

by RUTH TAYLOR

10 Must Sees in Historic Katy

Historic homes are on display at Katy Heritage Park

GETTING TO THE HEART OF KATY

While most Katyites enjoy the shopping, golf and leisure activities the south side has to offer, many people don't realize historic Katy, just north of I-10, also has many interesting places that you've just gotta see! Nestled throughout its quaint, cozy streets, you'll find everything from simple parks to ancient graveyards, to historic museums. Next time you're looking for simple fun places to explore, check out these interesting locales in the heart of Old Katy.

Forbidden Gardens is a nationally recognized outdoor Chinese museum and cultural center

1 OLD KATY SHOPS

If you've never ventured north to shop in Katy, you're missing out. It's fun to visit the cute, charming shops in downtown Katy. Whether you want to browse antiques at Second Street Antiques & Things or step across the street to Excessories for apparel and accessories. You may also want to drive over to east 5th street to shop for formal dresses at Silver Hanger. Step back in time when you visit ABC Country Store – an eclectic shop that has everything from unique gifts to feed. Lastly, don't miss the peace and tranquility of Nelson Water Gardens; a serene setting with ponds, soothing gardens, pots and plants. The store also has koi fish, water lilies and other aquatic plants.

ABC Country Store
6103 Highway Blvd
281-391-3333

The Silver Hanger
5423 E. 5th St. B
281-392-9990

Excessories
5725 2nd St.
281-391-0880

Second Street Antiques & Things
5614 2nd St.
281-391-2299

Nelson Water Gardens
1502 Katy Fort Bend Co. Rd.
281-391-4769

The restored M-K-T Train Depot takes visitors back in time

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GREEN MEADOWS GOLF COURSE

Tucked away off Franz Road in downtown Katy is a beautiful 18-hole golf course with lovely grasslands and stoic 40-year old trees as far as the eye can see. Family-friendly, with no alcohol allowed, Green Meadows is said to be the most affordable golf course in Katy, with prices ranging \$26.50-\$32.99 and junior prices at \$8.70-\$17.30. One of the last remaining 'walking' courses in the area; Green Meadows does not make you rent a golf cart. Green Meadows was the first golf course in Katy, founded by Ward Stanberry in 1968.

6450 Franz Road
281-391-3670
KatyGolf.com

century BC. Highlights include scale models of the Forbidden City of Beijing and the Lodge of the Calming Heart, as well as numerous weapons and architecture rooms. Forbidden Gardens is open year-round, 10 a.m.-5 p.m. Friday, Saturday and Sunday (except for major holidays). Call for tour times. Rates range from \$3-\$10 per person.

23500 Franz Road
281-347-8000
Forbidden-Gardens.com



Forbidden Gardens

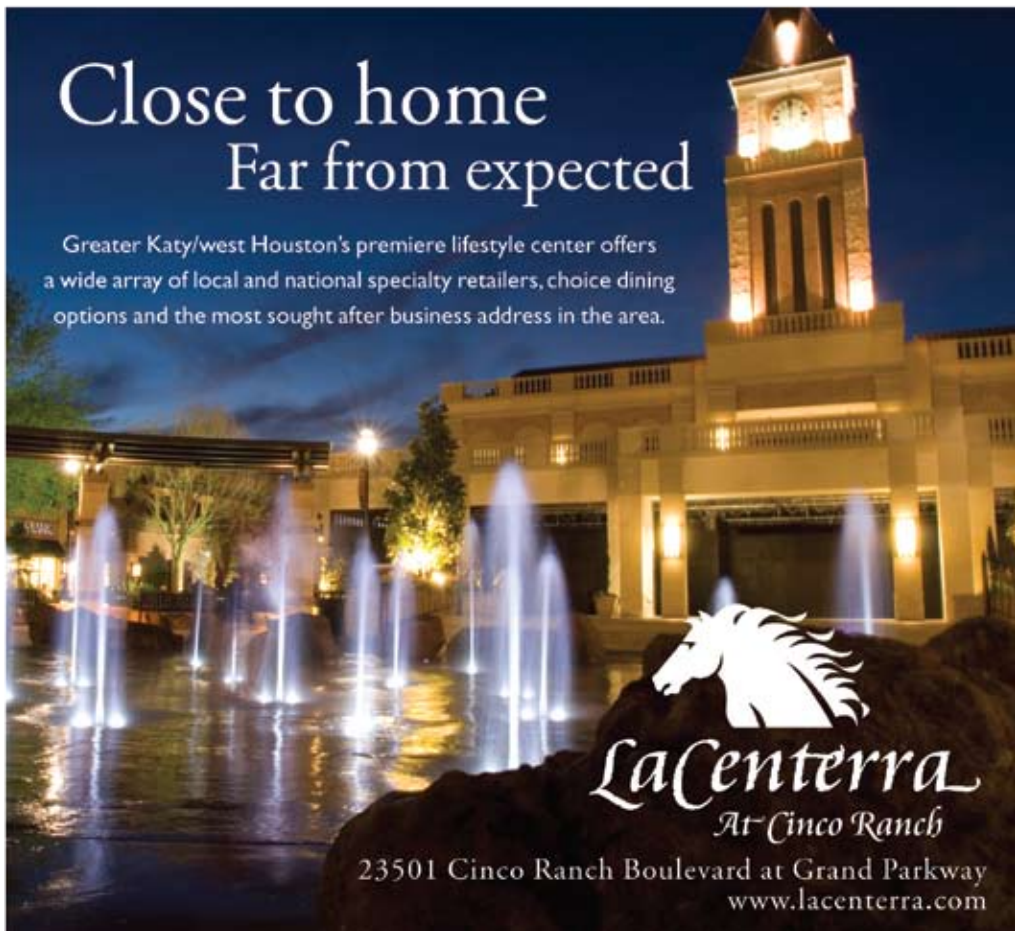
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FORBIDDEN GARDENS

