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SPECIAL ISSUE BONUS

Turn to **page 61** to find out about our annual **Where in Texas Are You? Contest**. The prize: a fabulous, entertainment-packed travel package for two to the **Rio Grande Valley**.

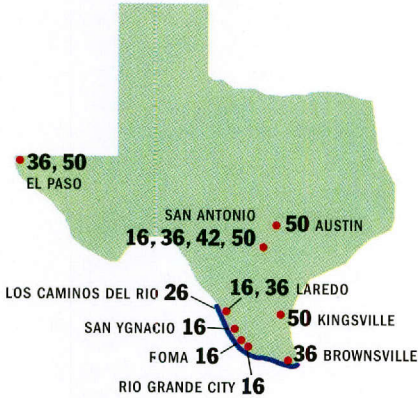
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[FRONT] Charra Girls from Nuevo Laredo, at Laredo's 16-day Washington's Birthday Celebration, illustrate this fiesta's international flavor. For more images from Texas fiestas, turn to page 36. Photo © Joel Salcido

[BACK] Retired vaquero Alberto Villa "LoLo" Treviño, a fourth-generation *Kineño* and expert plaiter of quirrs and ropes, works in the King Ranch Visitor Center. To learn about other Tejano artisans, turn to page 50. Photo © Joel Salcido



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Bienvenidos. Welcome to Texas. And to this month's issue, dedicated to Hispanic Texans, which coincides with **National Hispanic Heritage Month** (September 15-October 15).

Before an Austin, Crockett, or Houston had set foot in Texas, generations of Ayalas, Garcías, and Herreras had made this their home. Whether Texans of Hispanic/Mexican extraction call themselves Mexicanos, Tejanos, Chicanos, Hispanics, Latinos, Mexican Texans, Mexican Americans, la Raza, or another appellation, there is no doubt that they have played and continue to play a central role in the life of Texas.

Hispanic Texans and their forebears have given our state distinctive social organization patterns, housing styles, and home furnishings; bountiful wellsprings of folk art, customs, myths, tales, music, dance, and fiestas; and delicious and varied cuisines.

Our contributors this month explore aspects of Texas culture that have been made immensely richer by Hispanic Texans. **Randy Mallory** muses on the traditions of **plaza life** and the plaza's importance to the fabric of the community. **Ruben Ochoa** talks about the prolific heritage of Mexican and Latin American **artisans, craftspeople, painters, and sculptors**.

Chito Vela discusses the wealth of **fiestas** that flourish in Texas. **Macarena del Rocío Hernández** offers a personal reflection on the meaning of **El Día de los Muertos**, or Day of the Dead. **Ron Bechtol** discusses the range of influences in Texas' eclectic mixture of Tex-Mex, Southwestern, and traditional Mexican **cuisine**.

Gene Fowler writes about the international corridor known as **Los Caminos del Rio/The River Roads**, a belt that hugs the Rio Grande from just above Laredo and Nuevo Laredo downriver to the Brownsville/Matamoros area. Here, a shared culture has been forged over the past 250 years, from the time of Spanish Colonial villages and sprawling ranching operations to eras of steamboat navigation, irrigated farming, international trade, and burgeoning tourism.

According to demographers and U.S. Census figures, Hispanic Texans, who today comprise a third of the state's population, are projected to make up roughly half of the Texas population by the year 2030. Clearly, the influence of Hispanic Texans will continue to grow.

And I couldn't be more gratified. I spent the



© JOEL SALCIDO

Hispanic traditions touch Texans of all backgrounds. After the death, on September 2, 2001, of Mary Adele Anderson of Austin, Anderson Coffee Company employees Sarah Murphy, Peggy Sanders, and Kim Barnett erected this Día de los Muertos altar in her memory. The women had worked for years with Mary, who also played at the coffee shop as a child. Mary was the daughter of Linda and James T. Anderson, who opened the shop in 1972.

first 19 years of my life in Latin America. My first words were in Spanish, and the first flavors I remember were from the intermixture of cuisines that resulted from the fusion of Spanish influences with native American foodstuffs and artistry. I studied Spanish with a Basque teacher using a Mexican textbook. I learned American history with teachers from Mexico and classmates from Cuba and Venezuela; Mexican history from Americans; and Spanish literature from Españoles, Mexicanos, and Norteamericanos.

I loved reading about real-life exploits that still seem fantastical—who could have invented the tragedy, triumph, color, and scale of the Conquest of Mexico, **Cabeza de Vaca's** incredible eight-year odyssey across Texas, or the epic confrontations at the **Alamo, Goliad, and San Jacinto?**

When I was in college in Spain, my friends and I would eat at Spanish restaurants, sure, but we set aside time each week to chow down on enchiladas, tamales, frijoles, and guacamole. Those of us from the Americas shared common cravings—for chiles, corn, and other foodstuffs our Spanish friends never did quite accept. The *sabor*, the flavor, of every Hispanic culture differs. But each shares elements in common.

Texas is blessed with a wealth of these elements. Enjoy your explorations of this issue and of the *abundancia cultural* found throughout this great state. ¡Viva Texas!

Jack Lowry

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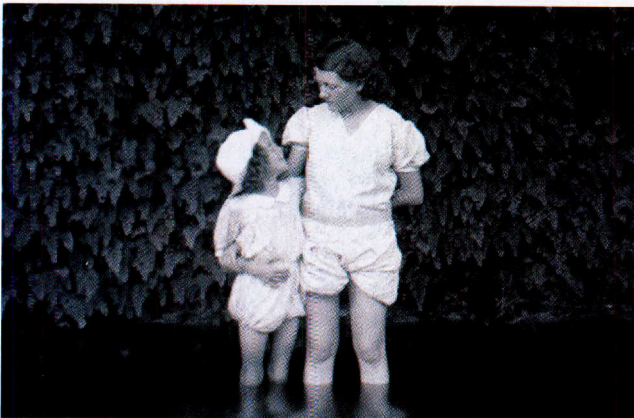


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[ABOVE] Texas-born Roxie Munro's brilliant illustrations (San Antonio's River Walk shown here) jazzed up the July issue.

[LEFT] As shown in the July issue, Laurie Sanders and her daughter hug in the cool, clear waters of Bear Creek, in Comal County.



© JOE SANDERS

we do this, a generation a hundred years from now might say, like Laurie Jasinski's grandmother once said, "I'd never seen anything like that in all my life.... It was just a

new experience for me."

KENDALL COLLIER
San Antonio

Ed. Note: *Thanks for writing, Kendall. Our hearts go out to all of those in Comal County and elsewhere in Texas who suffered in the recent floods.*

I'm sure you will get several letters from us Model T drivers explaining why "T's" must be backed up a hill. Maybe you could call us old codgers "Hell's Ancients!"

In the "Golden Age" story, the author stated that with Model T's, "reverse provided more torque and power." Not so. All of the pedals—first gear, reverse, and brake—received power from the same source.

HIT THE BACKROADS

Thanks to TH and to Laurie Jasinski for the trip to Comal County and the memories you shared. We, too, have crested Startz Hill and been awed by the view, driven the River Road, and gazed in marvel at the Natural Bridge.

What makes "The Golden Age of Motoring" [July issue] so special is the memories of travelers from times long past. These places, and countless others in Texas, have a history behind them that we so often take for granted. The realization that so many people have been here before enjoying the wild beauty of our land should remind us of an important fact: Even though we may own title to these lands, we are not true owners. We are merely temporary caretakers. We need to remember to respect what we have, preserving it for future generations. If

If you would like to write to *Texas Highways*, the editors would enjoy hearing from you. Though we are unable to print every letter, we just might select yours to appear in the magazine—whether you send us kudos or criticism. We reserve the right to edit letters. Write to Talk to TH, *Texas Highways*, Box 141009, Austin 78714-1009, or fax 512/486-5879. Email: editors@texashighways.com. Web site: www.texashighways.com.

The reason you had to back up was because of a gravity fuel-flow. The tank was under the front seat, therefore higher than the engine, and fuel flowed fine on level ground. (There was no fuel pump.) Going up a hill caused the tank to be lower than the engine—therefore, no gas flow. Backing up put the engine below the tank, and the gas could flow.

You had to remove the seat to fill up. Since there was no gauge, you measured the supply with a stick. By the way, I am 83, and my first used "T" was a lovely 1926 model.

BILL SETTLE
Seguin

READ ACROSS TEXAS

I want to thank you for including such a great article in the July issue ("Texas: Inside and Out") about a fabulous children's book and its illustrator. The article fit in perfectly with Read Across Texas, the 2002 summer reading program developed by the Texas State Library and Archives Commission. The program is being used by hundreds of public libraries to help hundreds of thousands of Texas children maintain their reading skills while having fun during the school vacation. So many people are inter-

(continued on page 4)

You Asked for It...

I belong to a group that is interested in haunted houses and places, primarily in Texas. Is there a source of information on or lists of such places?

DON WATSON
San Antonio

Ed. Note: *Your timing is spooky. We're running a story on haunted places (and some Lone Star ghostbusters) next month, so stay tuned. And we featured "Rooms with a Boo" in our October 1997 issue. Books on the subject in our library include *Spirits of San Antonio and South Texas* by Docia Schultz Williams and Reneta Byrne (Wordware Publishing, Inc., 1993) and *Ghosts Along the Texas Coast* by Docia Schultz Williams (Wordware Publishing, Inc., 1995). A search of one of the online book purveyors brought up several options, including *Haunted Texas Vacations: The Complete Ghostly Guide* by Lisa Farwell (Westcliffe Publishers, 2000). Happy ghost-hunting!*

ested in children's books, but they rarely get the kind of exposure that *TH* provided with this article. Those of us who work in the children's-literature field and in children's librarianship in Texas are particularly proud of Roxie Munro and the beautiful way in which she interpreted her native state.

JEANETTE LARSON,
YOUTH SERVICES MANAGER,
AUSTIN PUBLIC LIBRARY

SANATORIUM, TEXAS

Reading about the [TB] sanatorium in July's *Speaking of Texas* took my memory back 67 years! I was 17 years old when my doctor found a minor lesion on my left lung, classified as incipient. I was never "catching" (a threat to the rest of the world), and I didn't feel bad.

Sanatorium, Texas, had a post office, and it was a good thing. We lived for mail. We had a routine. When we woke up in the morning, the

© RANDY MALLORY



August's story on El Paso included the Wyler Aerial Tramway, which rises 946 vertical feet to the top of Ranger Peak. The four-minute ascent rewards riders with awesome views of the surrounding mountains and desert.

first thing we did was take our temperature and report it to the nurse on duty. We took our temperature a lot—there was a rumor going around that we had corns on our tongues. We walked to the dining hall for breakfast, and later went back to bed for two or three hours. Then up for lunch, and back to bed in the afternoon. And off and on, we were reporting our temperature to the nurse.

The dining hall was also the auditorium, where we attended sleep-inducing lectures about our condition. There were also movies, and sometimes musicians from San Angelo would entertain us. The walls of the building could be raised in sections, like garage doors. No air conditioning, of course. All in all, it wasn't a bad life. I went in March and went home in July. When Mother and Dad came to get me, they took me to the Cactus Hotel in San Angelo for lunch.

NAME WITHHELD BY REQUEST

SERVING TEXAS PROUD

I've been reading *TH* for at least 10 years now. I would be the first one to get my hands on it when I lived at home, and would go through stacks I missed when visiting from college. I'm now in the Army, stationed in Germany. I never realized how much I'd miss Texas. When my mom wanted to know what I wanted for my birthday this year, *Texas Highways* was the first thing to come to mind. I've missed the



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SPC ANGELA MONTGOMERY
Hometown: Brownwood

I am a Texan, however my career choice of the USAF has taken me away from home. Every year, my mother and father subscribe to *TH* for me, and I still enjoy reading it. I have hung onto every *TH* since I left home six years ago. I show the magazine to non-Texans, and it's as if they don't understand a Texan's pride. Thanks for being there for me when home was seeming so far away.

REBECCA GRISSETT
Panama City, Florida (Hometown: Seguin)

PASSING THROUGH EL PASO

Regarding August's story on El Paso: Just this morning, I was driving in northeast El Paso and noticed the beautiful overpass at the intersection of Dyer and Transmountain Road. The Texas Department of Transportation has built some really lovely roads out here. There's the drive through downtown; then there is Art Craft, which, I think, is one of the prettiest roads in Texas; then, the Border Highway. The Redd Road/I-10 intersection is also very nice. Perhaps our mountain setting lends itself to these structures. I think that TxDOT has done an outstanding job.

PATRICIA H. WORTHINGTON

CORRECTIONS: In July's story on Roxie Munro's vibrantly illustrated *The Inside-Outside Book of Texas*, we misidentified the Neutral Buoyancy Laboratory at NASA's Johnson Space Center as the National Buoyancy Laboratory. What a letdown!

And La Verne Crider Moore, the owner of Crider's Rodeo & Dance, near Hunt, tells us that we misidentified her son Bill Moore's granddad in our July story on West Kerr County. It was La Verne's father, Walter Crider (along with his wife, Audrey), not Tom Moore, who opened Crider's in 1925. La Verne should know—she has been associated with the dance hall in one way or another for 73 years.

Not only has Crider's stayed in the family (Bill and his wife, Tracy, manage the rodeo), the hall has a reputation of being family-oriented. "You'll see couples dancing with babies in arms, children dancing with their grandparents," says La Verne. "People from the same families have been coming here since the 1920s." Crider's Rodeo & Dance is 3 mi. west of Hunt on Texas 39; 830/238-4441.




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SACVB/AL RENDON

Texas-born conjunto legend Valerio Longoria (1924-2000) began playing the accordion when he was seven years old. He was inducted into the Conjunto Music Hall of Fame in 1982, received the National Heritage Award from the NEA in 1986, and over his long career, made more than 200 recordings with local and international labels. Here, in 1998, he plays at the Tejano Conjunto Festival in San Antonio.

GRAB YOUR MAIN SQUEEZE

From September 26 through January 5, the Witte Museum in San Antonio showcases *Squeezebox: Accordion Communities in the U.S.*, a photography exhibit highlighting the diverse accordion-music traditions found across the country (think conjunto, zydeco, polka, and more). Along with dozens of images on display, *Squeezebox* includes displays of vintage accordions and a sound installation. On select evenings in October, the Witte sheds further light on accordion traditions with film screenings, gallery talks, and music and dance performances. The squeezebox salute continues at the Empire Theatre on October 17, when Pulitzer Prize-winning author Annie Proulx will read from her 1996 novel, *Accordion Crimes*, a tale of an accordion's global odyssey.

Then, on October 19-20, at La Villita, the 2nd Annual Accordion Festival welcomes more than 20 bands on stage, ranging from Irish and French Canadian ensembles to merengue, tango, and conjunto performers from Texas, Mexico, Central America, and beyond.

For more information about the Witte, call 210/357-1900; www.wittemuseum.org. For more about the La Villita festival, call 210/

222-ARTS or 512/441-9255; www.internationalaccordionfestival.org.

CALIENTE OFF THE PRESS

If you want to get your lips limbered up for a new language, bilingual books are great:

They let you cheat a little. If you don't know a word in Spanish, for example, it's there on the opposite page, in English. You probably know more *español* than you think, so dive in. There's no test. Watch a DVD with the subtitles turned on. Pick up a copy of the magazine *People en Español*. Turn your dial to a Tejano station. And check out the offerings from these three Texas publishing houses, which do a great job presenting Latino literature and culture, from both sides of the Rio Grande.

The folks at El Paso's Cinco Puntos Press are justifiably proud of Austin musician Tish Hinojosa's bilingual songbook, *Cada Niño/Every Child* (\$18.95

hardcover). Illustrated by fellow Texan Lucia Angela Perez, the book has cheerful lyrics and vibrant artwork that tell stories of vegetables dancing in gardens, the joy of daydreaming beneath a magnolia tree, a grandmother's love—and much more. To request a catalog of Cinco Puntos' many titles for adults and kids (or to order a copy of *Cada Niño* and its companion CD), call 800/566-9072; www.cincopuntos.com.

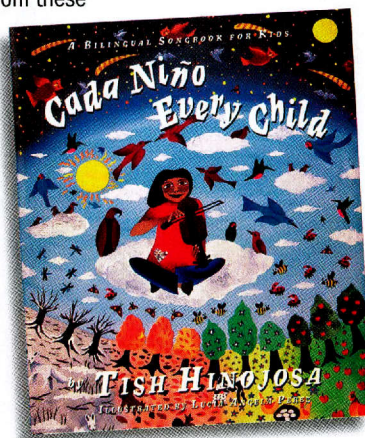
In Austin, The University of Texas Press offers hundreds of titles in its *Latin American, U.S., Latino, and Border Studies* catalog, including the comprehensive *A Guide to Hispanic Texas*, edited by Helen Simons and Cathryn A. Hoyt, which provides statewide coverage of significant Hispanic architecture. (Chilean poet Pablo Neruda's bilingual *One Hundred Love Sonnets/Cien sonetos de amor* also sells well; the poems are lovely and *romántico* in both languages.) While most books are in English, if you're eager to flex your Spanish-language muscles, look for Joseph J. Keenan's fantastic *Breaking Out of Beginner's Spanish*, which contains chapters on "Snappy Answers," "The Secret Life of Verbs," and "Invective and Obscenity." What fun! To download a catalog, see www.utexas.edu.utpress, or call 800/252-3206 to request one.

Over in Houston, which boasts one of the largest Latino populations in the nation, the University of Houston's Arte Público Press has provided a forum for Hispanic literature since 1979. With 30 new titles each year, Arte Público (and its imprint, Piñata Books) publishes books in Spanish and English, for kids and adults. Since 1992, it has hosted the Recovering the U.S. Hispanic Literary Heritage Project, the first nationally coordinated attempt to recover, index, and publish lost Latino writings that date from the American colonial period through 1960; 28

titles have been published, with five more in the works. To request a catalog, call 800/633-ARTE; www.arte.uh.edu.

THAT'S ILLUMINATING!

With more than 7,300 prints in its archives, the Wittliff Gallery of Southwestern & Mexican Photography, on the top floor of the Alkek Library at Southwest Texas State University in San Marcos, houses one of the (continued on page 8)



By the Way...

For a glimpse of what life was like in Mexico and Central and South America before the Spanish arrived, check out the **Houston Museum of Natural Science's John P. McGovern Hall of Americas**, which showcases more than 700 objects that reveal the development of the Western Hemisphere. Items on display from Mexico include Aztec incense burners and stone statues, Mayan polychrome pottery, and small, lifelike figurines from the Yucatán island of Jaina that anthropologist and curator Dr. Dirk Van Tuerenhout likens to Polaroid snapshots of the day....call 713/639-4629; www.hmns.org.

Located in a beautiful structure behind **San Antonio's Convention Center**, the **Instituto de México** offers changing exhibits of works by Mexican and South American artists, as well as films, concerts, classes and workshops, and lectures on topics ranging from art and language to customs like *el Día de los Muertos* (check out the Instituto's ornate altars in November). At press time, Mexican president Vicente Fox was expected to attend the ribbon-cutting of an exhibition beginning here in late August, which will highlight Mexican painters of the 20th Century, including Diego Rivera, David Alfaro Siqueiros, and Rufino Tamayo....call 210/227-0130.

Two years ago, we told readers about Houston's extraordinary Torch Collection, a corporate amassment of art, artifacts, and archives focusing on regional history and culture—free for viewing to the public. At the **Beeville Art Museum** through October 16, you can see highlights from the collection (now renamed *Visions of the West*, to better reflect its scope) in a special exhibition called *Side by Side: The Tex-Mex Borderlands*. Items on display include antique equestrian gear from South Texas, 19th-Century textiles and tin *retablos*, photographs, and paintings....call 361/358-8615; www.beeville.net/beevilleartmuseum. (To see *Visions of the West* in Houston, call 713/650-1246.)

Mexico has always been a larger-than-life kind of place. From August 31 through October 18, (continued on page 9)



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largest collections of contemporary Mexican photography in the state. Through October 20, the gallery showcases 80 images in a show called *Río de Luz—River of Light*, curated by screen-writer-filmmaker Bill Wittliff and photographer Keith Carter.

The images featured in *Río de Luz* illuminate for viewers the rich diversity and strength of Mexico's people, the drama of its social conflicts, the vibrancy of its celebrations and religious observances, and its incredible, varied landscapes. The gallery's oldest photograph, a haunting 1867 albumen print by French photographer François Aubert called *The Corpse of Emperor Maximilian*, shows the executed Austrian archduke, who governed Mexico 1864-67, dressed in full uniform, his empty eye sockets set with glass eyes taken from a local statue of the *Virgen de los Remedios*. Other highlights include *Chapultepec Castle, Mexico City* (1904) by Guillermo Kahlo (Frida's father), and arguably Manuel Alvarez Bravo's most famous work, *Obrero en huelga asesinado* (*Striking Worker Assassinated*), taken in 1934.

Also at the Alkek Library, the **Hispanic Writers Collection**, part of the university's Southwestern Writers Collection, includes novels, screenplays,

COURTESY WITTLIFF GALLERY OF SOUTHWESTERN & MEXICAN PHOTOGRAPHY



notes, and personal effects of such literary figures as Rudolfo Anaya, Sandra Cisneros, Américo Paredes, and Evangelina Vigil-Piñon. Don't miss the 1555 printing of Alvar Núñez Cabeza de Vaca's *La relación y comentarios*, considered by historians to be the earliest work about what is now Texas. These archives and more are available for viewing by request Mon-Fri 8-5 (Tue until 9), Sat 9-1.

Photographer Mariana Yampolsky's undated silver-gelatin print *Así la construí* (*This is How I Built It*) is part of the *Río de Luz* exhibition in San Marcos.

You can view exhibits at the Alkek Mon-Fri 8-5 (Tue until 9), Sat 9-5, Sun 2-6. Admission: Free. Call 512/245-2313; www.library.swt.edu/swwc.

FOR THE RECORD

The quiet, palm-studded Rio Grande Valley town of **San Benito** enjoys a rich musical legacy. If you've ever enjoyed the music of such Texas greats as Freddy Fender, Flaco Jiménez, or Lydia Mendoza, you owe your giddy ears to the mastery of **Ideal Records**, which operated out of San

Benito and Alice in the 1940s, '50s, and '60s. According to **Arhoolie Records** president Chris Strachwitz, who offers hundreds of vintage recordings from the Texas-Mexico border in his Tejano catalog, Ideal was one of the first companies to record working-class Mexican music, and it was all the more special because owners Paco Betancourt and his partner, Armando Marroquín, were members of the Mexican-American community.

While the press and offices were in San Benito, the recording studios lay some 70 miles north, in Alice, where today, the **Tejano R.O.O.T.S. Hall of Fame** preserves artifacts and memorabilia dating to the 1940s. (R.O.O.T.S. stands for "Remembering Our Own Tejano Stars.") Here, you can see scads of historic photographs and record covers, costumes, and instruments, including the saxophone of musician Beto Villa, considered by musicologists to be the "father of the modern *orquesta*," and an outfit worn by San Antonio Grammy-winner Sunny Ozuna, who, with his band, Sunny and the Sunliners, in 1963 was the first Tejano artist to appear on *Dick Clark's American Bandstand*.

San Benito keeps its creative legacy alive, too, with the **Narciso Martínez Cultural Arts Center**, named for Texas accordion master "El Huracán del Valle" Narciso Martínez, offering arts programs year round. On September 13-15, on its outdoor festival grounds, the center hosts the **10th Annual Narciso Martínez Conjunto Festival**, with musicians like Mingo Saldivar, Bene Medina, and Santiago Jiménez Jr. taking the stage.

To view the Tejano catalog of Arhoolie Records, log on to www.arhoolie.com, or call 510/525-7471 for more information. For more about the Tejano R.O.O.T.S. Hall of Fame Museum, at 213 W. Wright in Alice, call (continued on page 10)

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By the Way...

