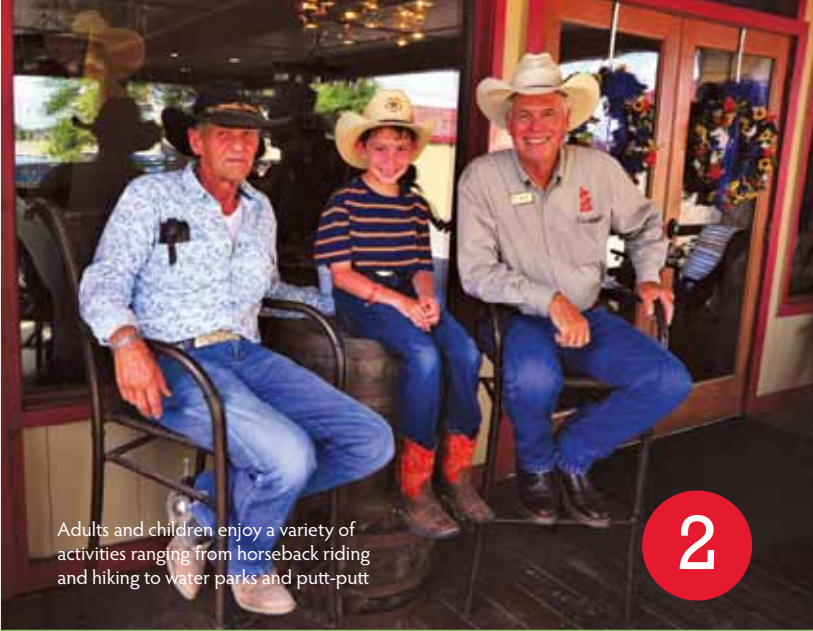




Catch breathtaking views of the pink granite dome, a central Texas landmark

1



Adults and children enjoy a variety of activities ranging from horseback riding and hiking to water parks and putt-putt

2

8 Wonderful

Places to travel in Texas for some family fun on a quick weekend getaway

Written by Heather Lowrie

Summer is here! Grab the family, get your suitcases, and gear up for some adventure. Make great memories traveling to some fabulous destinations in the great state of Texas. Make your list, check it twice, and schedule spontaneous fun for the family. These weekend trips can help celebrate summer like you never have before. Enjoy what each unique destination has to offer. Whether you relish camping in the great outdoors or relaxing with a five-star spa close at hand, we've researched several phenomenal destinations to add to your family's travel bucket list.

