

Photo Courtesy of the Galveston Island Convention and Visitors Bureau



5 Fun Weekend Vacations

Texas Getaways Perfect for Your Katy Family

Written by Wendy Clark



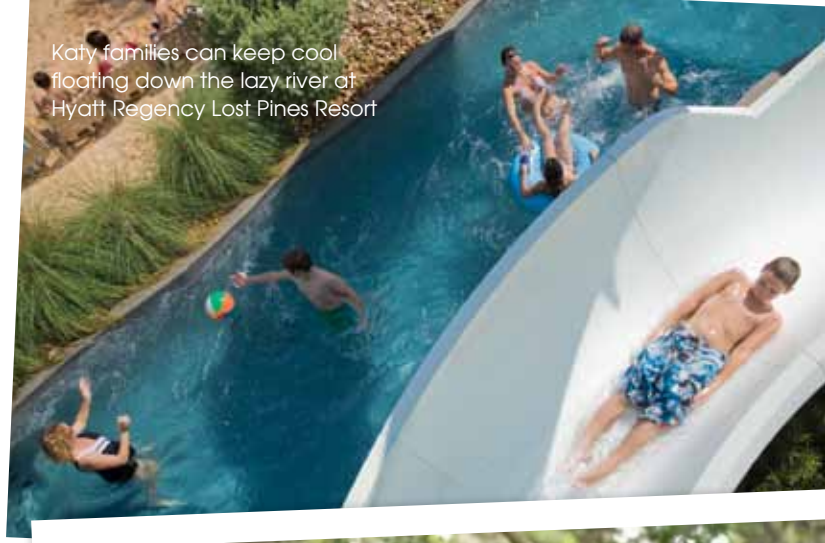
Kid-friendly attractions like SeaWorld make San Antonio a great place for a summer escape



Enjoy Fredericksburg's many beautiful wineries and landscapes



Enjoy a family picnic on Stewart Beach in Galveston



Katy families can keep cool floating down the lazy river at Hyatt Regency Lost Pines Resort



Families can ride horseback along pictureque trails at the Hyatt Regency Lost Pines Resort



The Hyatt Regency Lost Pines Resort offers kayaking on its surrounding lakes



Lisa and Joe McCurdy visit the Alamo, a popular attraction among San Antonio tourists

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For a memorable trip, plan activities everyone will enjoy

Photo Courtesy of the Galveston Island Convention and Visitors Bureau



Early morning fishing trips make for simple summer fun

Photo Courtesy of the Galveston Island Convention and Visitors Bureau



At Moody Gardens in Galveston, kids will have fun exploring nature

Summer vacations often become the backbone of family lore. Stories of when cousin Ed hooked his pants while fishing on Lake Travis, the time your sister Suzie dropped her ice cream cone on the floor of the Alamo, and the mischief you and Grandpa got into on a trip to Canyon Lake all evoke memories of spending time with those who matter most in places that epitomize the great state of Texas. The vastness of the lone star state opens the door to new experiences, cultures, and excitement – all within a short drive. Katy Magazine invites you to consider the following possibilities for your next family getaway. Just be sure someone keeps an eye on Grandpa!

1 Bastrop

Just outside of Austin on Hwy. 71 lies the charming town of Bastrop. Nestled among the heavily wooded hills, area attractions include Bastrop State Park and the Bastrop Opera House. For the history buffs in your family, Bastrop is home to over 130 buildings listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Katyites Josh and Kara Whitfield love the quiet and variety of activities available at the family-friendly Hyatt Regency Lost Pines Resort. “There is so much to do – horseback riding, a golf course, great nightlife, [and kayaking],” says Kara. “Our favorite activity is enjoying the winding river. It’s about a mile long and you can tube the whole way. It’s great for kids, because the current isn’t too strong.” The resort also hosts live music and a full-service spa on the grounds. The Whitfields look forward to taking their daughter Julia, 2, to visit soon.