(continued from page 7) the **Bob Bullock Texas State History Museum** in Austin takes that statement to new heights when it screens the IMAX film *Mexico*, with narrator Martin Sheen interpreting the words of Mexican writer Carlos Fuentes. The film takes viewers to ancient Olmec, Zapotec, Aztec, and Mayan civilizations; explores the Spanish-conquistador era in the early 16th Century; and celebrates the vibrancy of Mexico with images of monarch butterflies in Michoacán, flower-covered grave sites during *Día de los Muertos*, and murals by renowned artists José Clemente Orozco and Juan O. Gorman. On August 31, the museum inaugurates the film with ballet folklórico, a mariachi band, and demonstrations of traditional crafts; on Sundays and Mondays, the museum presents *Mexico* in Spanish....call 512/936-IMAX; www.TheStoryofTexas.com.

El Paso's festive **Fiesta de las Flores** celebrates its 50th anniversary August 30-September 2. A scholarship fund-raiser for the local chapter of the League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC), the event welcomes thousands of revelers over its four-day run with parades, a dance, a special Mass, international music, a carnival, food, drink, craft vendors, fireworks, and even a reunion of past festival queens. Last year, some 74 students benefited from scholarships made possible by this chapter....call 915/542-3464.

Also in El Paso in September, check out an exhibition that sheds light on one of the most important icons of Hispanic culture. At the Adair Margo Gallery through September 27, photographer Diana Molina and other artists present images of the Virgin of Guadalupe in the show *Our Lady of Guadalupe: Morena Moderna*....call 915/533-0048.

Temple native José "Little Joe" Hernández made his recording debut in 1955 at age 15. Today, with his band, **Little Joe y la Familia**, he performs for audiences worldwide; he stars in movies, television shows, and commercials; and he has won several Grammy awards. At the **Little Joe y la Familia Museum** and store in Temple, you can see trophies, awards, photographs, and memorabilia related to Little Joe's career, and you can buy such items as T-shirts, posters, and recordings. ...call 254/773-1775; littlejoemusic.homestead.com.

The late Texas philanthropist Algur H. Meadows began acquiring spectacular examples of Spanish art masterpieces during trips to Madrid in the 1950s. In 1962, he donated his collection to Southern Methodist University in Dallas, and three years later, he founded the campus' **Meadows Museum**, which now houses one of the finest collections of Spanish art outside of Spain. The Meadows offers viewers the rare chance to see works by some of Europe's greatest painters and sculptors,

among them Velázquez, Murillo, Goya, and Miró. This fall, beginning September 5, the Meadows offers a monthly **Spanish-conversation group**, followed by a **book club** meeting in which participants will explore literary works with ties to the collection....call 214/768-2516; www.meadowsmuseum.smu.edu.

Just north of Town Lake in downtown Austin, the 300-500 block of Congress Avenue offers opportunities galore to immerse yourself in Latino culture. The restaurant **Las Manitas** serves up interior dishes at reasonable prices, **Tesoros Trading Company** proffers gift items from throughout the world, **La Peña Gallery** presents artworks by artisans from throughout the Americas, and **Mexic-Arte Museum** presents year-round traveling exhibitions highlighting Latin American art and culture. Beginning September 28 through November 16, Mexic-Arte presents *Tesoros de la Catedral de Santiago, Saltillo, México*, an exhibition of religious art and historical treasures (*tesoros*) from the Cathedral of Santiago in Saltillo, including 18th-through 20th-Century paintings, sculptures, ex-votos, and sacred vessels. Mexic-Arte's annual **El Día de los Muertos Celebration and Parade** takes place November 1. (continued on page 10)

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This stained-glass image of the Virgin of Guadalupe is part of an exhibition at El Paso's Adair Margo Gallery.

361/664-8000; www.tejanoroots.net. For details about the Narciso Martínez Cultural Arts Center, at 101 S. Sam Houston in San Benito, call 956/361-0110. (*Taquachito Nights: Conjunto Music From South Texas*, a stellar CD recorded at the 1998 Conjunto Festival, is available at record stores and from Smithsonian Folkways; 800/410-9815.)

ARTE Y ESPERANZA

Since its founding in 1980, **San Antonio's Guadalupe Cultural Arts Center**, located in a restored 1940s theater on the city's west side, has sought to preserve and foster appreciation of Latino arts and culture. Programs throughout the year include classes in such traditional instruments as guitar, bajo sexto, accordion, and violin; workshops in dance, art, and theater; and seminars in creative writing for students of all ages.

The GCAC hosts a variety of festivals and events that focus on individual disciplines: the **San Antonio Cinefestival** in February, the largest and oldest international Latin film festival in the United States; the **Annual Tejano Conjunto Festival**

(in May), an incredible coming-together of conjunto stars, dance, food, and merriment; the **Inter-American Bookfair and Literary Festival** (Nov. 21-23 this year, but usually in Oct.), which welcomes well-known writers and publishers to speak about their works; a **Día de los Muertos** parade and exhibit in November; and an arts and crafts bazaar called **Hecho a Mano/Made by Hand** in December (Dec. 5-8, 2002).

On September 26, the GCAC celebrates the **10th anniversary of the Guadalupe Dance Company** with a reception and performance (accompanied live by Grammy Award-winners Los Lobos) at downtown's Lila Cockrell Theatre.

What's that taking place on the theater's west wall? Stay tuned: In December, GCAC supporter and local artist **Jesse Treviño** will unveil his newest contribution to the city's public artworks—a 40-foot-high tile mosaic of the **Virgin of Guadalupe**. He says of the mural: "People all have *esperanza*—the hope that one day they will have the things they need for their dreams to come true."

For more information, call 210/271-3151; www.guadalupeculturalarts.org.

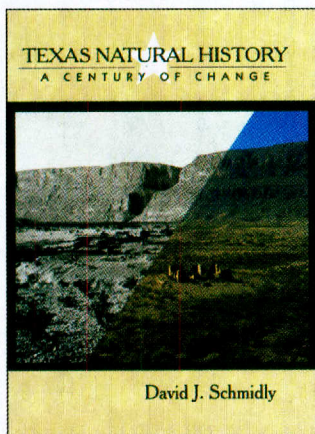
By the Way...

(continued from page 9) ...call 512/480-9373; www.main.org/mexic-arte.

Americanos: Latino Life in the United States, a traveling Smithsonian photography exhibition produced by actor/activist Edward James Olmos, debuted in Texas in May 2000 at the **Institute of Texan Cultures in San Antonio**. It has since traveled to dozens of cities across the nation, and it makes an appearance at the **International Museum of Art & Science in McAllen** August 24 through November 17. *Americanos* comprises 120 photographs that explore themes of work, family, spirituality, community, sports, culture, and the arts. Among the portraits on display: teacher Jaime Escalante, whose story is portrayed in the movie *Stand and Deliver*, and Mary Lou Castro, the first San Antonio woman to enlist in the U.S. armed forces during World War II...call 956/682-1564; www.mcallenmuseum.org.



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Glass Menagerie? No, Cement!

When she died in 1989 at age 84, Beatrice Valdez Ximénez left behind seven children—and many more animals. But her menagerie wasn't what you might expect. Beatrice's animals, which roared, ignored, glared, and stared at the world from every nook and cranny of her front yard, sprang from her own imagination, took shape in cement, and came to fantastic life through her use of vibrant colors and patterns.

Born in Graytown, near Floresville, Beatrice learned the basics of her craft from her husband, Pedro Ximénez, who had studied faux-wood technique with the well-known San Antonio

cement-sculptor Dionicio Rodríguez (perhaps best known for his faux-wood cement bridge in Brackenridge Park). After Pedro's death in 1956, Beatrice gave up creating the wood-like furniture and buildings the couple had fashioned together and eventually began assembling her own private zoo.

And what a zoo! A rosy-pink pig with extra-long snout and longer ears; a terra-cotta-colored monkey standing on its hind legs, "arms" outstretched, palms and face skyward (or is it E.T., awaiting his spaceship?); a two-headed, yellow, spotted creature with four ears, two curling tails and tongues, but a mere four legs. Some of the animals bore decorations of shells, earrings, and pebbles. Anything was possible in this faux-Eden.

Beatrice's inspiration came from various sources: toys, movies, books, and TV nature programs. Beginning with metal reinforcing rods covered with metal mesh, she added three layers of cement, which, by a secret process, contained the dyes. Various family members got involved in the projects. "One



Beatrice Valdez Ximénez (1904-1989) created a wild kingdom—from cement—at her Floresville home. "Mom's greatest joy was seeing the kids playing on her animals," says Arturo Ximénez, her youngest son.

time, after I bought a basketball hoop for my kids, I couldn't find it," says Beatrice's son Arturo with a laugh. Turned out his mother had used it as a base for one of her inspirations.

Folk art doesn't get better than this: a personal vision made, so to speak, concrete; as much a puzzle as a delight to the eye; made from simple materials; (usually) not for sale. Beatrice's unique creations gained her a spot in Texas Folklife Resources' (see page 56) first touring exhibition, *Handmade and Heartfelt*, in 1986. Today, several of her *animales feos* ("ugly animals"), as she called them, remain at the Ximénez home, on Standish Street in Floresville.

—Ann Galloway

Folklorista Eminente

Both my maternal grandparents came from a long line of colonizers who had come with Escandón to El Nuevo Santander," wrote Jovita González de Mireles in an autobiographical statement. Born on her grandparents' Las Víboras Ranch near Roma in

1904, González became a pioneer Tejana educator and author.

Her father, who had taught school across the river in Mier, moved the family to San Antonio in 1910 so that his children could be educated in English. After high school, Jovita taught and tutored in Rio Grande City, Encinal, and San Antonio to finance her college education. At the University of Texas in Austin, she met renowned folklorist J. Frank Dobie, who mentored her in the collecting of Rio Grande Valley folklore.

In 1930, under the direction of Dr. Eugene C. Barker, González completed her thesis, "Social Life in Cameron, Starr, and Zapata Counties," and received a Master's degree in Texas history. That same year, she became the only Mexican-American woman to

serve as president of the Texas Folklore Society. She published numerous essays on Hispanic life and legend in the group's annual publications.

Jovita married Edmundo de Mireles, a founder of bilingual education in Texas, in 1935. After teaching in Del Rio, the couple accepted positions in Corpus Christi in 1939, where they taught and coauthored Spanish textbooks before retiring in the 1960s.

Much of González's literary output remained unpublished during her lifetime (she died in 1983). Thanks to the efforts of such scholars as Jose E. Limón, María Cotera, and Sergio Reyna, her novel *Caballero* was published in 1996, followed by another novel, *Dew on the Thorn*, in 1997. *The Woman Who Lost Her Soul*, a collection of folklore-based short stories, came out in 2000. About her, literary critic Leticia M. Garza-Falcon has written, "Jovita González reminds us of what a long road it indeed has been for Mexicanos in Texas to achieve finally their own voice."

—Gene Fowler, Austin



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So many aspects of life in Texas come from the traditions brought to these lands by Spaniards and Mexicans, who transformed indigenous cultures and fused them with their own heritage, whether from Old World or New.

The earliest exploration of the Texas coast by a European may have occurred in 1519, the year Hernán Cortés landed at Veracruz, preparing for the conquest of Mexico. The same year, Spanish explorer Alonso Álvarez de Pineda sailed from Jamaica across the Gulf of Mexico to the Texas coast. The first document of Texas history is a map of the Gulf Coast, sketched during this voyage.

But the Spanish era of Texas history really began nine years later, when a massive swell in the Gulf of Mexico sent a boatload of explorers, including Spanish adventurer Álvar Núñez Cabeza de Vaca and 48 others, crashing onto the sands of Galveston Island. Disease and misfortune quickly reduced the number of survivors to 15. Cabeza de Vaca called the island “Malhado,” or “evil destiny.”

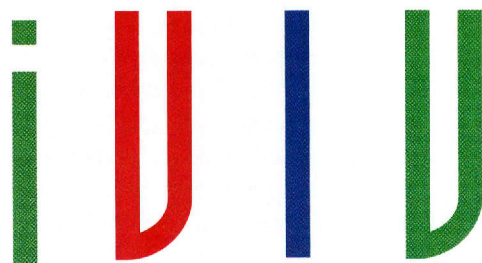
Shortly after the shipwreck, the surviving Spaniards were separated among different Karankawa tribes. Cabeza de Vaca, Alonso del Castillo Maldonado, Andrés Dorantes de Carranza, and Dorantes’ Moroccan slave, Estevanico, would spend the next eight years wandering through Texas and northern Mexico, alternately living as slaves and as medicine men. In an incredible tale of suffering, courage, and

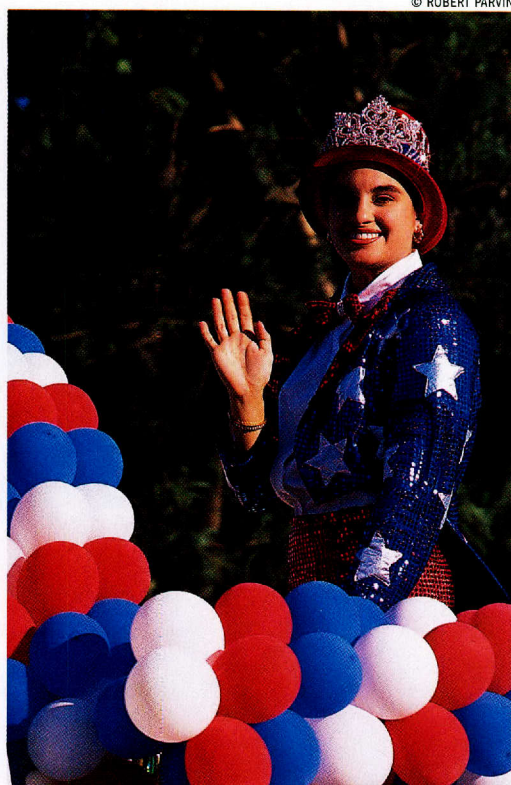
triumph of the spirit, the four men entered Mexico City in 1536, where they received a heroes’ welcome by Viceroy Antonio de Mendoza and Hernán Cortés himself.

Cabeza de Vaca never returned to Texas, but the reports of his exploits prompted Spain’s King Charles I to sponsor further explorations of what would become the southern United States. Notable among these for our purposes were Hernando de Soto’s expedition from Florida to East Texas in 1539-43 and Francisco Vázquez de Coronado’s explorations from Mexico and Arizona across the Llano Estacado in New Mexico and Texas and as far north as Kansas (1540-42). In their reports to Spain, Luis de Moscoso Alvarado (who succeeded De Soto as head of his expedition) and Coronado concluded that Texas would be a good land for agriculture, but

[ABOVE] Lorenzo de Zavala (left) proved to be one of the most active politicians in Colonial Mexico, independent Mexico, and the Republic of Texas, where he served as first vice president. In 1540-42, Francisco Vázquez de Coronado ventured east from Arizona, through the Texas Panhandle, and on to Kansas, where he reluctantly gave up his search for the golden province of Quivira.

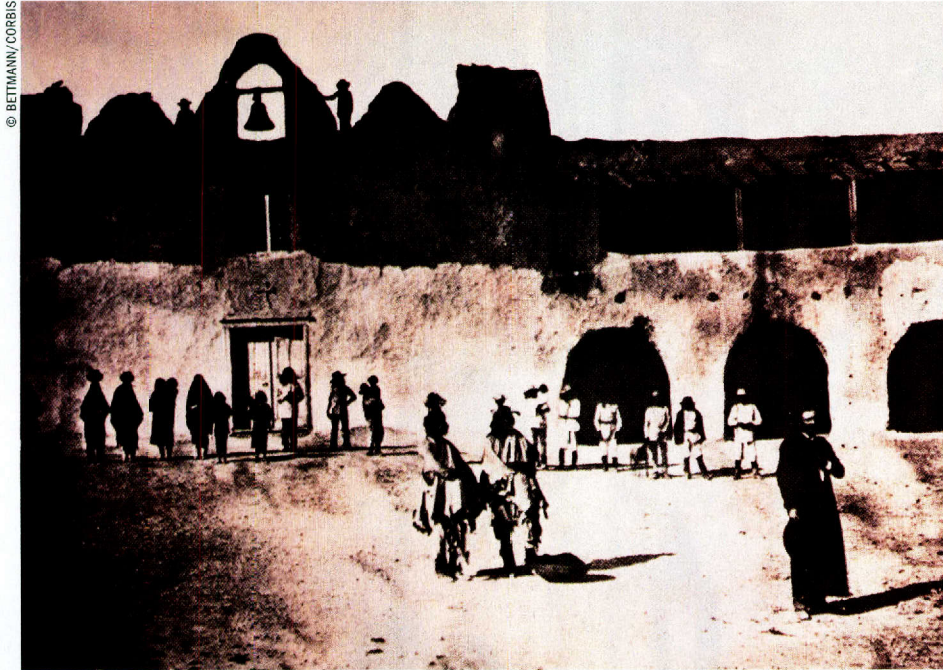
[FACING PAGE, CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT] The ornate carving on the façade of Mission San José in San Antonio is typical of the Churrigueresque style of the Spanish baroque. The annual Fiesta del Campo in Falfurrias (October 10-13, 2002) celebrates Tejano ranching traditions with colorful fanfare and trail-riders like Ignacio Vela, a former vaquero.



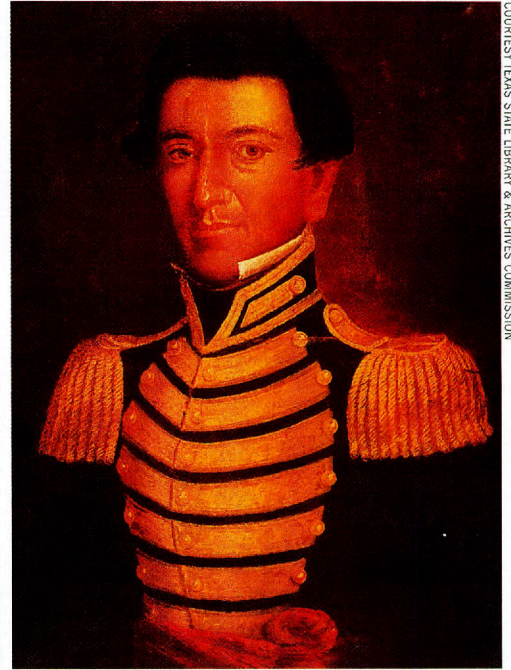


A • TEXAS!

AT LEAST SINCE 1836, the United States has been a powerful force that has shaped Mexico's society and economy. But Mexico, too, has helped shaped the United States—culturally, economically, politically, and socially.



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Members of the Tigua Indian tribe (left) were photographed in the 1860s in front of the Church of San Antonio de Padua at Ysleta, where they came with Spanish soldiers and padres in 1680. Juan Seguín (right) led a Tejano military unit at the Battle of San Jacinto, served in the senate of the Republic of Texas, and was mayor of San Antonio in 1840-42. The town of Seguin, which is named for him, honors him with a larger-than-lifesize bronze statue in its Central Park.

that there were no signs of silver or gold to attract the king.

The year Coronado filed his bleak assessment of Texas, 1542, the Crown decreed the *Nuevas Leyes de Indias*, or New Laws of the Indies for the Good Treatment and Preservation of the Indians, which forbade adventures that led to the killing of Indians. The new laws did not prevent the exploitation of Indians, but they ended the idea that the Indians were the natural property of the Spaniards. With the legislation, the heyday of the conquistador also ended, and subsequent incursions into Texas followed a slower pattern of settlement.

The Catholic Church introduced the mission-building era in Texas in the 1680s, which left a legacy of impressive architecture, from the missions at Ysleta and El Paso in West Texas to those at San Francisco (near Weches) and Nuestra Señora del Espíritu Santo (at Goliad) in eastern Texas,

to the defunct mission at San Sabá (at Menard), and the five San Antonio missions, including the most famous structure of all, the Alamo.

French explorer René Robert Cavelier, Sieur de la Salle's attempt in 1685 to establish a colony at Matagorda Bay, though unsuccessful, awoke Spain to the vulnerability of its northern flank. Fearing French intentions in Texas, Governor Alonso de León of Coahuila mounted four expeditions in the 1680s, exploring the area between the Rio Grande and the Piney Woods of East Texas. On his fifth expedition in 1690, De León, accompanied by Fray Damián Massanet, established the Mission San Francisco de los Tejas, in the land of the Tejas Indians, west of Nacogdoches. A permanent Spanish presence had now begun in East Texas, as well as at Ysleta in West Texas.

Catholic padres, *soldados* (soldiers), and *vaqueros* of mestizo and Indian blood tamed the lands around the churches and presidios

of Texas, and introduced a great livestock ranching tradition. Following Cortés' conquest of Mexico in 1521, horses multiplied in central Mexico, and wild steeds migrated to the grasslands northward and became the Indian ponies of the Plains tribes. In 1777, on an exploratory journey from Mexico City to San Antonio de Béxar, Father Juan Agustín Morfi described the area between the Rio Grande and Río Nueces of present-day Texas as so full of horses "that their trails make the country, utterly uninhabited by people, look as if it were the most populated in the world."

Spanish cattle, too, evolved in the wilds of Mexico and Texas, and resulted in sturdy stock that adapted to the land more readily than man. When Spain began serious efforts to colonize southern Texas in the 1700s, the settlers discovered great cattle herds already thriving here. The beasts proved ideally suited for the early cattle drives (which Spain organized to feed and shelter American rev-

olutionaries in the War of Independence), and for those more widely-known drives that peaked during the two decades following the Civil War (1866-86).

Today, the Texas Longhorn survives as the descendant of the early Spanish and Mexican cattle. Similarly, the progeny of Spanish sheep and goats thrive on the Edwards Plateau. Spaniards also brought the first pigs and chickens in the New World on their expeditions.

Spaniards disseminated cultivated foodstuffs of Native Americans throughout the Americas, Europe, and even Asia and Africa. To name but a few of the crops they spread are avocados, beans of every kind, chili peppers, cocoa, corn (maize), potatoes, pumpkins, squashes, sweet potatoes, and tomatoes. And Spaniards brought their preferred grains and fruits to cultivate in the New World—wheat, rice, sugarcane, grapes, and various fruit trees. Spain introduced the language and equipment of Texas ranching and Western life—buckaroo (from *vaquero*), canyon, coyote, chaps (from *chaparreras*), corral, lasso, lariat (from *la reata*), mustang (from *mesteño*), hoosegow (from *juzgado*), quilt (from *cuerda*), ranch, rodeo, and *sombrero*.

Consider, as well, Spanish place names in Texas. Even those that have been mangled, however creatively, with Anglo pronunciations—Amarillo, San Jacinto, Guadalupe, Refugio—are still beautiful to the ear. And many retain a certain mystique—El Río de los Brazos de Dios, El Río de los Nueces, Nuestra Señora de Loreto, Del Rio, Santa Elena, Mercedes, Concepción, El Capitán, and Sierra Vieja. There are lonely spots, too, with haunting names, like the Jornada del Muerto (Dead Man's Journey), El Despoblado (The Uninhabited Place), and Sierra Diablo (Devil's Range).

In *Spain and the Independence of the United States*, historian Thomas E. Chávez specifies the importance of Spain and its colonies' roles in the American Revolution. Spain taxed its colonies, including present-day Texas, New Mexico, Arizona, and California, to help the 13 United States colonies in their war effort. Texas provided cattle to help feed Bernardo de Gálvez's troops. In May 1781, Gálvez sent 7,000 Longhorn-fed soldiers for a siege

of Pensacola, the British capital of western Florida.

Gálvez captured the Bahamas, Florida, and Jamaica from the British, in the process distracting attention from the insubordinate American colonists. Gálvez, subsequently named viceroy of New Spain, was honored in 1786, when Galveston Bay was named for him. The city that grew on the island facing the bay also took his name.

After 1803, when Thomas Jefferson purchased the Louisiana Territory, the aggressive neighbors to the north became more nettlesome to the Spaniards. Not only did Spain fear that *Norteamericanos* would enter Texas en masse, but the native *Mexicanos* and *criollos* were also getting restless.