La Torretta Lake Resort and Spa offers relaxing activities alongside Lake Conroe

5



6

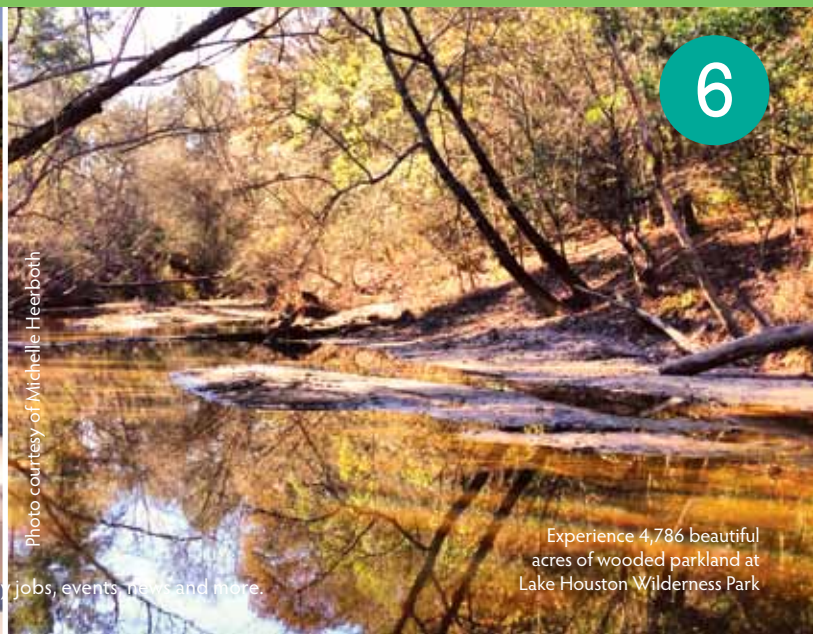
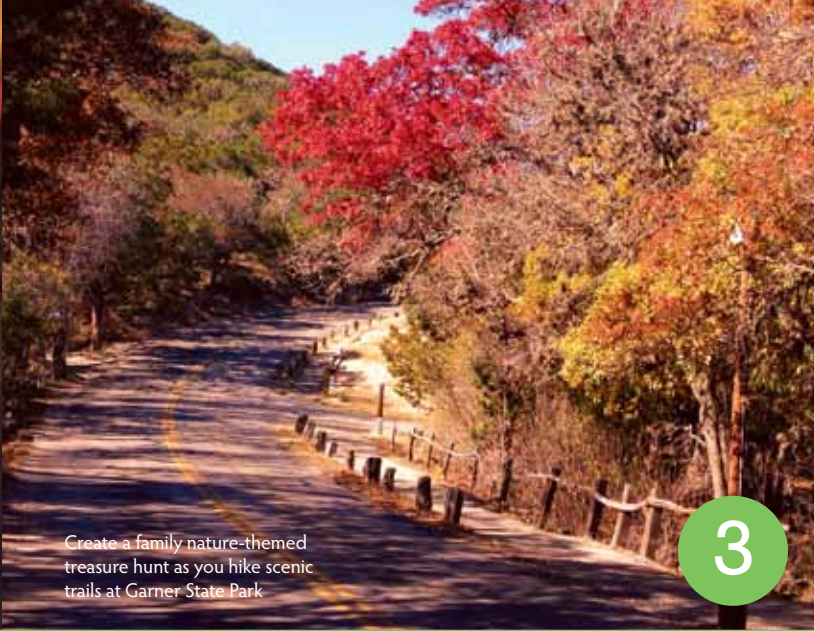


Photo courtesy of Michelle Heerboth

Experience 4,786 beautiful acres of wooded parkland at Lake Houston Wilderness Park



Create a family nature-themed treasure hunt as you hike scenic trails at Garner State Park

3



Kids participate in MagiQuest activities, a live-action adventure game at Great Wolf Lodge

4

Weekends

1. Enchanted Rock State Park

16710 Ranch Rd. 965

Fredericksburg

830-685-3636

tpwd.state.tx.us/state-parks/enchanted-rock

This state park has been known for enchanting avid rock climbers. This is one of the best places to get a full picture of Texas landscape at its best. Known for its ancient pink granite dome and vernal pools that are a threatened natural resource, this park represents a piece of Texas that shouldn't be missed. They have fantastic ranger programs that include a star party, nature hikes, and a junior ranger explore pack just for kids.

2. Flying L Guest Ranch

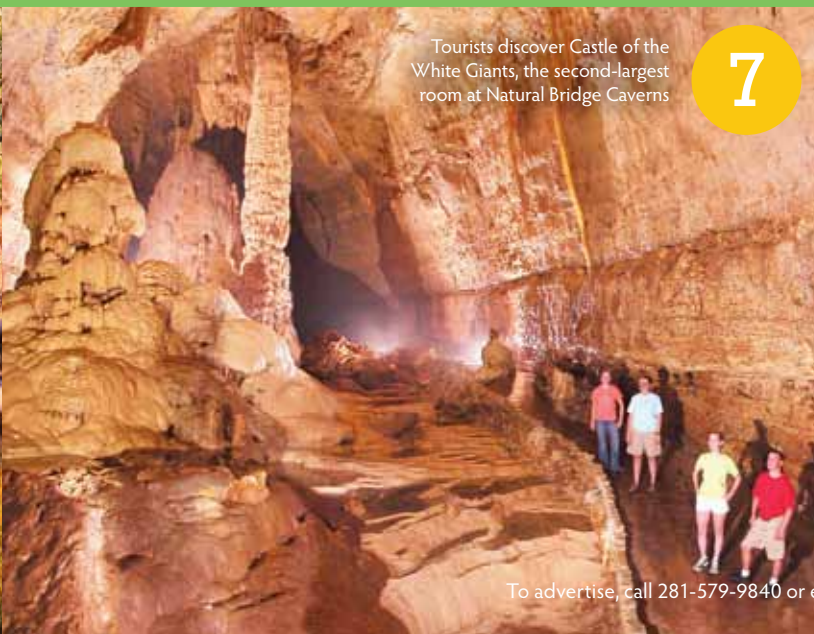
566 Flying L Dr.

