

Discover New Frontiers In Texas

From drag queens to the Cowboys: a local's guide to Dallas, Texas

With Latin influences, inclusive nightlife and line-dancing saloons, Dallas is a melting pot where new experiences abound, says Jason Hanna, one half of influencers 2 Dallas Dads



📷 Sundown over the State Fair of Texas. Photograph: Joseph Haubert

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With its unmistakable cosmopolitan vibes mingling with southern charm, Dallas is one of the most quintessential Texas cities. Here you'll feel equally comfortable dining in a five-star steakhouse as you will at the [State Fair of Texas](#), the longest running state fair in the US.

We talked to Jason Hanna, who along with his husband, Joe Riggs, makes up the team behind [2 Dallas Dads](#), local influencers raising twin 10-year-old sons in the city, to share his favourite Dallas hangouts, both with and without the kids in tow.

Food and drink

Dallas is known for its legendary steakhouses. These days, one of the best experiences you'll find is [SĒR Steak + Spirits](#) on the top floor of the [Hilton Anatole](#), where they specialise in perfectly marbled locally sourced steaks, in addition to bites such as octopus al pastor and diver scallops topped with a delicate béarnaise sauce. They're all served with a phenomenal view of the Dallas skyline - perfect for a date night or an intimate meal with friends.



📷 Jason Hanna (left) and husband, Joe Riggs; SĒR Steak + Spirits at the Hilton Anatole

Hanna says he and his husband love taking the kids to a beloved Texas chain called [Gloria's Latin Cuisine](#), which serves a menu of Salvadorian-inspired favourites. "It's very kid-friendly," he says. "The cuisine is always hot and fresh and the service is always impeccable, and the frozen meltdown margaritas are our favourites."

Bistro 31, located in the Highland Park neighbourhood, is an ideal brunch spot, says Hanna - with the bonus of great people-watching. Dallas's shopping and fashion scenes are legendary, and in this high-end retail district, you'll enjoy experiencing a little of those affluent vibes.

Nightlife

Head to Dallas's Oak Lawn district, "typically referred to as the Gayborhood", says Hanna, for LBGTO-friendly evening entertainment. "We enjoy going out there because there's pretty much a flavour for everybody. It's just a great diverse group of folks," he says.

Among some of his favourite picks are the Round-Up Saloon for country line dancing; S4 for more club dance vibes; and the Rose Room located upstairs inside S4 for drag shows. "Dallas's drag queens, I think, are top in the country, so the drag shows they put on at the Rose Room are top-notch and always great entertainment," says Hanna.



📷 Dallas's 'Gayborhood': drag show at the Rose Room and Pride crossing in Oak Lawn

The quaint neighbourhood of Lower Greenville is also an up-and-coming district with a lot of different bars and new restaurants opening all the time, he says. "The streets are always busy with nightlife and fun energy," says Hanna.

Outdoor sports and adventure

Dallas has positioned itself as a leading sports destination, recently investing nearly \$300m (£240m) in improvements to AT&T Stadium, where the Dallas Cowboys play, hosting Major League Cricket for the first time, serving as the US's golf home in nearby Frisco after the relocation of the PGA of America

headquarters, as well as being the home base of many of the world's esports companies.

"It's amazing to go to AT&T Stadium, it's such a great experience watching the Dallas Cowboys," says Hanna. "But we are a soccer family - our kids play for FC Dallas Youth, and we've got season tickets to FC Dallas games. Going to the games is one of our favourite weekend activities."



📷 AT&T Stadium, home of the Dallas Cowboys (left); family time in Klyde Warren Park.
Photograph: Alamy

Outside of sports, the Dallas dads spend their fair share of time getting the kids some fresh air at the city's Klyde Warren Park, an urban park space built over a freeway. "They have yoga classes in the morning, there's food trucks, and on weekends it's packed with kids and families, and there's a little bit of everything," says Hanna.

History and heritage

One of the most notable moments in US history occurred in Dallas in 1963, with the assassination of John F Kennedy, the US president, while he rode in a motorcade through the city's Dealey Plaza. "That's an important gathering space for Dallas - you can go and visit the book depository at the Sixth Floor Museum at Dealey Plaza. The history around that is something that continues to be a story for Dallas."



📷 Hot diggity dog: a day at the State Fair of Texas

If you are visiting Dallas in September or October, try to swing by the State Fair of Texas and pay a visit to Big Tex, the 17-metre iconic cowboy that welcomes visitors to the fairgrounds. State Fair vendors outdo each other each year in new and wild deep-frying accomplishments, from deep-fried butter to fried Coke. If you're planning on going to the State Fair, Hanna recommends parking the diet for 24 hours. "I would definitely go on a cheat day," he says.

Music, arts and culture

Dallas has a tremendous number of art museums located within a short walk of each other in the Dallas Arts District - with the bonus that many of them are free of charge. In particular, visitors should check out the Dallas Museum of Art and the Crow Museum of Asian Art (both located near Klyde Warren Park).



📷 A performance hosted by the Crow Museum of Asian Art in the Dallas Arts District. Photograph: Kasumi Chow Photography

"The Dallas Arts District is fantastic. There are 20 square blocks, and it's walkable from downtown," says Hanna. "There are so many award-winning museums. There's the Nasher Sculpture Center, one of the finest collections of modern sculpture. And if there's a show, I would strongly recommend heading to the Winspear Opera House."

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