Relations between Spain, the United States, Mexico, and Texas have always been *agridulce*—bittersweet. And the relationship between Hispanic America and its Indian and Spanish past is equally rocky. During the wars of independence from Spain and afterwards, Mexicans in large part repudiated both cultures. Some looked to the United States for models of culture and society, but more looked to France, especially after Mexico lost Texas and the Southwest.

When Antonio López de Santa Anna abolished Mexico's Liberal Constitution of 1824 and fought efforts at resistance to his regime (in Yucatán, Zacatecas, Alta California, and Texas), he alienated Anglos and Hispanics alike. Santa Anna proved ruthless, arrogant, and, militarily, incompetent. In 1836, he lost Texas, and in the Mexican War of 1846-48, he also ceded Arizona, California, Colorado, Nevada, New Mexico, and portions of Utah to the United States. For most Mexicans, these losses resulted in a festering wound that has contaminated relations between Mexico and the United States ever since.

But the ties that bind are equally strong. Juan Seguín distinguished himself as an officer in the Texas revolutionary army. His Tejano unit fought at San Jacinto, and he accepted the Mexican surrender of San Antonio on June 4, 1836. He went on to serve in the Texas senate and as mayor of San Antonio.

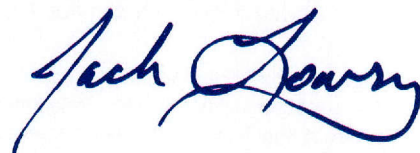
Under a Tejano general, Ignacio Seguín Zaragoza, the French troops of the Emperor Maximilian were routed at Puebla, Mexico, on May 5, 1862—the famous Cinco de Mayo, a national holiday in Mexico and commemorated throughout Texas and the Southwest. Zaragoza, whose mother was a relative of Juan Seguín, was born in 1829, at Bahía del Espíritu Santo in the Mexican state of Coahuila y Texas, near present-day Goliad.

Unfortunately, following the Texas Revolution, Tejano patriots like Juan Seguín, José Antonio Menchaca, and the first vice president of the Republic of Texas, Lorenzo de Zavala, felt the sting of discrimination by the dominant Anglo culture. Historian Paul Lack has pointed out that Mexican Americans who fought for the Texas Republic “may have helped to advance their cause individually, but as a whole the government's policy toward persons of Mexican descent had become capricious by the summer of 1836.”

Historian James Haley has written that Santa Anna's defeat at San Jacinto “was just cause for joy among both Anglo colonist and native Tejano. It was the following chapter of prejudice and abuse of the Tejano population that still needs healing.”

One telling quote comes from Mexican dictator Porfirio Díaz, who late in the 19th Century characterized the U.S.-Mexico relationship thusly: “Poor Mexico, so far from God and so close to the United States.” At least since 1836, the United States has been a powerful force that has shaped Mexico's society and economy. But Mexico, too, has helped shaped the United States—culturally, economically, politically, and socially. The border has proved both a barrier and a bridge.

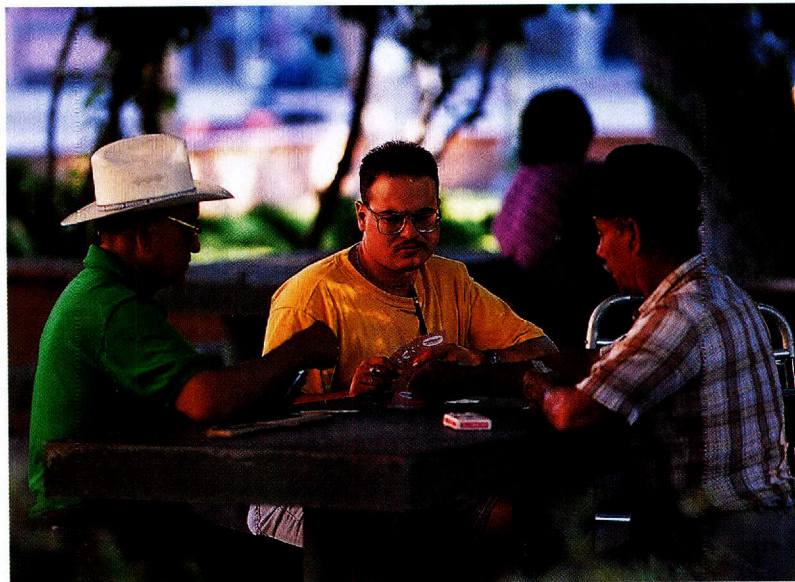
As we forge ahead through the 21st Century, rest assured that our mutual influences will become even greater. *Gracias, mis hermanos hispanos, por todo lo que nos han otorgado a través de los años.* Thank you for this living, breathing legacy. *Un millón de gracias.* ★



Hangin' out IN SOUTH TEXAS' OUTDOOR LIVING ROOMS

PLAZA LIFE

STORY AND PHOTOGRAPHS
BY RANDY MALLORY



Native Chilean Emilio Salcedo relaxes on a bench in the dappled shade of live oaks in San Antonio's Main Plaza. He waits for noon Mass in America's oldest cathedral sanctuary, San Fernando Cathedral, which faces the plaza. I join his vigil. Emilio tells me he works for a mining company in El Paso, where he now lives. He's in San Antonio en route to a mine in Mexico.

As we chat, we watch youngsters in Sunday finery scamper around a broad, circular fountain spraying water plumes toward a blue Texas sky. We glance at couples feeding pigeons, at a snow-cone vendor scooping shaved ice, at old-timers lined along a low, limestone ledge that edges the plaza's lush plantings.

"This plaza feels just like home," he confides, and I understand. For years, on travels south of the Rio Grande, I've always gravitated to downtown plazas—pleasant, park-like places where people of

all ages meet and greet and just hang out, day and night. Whenever I'm in South Texas, where Hispanic heritage runs almost three centuries deep, I reconnect with plaza life.

"All across Latin America, you find plazas like this," Emilio explains. "The plaza is the center of life in our cities."

No wonder. A set of 16th-Century Spanish ordinances, called the Laws of the Indies, required a main plaza (*plaza mayor*) at the heart of each New World settlement. Measuring no less than

200 by 300 feet, the plaza consisted of a square or rectangular open space encompassed by four principal streets. Other town streets extended from the plaza in all directions to form a grid pattern.

Structures facing the plaza typically included a church, governmental buildings, and businesses. Prominent citizens often lived on or near the plaza. Larger towns frequently incorporated smaller plazas (*plazuelas*) in outlying neighborhoods.

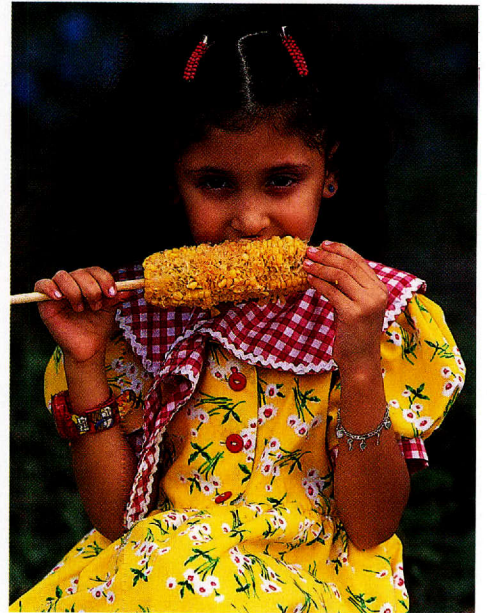
Originally bare and unadorned, plazas hosted military maneuvers, horse races, celebrations, and markets. Some featured a public well or fountain.

During France's brief occupation of Mexico in the 1860s, Mexican Emperor

[CLOCKWISE, FROM ABOVE] Folks gather for a casual card game at Jarvis Plaza, one of several plazas in Laredo. Del Rio's Brown Plaza brings people together for special events throughout the year, including Diez y Seis, to be held this year September 13-16. Kristen Nicole Rodriguez of San Antonio attends Mass every Sunday at San Fernando Cathedral, then enjoys spicy corn-on-the-cob while relaxing on Main Plaza, with its fountain, shaded benches, and vendors.



© ROBERT PARVIN





Laredo's popular La Posada Hotel (956/722-1701 or 800/444-2099) anchors the south side of Plaza San Agustín. The 1916 building once housed the Laredo High School.

Maximilian and his wife, Carlota, permeated plazas with the ambiance of French Renaissance gardens. By the late-19th and early-20th century, a typical Mexican plaza boasted garden-like settings—filled with trees, flower beds, walkways, and a *kiosco* (a gazebo-like pavilion), used for musical performances.

Throughout Texas history, in places as far-flung as El Paso and Nacogdoches, many towns incorporated plazas from the Hispanic tradition into their layouts, though many have been altered over time. Today, most traditional Hispanic plazas remain in South Texas. That's according to a study by Arizona State University geography professor Daniel Arreola, who identifies more plaza towns in South Texas than in any other U.S.-Mexico border region. His scholarly new book, *Tejano South Texas: A Mexican American Cultural Province*, describes plazas as one of several cultural attributes that define Hispanic South Texas.

Unlike many historic plazas in Spain that did not evolve as community public spaces, writes Professor Arreola, Spanish-

American plazas became the social hubs of their communities, hosting fiestas, political rallies, musical performances, and social gatherings. People-friendly plazas made the perfect proving ground for the Spanish tradition of the promenade, or *paseo*.

In the paseo, young men moseyed in one direction around the plaza, eyeing eligible young women strolling in the opposite direction...with attentive parents watching nearby.

Longtime Laredo historian and archeologist Rose Treviño fondly recalls paseos in her native Mexico and in Laredo, where she's lived since age 13. "The plaza was *the* spot for people-watching. People's houses were very small and crowded, so the plaza became the community's outdoor living room," she says. "We don't have paseos anymore, but the plaza is still a great place for hanging out with the family."



The paseo may be passé in South Texas, but my favorite of Laredo's several plazas, San Agustín Plaza, retains much of the charm of the traditional Hispanic plaza. As the area's only 18th-Century

plaza, San Agustín lies where Don Tomás Sánchez established Laredo in 1755.

Trees and shrubs fill this peaceful place, tucked along the banks of the Rio Grande, only a short walk from Nuevo Laredo, Mexico. Red-brick walkways emanate from a pillared, masonry kiosco. Locals and tourists relax on concrete benches chiseled with "In Memory of..." followed by cherished local family names. A larger-than-life statue, donated by Mexico, honors General Ignacio Zaragoza, hero of the May 5, 1862, Battle of Pueblo, Mexico, the event celebrated as Cinco de Mayo. (Laredo's Mexican Consulate hosts Cinco de Mayo festivities each May 5 on San Agustín Plaza, plus a Diez y Seis de Septiembre, or Mexican Independence Day, celebration, this year on September 15, and a Christmas event in December.)

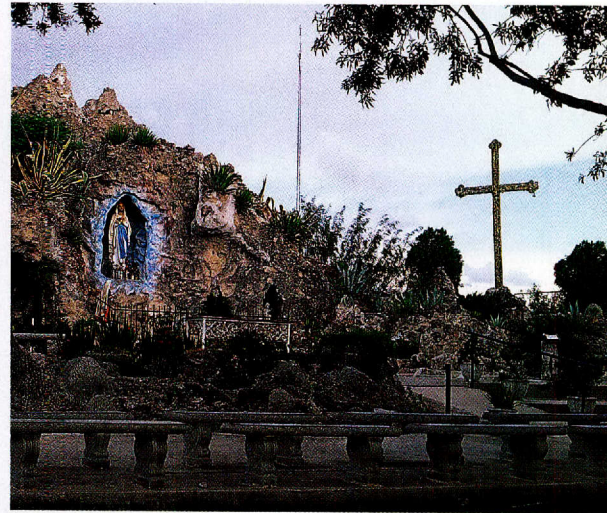
I connect with local tour guide Sam Johnson, who walks me past historic sites on the plaza. The first, San Agustín Catholic Church, was founded in 1760, making it one of the state's oldest churches. The present French Gothic Revival stone structure was built in 1872 and restored in 1989. Sam shows me the outline of the previous stone structure, visible in an outside brick patio.

Sam and I peek into the 18th-Century Ortiz House, also on the plaza. Next door is the Washington's Birthday Celebration Museum, which displays memorabilia from Laredo's tribute to George Washington, held each February for more than a century (see "Mexican Fiestas," page 36).

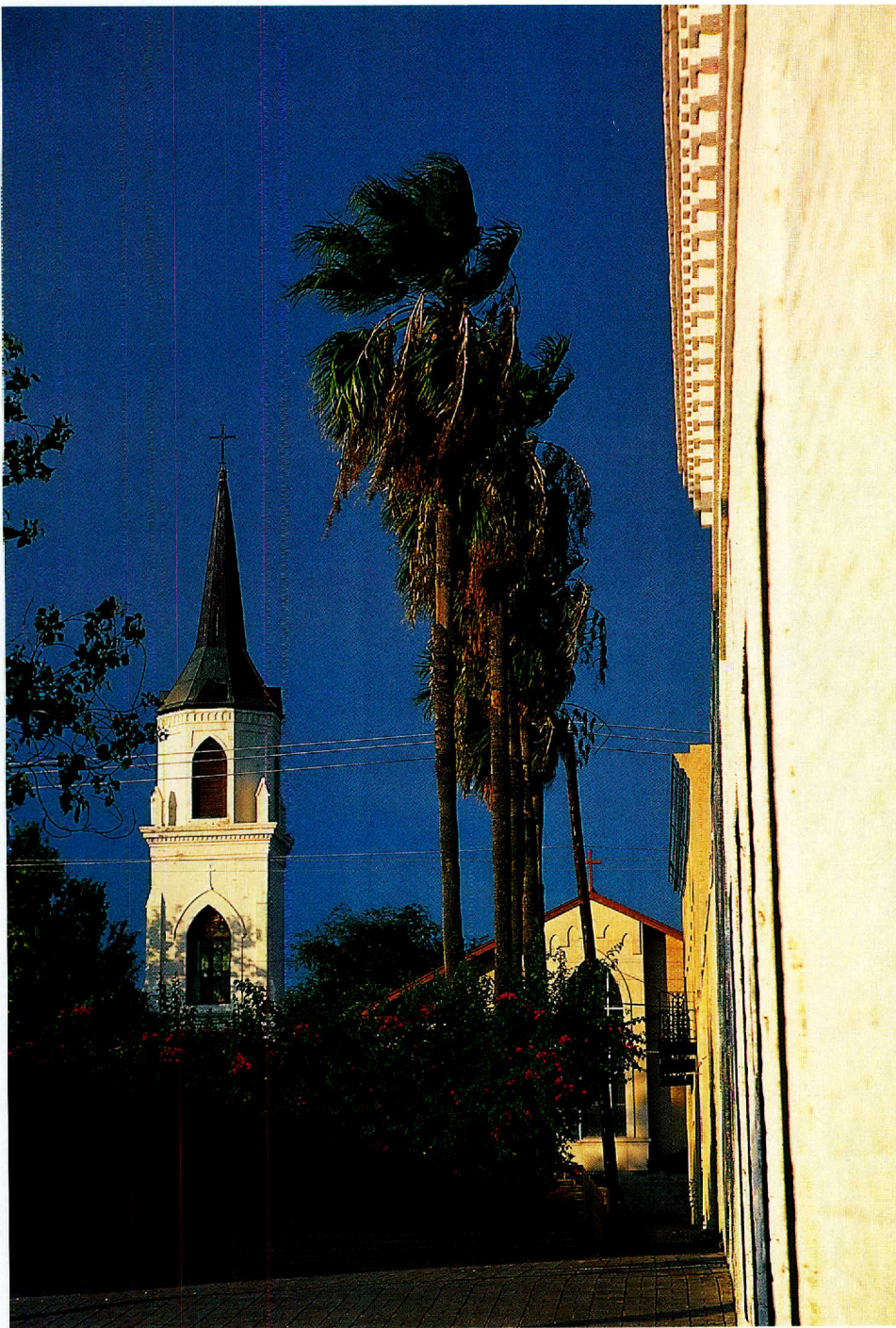
Down Zaragoza Street on the south side of the plaza, we visit the Republic of the Rio Grande Museum, a project of the Webb County Heritage Foundation. Housed in the former headquarters of the Republic of the Rio Grande, a self-declared nation that came and went in 1840, the museum chronicles the ill-fated attempt at local self-governance. Outside the museum, Sam hops aboard a rubber-tire trolley to guide visitors on a two-hour, bilingual tour of Laredo's many historic sites (see "Stories from the Streets of Old Laredo," January 2002).

I stroll next door, to the 208-room La Posada Hotel, site of an early *casa judicial* (government building). Constructed in

THROUGHOUT TEXAS HISTORY, in places as far-flung as El Paso and Nacogdoches, many towns incorporated plazas from the Hispanic tradition into their layouts, though many have been altered over time. Today, most traditional Hispanic plazas remain in South Texas.



[CLOCKWISE, FROM LEFT] Every weekend, Carmen Cortez sells fruit and spicy ears of corn in front of San Antonio's historic San Fernando Cathedral on Main Plaza. Facing Rio Grande City's Britton Avenue Plaza is a 1928 replica of France's famous Grotto of Lourdes, with a statue of the Virgin Mary cast in Paris. Julio de la Cruz awaits customers at his snow-cone stand in San Antonio's Milam Park (the mural in the background graces Christus Santa Rosa Hospital).



Bougainvillea and date palms frame Our Lady of Refuge Church (1853-56) along Roma's mall-like plaza. The movie *Viva Zapata!*, starring Marlon Brando, was filmed on the plaza in the 1950s.

In 1916 as the Laredo High School, this Spanish Revival building features a fountain, Bruní Plaza (at Washington and San Bernardo streets) features the old public library building, which still houses a branch of the library, along with city offices and a police substation.

Plazas also carry on Hispanic tradition in several historic border towns downriver from Laredo. For example, tiny San

Ygnacio (founded 1830), which boasts a historic district listed in the National Register of Historic Places, is anchored by Plaza del Pueblo, which remained a simple, open space until the 1950s. Today, the square sports native and nonnative trees, benches, and a gazebo. A small, white-steeped church flanks this gathering place, as do several of San Ygnacio's many 19th-Century sandstone structures. One such building, now restored as a residence, served as the fort in the 1950s movie *Viva Zapata!*, starring Marlon Brando. (For details on the *Viva Zapata!* festival, see pages 29 and 35.)

Scenes in *Viva Zapata!* also unfolded farther downstream, on Roma's Memorial Plaza, the heart of one of Texas' most intact Spanish Colonial towns. The plaza, which lies in the town's National Historic Landmark District, sprawls mall-like along Convent Street, from Our Lady of Refuge Church (1853-56) to a bluff overlooking the Rio Grande. During the last half of the 19th Century, with Roma booming as the river's westernmost port, a prosperous commercial district built up along the plaza. Noted German architect Heinrich Portscheller built several of these well-proportioned, two-story buildings. Many have been restored, and others are currently being restored, as is the plaza itself.

Still farther downstream, another former river port, historic Rio Grande City, also has a mall-like plaza. In 1848, founder Henry Clay Davis patterned his town after the state capital. But unlike Austin, a plaza runs down the main street, Britton Avenue, which descends from the Starr County Courthouse to the Rio Grande. Filled with historical markers, walkways, fountains, and a kiosk, the tree-covered plaza features an unusual site: In 1924, Catholic priest Gustavo Goldback built a replica of the grotto shrine of Our Lady of Lourdes in France, complete with a statue of the Virgin Mary cast in Paris.

Back in San Antonio, as Mass ends at San Fernando Cathedral, worshipers fill Main Plaza, originally called *Plaza de las Islas* (Plaza of the Islands). Fifteen Spanish families gave it that name after journeying here from the Canary Islands in 1731 to establish Villa de San



Festive mariachi tunes fill the night air at Del Rio's Brown Plaza, dedicated on Cinco de Mayo in 1908. The gazebo was restored after a flood in 1998, music to the ears of the many who enjoy gathering here.

changes always took place—changes in governments, commerce, and just ordinary life. The Spanish originally decreed that the plazas serve the citizenry ‘for their use and entertainment.’ That’s the way it’s always been and continues to be.”

Those words ring true as I watch a youngster on Main Plaza bite into a steaming ear of fresh corn-on-the-cob, served from a street cart like I remember it from trips to interior Mexico—drizzled with chili powder and a squeeze of lime.

If this lively Sunday in downtown San Antonio is any indication, plazas remain a cultural touchstone, connecting South Texans to their rich Hispanic heritage. ★

Regular contributor RANDY MALLORY of Tyler says that researching this story drove home for him the importance of maintaining the cultural touchstones that carry our bountiful Hispanic heritage forward.

Fernando. By 1750, the islanders had completed what became San Fernando Cathedral (later expanded and currently undergoing further expansion). They situated the plaza and church between Spain’s two existing installations established in 1718—the Mission San Antonio de Valero (now the Alamo) and its protective fort, Presidio de San Antonio de B exar. Eventually, both the fort and the mission got their own plazas.

Today, what’s left of the presidio’s *Plaza de Armas* (Military Plaza) is home to the 1749 Spanish Governor’s Palace, the first seat of Spanish government in Texas and perhaps the grandest Spanish Colonial building in the state. A few blocks east, Alamo Plaza began looking like a traditional Hispanic plaza in the late 1800s and now features shady sitting areas, a bandstand, and the grand 1936 work of Italian-born sculptor Pompeo Coppini, a marble cenotaph bearing the names of those who perished in the momentous 1836 battle.

Hanging out at these three downtown plazas—and at nearby Milam Square, a recently refurbished plaza next to San Antonio’s bustling *mercado*, or market—I recall what long-time San Antonio historian Mary Ann Noonan Guerra once told me:

“It was on our plazas that the greatest

ESSENTIALS South Texas Plazas

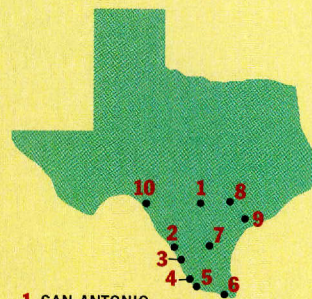
FOR A TASTE of plaza life, here are a few among many South Texas plazas to sample.

Downtown plazas in **San Antonio** include **Main Plaza** (Main Ave. at Commerce St.), **Milam Park** (Santa Rosa at Commerce), **Military Plaza** (Flores at Commerce), and **Alamo Plaza** (Alamo at Houston). For information and plaza events, contact the San Antonio Convention and Visitors Bureau, 800/447-3372; www.sanantoniocvb.com.

In **Laredo**, visit **San Agust n Plaza** (Flores at Grant), **Jarvis Plaza** (Matamoros at Salinas), and **Bruni Plaza** (Washington and San Bernardo). Contact the Webb County Heritage Foundation, 956/727-0977; www.webbheritage.org. Trolley tours run Tue, Thu, and Sat year round. The foundation, at 500 Flores Ave., also offers a self-guided walking tour brochure of historic sites. For information on other attractions in Laredo, call the Laredo Convention & Visitors Bureau, 800/361-3360; www.visitlaredo.com.

Other plaza towns include **San Ygnacio** (Plaza del Pueblo; call the Zapata County C of C, 956/765-4871 or 800/292-5253), **Roma** (Memorial Plaza, on Convent St.; call the Roma Historic District Visitor Station, 956/849-0099), **Rio Grande City** (Britton Ave. Plaza; call the C of C, 956/487-3024; www.riograndecity.net), **Brownsville** (Washington Plaza; call the CVB, 800/626-2639; www.brownsville.org), **San Diego** (Padre Pedro Park; call the Alice C of C, 361/664-3454), **Gonzales** (Military Plaza; call the C of C, 830/672-6532 or 888/672-1095; www.gonzalestexas.com), **Victoria** (De Le n Plaza; call the CVB at 361/573-5277 or 800/926-5774; www.visitvictoria.org), and **Del Rio** (Brown Plaza; call the C of C, 800/889-8149; www.drchamber.com). Valley information is also available from the Rio Grande Valley C of C in Weslaco (956/968-3141, www.valleychamber.com) and from TxDOT’s Valley Travel Information Center in Harlingen (956/428-4477 or 800/452-9292; email: vytic@dot.state.tx.us).