Bandera

800-292-5134

flyingl.com

This western ranch experience is sure to bring the cowboys out in any family. Who wouldn't enjoy riding horses in the state park, live evening entertainment, and the Lone Star Lagoon Water Park? Grab your boots and don't miss out on the ghost town and get some rest in your very own original 1947's Frank Lloyd Villa. Let dad play golf on their beautiful 18-hole championship course. If you are looking for an adventure that is off the beaten path, this is the place for your family.



Tourists discover Castle of the White Giants, the second-largest room at Natural Bridge Caverns

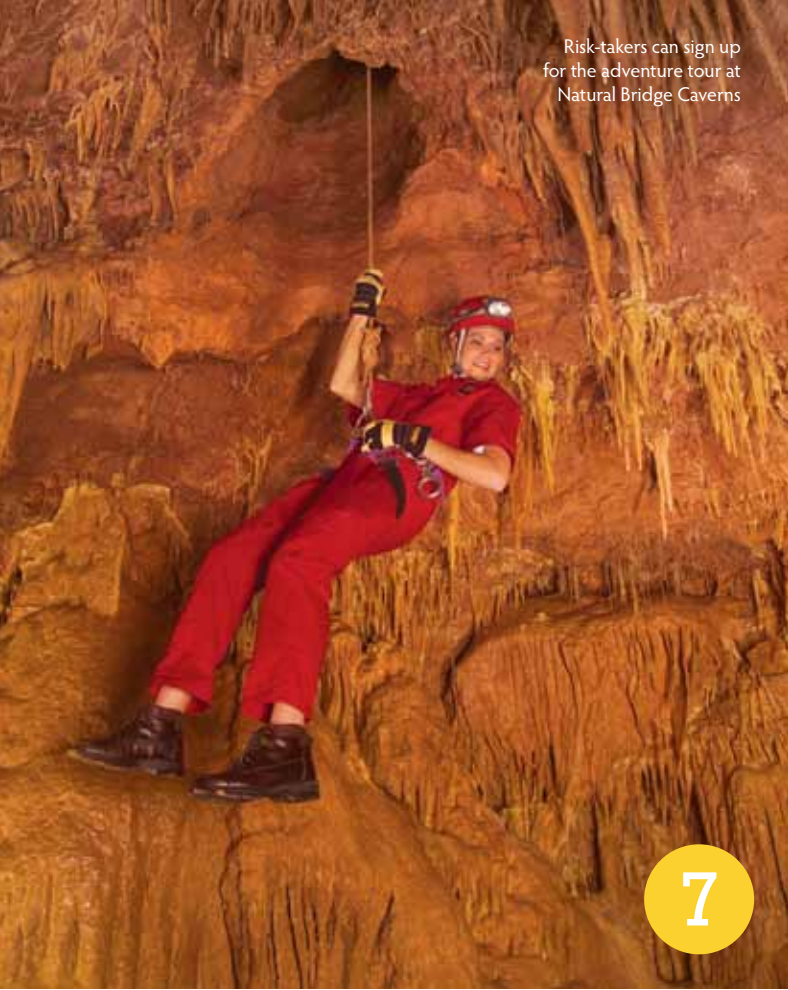
7



Maddie and Isabella gobble up ice cream cones while playing with Yogi Bear and friends

8

Risk-takers can sign up for the adventure tour at Natural Bridge Caverns



3. Garner State Park

234 Ranch Rd. 1050

Concan

830-232-6132

tpwd.state.tx.us/state-parks/garner

This is one of the best camping destinations in the state. Families from all over come to enjoy the 2.9 miles of Frio River on the 1,774-acre park. They have everything, literally! Hiking (don't miss the crystal cave), tubing, fishing, kayaking, miniature golf, basketball, volleyball, paddleboats, and swimming in clean, clear water. The biggest and best highlight is the summer dance. Since the 1940s campers have enjoyed this tradition each night, complete with a jukebox. For those moms who have said they will never go camping, this place could change your mind.

