



FESTIVAL GUIDE

GREATER HOUSTON AREA

Your Guide to Annual Festivals & Events
in the Greater Houston Area



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JANUARY

Martin Luther King Jr. Grande Parade | Midtown

This annual parade celebrating the civil rights leader marches through the heart of Houston and draws more than 300,000 supporters from around the nation. mlkgrandeparade.org

Chevron Houston Marathon | Houston

This annual 26.2, 13.1, and 3.1-mile run, which begins and ends at Downtown's George R. Brown Convention Center, has steadily grown to attract more than 20,000 entrants from around the world and 200,000 spectators. chevronhoustonmarathon.com

FEBRUARY

Texas Lunar Festival | Houston

Celebrate the Asian Lunar New Year at the annual Texas Lunar Festival. In the Chinese lunar calendar, a different animal or mythological beast represents every year in a twelve-year cycle. texaslunarfest.net

Mardi Gras Galveston | Galveston

Mardi Gras was publicly observed on Galveston Island as early as 1867 but was discontinued during World War II. The Island's celebration was resurrected in 1985 and since then has become one of the most popular events along the Texas Gulf Coast. mardigrasgalveston.com

World's Championship Bar-B-Que Contest | Houston

The World's Championship Bar-B-Que Contest is three days of cooking, competition, eating and dancing. Trophies are awarded to teams preparing the best dish in each category (brisket, chicken, pork and spare ribs) as well as an overall winner! rodeohouston.com

MARCH

Azalea Trail | Houston

One of the surest signs of spring in Houston is the annual Azalea Trail. Houstonians and visitors view the spectacular gardens at Bayou Bend and Rienzi, and visit River Oaks' exquisite private homes and admire their breathtaking gardens. riveroaksgc.org

Buffalo Bayou Regatta | Houston

The largest canoe and kayak race in Texas. Over 200 vessels are expected to hit the waters in west Houston, racing and enjoying the day, ending in Sesquicentennial Park in Downtown Houston. buffalobayou.org

Tour de Houston | Houston

This annual bike ride offers Houstonians and visitors a unique way to view the city with routes winding through Houston's historic neighborhoods, scenic districts and parks while raising funds for the city's Reforest Houston program. houston.tx.gov

South Texas State Fair | Beaumont

The YMBL South Texas State Fair & Rodeo brings thousands of visitors to Beaumont each spring to experience food, entertainment, and carnival rides! ymbbl.org

Houston Children's Festival | Houston

Houston's official family celebration is held annually in downtown Houston. Benefiting Child Advocates, the event offers a dazzling smorgasbord of exciting activities, including six entertainment stages, more than 350 games and 10 family adventure areas. houstonchildrensfestival.com

APRIL

The Woodlands Waterway Arts Festival

The Woodlands

This Arts Festival is ranked one of the top fine arts festivals in the nation, featuring 225 extraordinary artists representing a broad range of styles and mediums alongside art workshops for all ages, culinary demonstrations, live music performances, craft beer tents and more. thewoodlandsartscouncil.org

Nurture Nature Fest | Baytown

The Nurture Nature Fest will include kayaking, fishing, hourly live animal shows, touch tanks, inflatables, food trucks and more. baytown.org

WorldFest | Houston

WorldFest brings a blend of feature films, shorts, screenplays, TV commercials, music videos and documentaries to viewers throughout the area. worldfest.org

Art Car Parade | Houston

More than 250,000 spectators line downtown's streets to view this parade, which showcases Houston's most outlandish folk art creations on wheels. The parade is produced by the Orange Show Center for Visionary Art. thehoustonartcarparade.com

Texas Crawfish & Music Festival | Spring

The largest and most established crawfish festival in the South, with two weekends of family-friendly fun featuring live music, hundreds of vendors, carnival rides, interactive games and activities for kids of all ages, as well as 25 tons of the best Cajun crawfish. texascrawfishfestival.com



M A Y

Dragon Boat Festival | Houston

The Texas Dragon Boat Association, in collaboration with Buffalo Bayou Partnership, presents the Dragon Boat Festival. The festival will showcase 30 teams competing along the banks of Buffalo Bayou at Allen's Landing, and will feature Asian cuisine, music, arts and crafts, and cultural performances for the whole family. texasdragonboat.com

Keels and Wheels Concours D'Elegance | Seabrook

This annual event features 200 classic cars and 100 wooden boats and attracts enthusiasts from around the world. keels-wheels.com

The Rails & Tails Mudbug Festival | Tomball

Two days of celebrating tasty crawfish through music, food and fun at Tomball's historic downtown Depot. tomballtx.gov