BOOKS For more on plaza towns and South Texas’ Hispanic culture, look for *Tejano South Texas: A Mexican American Cultural Province* by Daniel D. Arreola (Univ. of Texas Press, 2002). For more on San Antonio’s plazas, try Mary Ann Noonan Guerra’s *The History of San Antonio’s Market Square* and *The Alamo*, both of which are available in San Antonio at the Alamo, at the Missions of San Antonio, and through The Twig Book Shop (5005 Broadway, 78209; 210/826-6411; <http://thetwig.booksense.com>).



- 1 SAN ANTONIO
- 2 LAREDO
- 3 SAN YGNACIO
- 4 ROMA
- 5 RIO GRANDE CITY
- 6 BROWNSVILLE
- 7 SAN DIEGO
- 8 GONZALES
- 9 VICTORIA
- 10 DEL RIO

Celebrating THE CYCLE OF LIFE





J. GRIFFIS SMITH

EL DÍA DE LOS MUERTOS

BY MACARENA DEL ROCÍO HERNÁNDEZ

During our long drives down the dusty, nameless roads that lead to my grandfather's ranch in northern Mexico, my mother would recite her funeral instructions as if she were telling me how to make flour tortillas. As the cemetery, with its small multicolored mausoleums and traditional headstones came into view, she would say, "There has to be prayer, and I want some singing," her voice becoming softer as she tried to remember the Baptist hymn she had heard at so many funerals at our church. "And you have to bring me back here. I want you to make sure you bury me in Mexico, where they respect the dead."

In Mexico, the dead are more than respected; two days—November 1 and 2—are set aside to remember and celebrate the lives of those who have left us. During All Saints' Day and Día de los Muertos (All Souls' Day), rooted in indigenous and European traditions, it is believed that the souls of the dead return to visit the living.

In some places, like the Mexican state of Oaxaca, the celebration takes on highly ritualistic community processions and the construction of elaborate family altars. In the United States, in places like San Francisco, art galleries and museums showcase Day of the Dead altars created by local artists. In cemeteries in San Antonio and the Rio Grande Valley, people picnic beside the graves of their loved ones, often sere-

nading them with mariachis or with the music that the deceased once enjoyed.

In the Mexican state of Nuevo León, where my parents grew up, the cemeteries come to life during Día de los Muertos with colorful flowers and *coronas* (floral wreaths). On that day, Nuevo León residents mingle with those who years ago left the ranchos and have returned for their annual visit.

When my mother, now 60, was a striking *soltera* with long, black curly hair, the neighboring ranching communities held the biggest dance of the year on November 2, on Día de Los Muertos. Those Old World days, when a young man traded a loaf of bread for the privilege of dancing with a pretty girl, seem just as unrecognizable to me as the painted portraits of

Mariachi Durango fills a San Antonio cemetery with *música* during El Día de los Muertos.



A 9/11/01 Day of the Dead tribute altar at San Antonio's Mi Tierra Café y Panadería.

unknown relatives that hang in my grandmother's house. Gatherings like those hardly ever happen now.

Most people, like my parents, left these Mexican ranchos and moved to small Texas towns along the Rio Grande. They came to *el otro lado* (the other side), planning to one day return to Mexico and plant a few acres of melons, corn, and sorghum, buy a few cows and goats, and hire the ranch help they could never afford before they moved away. But after a few

years of life here, after raising children who have no desire to return to the hot, desolate land nearly a hundred miles south of the border, people like my parents gradually abandoned their dreams of big ranchos in Mexico. What replaced that dream is a much more modest wish, to rest eternally in a small plot of soil at *El Panteón Sara Flores*. Four generations of my family, on both my mother's and father's sides, rest at that cemetery, about three miles from my grandfather's ranch. When I was

growing up, my family would go there for funerals, every Mother's Day, and of course, for Día de los Muertos.

That is still the time of year when we go back. Relatives, who originally came from the small ranching communities of Altamira, La Ceja, La Reforma, and Serafín, bring lawn chairs and tacos, flowers and water, prepared to spend hours by the grave sites of those we have lost. There, as a family, we reconnect with our dead.

On the first day of every November, my parents would drive us to a tiny McAllen cemetery, wedged between a warehouse and the airport. That is where my brother, Ramiro, rests, a couple of miles away from the hospital where he died shortly after his birth, on November 4, 1971. My father and my uncle Rafael were the only witnesses at his funeral because my mother was too sick to leave the hospital. If she had been well, the brother I never met would not have been buried there, but in Mexico, probably next to my uncle and great-grandfather.

When we visited Ramiro's grave, my father would yank out the weeds swallowing the small plot as my mother tied a small bouquet of artificial flowers to the metal nameplate marking the grave. They never thought of buying a marble headstone, because they didn't intend for him to stay there. "When I die," my mother would tell us, "I want you to make sure you bury him with me in Mexico. I don't want his grave to be forgotten."

My parents spoke openly about death, as did all my other relatives. After almost three decades of hearing my mother start what seemed like every other sentence with "When I die..." and "The day I die..." I learned not to fear death. Because of Día de los Muertos and other holidays that brought us back to the cemeteries, the stories of relatives like my great-grandmother Manuela, or *tío* Abel, who both died long before I was born, became part of my personal history.

"Your *tío* Abel was a sharp dresser and very good looking. He looked like Pedro Infante and sang like Lorenzo de Monteclaro," my mother would often tell us as we walked by the grave site of her oldest brother, who was only 30 years old

IN MEXICO, the dead are more than respected; two days—November 1 and 2—are set aside to remember and celebrate the lives of those who have left us. During All Saints' Day and Día de los Muertos, rooted in indigenous and European traditions, it is believed that the souls of the dead return to visit the living.



The author (center, in blue), with her grandfather and other family members at *El Panteón Sara Flores* in northern Nuevo León, Mexico, during *El Día de Los Muertos*.

when he was murdered in a nearby dance hall. To tío Abel's left rests my great-grandmother Teodora Castillo, or as I knew her, 'uelita Lola, a short woman with an explosive temperament that made her six-foot husband look small next to her, even though she stood only four-feet-and-a-few-inches tall. When I began spending my summers with her and my grandparents in Mexico, she had become an almost century-old *viejita*. She gave me my first chicken, although later, without asking me, she used it to make a *caldo*. *Abuelito* Cleto, her husband, died long before I was born. At the cemetery, he rests at her feet.

When my father died four years ago, my seven siblings and I were torn between burying him in Mexico or on this side of the border, where we all live. Although my father wanted to be buried close to his mother, he often joked, "The day I die, these kids are going to do whatever they

want, and I won't know the difference." We decided to bury him where we knew he belonged, next to his mother, father, and younger brother and just a few feet away from his beloved grandmother Manuela.

In the years since his death, I have come to understand that *Día de los Muertos* is more than just a cultural tradition: It is one more day in which I can honor my father's life and be reminded of how he still lives in me.

Last April, on my father's birth date, I was joined by my grandfather, my father's cousins, and their children at *El Panteón Sara Flores*, where we cleaned my father's grave site, polished the tombstone, and recalled our Easters together. As my cousins tied flower arrangements onto the tombstone, a seven-foot, black granite wall, my grandfather and I roamed through the back of the cemetery, near the tall pine tree he planted shortly after his son was buried. "*Aquí*," he said pointing

to a small plot, just big enough to fit one person, that lies next to his mother's grave. "Here is where I am going to be buried."

"And where are we supposed to bury 'uelita Cecilia," I asked, wondering about my grandmother, his wife of 67 years.

"Right there with me," he answered.



I wonder about my own family, whether our children's children will be able to roam through a cemetery and point to headstones that tell them where their family comes from, or whether our grave sites will be scattered and abandoned throughout Texas and Mexico. I still don't know where I should be buried. But I know where I will bury my mother and Ramiro—in Mexico, right next to my father, just a few miles from where she was born. ★

MACARENA DEL ROCÍO HERNÁNDEZ grew up in La Joya, and is a graduate of Baylor and UC Berkeley. She's a staff writer for the *San Antonio Express-News*.



Dead or alive. A costumed couple celebrates with a Day of the Dead dance at Austin's Mexic-Arte Museum.

History AND CULTURE ALONG THE RIO GRANDE

LOS CAMINOS DEL RIO

BY GENE FOWLER • PHOTOGRAPHS BY JOEL SALCIDO

Travel the roads of the river, the big river, the Rio Grande, and you follow in the paths of Indians, Spanish explorers, and military campaigns that shaped the course of history. As Professor Jerry Thompson, a past president of the Texas State Historical Association, points out, “The 200-mile stretch of the Rio Grande from Laredo to Brownsville is one of the more historic areas in the United States.”

For much of that history, noted a June 25, 2001, statement by the National Trust for Historic Preservation, “the sun-baked Lower Rio Grande Valley...has been a place where time moves slowly. But now the future is rushing in at breakneck speed,

and much of the region’s heritage is in danger of being swept away.”

To encourage preservation, the National Trust placed *Los Caminos del Rio*—the binational heritage-tourism corridor between Brownsville/Matamoros and Laredo/

the border region and made a week-long trip to assess the area between Laredo and Brownsville,” explains Mario. The panorama of historic sites and structures inspired him. Moreover, Mario discovered, the corridor that was later christened *Los Caminos del Rio* is “a land apart,” a unique region of blended cultures.

“Mexicans are intricately linked with their neighbors across the Rio Grande,” he explains. “There’s a shared heritage of cultural and family ties. So the Caminos idea resonated in northern Mexico and in South Texas, and the result—the nonprofit organization *Los Caminos del Rio* of Texas and Mexico—is an unprecedented cooperation between the two nations.”

Nuevo Laredo—on its 2001 list of America’s 11 Most Endangered Historic Places.

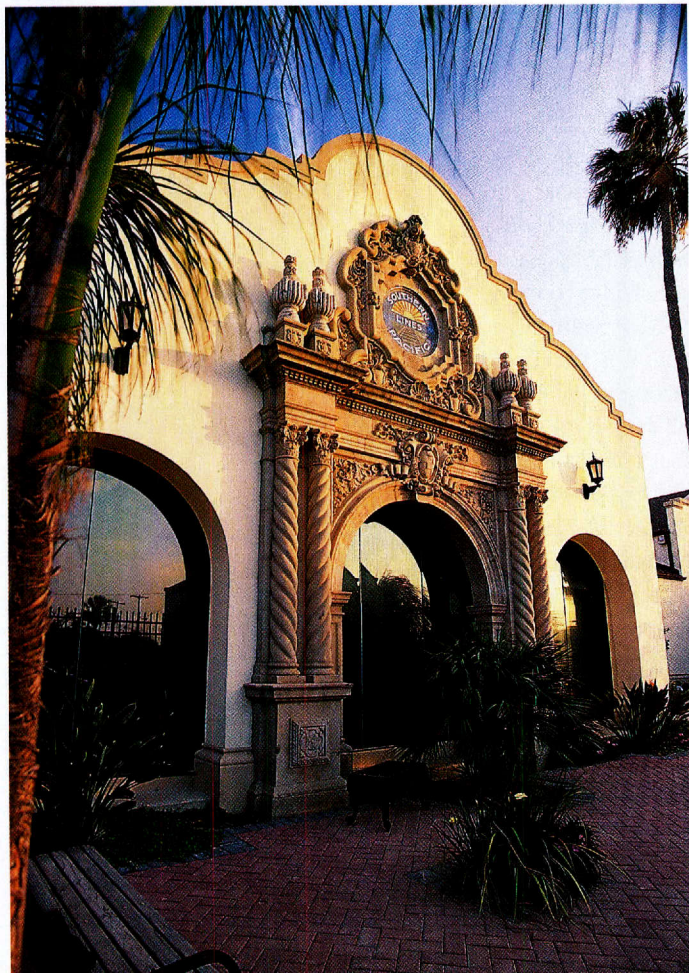
That national focus capped a decade of efforts to draw attention to an often overlooked strip of borderlands. Dr. Mario Sánchez of Austin conceived the *Los Caminos del Rio* (the River Roads) project in 1990, while working as an architect for the Texas Historical Commission.

“I was assigned to

“*Los Caminos del Rio* works to interpret and preserve the legacies of the borderlands,” says executive director Rachel Torres from the organization’s current headquarters, in Brownsville. More than 250 sites along the trail illustrate the history and culture forged here. Travelers on the U.S. side find places like Brownsville’s Palo Alto and Resaca de la Palma battlefields, which saw action during the Mexican War (1846-48); the Port Isabel Lighthouse, built in 1853 and recently restored; and Laredo’s beautiful San Agustín Plaza.

[LEFT] In 1928, the Southern Pacific Railroad constructed this Spanish Colonial building as part of its extension into the Rio Grande Valley. Today, it houses the Historic Brownsville Museum, which highlights area history.

[FACING PAGE] The 1928 bridge between Roma and Ciudad Miguel Alemán is the only remaining suspension bridge on the Rio Grande. No vehicular or pedestrian traffic is currently permitted, but tourists and residents can cross the river via a new bridge, built alongside the old one in 1978.







Roma's 15-block downtown district encompasses some 43 historic commercial, residential, and religious structures, most built in the mid- to late 1800s. Only the tower portion of the original Our Lady of Refuge Church (Nuestra Señora del Refugio), built in 1853-56, remains.

Crossing the Rio Grande into Mexico reveals still more treasures, including Mier's Spanish Colonial plazas, the ghost town of Guerrero Viejo, and the 1928 Roma-Ciudad Miguel Alemán International Bridge.

Together, the ribbon of attractions depicts the area's Spanish Colonial and military history, agricultural and ranching traditions, and transportation and business development. Efforts also focus on the abundant (and sometimes threatened) natural attractions of the Lower Rio Grande, as well as the area's architectural, social, and cultural legacies.

In his recent book, *Tejano South Texas*, Arizona State University professor Daniel D. Arreola describes Los Caminos as "a distinctive cultural province" with "no equivalent anywhere along the borderland." Much of that distinctiveness can be traced back to the mid-1700s, when Spanish Colonial settlements sprang up on both sides of the Rio Grande under the supervision of José de Escandón. Establishing Camargo, Reynosa, Revilla (today known as Guerrero), and Mier on the south side of the river, and Dolores (now an archeological ruin) and Laredo on the



George Guerra's great-great-grandfather ran the Manuel Guerra Store (facing page). Today, George owns a home-decor shop, called eDomicilio, in Rio Grande City.

north bank, Escandón named the province Nuevo Santander for his native province in northern Spain.

For generations, the Rio Grande was nothing more than a body of water to Escandón's colonists and their descendants. In time, settlements dotted both sides of the river like a jeweled necklace. Their very names—Hidalgo, Rio Grande City, Roma, Zapata, San Ygnacio—are redolent of adventure and romance. After the Treaty of Guadalupe-Hidalgo set the Rio Grande as the border between Texas and Mexico in 1848, Nuevo Laredo arose on the south bank and—downriver—Brownsville on the north. Another crop of towns—including McAllen, Mission, and San Juan—sprouted with the arrival of the railroads in the late 19th and early 20th centuries and the citrus farming boom in the irrigated "Magic Valley."

Valley folks have always been mindful of their heritage, but the first decade of Los Caminos del Rio brought that dedication into sharper focus. In Laredo, Los Caminos helped renovate the Republic of the Rio Grande Museum, a brick building on San Agustín Plaza that, according to local tradition, served in 1840 as the capitol of an

“LOS CAMINOS DEL RIO works to interpret and preserve the legacies of the borderlands,” says executive director Rachel Torres. More than 250 sites along the trail illustrate the history and culture forged here.



Built in 1884 by German mason Heinrich Portscheller for Roma businessman Manuel Guerra, the Manuel Guerra Store building features ornate brick cornices and a beautiful iron balcony railing. Someday, it may reopen for business as a B&B, movie set, or retail shop.

independent nation (the Republic of the Rio Grande) between Texas and Mexico.

Los Caminos del Rio was launched just in time to help restore San Ygnacio’s 1875 Our Lady of Refuge Church, which had burned in 1990. Fifty miles downriver, the project further aided an extensive restoration of 19th-Century buildings in the 15-block National Historic Landmark District in Roma. Some of these structures, of sandstone, caliche, and locally fired brick, are aging film stars, having appeared in the early-1950s Hollywood movie *Viva Zapata!*, which starred Marlon Brando as the Mexican revolutionary leader Emiliano Zapata. “Visitors often want to see the balcony of the Noah Cox House, where Anthony Quinn leaned down to kiss his horse,” says Mayor José F. Moraida. “Or the church tower on the

plaza where Marlon Brando got married.”

Some of the 200 locals who appeared in the film will be on hand October 7-13 for the third annual *Viva Zapata!* Festival. The mayor says future fests may cook up the World’s Largest Enchilada, to be constructed (and consumed) on the 1928 suspension bridge between Roma and Ciudad Miguel Alemán. The only remaining suspension bridge on the Rio Grande, the span is slated for restoration as a pedestrian bridge.

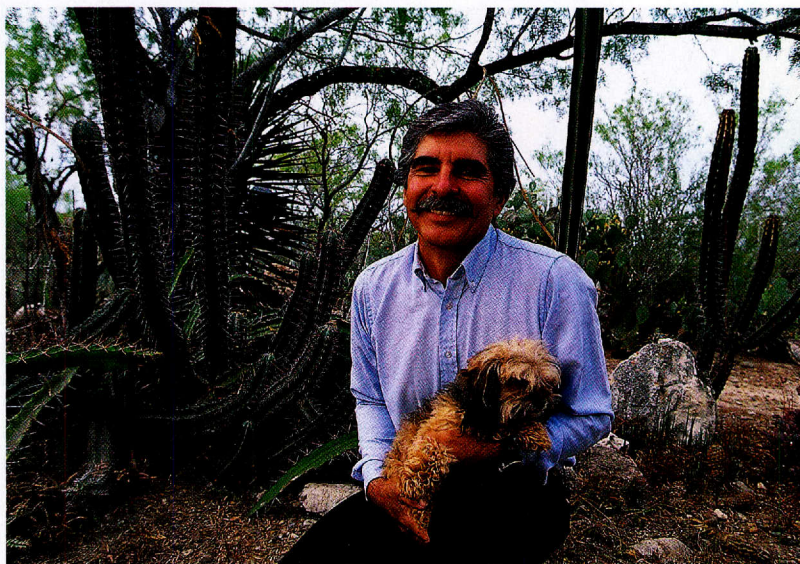
At an archive and visitors’ center on the Roma pla-

za, Los Caminos del Rio field agent Carlos Rugerio rhapsodizes about local landmarks, such as the 1884 Manuel Guerra Store and Residence. One of many Roma buildings designed by German mason Heinrich “Enrique” Portscheller, the Guerra Store features original ornamental ironwork and Portscheller’s elegant molded brickwork.

Manuel Guerra’s great-great-grandson George Guerra ponders turning the building into a B&B, a movie set, or a retail shop. George returned to his native Rio Grande City after a post-college decade of globetrotting as a marketing expert. “Two years ago, I was set to move to Milan, Italy,” he muses. “But Starr County kept calling me back. I could always touch my family’s past here.”

After opening eDomicilio (home decor and accessories) in a century-old downtown building, George set out to help preserve Rio Grande City’s other historic structures, such as the exquisite Silverio de la Peña Post Office and Drugstore, designed by Portscheller in 1886. He quickly finessed the town’s acceptance into the Texas Historical Commission’s Main Street Program, *(continued on page 32)*

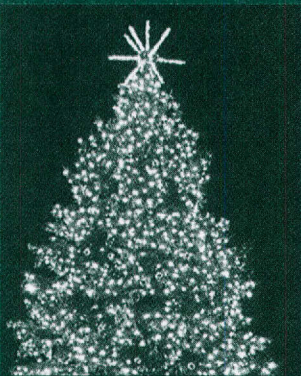
Naturalist Benito Treviño (shown here with Dot) offers tours of Rancho Lomitas, his 177-acre ranch at Rio Grande City. Benito and his wife, Toni, hope to encourage people to protect native plants and wildlife and to conserve water. To see the ranch, call 956/486-2576, or email lomitas@vsta.com.





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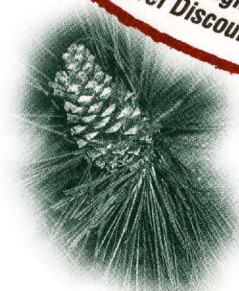
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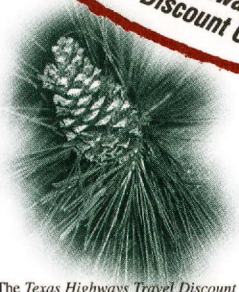
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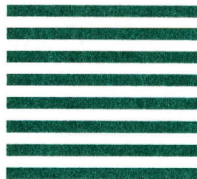
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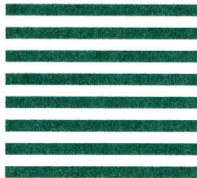
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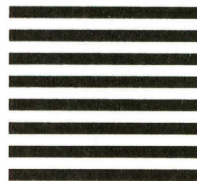
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HISTORY-MINDED TRAVELERS *from around the globe find their way to this “New World Pompeii,” as one visitor described Guerrero Viejo.*

which helps revitalize older downtown areas. One local beauty, the 1897 La Borde House, restored 20 years ago by former owner Larry Sheerin with the aid of Valley preservationist (and McAllen gallery owner) Che Guerra, offers some of Los Caminos del Rio’s most romantic accommodations.

Some 15 miles away, the Los Ebanos International Ferry traverses an ancient Indian

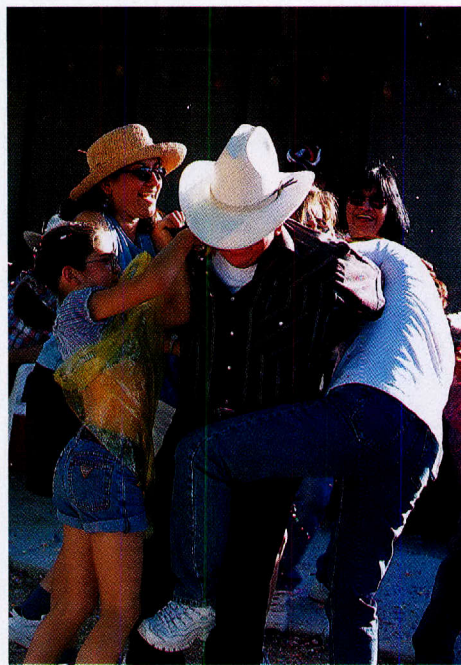
ford on the river, later used by Escandón’s colonists, Zachary Taylor’s Mexican War troops, Texas Rangers pursuing cattle rustlers, and Prohibition-era smugglers. Ferry master Albert Simo points out the ferry’s anchor, an ebony tree—said to be 270 years old—that gives the town its name.

Downriver at Hidalgo, the restored 1909 irrigation pumphouse, the last of the river’s

original steam-engine pumphouses, stands as a tribute to Valley farming traditions.

On the Mexican side, the Spanish Colonial ghost town of Guerrero Viejo may provide the most dramatic experience along the roads of the river. Half-submerged by the creation of Falcon Dam and Reservoir on the Rio Grande (about

[ABOVE] In the 1950s, the damming of the Rio Grande to create Falcon Reservoir resulted in submersion of several towns along the U.S.-Mexico border. Today, Guerrero Viejo, on the Mexican side of the Rio Grande, has emerged due to years of drought. In 1993, former residents pitched in to help stabilize many of the town’s significant structures. The New York-based World Monument Fund hopes to further stabilize buildings in Guerrero Viejo, but for now, the ruins evoke a sense of mystery and nostalgia.



