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Dallas Daytripping
photos by Wendy Crooks



head south for a visit to dallas

by wendy crooks

THE DALLAS CONVENTION AND VISITOR'S BUREAU recently unveiled its new logo and slogan, "Dallas: Live large. Think big." in order to attract people to their fine city. According to Mayor Laura Miller, groups were passing on Dallas as their destination because "there's no sizzle." Maybe those people just need a little direction. I didn't have to look hard to find plenty to do and see in the Big D.

HISTORICAL SITES

The world-renowned Dealey Plaza where John F. Kennedy was shot is not to be missed. The Texas School Book Depository, which is home to The Sixth Floor Museum, is full of history, the motorcade route, news of the assassination, the investigation and much more. This summer the museum opened The Living Room Candidate:

A History of Presidential Campaign Commercials, 1952 - 2004. The moving exhibit features more than 200 of the most memorable and historically significant presidential commercials from every presidential campaign since 1952. It also includes historical background and results from each election. The exhibit will run until January 30, 2005. Located at 411 Elm Street, they



are open daily (except Christmas) from 9 am – 6 pm. For more information visit: www.jfk.org or call 214.747.6660.

Just down the road from Dealey Plaza is where John Neely Bryan, the first Dallas settler, lived. Although a flood mostly destroyed the original in the late 1800's, the Bryan's Cabin is a restored replica of the first house in Dallas. The cabin stands less than a quarter mile from the original site at Dallas County Historical Plaza.

WILD LIFE IN THE CITY

Sharks are coming to Dallas! Soon the Dallas World Aquarium will be home to a few new underwater creatures. Aquarium goers will experience the seven-story exhibit called the Mundo Maya beginning in August. The 400,000-gallon "tank" will include a 40-foot walk through tunnel, which will house Bull sharks, and Brown sharks. Other Aquarium exhibits include a rainforest filled with rare and indigenous plants, birds, and monkeys. Crocodiles, otters, penguins, sea turtles and stingray are just a few of the intriguing aquatics you will find in the facility. The Aquarium is open 7 days a week (except Thanksgiving and Christmas) from 10 am - 5 pm. Visit www.dwazoo.com or call 214.720.2224 for more information.

LARGE AND SMALL ATTRACTIONS

Young and old will appreciate the fabulous displays that the American Museum of Miniature Arts has to offer. Some of their collection is displayed at the Hall of State at Fair Park. If you have a train lover in the group, you will want to check out the wonderful trainscape display at Children's Medical Center. Visit www.minimuseum.org for more information or call 214.421.4500 for driving directions and hours of operation.

Another must see Dallas attraction is Fair Park. Encompassing 277 acres, you can certainly spend a whole day at Fair Park enjoying one of the largest complexes of sports, cultural, entertainment and exhibit facilities in the Southwest. Fair Park offers history and architectural wonders of the birthplace of the Texas State Fair and the 1936 Centennial Exposition. To

visit more than one of the 8 museums, you might consider buying a passport ticket for admission to the Age of Steam Railroad Museum, the Science Place, the Dallas Aquarium at Fair Park, the African American Museum, the Hall of State, the Dallas Museum of Natural History, the Texas Discovery Gardens and the Women's Museum. You will have 90 days from the date of purchase to visit each of the 8 museums. Visit www.fairparkdallas.com or call 214.421.9600 for directions and information.

Whether you're looking for a full day of activities or simply a jaunt to the city, Dallas has plenty to offer in the way of sightseeing and exploration. Happy day tripping!

Wendy Crooks is a freelance writer living in Plano.

OTHER DALLAS DELIGHTS:

Dallas Arboretum & Botanical Garden – Explore 66 acres of natural beauty and history. Call 214.515.6500 or visit www.dallasarboretum.org for more information.

Dallas Firefighters Museum – Visit the old two-story fire station and discover more than 100 years of Dallas firefighting history; located across from Fair Park. 214.821.1500.

Mary Kay Museum – Learn the story of the company's beginning struggles to its now successful corporate operations. 972.687.6300.

Six Flags over Texas – 200 acres of amusement fun for the whole family! 817.530.6000 or www.sixflags.com.

Old City Park – 38 structures take you back to life in the 1800s. 214.421.5141 or www.oldcitypark.org.

Wilson Historic District Walking Tour – This walking tour takes you back to the Victorian era of Dallas. 214.821.3290 or www.preservationdallas.org.

McKinney Avenue Trolley – Take a free ride from downtown to uptown McKinney Avenue. 214.855.0006 or www.mata.org.

Pioneer Plaza – See the world's largest bronze monument, 40 Texas Longhorn steers driven by 3 cowboys; located at Young and Griffin Streets. www.dallastpf.org.

Dallas Zoo – Many rare and endangered animals await you here! There's much to see including the renowned reptile collection, the children's zoo, the tallest statue in Texas (the 67 ½ ft. giraffe located at the entrance) the rainforest and more. Call 214.670.5656 or visit www.dallas-zoo.org for directions.