Step into a distant land as the Forbidden Gardens Museum presents 2,000 years of Chinese history. Founded in 1996 by Ara and Irene Poon, the outdoor museum and cultural center offers displays from eras dating back to the third

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HERITAGE PARK

Take a walk in Katy of yesteryear as you visit Heritage Park. A proud tribute to Katy's past, the Heritage Society and the City of Katy teamed up to establish this historic park where restored homes and artifacts would be on display for all. The park also has beautiful grounds and an old-fashioned bandstand where free community concerts take place. Visitors enjoy seeing the family homes of Adam Stockdick, Katy's first realtor, W.H. Featherstone, one of Katy's first preachers, the Wright House where one of Katy's first pharmacists lived, and the Old Post Office.

5990 George Bush Drive
katyheritagesociety.com



Heritage Park

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RAILROAD PARK MUSEUM

Go back to where it all started – the restored Missouri-Kansas-Texas Depot. In the late 1800's the original pioneers arrived via the M-K-T railroad. Inside the original depot you'll find many historical relics including original ledgers, pot belly stoves from the cabooses, and old photos. Inside the freight room is one of the most interesting features – walls filled with original charcoal drawings and writings from past settlers waiting for the next train or for cargo to arrive. Tour guide Danielle Vana says that this is her favorite room. "It puts me in touch with whoever may have written that. The penmanship of the names was done very well." Outside you'll find an authentic red caboose and a square with benches and a town clock.

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Poncho and Charlie of Katy say get out of the dog house and into your dream house!

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Photo by Osborne Photography

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THE PINK MAGNOLIA

Out of all the secret hidden treasures of Katy, The Pink Magnolia should not be missed. In December 2004, owners Ed and Sylvia Sierra opened the renovated century-old farmhouse offering the only gathering place of its kind in Katy. Their small art gallery features painters and sculptors who have a unique story. "There are special people that create good art and have good stories, such as a quadriplegic mouth painter who survived mouth cancer, as well as victims of abuse," states Sylvia Sierra. Pink Magnolia also works with non-profit organizations such as Katy ArtReach and Katy ISD mentors program. The regional MADD (Mothers Against Drunk Driving) candlelight vigil, previously held for years in Tranquility Park, will be held on December 2nd, as well as their appreciation dinner for DWI law enforcement officers. Call for hours and special events.

1306 Avenue A

281-391-7778

ThePinkMagnolia.com



Photo by Ruth Taylor

FAST FACTS ABOUT OLD KATY

Population 13,561+

Founded The first residents arrived around 1875.

Named Originally known as Cane Island, Katy eventually got its name from the M-K-T Railroad (shortened to The Katy). Or, rumor has it Katy may have been named after a local saloon keeper's wife who welcomed visitors and newcomers with a stiff belt.

Mayor Donald Elder, Jr.

City Council Ward A: Kenneth Berger, Hill Adams; Ward B: Steve Pierson, Fabol Hughes; At-large: Hank Schmidt, Jr.

Interesting Facts The Galveston Hurricane of 1900 either completely wiped out or destroyed almost every structure in Katy. For this reason, there are no remaining historical buildings before 1900.

Katy started out as prairie land with only a sparse tree in view. One of the original Stockdick settlers sought out fallen acorns on trees in Houston which were planted all over Katy. This is where many of our old oak trees originated.

Roberta Wright Rylander, an early settler, became one of the first female pharmacists of her time at the Stewart and Wright Drugstore.

A windmill near the Outdoor Learning Center in Katy



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HERITAGE MUSEUM

Walk a few steps from Heritage Park down to the Heritage Museum where you'll find an array of historical artifacts on display. Among the vast assortment you'll see equipment from Katy's first telephone system and antiques from some of Katy's original buildings that no longer exist. "I think all of it is interesting, especially the railroad and cattle items that are a part of the heritage of the community," says docent Bill Miller. "Kids' tastes vary too, some come in and like the telephone equipment, and some sit at the ice cream bar."

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MAGNOLIA CEMETERY

After playing a round of golf, drive to the end of Franz where it meets Bartlett road. On the left lies Magnolia Cemetery established in 1901 as the resting place of Katy's earliest founders. The clearing of trees on either side of Bartlett Road makes a great location to watch the setting of the sun. With the horses in the foreground and the small patch of prairie land around, one can enjoy the coming of the dusk in peace with a feel for Old Katy's serenity.



This welcome sign greets passengers on Pin Oak Rd.

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SNAPPY'S CAFE AND GRILL

While you're out and about, stop in for a down home meal at Snappy's. Opened in 2002 by the Tsounakas brothers, locals come out from north and south Katy for the best breakfast in town, and home cooking as if you were at grandma's. Old time Katyites gather here for coffee club, but the simplicity of Snappy's also appeals to local politicians, celebrities, and young adults who stop in for the plain ol' good food! Snappy's supports the community by hosting Kids Unlimited Foundation meetings free of charge.

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COTTAGE CHARM TEA ROOM & CAFÉ

Nestled in a quaint farm house built in 1905 is a small tea room offering light lunches, classical music and high teas served all day. A variety of special shops including antiques and custom made children's clothing make your visit even more appealing. Regular events such as free movie night, Star Search and the Christmas light show invite the community to return time and time again. Owners Patti and Chip McKenzie also host church functions such as youth groups and Bible studies free of charge. **KM**

5806 4th Street
281-391-0606
CottageCharm.org

Ruth Taylor is a freelance writer, photographer and foreign language translator. She resides in Katy with her husband Robert, and children Kaylee and Trevor.

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