George Guerra's uncle, Dicky Guerra, cavorts with relatives at a family picnic near Roma.

70 miles southeast of Laredo) in the early 1950s, the deserted city stands today on dry land due to years of drought.

History-minded travelers from around the globe find their way to this “New World Pompeii,” as one visitor described Guerrero Viejo. They wander haunted lanes, crowded with trees and tangled brush, through surreal streets of stone structures in varied stages of soulful ruin. *Viva La Fe de Dios* (Long Live God’s Faith) reads the aged inscription on a home’s wooden beam.



Built of adobe by the Oblate Fathers in 1849, La Lomita Mission served as a station between the Catholic sanctuaries in Roma and Brownsville. The town of Mission got its name from the chapel.

BORDER FOLK-HERO

CATARINO GARZA

In the early 1890s, border folk-hero and journalist Catarino Erasmo Garza led three invasions into Mexico from Texas.

As the late Américo Paredes explained in his 1976 book, *A Texas Mexican Cancionero*, the *Garzistas* rebelled against Mexican dictator Porfirio Díaz with the same desire for democratic reform that fueled the Revolution 20 years later.

Born near Matamoros in 1859 and educated at the city’s San Juan College, Garza began publishing a newspaper, *El Bien Público*, in Brownsville at age 20. By 1887, he was publishing *El Libre Pensador* in Eagle Pass, where fiery editorials got him arrested and jailed (for a month) for criminal libel. The next year, after moving the paper to Corpus Christi, he was arrested by Texas Ranger captain John R. Hughes for criminal libel against U.S. customs inspector Victor Sebree (for writing, truthfully, that Sebree had killed a man in the Starr County sheriff’s custody). Released from the Rio Grande City jail, Garza was wounded by Sebree in a shootout.

Pursued by Garza supporters, Sebree took refuge in Fort Ringgold, sparking the so-called Rio Grande City Riot of 1888, which captured headlines as far away as Great Falls, Montana, but really wasn’t a riot at all. After *Garzistas* engaged the Mexican army in combat on Mexican soil in 1890 or 1891, in violation of U.S. neutrality laws, American military and Texas lawmen hunted for the revolutionaries from Eagle Pass to the coast. Captain John G. Bourke, commander at Fort Ringgold, was himself mistakenly arrested as a suspected *Garzista* during the manhunt. On January 30, 1892, *Harper’s Weekly* ran a Frederic Remington sketch, *Garza Revolutionists in the Texas Chaparral*, and sometime that year Garza lit out for South America, where he was killed in 1895. Along the Lower Rio Grande, singers of *corridos* continued to spread his legend for generations.

—Gene Fowler

TATITA SANTO

Portraits of Jesus, the Pope, and El Niño Fidencio adorn the wall of one deserted home in the Spanish Colonial ghost town of Guerrero Viejo. A folk healer in tiny Espinazo, Nuevo León, who created a sensation throughout Mexico in the 1920s and '30s, Niño Fidencio (1898-1938) is widely venerated in Texas and Mexico to this day.

On the Niño Fidencio Research Project Web site (<http://ntmain.utb.edu/vpea/elnino/fidencio.html>), Dr. Antonio Zavaleta of Brownsville has posted the story of Padre Rojas, a.k.a. Tatita Santo, an all-but-forgotten folk saint who traveled the roads of the Rio Grande during the French occupation of Mexico, in the 1860s. Appearing on plazas in Mier and Guerrero in early 1861, the long-haired and bearded old man (possibly of Indian heritage) created excitement and controversy. He performed healings, led crowds in saying the rosary, and told followers that Mass and confession had been outlawed. "New Saint in Mexico," read the headline of a story in the *Corpus Christi Ranchero*.

When the priest in Reynosa noted poor attendance at Mass because the faithful had flocked to Mier to see Tatita Santo, he went to Mier with two other priests and publicly denounced Santo as an impostor whose curative power was a gift from the devil. The folk saint's followers grew angry, and the priests had to be escorted to the municipal palace under armed guard for their own safety.

Not all citizens fell under Tatita's spell. Authorities in Camargo, noting that "some ignorant people are preparing to celebrate his coming with the clamor of fireworks and other demonstrations of veneration," approved a petition banning Tatita Santo's presence there. A letter to a Monterrey newspaper signed in February 1861 by 11 prominent Guerrero citizens opined that Santo must be a criminal on the lam. Officials became so alarmed that, as Antonio Zavaleta and Joseph Spielberg write, in March he was "killed by the Cadereyta Police and Posse acting under the direct orders of the Governor of Nuevo León and Coahuila, Santiago Vidaurri."

—Gene Fowler



The faithful and the curious flock to Rio Grande City's Our Lady of Lourdes grotto, a replica of the famous shrine in southwest France.

Assisted by Los Caminos del Rio, former residents of Guerrero Viejo and their descendants stabilized the lovely stone church, Templo de Nuestra Señora del Refugio. In 1999, they held Mass in the church for the first time in nearly 50 years. Carlos Rugerio reports that the World Monuments Fund, based in New York, has earmarked funds for further stabilization of selected buildings in Guerrero Viejo. In time, Los Caminos del Rio hopes to make the site an international heritage park.

Back in the United States, at Nuevo

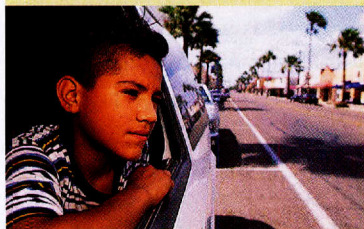
Santander Gallery in McAllen, Guerrero Viejo's ghostly, tattered plaza comes to life in a brightly colored painting by artist Santos Barbosa. Gallery owners Che and Becky Guerra display and sell an intriguing mix of art and artifacts, including not only paintings and sculptures, but also museum-quality retablos, ex-votos, altar-pieces, vintage spurs and other cowboy curios, and historical Mexican flags.

With its parapet, bells, and stained-glass windows depicting the Rio Grande and bits of Escandón's colonial map, the

ESSENTIALS Los Caminos del Rio

FOR INFORMATION about sites along Los Caminos del Rio, contact the following: **Brownsville Convention and Visitors Bureau**, 956/546-3721 or 800/626-2639, www.brownsville.org; **Harlingen Area Chamber of Commerce**, 956/423-5440 or 800/531-7346, www.harlingen.com; **Laredo CVB**, 956/795-2200 or 800/361-3360, www.visitlaredo.com; and **McAllen Chamber and CVB**, 956/682-2871 or 877/622-5536, www.mcallen-chamber.com. The **Rio Grande Valley Partnership** (956/968-3141; www.valleychamber.com) also has information and can provide phone numbers and Web sites for chambers in such towns as Hidalgo, Edinburg, Mission, Rio Grande City, and others.

Look in your library for *A Shared Experience*, a Los Caminos del Rio guidebook compiled by Dr. Mario Sánchez. To purchase a copy of the book or to receive the free brochure *Los Caminos del Rio—Legacies of the Borderlands*, write to the Texas Historical Commission, Box 12276, Austin 78711, 512/463-6255, or click on “Heritage Tourism” on the Web site: www.thc.state.tx.us. You



Larry Gonzales, 13, takes a spin through Weslaco.



can also pick up brochures at the *Texas Highways* store (150 E. Riverside, Austin) and at any Texas Travel Information Center.

THE FOLLOWING is a list of some of the resources and sites along the Los Caminos trail, listed (roughly) east-to-west. The area code for the Texas sites is 956.

BROWNSVILLE Historic Brownsville Museum, 641 E. Madison, Brownsville 78520, 548-1313; www.brownsvillemuseum.org. **Brownsville Heritage Museum/Stillman House Museum**, 1305 E. Washington, 542-3929. **Sabal Palm Audubon Center & Sanctuary**, 5 miles east of Brownsville on Southmost Rd. (FM 1419), 541-8034; www.audubon.org/local/sanctuary/sabal.

MATAMOROS, MEXICO Museo Casamata, at the corner of Santos Degollado and Guatemala streets; to call from the U.S., dial 011-52-868-813-5929.

PORT ISABEL Port Isabel Lighthouse State Historic Site, 421 E. Queen Isabella Blvd., 943-2262 or 800/527-6102; www.portisabel.org, www.tpwd.state.tx.us.

EDINBURG Hidalgo County Historical Museum, 121 E. McIntyre, 383-6911.

McALLEN Nuevo Santander Gallery, 717 N. Main, 618-4959; www.nuevosantander.com.

HIDALGO Old Hidalgo Pumphouse, 902 S. Second, 843-8686; www.hidalgotexas.com/pumphouse.

REYNOSA, MEXICO Museo Histórico de Reynosa, at the corner of Gonzales Ortega and Ignacio Allende streets; to call from the U.S., dial 011-52-899-922-1512.

LOS EBANOS Los Ebanos International Ferry. If you're heading west from McAllen and notice a street sign for

Los Ebanos Road, that's not it. Keep going until you reach FM 886 at Sullivan City, turn south on FM 886 for 3 miles, and follow signs to the ferry. Call 485-2855.

RIO GRANDE CITY La Borde House, 601 E. Main, 487-5101. eDomicilio, 506 E. Main, 488-9874, www.eDomicilio.com.

ROMA Roma Historical Museum (200 Lincoln) and Roma Historic District Visitor Station (77 Convent Ave., on the plaza); 849-0099.

GUERRERO VIEJO, MEXICO The turnoff from Mexico Highway 2 to Guerrero Viejo is about 23 miles north of Nuevo Guerrero, near the sign denoting 160 kilometers. The bridge across Falcon Dam leads to Nuevo Guerrero. There are no stores or services in Guerrero Viejo. Look in your bookstore or library for *Guerrero Viejo* by Elena Poniatowska (Anchorage Press, 1997).

ZAPATA Col. José Antonio Zapata Museum, at the corner of US 183 and 6th Ave.; 765-3062. For information about the *Viva Zapata!* Festival (Oct. 7-13, 2002), call 849-1411.

LAREDO The Republic of the Rio Grande Museum, 1003 Zaragoza, 727-3480; www.webbheritage.org.

gallery building itself resembles a Spanish mission or church. “We wanted the space to reflect the spirit of Escandón’s colonists, so we used materials like mesquite and caliche that would have been available in the 1750s,” explains Che.

The roads of the river traveled by Nuevo Santander settlers some 250 years ago (and by Coahuiltecan before that) run toward horizons without end. “Los Caminos del Rio Heritage Project is a long-term endeavor,” wrote former Mexican tourism official Margarita Robleda Moguel

in *A Shared Experience*, a guidebook to Los Caminos compiled by Mario Sánchez. “Just as the most exquisite foods are cooked slowly, so too must this project be, since the ingredients in this case are much more delicate and deal with the very essence of man: his feelings, his dreams, his scars, and his potential.” ★

Frequent *Texas Highways* contributor GENE FOWLER has long been under the spell of the silvery Rio Grande and its storied communities.

Photographer JOEL SALCIDO enjoys capturing the many personalities of the Rio Grande Valley.



Che and Becky Guerra travel throughout the United States and Mexico to find treasures for their McAllen shop, Nuevo Santander Gallery.

Piñatas, PARADES Y PALETAS

MEXICAN FIESTAS



© JOHN DAVENPORT

BY CHITO VELA • PHOTOGRAPHS BY JOEL SALCIDO

My first memories of a fiesta come from Bustamante, my grandmother's hometown in Nuevo León, Mexico. Like migrating birds that return to the same spot year after year, my family would dutifully make the 120-mile journey from Laredo to Bustamante every August to celebrate the town's Fiesta del Señor de Tlaxcala. During the week-long event, the normally quiet town bustles with activity as thousands of visitors drive in from all over Texas and northern Mexico. Colorful banners decorate the streets, fireworks fill the sky, the plaza fills up with vendors selling all kinds of treats and trinkets, and a live band keeps everyone dancing until early in the morning. The Mexican fiesta is that one time of the year when family and friends are reunited, long-lost connections are reestablished, and everyone in the community—rich and poor, young and old—comes together to celebrate life. The tradition lives on in Texas where, virtually any time of the year, a Mexican fiesta is just a short road-trip away.

Any talk of fiestas in Texas has to begin with the biggest in the state—**Fiesta San Antonio**. This 10-day, citywide festival attracts tourists from across the United States and throughout the world. Fiesta began in 1891 when a group of women paraded in front of the Alamo with deco-

rated horse-drawn carriages, pelting each other with flower blossoms. That original "Battle of Flowers" parade, which was organized to honor the heroes of the Alamo and the Battle of San Jacinto, eventually spawned a multicultural community celebration unlike any other in the country.

During the festival, downtown San Antonio and the River Walk buzz with activity. The Fiesta del Mercado, held in the historic Market Square, anchors the celebration, with six stages featuring Tejano, country, rock, and blues music, along with dozens of booths selling every Mexican delicacy you can imagine. Whether you're in the mood for *tripas*, *gorditas*, *flautas*, or just a taco, you will find it here. After a spicy snack, make sure and soothe your burning palate with a cold beer. After a few of those, you may be ready to dance a *cumbia* or a two-step, or just hang back and listen to blues and jazz artists from all over the state. The music and fun go on until midnight every day. If shopping draws your interest, the Fiesta del Mercado offers stores and booths reminiscent of old Mexico. Souvenir shoppers find endless choices: T-shirts, baseball caps, jewelry, pottery, glasswork, paintings, and Mexican curios. Make sure to visit the part of the *mercado* that's across from the famous Mi Tierra restaurant...it is hidden and easy to

Get ready for confetti at Brownsville's Charro Days, above, left. Fiesta San Antonio royalty greet youngsters after a San Fernando Cathedral Mariachi Mass, above, right. David Castañeda (facing page) is in the loop at the Bazaar de la Villa Antigua, San Agustín Plaza, in Laredo.



TRUE TO HISPANIC tradition, Texas' fiestas involve the entire community, bringing people together and reaffirming their bonds. The celebrations offer a break from work, reminding everyone to stop and enjoy life.



BOTH PHOTOS © JOHN DAVENPORT

Head and shoulders. *Cascarones*—confetti-filled eggshells—are a longtime tradition at Fiesta San Antonio. Fiesta's Battle of Flowers parade is in its second century of blooms and big fun.

miss. If you brought the *niños* along, or if you are a *niño* at heart, the carnival, with its cotton candy, Ferris wheel, and ring toss, lies adjacent to the market.

Another great downtown event, Night in Old San Antonio, takes place over four days during Fiesta. Held in the twisting passageways and on the lush, green plazas of the River Walk's historic La Villita, NIOSA celebrates the different people who have come together to create modern-day San Antonio. Thousands of revelers enjoy more than a dozen distinct areas, each representing a culture from within the city. The food proves just as diverse: everything from frog legs to "armadillo eggs" (cheese-stuffed jalapeños), German goodies over at Sauerkraut Bend, and *tapas* at the Villa España, so bring your appetite.

You can visit a blacksmith shop at Frontier Town, buy beads in the French Quarter, and check out the barbershop

quartet on Main Street. Better yet, buy some *cascarones* in the Mexican market, and smash them on someone's head!

(In case you are wondering why confetti is in the hair of almost everybody, smashing *cascarones*—painted, confetti-filled eggs—on the heads of friends and relatives began as a Mexican Easter tradition and is found everywhere at Fiesta.) The beautiful maze that is La Villita provides the ideal spot for a celebration of San Antonio's heritage

and culture, as the almost 200-year-old location exudes history at every turn. One word of caution: With all of this activity



Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts stretch out a supersize Stars and Stripes during the Battle of Flowers parade.

downtown, traffic can really back up. Park on the fringes of downtown, and walk to the events, or leave your car at park-and-ride locations.

On both Sundays during Fiesta, the Mariachi Mass at San Fernando Cathedral and the “Day in Old Mexico” *Charreada*

highlight the beauty and tradition of Texas’ Hispanic heritage. The nationally televised Mariachi Mass asks for God’s blessing on Fiesta and all its participants. The high, vaulted ceilings and limestone walls of the historic cathedral provide a perfect complement to the trumpets and guitars of the two dozen mariachis that accompany the service. Another event,



A beautifully elegant debutante enlivens the Washington’s Birthday Celebration parade in Laredo.

held blocks from San Antonio’s 18th-Century San José Mission, the *Charreada*, or Mexican rodeo, makes you feel as if you are back in the days of the *vaqueros*, with equestrian events, roping demonstrations, and the colorful, traditional dress of

FIESTA SAN ANTONIO

April 19-27, 2003

The Fiesta® San Antonio Commission,
2611 Broadway,
San Antonio 78215-1022;
210/227-5191 or 877/723-4378;
www.fiesta-sa.org.

Or contact:

San Antonio Convention & Visitors Bureau, Box 2277, San Antonio 78298;
210/207-6700 or 800/447-3372;
www.sanantoniocvb.com or
www.SanAntonioVisit.com.



Mexican cowboys and cowgirls.

Visiting San Antonio at any time during the year offers a lesson in Hispanic heritage. Visiting during Fiesta brings that heritage alive, allowing visitors to see, feel, and even take part in cultural traditions that are centuries-old. There may not be a better *fiesta* in the nation.

In deep South Texas, along the banks of the Rio Grande, February is the perfect time

of the year for fiestas. Winter refugees from northern states fill campsites and resorts throughout the area to soak up the Texas sun, while South Texans enjoy the outdoors before the return of 100-degree days.

Spring quickly approaches, and the cacti begin sporting vivid yellow, red, and orange flowers, splashing the border landscape with color. In this environment, two fiestas have taken root and grown—Brownsville’s Charro Days and Laredo’s Washington Birthday Celebration.

The **Washington’s Birthday Celebration**, one of the oldest festivals in Texas, dates to 1898, when the local chapter of the Improved Order of Red Men, a national fraternal organization, celebrated George Washington’s Birthday to try

to spark some patriotism in the predominantly Mexican, Spanish-speaking city. Even that first party proved international in scope, though, with the Order meeting Mexican officials at the international bridge to welcome them to the celebration. That tradition of friendship and goodwill continues today with the *abrazo* ceremony, held on the Lincoln-Juárez International Bridge (Saturday, February 22, 2003, at 8 a.m.), where delegations from the United States and Mexico meet in the center of the span and send out a pair of nervous, smiling children to exchange hugs at the neighboring countries’ boundary line.

The 16-day festival features more than 30 different events, but two of the most popular are Jambózie and the Jalapeño Festival. Laredo’s narrow, historic streets—architecturally similar to New Orleans’—

THANKS TO EL PASO

Mention “the first Thanksgiving,” and people’s thoughts immediately turn to turkey, pumpkin, pilgrims, and Plymouth, Massachusetts. But did you know that the first thanksgiving in what is now the United

States actually took place in El Paso, Texas? On April 30, 1598, after four months spent crossing the desert, and 22 years before the pilgrims landed at Plymouth Rock, Juan de Oñate and his colonizing caravan feasted on the banks of the Rio Grande, giving thanks for having arrived safely at “El Paso del Río del Norte.”

Today, this historical event is remembered with—what else—a fiesta! El Paso’s Heritage Week

Festival combines a commemoration of Don Juan de Oñate’s thanksgiving with Cinco de Mayo to produce a 10-day celebration of history, culture, and art. Events range from a tour of downtown murals to a traditional Native American gathering, and include children’s events like adobe brick-making and mud-plastering at the Socorro Mission project with the El Paso County Historical Society, and the Día de los Niños—Día de los Libros event at the El Paso Public Library. The history and ecology of the region are also prominently featured, with mountain hikes, architectural tours, and even a ghost tour. Heritage Week culminates on Cinco de Mayo with a parade that features lowriders alongside covered wagons and stagecoaches, and a downtown street festival with live music, theater, storytellers, and arts and crafts.

—Chito Vela

EL PASO HERITAGE WEEK FESTIVAL

Apr. 26-May 5, 2003

El Paso Heritage,
Box 3532,
El Paso 79923-3532;
915/533-1555;
www.epheritage.com.

Or contact:

El Paso Convention & Visitors Bureau,
One Civic Center Plaza, El Paso 79901;
915/534-0600 or 800/351-6024;
www.visitelpaso.com.



provide the perfect site for Jamboozie, a Mardi Gras-style street party. Several downtown blocks close to vehicle traffic and become a sea of beaded, masked revelers drinking and dancing the night away. Multiple stages feature rock, tejano, jazz, and more-traditional Mexican music, alleyways turn into art galleries, and dozens of booths offer a variety of Mexican dishes and other delicious food. While you're at Jamboozie, make sure to try a jamboozie, the festival's signature purple drink, concocted from three different tequilas, sweet blue curaçao, and a secret combination of other liquors.

Get a taste of the Jalapeño Festival during the final weekend of the Washington's Birthday Celebration, and discover why the festival is known as the "hottest weekend of the year." This two-day festival, held at L.I.F.E. (Laredo International Fair & Expo) Downs on Friday and Saturday, features Tejano- and country-music performers, food of all kinds, and a carnival right next door. The festival's signature event, the world-famous jalapeño-eating contest, puts the most ironclad of stomachs to the test. The rules are simple: Contestants

WASHINGTON'S BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION

February 8-23, 2003

Washington's Birthday Celebration Assn.,
1819 E. Hillside Rd.,
Laredo 78041;
956/722-0589;
www.wbcald.com.

Or contact:

Laredo Convention & Visitors Bureau,
501 San Agustin, Laredo 78040;
956/795-2200 or 800/361-3360;
www.visitlaredo.com.



have 15 minutes to eat as many jalapeños as possible—without throwing up. The winner takes home \$500, with \$300 for second place, and \$100 for third. The remaining contestants get a belly full of jalapeños for the evening and a world of

hurt in the morning. The record stands at 141 (ouch!) jalapeños.

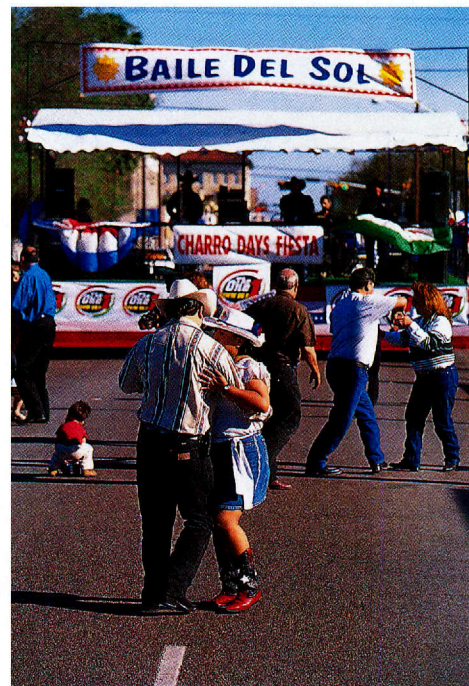
The last weekend of Washington's Birthday Celebration provides the perfect opportunity to explore the downtowns of Los Dos Laredos—Laredo, Texas, and Nuevo Laredo, Tamaulipas, just across the international bridge. The Bazaar de la Villa Antigua, held in Laredo's historic San Agustín Plaza on Saturday afternoon, features music, food, and demonstrations of traditional Mexican arts and crafts, such as roping, dancing, and woodworking. In Nuevo Laredo, the Victoria Street Festival combines tastes and sounds from both sides of the border.

About 200 miles downriver, palm-lined sidewalks, historic homes and buildings, and a warm Gulf Coast breeze greet visitors to **Brownsville's Charro Days**. Held in the heart of downtown Brownsville in late February and early March, this fiesta celebrates two nations, two cities, and twin cultures. Begun in 1938 by local merchants trying to shake the blues of the Great Depression, Charro Days has become a true celebration of Mexican culture and heritage, and the event has an intimacy and an innocence that make it a wonderful family event.

The first thing you notice at the Baile del Sol, the official kickoff for Charro Days, are the dozens of children dancing and running around in colorful Mexican costumes while proud parents watch from bleachers lining the street. Hard to tell who enjoys it more, the children or their parents, but the colors and artistry of the costumes entertains the entire crowd. Soon, local dignitaries crowd onto the grandstand to belt out the *grito*, or traditional Mexican yell, that officially begins the fiesta, accompanied by an explosion of mariachi music and confetti. The festivities continue through the afternoon, culminating in a lively street dance.



