500 McKinney. 713.400.7336. discoverygreen.com

FRESH FRIDAYS PRESENTED BY FRESH ARTS COALITION

THURSDAYS ROCK AT DISCOVERY GREEN PRESENTED BY CAPITAL ONE BANK
Thursdays in Mar & Apr EXTREME Will Housto-nians compete in a city-wide Wii Tournament projected on the big screen. Free. 6:30. Discovery Green, 1500 McKinney. 713.400.7336. discoverygreen.com

THURSDAYS ROCK AT DISCOVERY GREEN PRESENTED BY CAPITAL ONE BANK
Thursdays in May Concerts on the Green are back with a rich variety of Gulf Coast and Central Texas talent. Check web site for complete band listing. Free. 6:30. Discovery Green, 1500 McKinney. 713.400.7336. discoverygreen.com

SUNDAYS IN THE PARK PRESENTED BY THE FOUR SEASONS HOTEL HOUSTON
Sundays Afternoon concerts entertain children of all ages to make for an idyllic Sunday in the park. Check web site for complete band listing. Free. 3–5pm. Discovery Green, 1500 McKinney. 713.400.7336. discoverygreen.com

TOURS
BUFFALO BAYOU WALKING TOURS
Mar 7, Apr 4 & May 2 Arch docents will lead you on this two-hour architectural stroll along Buffalo Bayou Parkway for an overview of downtown Houston’s history and architecture. Tickets $15/$10 for AIA, Architypes and Bayou Buddies members). Sat 10–noon. Architecture Center Houston, 315 Capitol, Suite 120. 713.520.0155. aiahouston.org

BAT TOURS BY PONTOON BOAT
Mar 13, Apr 10 & May 8 You’ll enjoy an amazing view of the bats’ dusk emergence and learn more about these magnificent flying mammals that share the city with us. Cancellations must take place 48 hours prior to the boat tour. Reservations required. Tickets $35/$20 for kids 4–12. Fri dusk (time varies depending on time of month). Allen’s Landing, Commerce at Main. 713.752.0314. buffalobayou.org

SECOND SATURDAY BUFFALO BAYOU BOAT RIDES
Mar 14, Apr 11 & May 9 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. Tickets $7/$5 for kids 4–12. Sabine Promenade along Buffalo Bayou. 713.752.0314. buffalobayou.org

HISTORY PONTOON BOAT TOURS
Mar 21, Apr 25 & May 2 Buffalo Bayou Partnership invites you to board their new pontoon boat and take a look back to the late 1800’s, when Houston was founded, to learn about those important individuals and families along Buffalo Bayou who helped shape Houston. Reservations required. Tickets $50. Sat 10–noon or 1–3. Allen’s Landing, Commerce at Main. 713.752.0314. buffalobayou.org

DOWNSTREAM: A CENTER FOR LAND USE INTERPRETATION TOUR OF HOUSTON’S WATER AND OIL
Mar 21 A custom-designed boat tour from downtown Houston to the San Jacinto Monument that includes encounters with the larger urban and industrial environments surrounding Houston.
the bayou. Tickets $75. Sat 9 return by 8. Allen’s Landing, Commerce @ Main. 713.752.0314.
buffalobayou.org

KAYAK TOURS
Mar 22, Apr 19 & May 17 Celebrate Houston in a whole new way and join the Buffalo Bayou Partnership for a kayak adventure through Houston’s stunning urban wilderness. Reservations and payment for tours must be made in advance. Cancellations must take place 48 hours prior to the tour. Tickets $60. Start: Shepherd Street End: Allen’s Landing. 713.752.0314. buffalobayou.org

DISCOVER HOUSTON TOURS
Ongoing Ghost tours, tunnel walk and rail tours, architecture tours and more are available. Tour guide Sandra Lord is the resident expert and has been conducting downtown and Houston tours since 1988. Ticket prices vary. 713.222.9255. 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 @ City Hall, 901 Bagby, 713.465.7415. visithoustontexas.com

HERITAGE SOCIETY HISTORIC HOMES TOUR
Nestled among 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 and free for kids under 18. Tue–Sat 10, 11:30, 1 & 2:30 and Sun 1 & 2:30. 1100 Bagby. 713.655.1912. heritagesociety.org

MINUTE MAID PARK TOUR
Get a behind-the-scenes look at Minute Maid Park including the historic Union Station, broadcasting booth or press boxes, Astros’ or visitors’ dugout, luxury suites and much more. $9 adults, $7 seniors & $5 for kids 3–14. Mon–Sat 10, noon & 2. Minute Maid Park, 501 Crawford. 713.259.8687. astros.com

TOYOTA CENTER’S BACKSTAGE TOUR
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. houstontoyotacenter.com

FREE SELF-GUIDED AUDIO WALKING TOURS
Put your headphones on, hit play and let local insiders, captivating voices and an original soundtrack envelop you in stories of Houston’s past and present. No need to worry about which way to go or what to look for, we’ll point out everything along the way. Three tours are available: The Ultimate Downtown Tour, Museum District Walk & Roll and A Walk in the Park: Discovery Green Walking Tour. Tours are free and available to download to your iPod or MP3 player at houstondowntown.com or as a podcast on iTunes.
Houston is a city where you can do anything you want. We have great restaurants and great shopping. This is an exciting city with plenty to do year-round.

CARLOS LEE
Outfielder, Houston Astros

EXPERIENCE MY HOUSTON

The Houston Astros is a team of diversity. We have players from everywhere, and that has encouraged me to learn new languages. The Astros roster is a great representation of the City of Houston.

The fan support during my first year with the Astros was amazing. There's nothing like playing at home. My friends and family love to see me play at Minute Maid Park, and enjoy all the area attractions, including shopping at The Galleria.

When I am not playing baseball, I am on my ranch working with my cattle. Being a cattleman, I really enjoy a great steak at Pappas Bros. Steakhouse.

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