2 Fredericksburg

Fredericksburg, a German settlement with origins dating back to the 1800s, lies 80 miles west of Austin on Hwy 290. Festivals are held year-round and are perfect for a weekend with the kids. The area is known for its rich cultural heritage, numerous bed and breakfasts, a handful of wineries, and according to the Texas tourism website, the only museum in the continental U.S. to pay homage to the battles fought in the Pacific theater during World War II. Lon and Jennifer McAllister, who live in Katy with their three kids, Mark, 21, Jessica, 17, and Garrett, 9, enjoyed visiting Fredericksburg during the Food and Wine Festival. While in the vicinity, they also visited the picturesque Enchanted Rock State Natural Area. “Enchanted Rock was really cool,” Lon shares. “It’s a giant dome made entirely of granite.” Jennifer enjoyed browsing for her favorite candles and other unique nic nacs in town.

3 Galveston

Galveston Island enjoys a glowing reputation of sand, sun, and a relaxing atmosphere. Texans flock to Galveston’s beaches every year in search of a little R&R just 45 minutes south of the bustle of Houston. But don’t let this sleepy seaside town fool you – there is more to explore than meets the eye! Be sure to check out Moody Gardens, The Grand 1894 Opera House, Schlitterbahn Waterpark, Seawolf Park, the Ocean Star Offshore Drilling Rig and Museum, and the Tall Ship Elissa. Enjoy a variety of unique stores and oceanfront restaurants, which offer something for everyone, and tour the island’s historic Strand district. For activities easy on the wallet, enjoy a free ride to Bolivar on the ferry, where the kids will love watching the porpoises in the water, or view the annual beachside fireworks display on July 4. Galveston has long been a favorite weekend destination for the Tomlinsons of Katy, who enjoy the simple things the island has to offer. “Out of all the things to do, the kids always just loved playing out in the water the best,” says mom, Maria.

4 San Antonio

Probably one of the most tourist-friendly cities in the state, San Antonio has it all – attractions, history, and romance. Sprawled along the San Antonio River, the city is home to the state’s number one tourist draw – the Alamo. Just a stone’s throw from the Alamo is La Villita Historic Arts Village, where artisans hand-pour candles and demonstrate glass-blowing. Joe and Lisa McCurdy of Katy recently visited the city with their daughter, Falyn, and recommend visiting the area’s many historic missions that date back to the 1700s. All are open to visitors and are off the beaten path. “We enjoyed a great breakfast at Gunther House – a restored King Williams home and site of an old flour mill, which still stands behind the home,” says Lisa. When night falls, head to the River Walk in the heart of the city for great casual or formal dining and a leisurely stroll or boat ride along the inviting river.

5 Waller

Located just 30 miles north of Katy, Waller is home to family fun right in your own backyard! Katy parents, Kevin and Kristi Wees, enjoyed taking their son, Brandon, to Yogi Bear’s Jellystone Park, a family-friendly campground complete with a swimming pool, water slides, tennis courts, a petting zoo, a lake for fishing, and crafts such as ceramics. “Really, it was one of our favorite vacations,” says mom, Kristi. “Brandon loved the water slides and saying the pledge of allegiance each morning with Yogi Bear.” The campground has a different theme for fun every weekend – when they visited, the Wees family helped celebrate Yogi’s birthday by bringing a birthday cake. Along with campground fun, while in the Waller area, families can also take advantage of nearby sites like the Blue Bell Creameries in Brenham or the Washington on the Brazos State Historic Site, which commemorates Texas independence. Along the way, be sure to stop for some photos of your cuties in the plentiful wildflowers along Hwy. 290.

For a weekend packed with family fun that’s close to home, look no further than our own great state. Relax and unwind while exploring all the great things Texas has to offer. You might just make some memories that the whole family will cherish for years to come. **KM**

WENDY CLARK cherishes the memories of Uncle Jack and Papa Carroll, both of whom shared her enthusiasm for exploring Texas.

Weekend Getaway Resources

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