Comicpalooza | Houston

Comicpalooza is Texas' largest pop culture convention. It continues to be the best multi-format pop culture con in the southwest including J-Fashion, cosplay, a film festival, a literary conference, a code fest, maker space, Mars Rover rides, video and tabletop gaming, professional wrestling, and roller derby bouts. comicpalooza.com

Pasadena Strawberry Festival | Pasadena

A barbecue cook-off, a beauty pageant, arts and crafts, live entertainment, teen battle of the bands and the world's largest strawberry shortcake are all part of the Pasadena Strawberry Festival. strawberryfest.org

J U N E

Juneteenth Celebration | Houston

Juneteenth is a celebration of June 19, the day Texas learned of President Abraham Lincoln's signing of the Emancipation Proclamation freeing all slaves. The event at Miller Outdoor Theatre in Hermann Park includes blues, gospel and jazz performers and a variety of smaller events aimed at raising awareness of African-American heritage. visithoustontexas.com

Texas Outlaw Challenge | Bay Area

This annual event features a car show, time trials and a charity poker run. texasoutlawchallenge.com

Pride Houston | Houston

The largest LGBTQ+ event in the Southwest takes place each year during the Houston Pride Parade where 1,000 participants entertain 150,000 spectators with an empowering blend of light, color and sound with beautiful floats, costumes and performances. pridehouston.org



J U L Y

Freedom Over Texas Festival | Houston

Houston's official July 4th celebration takes place in Eleanor Tinsley Park at Buffalo Bayou and features live entertainment, food booths and a world-famous fireworks display. houstontx.gov

Star Spangled Salute | Woodlands

The Houston Symphony continues its annual celebration at Cynthia Woods Mitchell Pavilion. Festivities include fireworks accompanied by a dramatic 16-cannon salute. houstonSymphony.org

Great Texas Mosquito Festival | Clute

At the Great Texas Mosquito Festival, Willie-Man-Chew greets visitors from near and far to enjoy three fun-filled days of entertainment, a carnival, food, contests, and family fun. mosquitofestival.com

AUGUST

Houston International Jazz Festival | Houston
Big names in jazz convene in downtown Houston for some of the hottest music of the summer.
jazzeducation.org

Houston Shakespeare Festival | Houston
A tribute to the famous playwright, the festival attracts more than 475,000 people to its free performances at the University of Houston throughout the month.
uh.edu

AIA Sandcastle Competition | Galveston
American Institute of Architects Houston hosts its annual free Sandcastle Competition at East Beach in Galveston. For years, the competition has enticed some of the most talented architects and designers as well as drawn an average of 20,000 spectators.
aiahouston.org

Brewmasters Craft Beer Festival | Galveston
This foam-filled weekend features a stellar line-up of beer education and experiences featuring hundreds of beers, Taste It First selections and events like the Texas Brewery Tasting Tour, BrewHaHa Grand Tasting and Brew-B-Que. brewmastersbeerfest.com



SEPTEMBER

Fiestas Patrias | Houston
One of the largest and most colorful community-sponsored parades in the Southwest celebrates Mexico's independence from Spain. Colorfully clad dancers from area ballet folklórico troupes spin down the streets performing to festive Mexican music. The celebration culminates with the crowning of Miss Fiestas Patrias. tradersvillage.com

Oktoberfest Houston | Houston
Join us for Houston's only Beer Fest with a German twist, showcasing the best of German and Texas Culture in one fantastic day! Put on your Lederhosen and Dirndls and enjoy a variety of German and craft beer and the best polka music in Texas.
oktoberfesthouston.com

In a Pickle Festival | Kingwood
Get yourself in a pickle at the In a Pickle Festival in Kingwood Town Center Park. There will be local Crafters with each vendor having a pickle related item.
visithoustontexas.com

OCTOBER

Texas Renaissance Festival | Todd Mission
Starting in October and continuing for nine themed weekends in Plantersville, the Texas Renaissance Festival recreates an English village of the 16th century. Magicians, jugglers, minstrels, troubadours and comedians perform on six stages. texrenfest.com

Texas Contemporary | Houston
All art fairs are presented by galleries from around the world exhibiting modern and contemporary art in a variety of media including painting, photography, sculpture, and mixed-media. txcontemporary.com

Houston Open | Humble
Played at the Golf Club of Houston, 156 of the world's best golfers compete in the Houston Open in pursuit of the \$7 million-plus purse. houstonopengolf.com

Grito Fest | Baytown
The Annual Grito Fest is one of the area's most popular festivals celebrating Hispanic heritage. This family friendly outdoor concert will feature musical entertainment, mariachi bands, kid's activities, contests, food and craft vendors, and more. visitbaytown.com