The *abrazo* (embrace or hug) ceremony salutes U.S.-Mexico goodwill and friendship. The children chosen to represent each country meet on the Lincoln-Juárez International Bridge during Laredo's Washington's Birthday Celebration. At right, a chance to dance. Baile del Sol kicks off Brownsville's Charro Days.

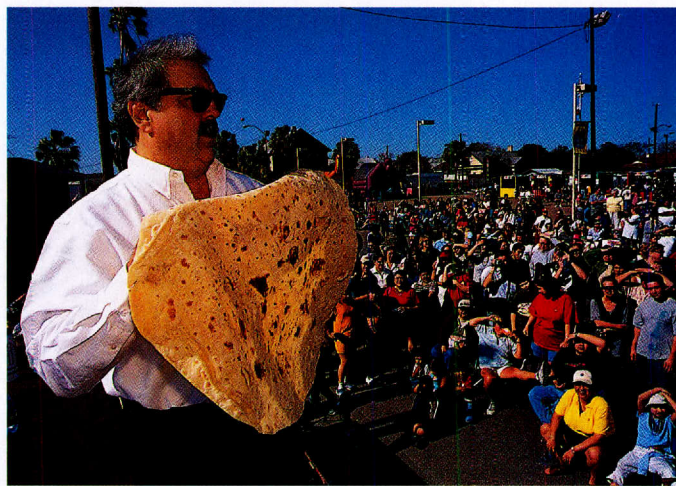




Sylvia Patriarco shares the microphone as she sings with other *El Grito* celebrants during Brownsville's Charro Days. Below, ladies and gentlemen, start your tortillas. FrijOlympics master of ceremonies George Gavito of Wow-Wees cafe warms up a Charro Days taco-eating-contest crowd.

Charro Days kicks into high gear the weekend after the Baile del Sol, with Saturday afternoon's Grand International Parade and Saturday night's Noche de Carnaval concert. Washington Park in downtown Brownsville hosts the Sombrero Festival, which features clowns, tug-o-wars, tortilla-tossing contests, and the "FrijOlympics," a charro bean cookoff. Live music and dancing accompany Sombrero Festival all weekend long.

True to Hispanic tradition, Texas' fiestas involve the entire community, bringing people together and reaffirming their bonds. They offer a break from work, reminding everyone to stop and enjoy life. They con-



CHARRO DAYS

February 23-March 2, 2003

Charro Days Headquarters,
455 E. Elizabeth,
Box 3247,
Brownsville 78523-3247;
956/542-4245;
www.charrodays.org.

Or contact:

Brownsville Convention & Visitors
Bureau, Box 4697, Brownsville 78523;
800/626-2639; www.brownsville.org.



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tain both dignified, elaborate ceremonies, and hilarious, comic rituals. Largely secular, not tied to a religious figure or event like many such events in Mexico, Texas' fiestas incorporate elements from the many different peoples who have settled here, reflecting the diversity of the state.

A trip to one of Texas' many fiestas provides a look at the past, a reflection of the present, and one damn good time! ★

DIEZ Y SEIS AND MORE

DIEZ Y SEIS de Septiembre is Mexico's most important holiday, but it is also celebrated throughout the United States. It commemorates the day in 1811 when Father Miguel Hidalgo y Costilla gave *El Grito de Dolores*, in the town of Dolores, Guanajuato. The priest's triumphant cry (*grito*) marked the beginning of the rebellion against Spain that led to Mexico's independence 10 years later. Especially in Texas, the Diez y Seis celebration is referred to as one of *Las Fiestas Patrias*. Following is a partial list of this year's events.

2002 DIEZ Y SEIS CELEBRATIONS

AUSTIN Sep. 15, 512/472-0516

BEEVILLE Sep. 14-15, 361/358-4553

EAGLE PASS Sep. 15, 888/355-3224

EL PASO Sep. 15, 915/533-6311

FORT WORTH Sep. 14, 817/390-8711

GALVESTON Sep. 14-15, 800/582-4673

HARLINGEN Sep. 13-15, 956/423-5565

LAREDO Sep. 15, 956/723-0990

MIDLAND Sep. 15, 915/687-2334

PECOS Sep. 13-14, 915/445-2309

SAN ANTONIO Sep. 14, 210/271-3151

SAN ANTONIO Sep. 15, 210/554-4575

SAN BENITO Sep. 13-15, 956/361-0110

SEGUIN Sep. 12-14, 830/372-3151

SONORA Sep. 15, 915/387-2880

FOR FURTHER FIESTA FUN

FREEPORT Fiestas Patrias, Sep. 14,
979/233-1217

HOUSTON Fiestas Patrias, Sep. 21,
713/926-2636

LAREDO Hispanic Heritage Fiesta, Oct. 2,
956/744-1588

PORT ARTHUR Mexican Fiesta, Sep. 14-15,
409/982-8300

RICHMOND Fiestas Patrias, Sep. 14,
281/342-6478

SAN ANTONIO Fiestas Patrias, Sep. 13-15,
210/207-8600

SAN ANTONIO Hispanic Heritage Month,
Sep. 15-Oct. 15, 210/207-2500

Freelance writer CHITO VELA is a UT law student and a columnist for *LareDOS* magazine.

Austin photographer JOEL SALCIDO's work has taken him throughout the Americas and to Spain.

Flavors FROM TENOCHTITLÁN TO TEXAS

COURTESY ROGELIO TREVIÑO



BY RON BECHTOL • PHOTOGRAPHS BY J. GRIFFIS SMITH

Blanca Alicia Rubio sits back in a leather *equipal* at Paloma Blanca, her daughter's San Antonio restaurant, and briefly closes her eyes. "I was born in Mexico City and raised in Guadalajara," she muses. "And Mexico City is still in me. I love all the food you see on the street."

Eyes wide open now, Señora Rubio continues her reverie, as her memories of Calle Bucareli with its *puestos*, or food carts, become clearer. "The *puestos* were neatly piled with lettuce, tomato, onion, avocado, *queso fresco*... [the vendors would] use a *telera*, and taking away the *migajón*, they would smear on refried beans, add ham or pork, [freshly chopped] onion, chilies, and avocado, and *chipotle en adobo*...you could also dip [the sandwich] in a *chile de arbol* sauce for a *torta ahogada*. It was the same in the markets. With a three-foot-square space and a *comal*, they could also make *sopitos* topped with shredded cabbage or lettuce and *queso panela*. They were so small I could eat 20."

And so good, she might have added. Bright with the colors of Mexico and flush with the flavors that only freshness and a deft hand with simple seasonings can convey, the foods of Mexico's *calles* and *mercados* (and by extension, those that Señora Rubio brought with her to Texas) are direct descendants of the markets of Moctezuma's court—markets whose bounty and beauty would have astonished even today's worldly consumer. But the culinary path from 16th-Century Tenochtitlán to Texas was not without its detours.

The first significant Spanish settlements in what is now Texas didn't appear until 1681, and the early Tejanos' diet had little variety, especially as compared to the

Aztecs'. However, in the ensuing decades, a kind of hybrid cuisine, born of contact among Spanish colonists, local Indians, vaqueros, and Anglo ranchers, began to develop. The taming of the once-wild frontier also encouraged variety through cultivation of gardens and the raising of domesticated animals, one result of which was the entry of cheese into the regional diet.

"Mexican cooking, however, was not always accepted among the general population," writes cookbook author and Mexican-food historian Jim Peyton in his 1994 book, *La Cocina de la Frontera, Mexican-American Cooking from the Southwest*. In fact, he says it wasn't until World War II and its consequent need for agricultural and factory workers "that Mexicans worked and lived with Anglos [and other ethnic groups] in an urban setting for the first time.... It is understandable that, until this time [more than 400 years after the arrival of Cortés], the Anglo community knew nearly nothing about Mexican cooking."



San Antonio's *Rey del Cabrito*, Rogelio Treviño, can legitimately lay claim to helping bridge the gap. Rogelio's father, Catarino Treviño, had walked door-to-door in Monterrey, selling meat hanging from hooks on a pole. When the family of 10 arrived in San Antonio in 1927, Don Catarino picked up where he had left off in Mexico, buying his cows from the stockyards at \$4.50 each on credit. By 1930, La Reforma Meat Market had been established, and seven-year-old Rogelio, who would later take over the business, was already at work, helping tend the steamer that his father had improvised from an oil drum to process heads of cows, sheep, and goats for *barbacoa*.

Texas' legendary Mexican-food tradition has always been family-driven. When Catarino Treviño (fifth from left, above) established La Reforma Meat Market in San Antonio in the late 1920s, his children numbered among the workers. (Catarino's son Rogelio, shown on the far right as a child, would eventually take over the business.) Viola Barrios (facing page) opened Los Barrios, a popular Alamo City restaurant, in 1979. Her son Louis, her daughter Diana, and her son-in-law Roland Treviño (coincidentally, Rogelio's son) all have roles in the family operation.



THE TEJANO TABLE

ALTHOUGH the foods on today's Tejano table stem from those of 16th-Century Tenochtitlán, the culinary path was not without detours. The early Tejanos' diet had little variety.... But in the ensuing decades, a kind of hybrid cuisine, born of contact among Spanish colonists, local Indians, vaqueros, and Anglo ranchers, began to develop.

COURTESY ROGELIO TREVIÑO



Above, from left, future “Goat King” Rogelio Treviño, his brother Jesse, and his sisters Elpedia and Mercedes stand behind the counter at La Reforma. Now an octogenarian, Rogelio (left) displays another old photograph, this one an early image of La Reforma’s wholesale arm, United Meat Company.

Cabrito, or kid goat, was in fact La Reforma’s main product. “My father introduced *cabrito* here,” says Rogelio. “*Chicharrones* and *carnitas*, too...he brought all of that.” Fortunately, there was a certain built-in clientele in the large number

of Mexicans from Monterrey already familiar with the products, but WWII increased goat sales among the larger population. “Most meat was rationed during the war, but not *cabrito*, so it was introduced that way,” says Rogelio. His founding of United Meat Company, the wholesale arm of La Reforma, provided not only for sales of goat and other meats to local restaurants, but also allowed for the promotion of *cabrito* in other parts of Texas as well. “We used to [process] 200 or 300 goats a week,” he recalls.

Now 80 and silver-haired, Rogelio has long since retired, but he clearly reigns as head of his own extended family. A son, Roland, and a daughter-in-law, Diana Barrios Treviño, may help run San Antonio’s popular Los Barrios restaurant, but their *cabrito en salsa* dinner, cooked Monterrey-style (first steamed, then baked, and served with a mild tomato sauce), nevertheless provides an eloquent reminder of the Goat King and his role in the popularization of a product once snubbed by all but *norteños*.

The imprint of another personality also informs Los Barrios—that of Mama Viola, Diana’s mother, Viola Barrios. She presides over the restaurant from noon to night, speaking in Spanish to both staff and clientele, and it is family dishes from her pueblo, Bustamante, in the state of Nuevo León, that occupy a place of honor on the menu right beneath the cabrito. “People bring their traditions with them when they come [to this country],” she says. In her case, those traditions didn’t exactly include the restaurant business—at least not formally.

“Every Sunday when I was a child, my father would kill a pig or goat, or maybe a *gallina* at 4 a.m., and *mis padres* would make *fritada*, *morcilla*, chicharrones...and the people would all come to my father’s *cantina con billares*. I got used to it,” she says simply.

The cooking of her *tías* also helped form a kind of “taste memory” she relied on when, in 1972, her husband finally gave in to her desire to buy “*un restaurante chiquito*” that was for sale. And, despite some upsets along the way, she hasn’t looked back since—except to recreate from memory dishes such as her grandmother’s chicken in an oregano-tomato sauce. Mama Viola’s perseverance resulted in an award to Los Barrios from *Esquire* magazine in 1981 as one of the “100 Best New Restaurants in America.” With this recognition, it was clear to the world at large that in Texas, Mexican cuisine had come a long way from its former isolation in the barrios of San Antonio, El Paso, Laredo, and other cities that had significant Mexican-American populations.



Despite big names such as Rick Bayless and Diana Kennedy, Mexican cooking—on both sides of the border—is still primarily family-driven. *Abuelas*, *tías*, and the occasional *tío* are the standard-bearers of kitchen tradition. Even when tradition is concocted out of available parts, like an improvised *guisado*.

“This was an accident,” says El Mirador’s Mary Treviño of her role as the Alamo City’s *reina de la cocina mexicana*. “My mother was a good cook, but there were no restaurants in the family. I had no

training,” explains Doña Mari, as she is known. In fact, buying a restaurant was secondary to her desire to be near her new granddaughter. Reading the classifieds one day, she came across—*por pura casualidad*—a place, “so cheerful, so small,” that was just a few blocks from her son’s home. Savings, friends, and family helped her buy it. From that point on, the story of the

development of El Mirador, which opened in 1967, has played out much like that of Mexican and Tex-Mex foods throughout Texas: As Doña Mari learned, the public came along with her.

In the beginning, it was enchiladas, tamales, rice, and beans—which was fine, “since that’s what everybody thought we ate all the time... what [else] was I going to

DEL ESPAÑOL AL INGLÉS

abuela: grandmother

barbacoa: the meat from steamed heads of sheep, goats, or cows

cabrito: kid goat

caldo Xochitl: an herbed chicken-broth soup with shredded chicken, rice, garbanzos, vegetables, pico de gallo, and sliced avocado

calle: street

cantina con billares: billiard parlor

carnitas: chunks of pork, deep-fried or sometimes baked until crisp

chicharrones: pieces of crisp, fried pigskin

chile de arbol: a small, narrow chili that is orange-red when dried and quite hot

chipotle en adobo: smoke-dried jalapeños preserved in vinegar with onion, garlic, and (frequently) tomato paste

comal: griddle of clay or steel

comino: cumin

empanada: a fruit-, vegetable-, or meat-filled pastry similar to a turnover

equipal: a chair, usually of pigskin or cowhide, stretched over a light, wooden frame

fritada: a dish containing sautéed meats and/or vegetables (in Viola Barrios’ family, variety meats cooked together with blood)

gallina: hen

guisado: a stew of chopped meat (also called *guisadito*)

marranitos: pig-shaped, ginger-flavored cookies

masa: dough made from dried corn that has been boiled with lye and then ground

mayoras: women who do most of the cooking in restaurants in Mexico

mercado: market

migajón: the white interior of a roll

mis padres: my parents

molcajete: a mortar of coarse stone

morcilla: blood sausage

norteños: inhabitants of northern Mexico

pan dulce (“sweet bread”): a term that includes most items found in Mexican bakeries

polvorones: very crumbly, sand-textured cookies popular at weddings

por pura casualidad: purely by accident

pueblo: a small town, but also a people in general

queso fresco: a crumbly white cheese, similar to farmer’s cheese

queso panela: a moist, fresh white cheese

reina de la cocina mexicana: queen of Mexican cooking

sopa Azteca: a tomato-broth soup with shredded chicken, potatoes, squash, fresh spinach, and Monterey Jack cheese

sopa Tarasca: puréed pinto bean soup with chilies, sour cream, Monterey Jack cheese, and fried tortilla strips

sopitos: masa that has been mixed with butter and cheese, then formed into small discs with raised edges and cooked on a comal

Tejano: early Texas settler of Hispanic descent. The term is also used to denote a modern-day Texan of Mexican descent. As with any such term, not all Mexican-Americans embrace it.

telera: a flattened, oval roll with a center seam, similar to a bolillo

tía, tío: aunt, uncle

torta ahogada: a dipped or “drowned” sandwich

un restaurante chiquito: a little restaurant



A 50-year-old mural of the Mexican city of Taxco provides a colorful backdrop for Blanca Alicia Rubio, who helps manage Paloma Blanca, one of two San Antonio restaurants her daughter Blanca owns. The elder Blanca has passed along family recipes to her daughter, as well as her name.

do?” she says. “I never even helped my mother cook, but you start remembering.” And you start listening, and experimenting. When a customer suggested flautas, she admitted, “I didn’t know how to do them—so he told me. I picked it up little by little.”

The soups, for which El Mirador has been lauded in *Travel & Leisure*, *Bon Appétit*, and *The New York Times*, “were an accident, too,” she says. “A cook suggested [the famous] *caldo Xochitl*, I liked the name of *sopa Azteca*, so I started inventing... a driver in Michoacán insisted I try the *sopa Tarasca*...,” and the rest is history. “The secret is doing what you like,” Doña Mari says simply. And she must really like her work to still arrive at 5:30 a.m. every day after more than 35 years.



If it’s not obvious by now, let’s make it clear: The women, called *mayoras* in a restaurant setting, keep things going in the Mexican kitchen. But Mexican baking is

a man’s world (see *Texas Highways*, August 2002), and Frank Salas and Ignacio Álvarez Sr. prove true to type. Frank, in a reversal of the usual scenario, was born in Texas but went to live with his grandparents in Monterrey during the Depression. He quit school early to help out the family, and by age 13 had started hanging out around a local bakery, helping the owner haul wood for the ovens and getting paid in loaves of bread. “I went home happy,” he says. Eventually, he was asked to stay and help inside—sweeping, cleaning, and firing the ovens.

“They wouldn’t let me do dough at first,” he recalls. “The bakers had their own [secrets], and they didn’t want you to know [them]... but you learn by looking around.” *Pan de huevo* (egg bread) was his first conquest, followed by French pastries (French cuisine was introduced to Mexico in 1864 with the brief reign of French-imposed Emperor Maximilian.) *Empanadas*, *polvorones*, and other (continued on page 48)

TEXAS HIGHWAYS

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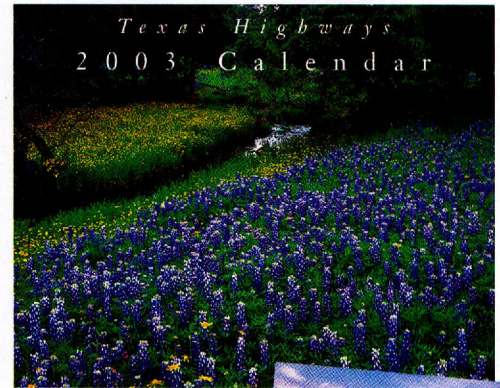
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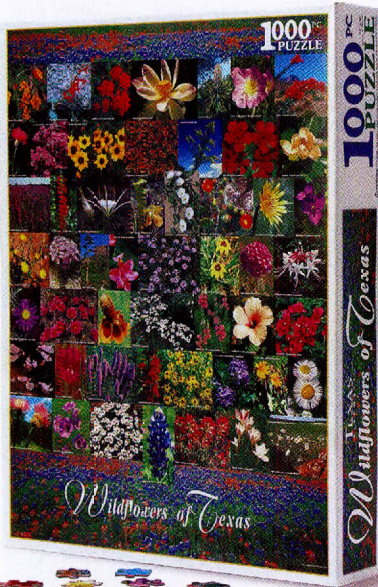
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★ A Texas Highways exclusive item

5J21

traditional Mexican *pan dulce* followed.

After 14 years in Mexico, Frank returned to Texas in 1941 and looked for a job as a baker. He found one with a mechanized bakery in San Antonio that turned out typical white bread from gas-fired ovens—completely different from his Mexican training. But, says Frank, “I knew the flour, what you use and don’t use.” Eventually, he went to work for the H-E-B grocery

chain, at first doing conventional rolls, breads, donuts, and the like. The break, for both Frank and the community at large, came when management decided to let him make his pan de huevo. He started by giving out free samples, and traditional breads that had been available up to then only at barrio bakeries at last found a broader audience. “I made bread in my mind every day, so I hadn’t lost the technique,” he says.

Ignacio Álvarez also came to the baking business at an early age—“about 11 or 12,” he recalls—from a family that had bread in its blood. The uncles who gave him his start closed their San Antonio bakery in 1955, but Ignacio had already been with H-E-B for five years at that time. He and Frank hooked up there, and when Ignacio opened his own business, Lux Bakery, in 1955, he took Frank along with



San Antonio's *reina de la cocina mexicana*, Mary Treviño, is known for her *sopas* and *caldos*. Their exquisite flavors, reminiscent of those in interior Mexico, have made Doña Mari and El Mirador, the small restaurant she opened in 1967, famous among Mexican-food aficionados.



Frank Salas (left) and Ignacio Álvarez Sr. have worked together for more than 50 years, most of them at Lux Bakery, which Ignacio's son Ignacio Álvarez Jr. now manages. The San Antonio bakery specializes in *pan dulce* and other traditional Mexican breads.

him. The two men started making Mexican pastries for their ex-employer, a business relationship that continues to this day.

But Frank and Ignacio's business has changed. These days, ginger-hued *marranitos* roll out of a Japanese-made machine in a continuous belt on their way to be stamped into pig shapes while huge mixers methodically knead doughs in the background. "As long as my body keeps me around, I'll be here," says Ignacio, adding that Frank still works from 5 a.m. to 1 p.m. But he laments that nobody, even recent arrivals from Mexico, wants to be a baker anymore. "They don't want to get up at 2 or 3 a.m. and work 10 to 12 hours a day.... [Bread] quality isn't suffering, taste and shape are the same, but there's no detail."

Except in the case of traditional *pan de muerto*, or Day of the Dead breads. "You [normally] can't afford to pay for handwork," says Ignacio, but these breads,

some in the shape of male and female figures, others representing skulls or squashes, are different. "[Customers] expect to pay \$10 to \$15 for a *pan de muerto*," says Frank, who notes that the old teach the young how to do the decorations using colored doughs and sugars. And now that Ignacio Jr. has taken over management of the bakery, miniature "dead" breads have been developed to sell to schools and churches. So perhaps the tradition will continue after all. "Times change, bread stays the same," muses the elder Álvarez.

Handed down from generation to generation of Mexican-American families all over Texas, many more culinary traditions refuse to die as well. When Blanca Rubio wants to recall a recipe she learned from her grandmother, her Mexican-kitchen muse, she closes her eyes again, envisioning the kitchen table with all the ingredients set out.

"I can still see her making a *guisadito*," she says, "browning the meat, taking away the juices to let it brown some more...crushing garlic and tomato in a *molcajete*—not a blender," she adds emphatically, "then adding the sauce to the meat with *comino* seeds rubbed in her hands, cooking it until the tomato turns dark red, lowering the heat, and adding salt... and it's delicious, delicious."

Machines may continue to replace molcajetes, but there will never be a substitute for *delicioso*. ★

RON BECHTOL, a San Antonio architect, writer, cooking instructor, and newspaper/TV restaurant critic, admires the men and women he interviewed for this story. He says, "Their obvious devotion to their craft should be thought of as a gift to eaters all over Texas."

Staff photographer GRIFF SMITH enjoyed capturing the charm and dignity of the culinary legends portrayed in this story.

ESSENTIALS Mexican Cuisine

NO MATTER what you call it—Mexican cuisine, Mexican food, Tex-Mex—the state's tasty Tejano fare stems from Mexico, so it's not surprising that many Texas restaurants and bakeries reflect culinary legacies easily traced to family members who came from south of the border. The following San Antonio establishments, mentioned in the story, represent only a few examples of this rich heritage.

Paloma Blanca Mexican Cuisine, 5148 Broadway; 210/822-6151.

Los Barrios Mexican Restaurant, 4223 Blanco Rd.; 210/732-6017.

El Mirador Restaurant, 722 S. St. Mary's; 210/225-9444.

Lux Bakery, 6402 S. Zarzamora; 210/923-8201.

