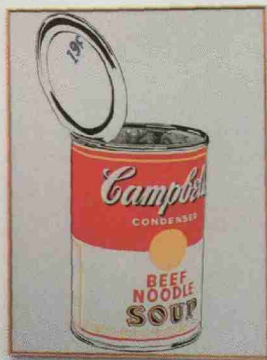


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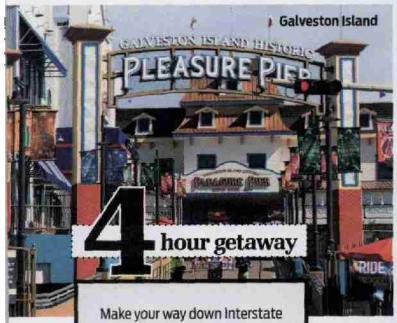
HOUSTON

Long known for its oil and natural gas industries, this diverse city is now defined by a new kind of energy.



Houston is big—after all, it *is* in Texas. And this city has a Texas-sized appetite for vibrant food, drinks and culture. Within its labyrinth of streets and towering steel buildings, and amid the often-stifling heat and humidity, you'll find this intricately diverse city has charm, character and a whole lot of soul.

—Jessica Dupuy



Galveston Island

4 hour getaway

Make your way down Interstate 45 toward the coastline to **Galveston Island**, said to be the country's most haunted city. It also offers a glimpse of the state's rich history and a taste of the Gulf Coast's bounty. As you cross the great bridge over the bay, the salty sea air welcomes you to what was the second-largest port of entry for immigrants in the late 1800s, after Ellis Island. Located downtown, **The Strand** offers a view of historic buildings and quaint beach shops. Tour the **Bishop's Palace** and **The Moody Mansion** before taking in a show at the **1936 Opera House** or dinner at iconic **Galdo's** seafood restaurant.

Buffalo Bayou Park



Menil Collection

see

The **Menil Collection**, a multibuilding campus with more than 17,000 paintings, prints, drawings, photographs, sculptures and rare books, is the largest private collection of its kind in the country. It includes works of Henri Matisse, Pablo Picasso, Jackson Pollock and Mark Rothko. Be sure to walk or jog through **Buffalo Bayou Park**, with its newly renovated hike and bike trails, and stroll through downtown's beautiful **Centennial Gardens at Hermann Park**.

eat

In the arty, edgy Montrose neighborhood, Chris Shepherd's Gulf Coast-centric **Underbelly** pays homage to the city's diversity with flavors from around the globe. **Hugo's** offers a taste of authentic Central Mexican fare. **Little Pappasito's Cantina** on Upper Kirby has classic Tex-Mex covered with its cheesy enchiladas and creamy *chili con queso*. Enjoy cocktails, wood-fired pizzas and a *cacio e pepe* to die for at **Coltivare**, in the historic Heights neighborhood. New to the scene: Underbelly's Shepherd recently opened **One Fifth Steak**. It's the first offering in a five-year project that seeks to annually rotate culinary focuses through the same historic Montrose building. (Next year, the concept will transition to One Fifth Romance Languages, with a focus on French, Italian and Spanish cuisines.) In the East Downtown area, the team behind Coltivare is developing its own multistage concept in a renovated 15,000-square-foot warehouse. It launches this summer with Viny's, a wood-fired pizza kitchen that will soon be followed by an American diner-style eatery with an adjacent lounge.



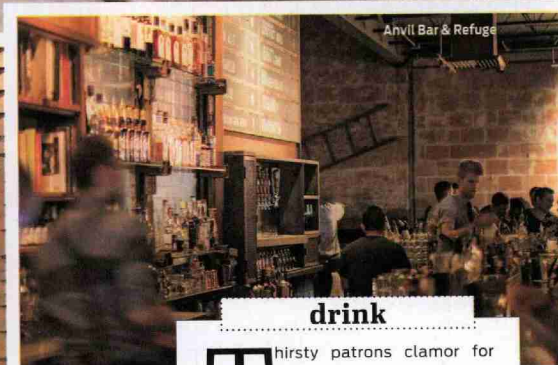
Underbelly

Kuhl-Lipscomb



shop

You'll find plenty of the usual suspects in shopping districts like Highland Village and Rice Village, but for the edgy and unique, look inside the city's Inner Loop (the area in the center of town bordered by Interstate 610). The iconic **Kuhl-Lipscomb** features a dazzling array of housewares, furniture and home accessories. For a more "indie" feel, look to **Space Montrose** for gift-worthy letterpress cards, prints by local artists, handmade jewelry and home accessories. In the Heights, **Manready Mercantile** peddles handmade textiles, leather, wood and natural apothecary goods tailored for the modern man. And for a dizzying selection of unique beers and ciders, don't miss the quirky **D&Q Beer Mart** in Montrose. Even if you don't grab a six-pack, you'll enjoy the quippy product descriptions.



Anvil Bar & Refuge

drink

Thirsty patrons clamor for cocktails at Montrose-area **Anvil Bar & Refuge**, led by Houston's cocktail king, Bobby Heugel, whose downtown **Pastry War** is a *mezcaleria* with some of the best south-of-the-border spirits you can find (and a darn good frozen margarita, too). For whiskey, the Heights' **Eight Row Flint** serves a devilish list of cocktails. It sports 120 whiskeys on the menu and eight barrels of various aged whiskeys on tap. Love Sherry and Scotch? Downtown, **Public Services Wine & Whisky** has a diverse selection of Sherry to go with a lineup of Sherry-barrel-aged whiskeys. Wine zealots have long hung out at **13 Celsius** and **Camerata**, but Master Sommelier David Keck is shaking things up with a hip honky-tonk, **Goodnight Charlie's**. Dance off those longneck specials to live music or a packed jukebox. The bar also serves Texas beer and wine, tacos and light patio fare.