

HOUSTON

Houston is the largest city in **Texas** and the fourth largest in the **United States**. It is huge, both in population and in land area. "Urban sprawl" is a term tailor-made for this city, due to Houston being the largest unzoned city in the country. Houston is a multicultural city home to some of the nation's largest Asian, Arab and Latin American populations. But its culture is not limited to diverse population, it also boasts a world class symphony and theater district that includes a full-time ballet company and opera.

Rated as a beta world city, Houston's economy has a broad industrial base in the energy, manufacturing, aeronautics, transportation, and health care sectors and is a leading center for building oilfield equipment. **The Port of Houston** ranks first in the United States in international waterborne tonnage handled and second in total cargo tonnage handled.



The Houston Museum of Natural Science is a science museum located on the northern border of Hermann Park in Houston. Museum attendance totals over two million visitors each year. The museum complex consists of a central facility with four floors of natural science halls and exhibits, **Burke Baker Planetarium**, **Cockrell Butterfly Center** and the **Wortham IMAX Theater**. The museum is one of the most popular in the United States and ranks second only to the American Museum of Natural History in New York City in attendance amongst non-Smithsonian museums. Much of the museum's popularity is attributed to its large number of special or guest exhibits.



The Museum of Fine Arts Houston, (MFAH), is one of the largest museums in the **United States**. The permanent collection of the museum spans more than 6,000 years of history with more than 40,000 works from six continents. The museum benefits the Houston community through programs, publications and media presentations. Each year, 1.25 million people benefit from museum's programs, workshops and resource centers. Of that total, more than 500,000 people participate in the community

outreach programs.

The Holocaust Museum Houston was opened in 1996. The museum is located in the Houston Museum District. The museum is the fourth largest **Holocaust memorial museum** in the **United States**. The museum's mission is to make people aware of the dangers which prejudice, hatred and violence brought about during the Holocaust. It also endeavors to remind us that these dangers are still relevant today. The museum

promotes understanding, remembrance and education with the goal that both students and the general population stay and become aware of the lesson of these tragic events. This lesson is that humankind must strive to live together in peace and harmony.

Space Center Houston, in **Clear Lake**. Indoor fun space museum with lots of hands-on space-science exhibits and artifacts from the full history of U.S. space exploration. Highlights include the actual **Apollo** and Mercury launch vehicles, and a tour of astronaut training facilities.

The Houston Zoo is a 55-acre (220,000 m²) zoological park located within Hermann Park. Housing over 4,500 animals belonging to over 900 species, the zoo is the seventh most visited zoo in the nation. The zoo is accredited by The **Association of Zoos and Aquariums** (AZA) assuring the highest standards of animal care and husbandry. On October 1, 2006, an Asian elephant named "Shanti" gave birth to an 384 pound male calf – the "largest elephant calf ever delivered in a zoo accredited by the Association of Zoos and Aquariums." The Houston Zoo website had set up a poll to decide what to name it. The choices in this poll were Colossus, Guinness, Sundar, Janu, and Mac. The name "Mac" was chosen. Mac died on November 9, 2008 due to a viral illness, at the age of 2.



Hermann Park is one of Houston's most-visited public parks. Situated between Fannin Street and North MacGregor Way, it is within walking distance from **the Texas Medical Center, Rice University**, and the Museum District, and within a few miles of the Third Ward, the historic Astrodome and Reliant Stadium (home stadium for the Houston Texans). The land which it occupies was presented to the City of Houston by George H. Hermann in 1914. This historic 445-acre (180 ha) park space is

home to numerous cultural institutions including the Houston Zoo, Houston Garden Center, Miller Outdoor Theatre, **Houston Museum of Natural Science**, and the Hermann Park Golf Course, which was the first desegregated public golf course in the United States.

The Houston Arboretum and Nature Center (155 acres) is a non-profit arboretum and nature center located in Memorial Park at 4501 Woodway Drive. It is open daily with free admission. The arboretum was first conceived by Robert A. Vines, and in 1951 park land was set aside by the City Council for the **Houston Botanical Society**. (Today's arboretum is somewhat smaller than its initial 265-acre (1.07 km²) site.) The **children's botanical hall** was funded in 1966. The arboretum contains over five miles (8 km) of nature trails, with forest, pond, wetland, and meadow habitats. Specialty gardens include a Hummingbird & Butterfly Island, Sensory Garden, and Wildlife Garden.



The Williams Waterwall is a multi-story sculptural fountain which sits at the south end of **Williams Tower** in the Uptown District of **Houston**. It and its surrounding park were built as an architectural amenity to the adjacent tower. Both the fountain and tower were designed by **Pritzker Prize** winning architect **Philip Johnson**. Johnson's design for the water wall was to be a "horseshoe of rushing water". The semi-circular fountain is 64 feet

(20 m) tall, to symbolize the 64 stories of the tower, and sits among 118 Texas live oak trees. Water cascades in vast channeled sheets from the narrower top rim of the circle to the wider base below, both on the convex side and on the rear side. This creates a visually striking urban waterfall that can be viewed from various buildings around the district.

TO DO

The Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo(TM), also called RodeoHouston(TM), is the world's largest livestock exhibition as well as the richest regular-season PRCA rodeo event.

INFORMATION

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