BOOKS Look for the following books in your local library or bookstore: *La Cocina de la Frontera, Mexican-American Cooking from the Southwest* by Jim Peyton (Red Crane Books, 1994); *El Norte, The Cuisine of Northern Mexico* by Jim Peyton (Red Crane Books, 1995); *¡Que Vivan los Tamales! Food and the Making of Mexican Identity* by Jeffrey M. Pilcher (Univ. of New Mexico Press, 1998); *Los Barrios Family Cookbook: Tex-Mex Recipes from the Heart of San Antonio* by Diana Barrios Treviño (Villard, 2002); and *Cocina de la Familia* by Marilyn Tausend with Miguel Ravago (Simon & Schuster, 1999).

Folk arts AND CRAFTS EMBODY A VIBRANT RESPONSE TO LIFE

HECHO A MANO

BY RUBEN E. OCHOA • PHOTOGRAPHS BY JOEL SALCIDO

In a dramatic scene in Larry McMurtry's Pulitzer Prize-winning novel, *Lonesome Dove*, a band of outlaw Kiowas surprises the novel's hero, Augustus (Gus) McCrae, on the flat Texas plains. Outnumbered and desperately low on options, Gus kills his horse at the edge of a wallow, then uses his fallen mount as a shield and his experience as a Texas Ranger to survive until nightfall. Under cover of darkness, Gus lifts his heavy saddle and begins walking across the open country.

Like Gus, a real-life South Texas cowboy would not likely part with his saddle, even in the direst of situations. In the latter 19th Century, a saddle could cost a working cowboy four months' wages, and a good saddle, one custom-fitted to the cowboy, could be more valuable than the horse it sat upon.

In the same South Texas chaparral country that provides the setting for *Lonesome Dove*, mid-19th-Century entrepreneurs Richard King and his wife, Henrietta, drew heavily upon well-established Spanish and Mexican ranching institutions to develop their King Ranch, then and today one of the world's most successful and famous cattle operations.

The *vaqueros* of northern Mexico whom King engaged to begin his cattle operations brought more than their invaluable knowledge of ranching to King Ranch. They brought a special craftsmanship and artistic expression to ranching implements: saddles, saddle blankets, chaps, bandannas, sombreros, lariats, and spurs. These items were rep-

resentative of a much wider range of folk arts and crafts brought to Texas by Spanish and Mexican settlers.

Many former and current *Kineños*, the proud title bestowed upon King Ranch employees, continue the traditional hand-crafting of ranch implements. One such *Kineño* is Robert Salas, a master leather

craftsman and saddlemaker. Salas' workshop is inside the confines of Kingsville's historic John B. Ragland Mercantile Company building. Advertised as "Kingsville's Center of Style and Quality" after its construction in 1909, Ragland's today houses the King Ranch Saddle Shop, its latest rendition of quality and style.

A native of Monterrey, Mexico, Robert Salas apprenticed under his father-in-law, Guillermo Guevara, who learned his craft in Mexico from his father. "Working with leather and making saddles is in my blood," says Robert. "Guillermo taught me how to hand-form every part of the saddle. He never used patterns to shape the designs on the saddles, and neither do I. This is our tradition, and I follow the tradition."



Above, master saddlemaker Robert Salas plies his trade at the King Ranch Saddle Shop. A plain, untooled saddle takes Robert about 56 hours to make. Casa de Emma owner Aura Emma Zapata of El Paso crafted the *milagro* at right from wood and aluminum. *Milagros*, or talismans, come in the shapes of people, animals, parts of the body, and the like, and embody their owners' hopes for health, wealth, love, faith, serenity—all the things human beings wholeheartedly desire.





"THESE ICONOGRAPHIC art-and-craft pieces were created primarily by indigenous artists to adorn churches, missions, civic buildings, and private homes. It is a cultural heritage mutually shared between Mexico and the United States in their common meeting ground here in the Rio Grande Valley."

Along with the tools of his trade that array Robert's workshop, leather chaps, gun and rifle scabbards, saddlebags, and numerous saddles in various stages of assembly and repair lie waiting to be finished. The artisan often incorporates the large skirts and covered stirrups (*tapaderos*) of Mexican and Spanish design into the saddles he makes for King Ranch and for clients around the world.

Visitors to the King Ranch Saddle Shop need walk only a few blocks to the King Ranch Museum (housed in the Henrietta Memorial Center, a historic, renovated ice plant) to view other Spanish-inspired crafts original to the ranch. Displayed alongside a large collection of historical photographs by award-winning artist Toni Frissell, you'll see a handcrafted chandelier by blacksmith Don Joaquín Arredondo, who died in 1990 at age 91, and a superbly woven saddle blanket by sixth-generation weaver Emiliano García. "True Emiliano saddle blankets are prized possessions, collectors' items," says King Ranch archivist Lisa Neely. "He only made them for so many years, and they are now passed down from generation to generation."

Like the American cowboy, the Mexican vaquero is a character of almost mythological proportion. In El Paso, this legendary figure has been captured in vibrant fiberglass splendor by master sculptor Luis Jiménez. His *Vaquero*, expertly balanced atop a bucking horse, stands larger than life at the entrance to the city's Museum of Art.

"Jiménez's *Vaquero* is inspired by traditional Mexican folk art," says museum director Becky Duval Reese. "Luis often makes social comment through his art, and



Above, a *bulto* (statue) of Christ, at the El Paso Museum of Art, reflects the folk-art tradition of using readily available materials from nature. Below, Casa de Emma owner Aura Emma Zapata holds a hand-made, wooden foot milagro that she created.



I believe the intent of *Vaquero* is to remind us that the first cowboys were Hispanic."

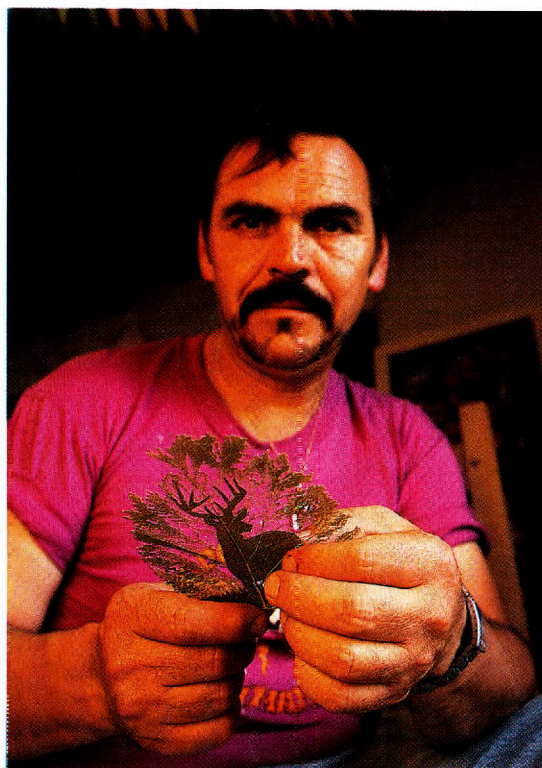
The El Paso Museum of Art's collection of Mexican folk arts and crafts includes examples of 18th-Century *retablos* (devotional images painted on copper sheets) and *bultos* (statues). One of the latter is an exquisitely preserved Head of Christ, made of polychrome wood, glass eye inserts, and, for the crown of thorns, maguey fiber and barrel-cactus thorns.

"The Christ *bulto* underscores the whole idea of the folk-art tradition, in which the artist uses materials close at hand, in this case natural woods, thorns, and native shrubs, to help convey the larger message," says Reese. "These iconographic art-and-craft pieces were created primarily by indigenous artists to adorn churches, missions, civic buildings, and private homes. It is a cultural heritage mutually shared between Mexico and the United States in their common meeting ground here in the Rio Grande Valley."

Casa de Emma, on El Paso's western edge, and The Bookery, at its eastern outskirts, exert a magnet-like pull on the artists who fill these homey shop interiors with Spanish- and Mexican-inspired folk arts and crafts. Casa de Emma, which anchors more than 20 other specialty shops at historic Placita Santa Fe, seems more sanctuary than shop, and its owner, Aura Emma Zapata, more teacher and custodian of sacred objects than shopkeeper.

"I try to help people understand the spiritual meaning of the *milagros* [small personal charms based on traditional Mexican talismans] and other indigenous folk arts and crafts that I have in my shop," says Emma, a native of Mexico. "I saw their

[FACING PAGE] The Bookery, situated within the 200-year-old, adobe Casa Ortiz in Socorro, offers a varied assortment of traditional and less-conventional folk art, along with rare and current books.



Artisan Jesús Leal holds one of his Eco Art leaves, which he patiently carves—using cactus thorns—into delicate portrayals of people, animals, and religious and natural scenes. Jesús' creations are sold at The Bookery in El Paso.

meaning many years ago in Jalisco, Mexico, at a church in the village of San Juan de los Lagos. It was not a special occasion, but hundreds of people were placing milagros [literally, “miracles”], retablos, and other special objects in sacred areas inside the church. I saw family, faith, tradition, my heritage. Through my shop, I meet people from all over the world. I have come to know that faith has no borders.”

Others, like El Paso potter John Ramirez, sense Casa de Emma’s spiritual qualities. “I like going to Emma’s,” says John. “From all of her art and craft pieces, you can feel the energy that comes from the native people of Mexico. I feel the Spanish influence as well. That mix is something I think we as Mexican Americans have within us.”

John uses natural clays he finds in the area and forms his pottery from rope-like strands of clay in the traditional manner of Mexico’s indigenous peoples. Sinuous carbon residues left over from horsehair, introduced during the firing process, form tracery that accent the translucent quality of many of John’s creations.

The Bookery, located in Socorro, one of

Texas’ oldest communities, is housed in a remarkably well-preserved, early-19th-Century Spanish adobe house known as Casa Ortiz. Beneath the original cottonwood and willow rafters, shop owner Margaret Barber maintains an alluring mix of rare books, puppets, and Hispanic folk art and crafts.

The more common fare of retablos, *santos* (carved and painted images of religious figures), and milagros shares space with singular, nontraditional folk arts and crafts made of iron, wood, and leaves...yes, leaves. Local eco-artist Jesús E. Leal travels to the mountains of northwestern Mexico to gather leaves from the Tampiceran tree. Jesús meticulously carves the fibers of individual leaves with needles made from cactus thorns to create astonishingly balanced silhouettes of natural scenes, and to illustrate religious themes.

A short distance from Casa Ortiz sits Socorro Cemetery, where numerous grave sites are adorned with wreaths and bouquets of colorful handmade paper flowers, a popular folk-art tradition in Mexico. As you head west from the

cemetery, other examples embedded in the fabric of the community’s built environment come into view: elaborate leaf-and-scroll designs on forged wrought-iron gates and *rejas* (burglar bars); murals and stone carvings of La Virgen de Guadalupe (the Virgin of Guadalupe); and other handmade devotional shrines prominently displayed in front yards, on commercial buildings, and in public spaces.

In one such public space in El Paso, a park-like setting underneath what locals call the “Interstate 10 spaghetti bowl,” a new and exciting addition to the city’s long tradition of public murals is unfolding. Under the direction of El Paso artist-muralist Carlos Callejo, area

students, mentored by artists and researchers, are covering the spaghetti bowl’s support beams with large-scale murals. The more than 50 murals completed to date portray various subjects and themes, such as historical figures, Meso-American mythology, and indigenous peoples of all of North America.

“Contemporary murals owe their roots to [Diego] Rivera, [José Clemente] Orozco, and other early-20th-Century Mexican muralists,” notes Carlos. “Murals tend to have a social message. What we want to do is reflect and convey the community’s concerns, aspirations, celebrations, and traditions, and at the same time provide a source of motivation and pride for our students and community as they learn more about themselves.”



To learn more about the roots and contemporary expressions of Hispanic folk arts and crafts in Texas, plan also to spend time at the Texas Folklife Resources Gallery and Archives, in Austin, and at the San Antonio Museum of Art. And if you care to fit this engaging subject into the broader context of Texas history, a trip to

"MURALS TEND TO *have a social message. What we want to do is reflect and convey the community's concerns, aspirations, celebrations, and traditions, and at the same time provide a source of motivation and pride for our students and community as they learn more about themselves."*



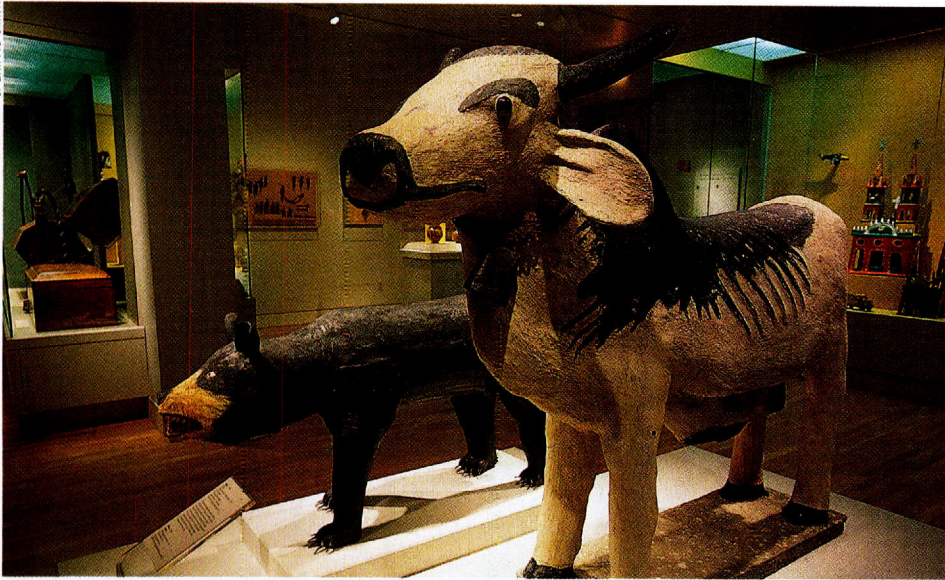
Continuing a long tradition of murals in El Paso, scenes on Interstate 10 supporting pillars portray subjects and themes from throughout North America. "We're very international," says artist-muralist Carlos Callejo, who directs the monumental student project.

the Texas State History Museum, also in Austin, should do the trick.

Visitors to Texas Folklife Resources (TFR) should not be misled by its unassuming exterior (and location next door to the Continental Club, one of Austin's most enduringly popular honky-tonks). Inside—among many other collections—resides perhaps the state's preeminent collection of color slides, black-and-white photographs, tape-recorded interviews, and other documentary resources dedicated to the study of Texas-Mexican (and other cultures') folk art.

TFR provided a glimpse of its archival wealth in a recent exhibition entitled *Arte Es Vida/Arte En Vida: Folk Art in the Texas Mexican Community*. Intimate images captured everyday people (folk) in the act of creating Hispanic arts and crafts. "These images were not meant just to show the making of an object," says former TFR director Pat Jasper. "They were meant to convey that the making of these objects and the objects themselves serve as vital testaments of ethnic identity, as expressions of religious belief, as strategies for economic self-sufficiency, and as constant reminders of the cultural continuity between Texas and Mexico."

No telling of "THE STORY OF (Spanish) TEXAS" at the Texas State History Museum would be complete without mentioning Spanish conquistadors, Texas-Mexican vaqueros, and the paintings of Jean Louis Théodore Gentilz. A reproduction of *On the Trail*, a mid-19th-Century oil painting by Gentilz, hangs in a corner of the museum's third-floor retrospective of Texas' ranching and agricultural heritage (the original painting is in San Antonio's Witte Museum). In the details of this painting and many others by Gentilz that focus on the Texas/Mexico border-



The San Antonio Museum of Art's Nelson A. Rockefeller Center for Latin American Art houses the state's premier holdings of the genre. One of the Center's four galleries (shown here) focuses on folk art. The museum owns some 10,000 fascinating examples of folk art, all *hecho a mano*, or handmade.

land, you can see historical renderings of Mexican-American arts and crafts that continue to resonate in Texas today.

Gentilz, an immigrant from France, drew inspiration for many of his paintings from his experience in San Antonio. Today, visitors to the San Antonio Museum of Art can find similar inspiration while viewing the state's premier permanent collection of Latin American art, housed in the museum's Nelson A. Rockefeller Center for Latin American Art.

Folk art—some 1,000 objects on display at a time—fills one of the Center's four galleries. The other three galleries focus on pre-Columbian; Spanish Colonial and Republican; and modern and contemporary art. This vast and visually stunning collection, together with its multimedia interpretation, allows visitors to travel through more than 4,000 years of Latin American art and view works from areas that span the Americas—from Argentina and Chile to Central America and Mexico.

The Center owes its name to one of its generous contributors, former U.S. Vice President Nelson A. Rockefeller. Over a span of 45 years, Rockefeller made countless visits to Mexico, enjoying its people and cultural richness and satisfying his passion for exploring the country's remote villages and busy urban marketplaces. In these places, Rockefeller collected thousands of folk

objects, many of which were donated by his daughter to the San Antonio Museum of Art.

"Since my first visit to Mexico in the 1930s," Rockefeller wrote just months before his death, in 1978, "I have sensed something strong, imaginative, and beautiful about her popular arts, and I have collected it and lived with it in my house ever since."

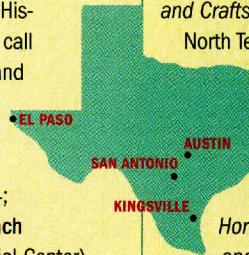
In many ways, Rockefeller's words reflect the feelings many people have for Hispanic folk arts and crafts: They are beautiful, they give meaning and expression to our daily lives, and they will continue to live in the place we Texans call home. ★

Historian and writer RUBEN OCHOA grew up in Laredo, where many members of his large, close family displayed folk art in their homes and yards.

JOEL SALCIDO also provided photographs for this month's stories on Día de las Muertos, Los Caminos del Rio, and fiestas.

ESSENTIALS Hispanic Folk Arts and Crafts

THE FOLLOWING SITES, all mentioned in the story, are good starting places for viewing the state's wide variety of Hispanic folk arts and crafts. (Please call regarding hours, admission fees, and wheelchair accessibility.) **King Ranch Saddle Shop**, 201 E. Kleberg Ave. (Box 1594, 78364), Kingsville 78363; 800/282-5464; www.krsaddleshop.com. **King Ranch Museum** (in the Henrietta Memorial Center), 405 N. Sixth St., Kingsville 78363; 361/595-1881. **El Paso Museum of Art**, One Arts Festival Plaza (corner of Santa Fe and Main), El Paso 79901; 915/532-1707; www.elpasoartmuseum.org. **Casa de Emma**, Placita Santa Fe, 5034 Doniphan Dr. (west of Mesa Exit, at I-10), El Paso 79932; 915/584-6247. **The Bookery**, 10167 Socorro Rd., El Paso 79927; 915/859-6132. **Texas Folklife Resources**, 1317 S. Congress Ave., Austin 78704; 512/441-9255; www.main.org/tfr. **Bob Bullock Texas State History Museum**, 1800 N. Congress Ave. (Box 12874, 78711), Austin 78701; 512/936-8746 or 866/369-7108; www.TheStoryofTexas.com. (See *By the Way*, page 7, for details on the museum's new IMAX presentation, *Mexico*.) **Nelson A. Rockefeller Center for Latin American Art, San Antonio Museum of Art**, 200 W. Jones Ave., San Antonio 78215; 210/978-8100; www.samuseum.org.



BOOKS Look in your library or bookstore for *Hecho en Tejas: Texas-Mexican Folk Arts and Crafts*, ed. by Joe S. Graham (Univ. of North Texas Press, 1991); *Art and Faith in Mexico: The Nineteenth-Century Retablo Tradition*, ed. by Elizabeth Netto Calil Zarur and Charles Muir Lovell (Univ. of New Mexico Press, 2001); *Voices from the Wild Horse Desert* by Jane Clements Monday and Betty Bailey Colley (Univ. of Texas Press, 1998); *Folklore and Culture on the Texas-Mexican Border* by Américo Paredes (Ctr. For Mexican American Studies, Univ. of Texas Press, 1993); *Mexican-American Folklore* by John O. West (August House, Inc., 1988); *Chicano Folklore* by Rafaela G. Castro (Oxford Univ. Press, 2001); *Folk Treasures of Mexico: The Nelson A. Rockefeller Collection* by Marion Oettinger, Jr. (Harry N. Abrams, Inc., 1990); *Folk Art in Texas* by Francis E. Abernethy (Southern Methodist Univ. Press, 1985); *Milagros: A Book of Miracles* by Helen Thompson (HarperSanFrancisco, 1998); *Mexican Popular Arts* by Frances Toor (B. Ethridge, 1973); and *A Treasury of Mexican Folkways* by Frances Toor (Crown Publishers, 1947). Also see "Mexican-American Folk Arts and Crafts," by Teresa Palomo Acosta, in Vol. 4 of *The New Handbook of Texas* (Texas State Historical Assn., 1996; also at www.tsha.utexas.edu/handbook/online/).

OCTOBER 2002						
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20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

BIG BEND COUNTRY

1-31
EL PASO
 Haunted Warehouse
 915/544-8864

3-6
EL PASO
 County Fair & Jr Livestock Show
 915/479-3089

4
MIDLAND
 CAF Hall of Fame
 Induction Ceremony
 915/563-1000

4-5
PECOS
 Barbecue Beef Cookoff
 915/445-2406
 Reeves County
 Fair & Livestock Show
 915/445-2406

4-6
WICKETT
 Bluegrass Festival
 915/943-6765

5
EL PASO
 Ballet Coppelia
 915/532-7273

FORT DAVIS
 Fort Davis National Historic Site
 Restoration Festival
 915/426-3202

5-6
MIDLAND
 Fina-CAF AIRSHO 2002
 915/563-1000

8-13
EL PASO
 Disney on Ice
 703/448-3695

11-13, 18-19
ODESSA
 Shadowlands
 915/580-3177

12
MARATHON
 Quilt Show
 915/386-4516

12-13
EL PASO
 Ballet Folklórico
 915/532-7273
 Chamizal Festival
 915/532-7273

MARFA
 Chinati Foundation Open House
 915/729-4362 or
 800/650-9696

13-14
DEL RIO
 Missoula Children's Theatre
 Sleeping Beauty
 830/775-0888

19
DEL RIO
 Amistad
 International Parade
 830/298-5826

EL PASO
 Concordia History Walk
 915/581-7920

19-20
DEL RIO
 Arts & Crafts Fair
 830/775-9715

20
EL PASO
 Celebration of the Americas
 Concert
 915/831-2703

26
DEL RIO
 Archaeology Fair
 830/775-7568

26-27
ODESSA
 Harvest Fair
 915/377-5353

27
ODESSA
 West Texas Winds Concert
 915/563-0921

31-NOV 2
TERLINGUA
 International Tolbert/Fowler
 Chili Cookoff
 903/874-5601

31-NOV 3
BALMORHEA
 Birdfest
 915/375-2325

GULF COAST

1-12
CORPUS CHRISTI
 Columbus Ships
 361/883-2862

2-5
WINNIE
 Texas Rice Festival
 409/296-4404

3-6
HOUSTON
 Greek Festival
 713/526-5377

3-31
KEMAH
 Boo on the Boardwalk
 281/334-9880 or
 877/285-3624

4
BROWNSVILLE
 La Bohème
 956/983-7945

4-5
BROWNSVILLE
 Zoofari
 956/546-7187

4-6
ROBSTOWN
 Czech Fest
 361/387-1312

SEABROOK
 Music Festival
 281/474-3838

4-12
ANGLETON
 Brazoria County Fair
 979/849-6416

4-19
BAYTOWN
 Harvey
 281/424-7617

4-6, 11-13, 18-20, 25-27
HOUSTON
 Flight Fest
 713/799-1234

5
KATY
 Rice Harvest Festival
 Fun Run & Parade
 281/828-1100

PORT ARANSAS
 South Texas
 Music Fest &
 Chili Cookoff
 361/749-4254

VICTORIA
 Heritage Day
 361/575-3623

6
HOUSTON
 Volkswagen Show
 281/890-5500

PORT ARANSAS
 Island Duathlon
 361/939-8296

WOODSBORO
 St. Therese's Catholic Church
 Fall Festival
 361/526-2835

7
ORANGE
 La Bohème
 409/745-5535 or
 800/828-5535

9
BROWNSVILLE
 Frida Kahlo Un Retablo
 956/983-7945

9-12
EDNA
 Jackson County Youth Fair
 361/782-7146

10-16
BROWNSVILLE
 B-29 Tour
 956/541-8585

12
LEAGUE CITY
 South Shore Dockside
 Food & Wine Festival
 281/334-1000

PORT ARTHUR
 CavOILcade
 409/983-1009

RIO HONDO
 Fly-In Waffle Breakfast
 956/748-2112

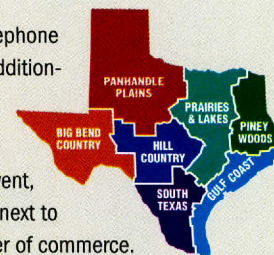
12-13
HOUSTON
 Bayou City Art Festival
 Downtown
 713/521-0133

KATY
 Rice Harvest Festival
 281/828-1100

ROCKPORT
 Seafair
 361/729-6445 or
 800/826-6441

IN FUN FORECAST, we provide events and telephone numbers for next month, so that you'll have additional time to plan your outings.