Festa Italiana | Houston
Houston's Annual Italian Festival on the campus of University of St. Thomas features authentic Italian food, wine, music, dancing, arts and crafts and entertainment for all ages. houstonitalianfestival.com

Wings Over Houston Airshow | Houston
This airshow takes off and lands at Houston's Ellington Field. The U.S. Air Force Thunderbirds and the Navy's Blue Angels have wowed onlookers in past years with aerial acrobatics, while aircraft from current Air Force and Navy inventories is on display. wingsoverhouston.com



NOVEMBER

Annual Puerto Rican & Cuban Festival | Houston
With over 20,000 participants each year, the Puerto Rican and Cuban Festival is an iconic Houston event! This festival includes great local food, live music, vendors, and a car show. prcfestival.com

Lone Star Rally | Galveston
Thousands of motorcycles roar their way up The Strand in a thunderous parade showcasing the hottest custom paint and coolest aftermarket accessories. lonestarrally.com

Quilt Festival | Houston
More than 1,600 antique and contemporary quilts, original cloth dolls and wearable art are on display at the George R. Brown Convention Center. There are hundreds of booths to shop for quilts, supplies, and crafts, as well as classes from beginner to expert levels. quilts.com

Turkish Festival | Houston
Celebrate the Annual Turkish Festival at Jones Plaza downtown. Sample authentic Turkish food, wine, coffee, dancing and fun for the entire family. houstonturkishfest.com

Nutcracker Market | Houston
Houston Ballet Guild's Nutcracker Market has become an annual tradition to kick off the holiday season. This shopping extravaganza, held at Reliant Center, features holiday decorations, food, clothing, jewelry, and even furniture. houstonballet.org

Via Colori Street Painting Festival | Houston
Via Colori has grown into one of the city's signature art festivals over its 10-year history. Attendees witness the streets of downtown transform into a massive outdoor art gallery with more than 250 local and national artists creating mind-blowing murals right before your eyes. centerhearingandspeech.org

Ice at Discovery Green | Houston
Ice skating returns and it's bigger than ever! Skate with a view of the downtown skyline at Discovery Green's now 7,716-sq. ft. outdoor rink in the heart of Texas. discoverygreen.com

A Christmas Carol | Houston
The Alley Theatre's amusing and musical rendition of *A Christmas Carol - A Ghost Story of Christmas* revisits the meaning of Christmas with Ebenezer Scrooge and classic characters like Tiny Tim as Scrooge embarks on a wild nighttime journey through re-imagined scenic designs, spectacular costumes, and original music. alleytheatre.org

The Nutcracker | Houston
Houston Ballet's timeless and dreamy production of the classic holiday tale *The Nutcracker* joins Clara as she marvels at the Christmas tree, flying cooks, the Sugar Plum Fairy and Prince dancing, and her unforgettable journey in the Kingdom of Sweets – a place children will dream about for years to come. houstonballet.org

Zoo Lights | Houston
TXU Energy Presents Zoo Lights at the Houston Zoo will transform the Zoo with more than 300,000 LED lights illuminating more than 50 animal-themed light displays, 15 miles of tree-lighting, and seasonal songs and stories. zoolights.houstonzoo.org

DECEMBER

Dickens on the Strand | Galveston
The annual holiday street festival, based on 19th-century Victorian London, features parades, non-stop entertainment on six stages, strolling carolers, roving musicians, bagpipers, jugglers and a host of other entertainers. galvestonhistory.org

Christmas Boat Lane Parade | Bay Area
Every year over 100 festively decorated boats of all sizes parade around Clear Lake and through the Clear Lake Channel in front of the Kemah Boardwalk. visitbayareahouston.com

Festival of Lights | Galveston
The holiday magic glistens at the Annual Moody Gardens Festival of Lights with more than a million lights and dozens of festive scenes. It's a winter wonderland with holiday shopping, pictures with Santa, a gingerbread house and the area's only outdoor ice rink. thelightsfest.com

Tamale Festival | Houston
Come out for a day of great fun, good music and great food! Enjoy a variety of tamales from varied Latino cultures as well as great Texas BBQ, food trucks, fair ground foods and much more! tamalefestivalhouston.com

German Christmas Market & Festival | Tomball
German Christmas Market & Festival Weihnachtsmarkt Texas Style - free admission, parking, and shuttle Herzlich Willkommen! tomballgermanfest.org

Christmas Village at Bayou Bend | Houston
Just in time for the holidays, Santa and his reindeer visit Bayou Bend for 12 evenings of festive fun this December. mfah.org





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