

San Antonio

The River Walk, the Alamo, the Pearl and five Spanish missions

San Antonio is Texas's third city and its most historic, founded as a Spanish mission in 1718. The River Walk, the Alamo and the four other Spanish missions along the river are the reason most people come, but the real city is the Pearl Brewery food hall, Market Square's mariachi, and the puffy tacos and barbacoa of the West Side.

At a glance

AIRPORT	SAT, 15 min to downtown
BEST SEASON	Oct-Apr; summer is 35°C+ humid
GETTING AROUND	Walk downtown · car for missions

When to go

October to April is ideal — warm days and cool evenings. Summer is hot and humid. April has Fiesta San Antonio; December has the River Walk Christmas lights.

Getting around

Downtown, the River Walk, the Alamo and the Pearl are all walkable. A car or the VIVA bus is needed for the four southern missions. The River Walk boat is a good orientation.

What to see

The Alamo	The 1836 mission and battle site — free entry, book ahead.
River Walk	A 24-km river path through downtown, with bars, restaurants and boat cruises.
The Pearl	The 1883 brewery turned food hall, farmers' market and hotel campus.
San Antonio Missions	Four Spanish missions south of the Alamo — a UNESCO World Heritage site.
Market Square	The largest Mexican market outside Mexico, with mariachi and pan dulce.
The DoSeum	The children's museum and the Japanese Tea Garden next door.
Brackenridge Park	The zoo, the Sunken Gardens and the Witte Museum.
La Villita	The first neighbourhood, now arts and crafts, on the river.

Tours worth booking

San Antonio River Walk boat cruise 35 min · Boat & beach · 4.6/5 (5180 reviews)

San Antonio Missions bike tour 4 h · Adventure · 4.9/5 (1240 reviews)

Space Center Houston admission with NASA tram 4–6 h · Culture · 4.8/5 (6420 reviews)

Fort Worth Stockyards cattle drive and rodeo 3 h · Culture · 4.7/5 (2840 reviews)

Sixth Floor Museum at Dealey Plaza 2 h · Culture · 4.8/5 (4360 reviews)

Austin food and food truck walking tour 3 h · Food & wine · 4.7/5 (1860 reviews)

Where to stay

Hotel Emma San Antonio · The Pearl · Design · From \$320

Mokara Hotel & Spa San Antonio · River Walk · Luxury · From \$340

The St. Anthony Hotel San Antonio · Downtown · Historic · From \$220

Hotel Havana San Antonio · River Walk · Boutique · From \$190

San Antonio Marriott Rivercenter San Antonio · River Walk · Family · From \$220

The Post Oak Hotel Houston · Uptown · Luxury · From \$420

Day-by-day itineraries

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