4. Great Wolf Lodge

100 Great Wolf Dr.

Grapevine

817-488-6510

greatwolf.com

Great Wolf Lodge is much more than your typical water park. With the themed rooms, massive arcade, and popular water rides, it's a place every family should visit. Where else can you have an interactive action adventure throughout the hotel, complete with your very own magic wand? MagiQuest is just one of the many popular adventures that sets this spectacular water resort apart from any other.

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4

Children will love slip sliding down the many different water slides



5

Awaken with morning yoga along the calm, peaceful Lake Conroe



5

Relax and catch up with those dearest to you in a fun, family environment



4

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5. La Torretta Lake Resort and Spa

600 La Torretta Blvd.

Montgomery

936-448-4400

latorrettalakeresort.com

Just an hour and half from Katy, this is a quick trip for a fun family retreat. Bring your swimsuits and extra sunscreen because this resort has an aqua park, five pools, sandy beaches, and a lazy river. When your family needs to dry out, you can play miniature golf or a game of tennis. Make some great memories having s'mores on the beach or watching a movie poolside.

6. Lake Houston Wilderness Park

25840 FM 1485

New Caney

281-354-6881

houstontx.gov/parks/ourparks/lakehoustonpark.html

This is the closest thing to a forest that your family will see just over an hour's drive from Katy. There are never-ending trails for your walk through the woods. They even have air-conditioned cabins that will make any tired camper forget about the Texas heat. The fun includes a fantastic calendar of events like the owl prowl, pollinator gardens, and geocaching. With over 4,700 acres of wooded park, bring your hiking shoes and get ready to see nature at its finest.

7. Natural Bridge Caverns

26495 Natural Bridge Caverns Rd.

San Antonio

210-651-6101

naturalbridgecaverns.com

These caverns are for the adventurous family. Bring your camera and some comfy shoes as you travel underground on the discovery, hidden passage, or lantern tour. If seeing the sky is more important than tunneling under it, there are plenty of new, fun attractions for the family. There is a canopy challenge adventure course and zip line, maze, and the popular gem and fossil mining. One of the best parts is Canopy Kids, a course made specifically for the little ones in the family. If your tiny tots feel like they are always missing out on the fun because they aren't tall enough, this is the place to give them their adventure.

8. Yogi Bear's Jellystone Park

12915 FM 306

Canyon Lake

830-964-3731

jellystonehillcountry.com

This is the perfect getaway for families with children of all ages. From the new pool and splash pad to pedal cars and laser tag, you are sure to enjoy your inner child. This isn't your ordinary campground. You can bring your own camper or rent an impeccable cabin. There is even a daily activity schedule full of creative crafts and themed events for every member of the family. After all, where else will Yogi Bear tuck you in and one of his friends read you a bedtime story? **KM**



HEATHER LOWRIE is a freelance writer who loves to find some new adventures with her family. After vowing to never go camping, she gave in and watched her three kids have an adventure like no other.



La Torretta's Splash Scape playground features a bucket dump, water slides, and splash pads

5



Canopy Kids invites younger visitors to navigate through the course

7



Yogi Bear's Jellystone Park offers a fully-equipped campsite for RVs and tents

8

Traveling Tips

Call Ahead

Sometimes the most popular attractions fill up fast. You don't want to get there and miss out just because you didn't call beforehand.

Ask for Suggestions

When you are making your reservations, ask about what their tips are for the best family vacation. You will get great insights to the property from someone who works there and knows it inside and out.

Check the Weather

Although it is constantly changing, make plans with the weather in mind. You don't want to be at an outdoor-only adventure and get stuck in the rain.

Have a Plan B

If things don't go as planned, have a backup plan. This is where the fun, spontaneous part comes in. Be flexible and realize that sometimes the trips that aren't perfect, are the ones that create the fondest family memories.



Children will be all smiles and giggles after visiting the water parks at Great Wolf Lodge

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