SOMETIMES DATES CHANGE after the magazine is printed. Before you drive miles to an event, confirm the date by calling the number listed next to the festivity or by contacting the local chamber of commerce.



FOR FREE ROUTING ASSISTANCE or details on any destination in Texas, call 800/452-9292 toll-free from anywhere in the United States and Canada, any day between 8 a.m. and 6 p.m. Central Time. A travel counselor at one of the state's Travel Information Centers will be on the line to provide travel information, send brochures, and advise you of any emergency road conditions.

IF YOU WISH TO SUBMIT AN EVENT for Fun Forecast, please send the information to Fun Forecast, Texas Highways, Box 141009, Austin 78714-1009; fax 512/486-5879. Submit information at least three full months before the first of the month in which the event will take place (for example, by October 1 for January festivities). Space is limited, so we may not be able to print every event. For a quarterly, more detailed schedule of events, write for a free Texas Events Calendar, Box 149249, Austin 78714-9249.

Texas Highways' Web site, www.texashighways.com, includes an expanded Fun Forecast that gives descriptions of the events.

16-20
HOUSTON
 International
 Orchid Adventure
 281/492-1437 or
 713/978-7400

16-21
BAY CITY
 Rice Festival
 979/245-6197

17-19
BROWNSVILLE
 Latin Jazz Festival
 956/546-3721

17-20
PORT ARANSAS
 Harvest Moon Regatta
 281/474-2511

18
WEST COLUMBIA
 Harvest Antiques
 & Apple Cider Day
 979/345-6125

18-20
CORPUS CHRISTI
 Texas Jazz Festival
 361/883-4500
 or 992-9631

19
BAYTOWN
 Heritage Festival
 281/424-7229
 or 838-1029

CORPUS CHRISTI
 Porcelain Art Show
 361/994-8005

HARLINGEN
 Jackson Street Jubilee
 956/427-8703

19
HOUSTON
 All-British
 Motor Vehicle Expo
 936/449-9029

PORT ARANSAS
 Sand & Surf Beach Run
 361/749-5319

ROCKPORT
 Victorian Gardening Tours
 361/729-0386

19-20
ALVIN
 Antique Show
 281/648-6883

GALVESTON
 ARToberFEST
 409/762-3617
 or 762-6564

HOUSTON
 Asian American Festival
 713/861-8270

KINGWOOD
 Fine Art Festival
 281/358-1710

20
VIOLET
 Beef Barbecue
 361/387-2308
 or 241-3032

21-23
VICTORIA
 Farm & Ranch Show
 361/576-5410

24-26
SPRING
 Bluegrass/Gospel Music
 Festival
 281/376-2959

25-27
VICTORIA
 Gem & Jewelry Show
 361/552-5857

25-NOV 10
HOUSTON
 La Bohème
 713/546-0246 or
 800/828-2787

26
DEER PARK
 Goblin Gallop 5-K/
 Kids One-Mile Run
 281/478-2050

HARLINGEN
 Blues on the Hill
 956/427-8870

HOUSTON
 Choral Society
 Opera Concert
 713/627-3609

KEMAH
 Walk the Dock
 281/334-9880 or
 877/285-3624

LAKE JACKSON
 Freaky Fright Fair
 & Monster Dash
 979/297-4533

PORT ARANSAS
 Fallback Festival
 361/749-6405

VICTORIA
 Symphony
 361/576-4500

26-27
ANGLETON
 Austin Town Festival
 979/864-1208

- 26-27**
GALVESTON
 Willie Nelson
 409/765-1894 or
 800/821-1894
- HOUSTON**
 Wings Over Houston Airshow
 281/531-9461 or
 713/266-4492
- NURSERY**
 Auto Show & Swap Meet
 361/578-8484
- 27**
GALVESTON
 Ghostly Gardens
 800/582-4673
- HOUSTON**
 Halloween Boo Bash
 281/890-5500
- PORT ARANSAS**
 Run with the Wind
 361/749-5666
- REFUGIO**
 Our Lady of Refuge
 Fall Festival
 361/526-2835
- 30-31**
BROWNSVILLE
 Boo at the Zoo
 956/546-7187
- 31**
DEER PARK
 Halloween Festival/Carnival
 281/478-2050
- 31**
FREERPORT
 Halloween Festival
 979/233-6061
- GROVES**
 Halloween Parade
 & Spook House
 409/962-1676
- ROSENBERG**
 Halloween Carnival
 832/595-3529
- WHARTON**
 St. John's Lutheran Church
 Fall Carnival
 979/532-4522
- 31-NOV 3**
HOUSTON
 International Quilt Festival
 713/781-6864

HILL COUNTRY

- 4-5**
DRIPPING SPRINGS
 St. Martin Festival Days
 512/858-5667
 or 858-7887
- ROUND ROCK**
 Bluegrass Festival
 512/454-9313
- 4-6**
FREDERICKSBURG
 Oktoberfest
 830/997-4810 or
 866/839-3378

- 4-6**
MASON
 Mason County
 Trail Ride
 915/347-5598
- 5**
AUSTIN
 Herbfest
 512/707-0113
- LUCKENBACH**
 Ladies State Chili Cookoff
 830/997-3224
- 6**
KERRVILLE
 Musici de Montreal
 Chamber Orchestra
 830/896-5636
- 10-17**
AUSTIN
 Austin Film Festival
 512/478-4795 or
 800/310-FEST
- 11-13**
FREDERICKSBURG
 Mesquite Art Festival
 830/997-8515 or
 866/839-3378
- KERRVILLE**
 Kerr County Fair
 830/257-6833
- 12**
BANDERA
 Quilt Show
 830/460-4985
- BURNET**
 Fort Croghan Day
 512/756-8281
- CANYON LAKE**
 Shrimpfest
 830/899-7608
 or 964-4091
- JOHNSON CITY**
 Hill Country
 Heritage Day
 830/868-7128
- KERRVILLE**
 Art Trail
 830/896-5530
- LAMPASAS**
 Herb & Arts Festival
 512/556-5172
- STONEWALL**
 Fish Fry
 830/644-2677
- 12-13**
UVALDE
 Arts & Crafts Show
 830/278-2846

- 12-13, 19-20, 26-27**
AUSTIN
 Wild Basin
 Haunted Trail
 512/327-7622
- MEDINA**
 Love Creek
 Pumpkin Patch
 830/589-2588
- 13**
CASTROVILLE
 Heritage Day
 830/931-2233
- 13-27**
INGRAM
 Art from the Studios
 830/367-5120 or
 800/459-HCAF

- 17-20**
BRACKETVILLE
 Alamo Village
 & Shahan HV Ranch
 Trail Ride & Cattle Drive
 830/563-2580
- 18-20**
CONCAN
 Bicycle Classic
 800/210-0380
- SAN MARCOS**
 River Fall Fest
 888/200-5620
- 19**
BOERNE
 Chili Cookoff/Craft Show
 830/995-2310
- CASTROVILLE**
 Balloon Fest
 830/538-3142
- Pumpkin Fest
 830/931-3533
- GOLDTHWAITE**
 Quilt Show
 915/648-3619
- KERRVILLE**
 Fall Festival
 830/257-6767
- MASON**
 Texas Songwriters
 in the Round
 Concert
 915/247-1414
- ROUND ROCK**
 Hairy Man Festival
 512/255-7871
- 19-20**
AUSTIN
 African Violet Show
 512/477-8672
- COMFORT**
 Antique Show
 830/995-2884
- 19-23**
GOLDTHWAITE
 Texas Friendship
 Wagon Train
 915/648-3356
- 20**
BOERNE
 VW Car Show/
 Swap Meet
 210/732-4688
- NEW BRAUNFELS**
 Mid-Texas Symphony
 830/372-8089
- 26**
FREDERICKSBURG
 Food & Wine Fest
 830/997-8515 or
 866/839-3378
- 26-27**
BOERNE
 Antique Show
 830/249-8000
- 31**
AUSTIN
 Halloween on Sixth Street
 800/926-2282
- SONORA**
 Fall Festival
 915/387-2248
 or 387-2880
- TAYLOR**
 Halloween Spooktacular
 512/352-3463

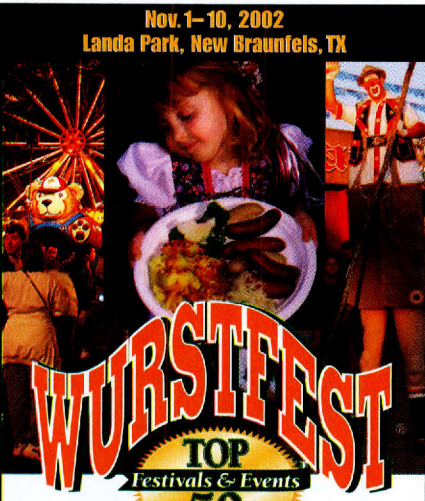
- PANHANDLE PLAINS**
- 3-6**
ABILENE
 Brecht on Brecht
 915/670-1405
- PAMPA**
 Gray County
 Centennial Celebration
 806/669-3241
- SAN ANGELO**
 Reckless
 915/942-2342
- 4-5**
COLORADO CITY
 World Champion Goat Cookoff
 & Car Show
 915/338-4899
 or 728-5106
- 5**
ROBERT LEE
 Street Affair
 915/453-2831
- SAN ANGELO**
 Archaeology Fair
 915/657-4444
- 5-6**
SHAMROCK
 Irish Craftfest
 806/256-2501
- 6**
BALLINGER
 4-H Bike-a-Thon
 915/365-2333
- GARDEN CITY**
 St. Lawrence Fall Festival
 915/397-2268
- 11-12**
ABILENE
 Film & Video WESTfest
 915/676-9620
- BIG SPRING**
 Webb AFB Reunion
 915/264-1999
- POSSUM KINGDOM**
 Possum Fest/
 Great Outdoors Barbecue
 & Chili Cook-Off
 940/779-2424 or
 888/779-8330
- 11-13**
SWEETWATER
 Jaycees All-Ranch
 Rodeo
 915/235-5488
- 12**
JAYTON
 Country Music Jam
 806/237-3822
- LUBBOCK**
 Grape Day
 806/745-2258
- Ranch Day
 806/742-0498
- POSSUM KINGDOM**
 Craft Fair
 940/779-4463
 or 779-3883
- 18-20**
ABILENE
 Home & Garden Show
 915/676-6211
- 18-22**
ABILENE
 ACU Homecoming Musical
 915/674-2739

- 19**
ABERNATHY
 Country Jamboree
 806/298-2397
- SAN ANGELO**
 Symphony
 915/658-5877
- 19-20**
CANADIAN
 Fall Foliage Festival
 806/323-6234
- 25-26**
ELECTRA
 Halloween Carnival
 940/495-3577
- 26**
ABILENE
 Fish Fry
 915/676-6211
- Fort Phantom
 Rendezvous
 915/677-1309
- SEYMOUR**
 Autumn Leaves Festival
 940/889-2921
- 28-NOV 2**
AMARILLO
 U.S. Team Penning
 National Finals
 940/322-4252 or
 806/378-3096
- 31**
SAN ANGELO
 Halloween Tours
 915/657-4444
- SWEETWATER**
 Halloween on the Square
 915/235-5488

PINEY WOODS

- 1-5**
TYLER
 (began Sep 26)
 East Texas State Fair
 903/597-2501
- 3-5**
CENTER
 East Texas Poultry Festival
 936/598-3682
- 4-5**
HALLSVILLE
 Western Days
 903/668-2592
- 4-5, 11-12, 18-19, 25-26**
SHENANDOAH
 Fine Arts Series
 281/292-5953
- 5**
NACOGDOCHES
 Fall Garden Festival
 936/468-1832
- TEXARKANA**
 Archaeology Fair
 903/793-4831
- 5-6, 11-12, 18-20, 25-27**
WINNSBORO
 Autumn Trails
 903/342-3666
 or 342-5257
- 9-13**
NACOGDOCHES
 Pineywoods Fair
 936/564-0849

Nov. 1-10, 2002
Landa Park, New Braunfels, TX



WURSTFEST
 TOP Festivals & Events
 50 LEISURE GROUP TRAVEL

A unique **Family FunFest** rich in German culture, Texas Style. Join us at the 42nd annual "Salute to Sausage" for "gemuetlichkeit"...fun and fellowship, German Style. Great music, good fun and many special events. Ample accommodations and groups are welcome.

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 email: info@wurstfest.com

11-12 JEFFERSON Texas Bigfoot Conference 877/529-5550	15 MARSHALL State Fair 903/935-4484	20 JEFFERSON Taste of Jefferson 903/665-2672	3-6 GLEN ROSE Bluegrass Reunion 254/897-2321	4-27 GRANBURY Ten Little Indians 817/573-9191 or 866/572-0881	5 MYRTLE SPRINGS Red Hot Ranch Rodeo & Chili Cookoff 972/564-2999
11-13 CONROE Cajun Catfish Festival 936/539-6009	16-19 GILMER East Texas Yamboree 903/843-2413	26 NACOGDOCHES Scare on the Square 936/559-2573	3-26 LOCKHART Web of Murder 512/376-5653	5 AUBREY Peanut Festival 940/365-9162	WHEELLOCK Pioneer Days 979/828-4627
MARSHALL Fire Ant Festival 903/935-7868	17-20 TYLER Texas Rose Festival 903/597-3130	SAN AUGUSTINE Sassafras Festival 936/275-3610	4-5 STEPHENVILLE Quilt Show 254/445-3949	BONHAM Autumn in Bonham 903/583-4811	5-6 FORT WORTH Extreme Monster Truck Nationals 817/215-8500
12 KILGORE Derrick Fest 903/984-5022	18-19 COLDSRING San Jacinto County Heritage Days 936/653-2009	PRAIRIES AND LAKES			RICHARDSON Cottonwood Art Festival 972/638-9116
NEWTON Homecoming Parade & Bazaar 409/379-5527	18-19, 25-26 CONROE Philadelphia Story 936/441-SHOW	1-6 WARRENTON Antique Show 979/249-3141	WAXAHACHIE Ellis County Courthouse Celebration 972/937-2390	CAMERON Arts & Crafts Fair 254/697-4979	HARKER HEIGHTS Star Fest 254/699-4999
RUSK Arts & Crafts Fair 903/683-4242	TYLER Arts & Crafts Fair 903/531-1214	1-20 DALLAS (began Sep 27) State Fair of Texas 214/565-9931	WHITNEY Pioneer Days 254/694-2540	COOPER Fall Festival '50s Weekend 903/395-4314	TEMPLE Old Tractor & Engine Show 800/479-0338
Pioneer Festival 903/683-4242	19-20 HUNTSVILLE Huntsville State Park Outdoor Odyssey 936/295-5644	1-31 CORSCIANA Quilt Show 903/872-5411	FORT WORTH Home & Garden Show 817/871-8150	CYCLONE Czech Heritage Day 254/985-2393	5-NOV 17 PLANTERSVILLE Texas Renaissance Festival 281/356-2178 or 800/458-3435
TYLER East Texas Symphony in the Park 903/592-1427	20 CARTHAGE Jim Reeves Music Jamboree 903/693-6634	3-5 FAYETTEVILLE Antique Show 512/267-4836	GONZALES "Come & Take It" Festival 830/672-6532	DEMISON Ooh La La TexFest 903/464-4452	6 FLATONIA Sacred Heart Fall Festival 361/865-3920
14-19 LIBERTY Trinity Valley Exposition Livestock Show & Rodeo 936/336-7455		3-6 FORT WORTH Betty Buckley in Concert 817/665-6000	4-12 WACO Heart o' Texas Fair & Rodeo 254/776-1660	GAINESVILLE Depot Day Festival 888/585-4468	FORT WORTH Library Fest 817/871-8022
			4-6, 11-13, 18-20, 25-27 ARLINGTON Fright Fest 817/530-6000	IVANHOE Goat Roast 903/583-7708	
				LANCASTER Historical Society Jubilee Ball 979/227-1355	

More of what you like the Valley for...

more places to enjoy nature

- ♦ Valley Nature Center
- ♦ Frontera Audubon Thicket
- ♦ WBC Llano Grande
- ♦ Santa Ana NWR

best centralized location to reach

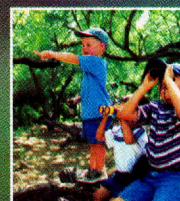
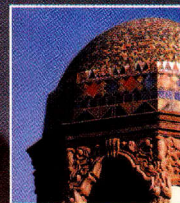
- ♦ South Padre Island, one hour
- ♦ Nuevo Progreso Mexico, 5 minutes
- ♦ McAllen or Harlingen, 15 minutes

more places to shop, dine, play & stay

- ♦ Weslaco Historic District, downtown
- ♦ Bicultural Museum
- ♦ Tierra Santa Golf Club
- ♦ Onion Festival in April
- ♦ Historic City Hall/Fire Station

1-888-968-2102 • www.weslaco.com

WESLACO

Fun Forecast

A roundup of next month's events

<p>6</p> <p>HALLETTSVILLE Quilt Show 361/798-4186</p> <p>LEWISVILLE Brave Combo 972/219-3748</p> <p>LINDSAY Octoberfest 940/665-2831 or 888/585-4468</p> <p>ROCKWALL Historical Foundation Tea 972/771-1196</p> <p>WAXAHACHIE A Taste of Waxahachie 972/923-2273</p> <hr/> <p>6-20</p> <p>GRANBURY Rio Brazos Art Festival 817/279-1164</p> <hr/> <p>8-31</p> <p>DALLAS Dallas Blooms Autumn 214/327-4901</p> <hr/> <p>9-13</p> <p>BELLVILLE Austin County Fair 979/865-3407 or 865-5995</p> <hr/> <p>10-13</p> <p>ENNIS NHRA O'Reilly Fall Nationals Drag Racing 972/878-4748</p> <p>SEGUIN Guadalupe County Fair & PRCA Rodeo 830/379-6477</p> <p>SHERMAN Grayson County Fair 903/532-6572</p> <hr/> <p>10-12, 17-19</p> <p>DENTON Carousel 940/565-2428</p> <hr/> <p>11-12</p> <p>CALDWELL Go Texan Barbecue Cookoff 979/596-1009</p> <p>COOPER Chigger Fest & Fall Festival Days 903/395-4314</p> <hr/> <p>11-13</p> <p>CANTON Antique Classic Auto Meet 972/276-1790</p> <p>GLEN ROSE Masters Championship Roping 817/579-7967 or 254/897-4509</p> <p>GRAPEVINE Coin Show 817/410-3459</p> <hr/> <p>11-13, 17-20, 24-26</p> <p>SHERMAN Smokey Joe's Cafe 903/892-8818</p> <hr/> <p>12</p> <p>CANTON Yam Jam 469/831-1249</p> <p>CEDAR HILL Country Day on the Hill 972/291-7817</p>	<p>12</p> <p>DALLAS A Night in India 214/979-6435</p> <p>FARMERS BRANCH Archaeology Fair 972/406-0184</p> <p>GATESVILLE Spur Festival 254/865-5007</p> <p>GRAND PRAIRIE Pumpkin Fun Run 972/264-1558</p> <p>JEWETT Fall Frolic 903/626-4202</p> <p>LOCKHART Cowboy Days 512/398-2818 or 398-5796</p> <p>LULING Night in Old Luling 830/875-2773</p> <p>MERIDIAN Lord's Harvest Festival 254/622-2858</p> <p>MOUNT VERNON Countryfest 903/537-4365</p> <hr/> <p>12-13</p> <p>CHAPPELL HILL Scarecrow Festival 979/836-6033</p> <p>FORT WORTH International Airshow 817/551-1967</p> <p>Model Railroad Show 817/249-4965</p> <p>Oktoberfest 817/625-9715</p> <p>GRAND PRAIRIE Barbecue Championship Cookoff 972/647-2331</p> <p>SAGINAW Train & Grain Festival 817/232-0500</p> <hr/> <p>13</p> <p>DEANVILLE VFD Barbecue 979/535-4761</p> <hr/> <p>16-19</p> <p>BONHAM Fannin County Fair 903/583-7453</p> <hr/> <p>17-19</p> <p>ROCKDALE Fair & Livestock Show 512/446-2030</p> <hr/> <p>17-20</p> <p>FORT WORTH Film Festival 817/390-8711</p> <hr/> <p>18</p> <p>WACO State Fair 254/752-9797</p> <hr/> <p>18-19</p> <p>MEXIA Jack's Creek Bluegrass Festival 254/375-2472</p> <hr/> <p>18-20</p> <p>FORT WORTH MusicFest & Art Fair 214/885-1881</p>	<p>18-20</p> <p>FORT WORTH Southwestern Seminary Oratorio Chorus 817/665-6000</p> <p>YORKTOWN Western Days 361/564-2661</p> <hr/> <p>19</p> <p>CHANDLER Blue Moon Gardens Fall Festival 903/852-3897</p> <p>CHRIESMAN Perk Williams Festival 979/567-3987</p> <p>COLUMBUS Last of the Red Hot Lovers 979/732-5135 or 877/444-7339</p> <p>DALLAS African-American Women's Expo 972/407-1322</p> <p>Race for the Cure 214/750-7223</p> <p>DECATUR Main Street Country Fair 940/627-2741</p> <p>DUNCANVILLE Harvest Fest 972/780-5090</p> <p>FAIRFIELD Arts & Crafts Festival 903/389-5792</p> <p>GLEN ROSE High School Rodeo 254/897-4383</p> <p>GRANBURY Antique Engine & Tractor Show & Historic Light Plant Tour 817/573-5299</p> <p>GRAPEVINE Butterfly Flutterby 817/410-3185 or 800/457-6338</p> <p>ROUND TOP Harrington String Quartet 979/249-3129</p> <p>SHINER Bocktoberfest 361/594-3383 or 800/574-4637</p> <p>TEMPLE The Buddy Holly Story 254/773-9926</p> <p>WHITESBORO Peanut Festival 903/564-3331</p> <hr/> <p>19-20</p> <p>FORT WORTH Japanese Fall Festival 817/871-7686</p> <p>GRANBURY Harvest Moon Festival 817/573-5299</p> <hr/> <p>19-20, 26-27</p> <p>CLIFTON Anything Goes 254/675-2278</p> <p>DALLAS Boo at the Dallas Zoo 214/670-5656</p> <p>GRAND PRAIRIE Forest of Fear 817/467-2104</p> <hr/> <p>19-31</p> <p>DENTON Scarecrows on the Square 940/349-8529</p>	<p>20</p> <p>BREMOND St. Mary's Fall Festival 254/746-7789</p> <p>GRANBURY Jazz on the Green 817/279-1164</p> <p>TEMPLE Brazilian Guitar Quartet 254/773-9926</p> <hr/> <p>22</p> <p>RICHARDSON Rick Bragg 972/744-4350</p> <hr/> <p>24-26</p> <p>SAN FELIPE Haunted Trails 979/885-3613</p> <hr/> <p>24-27</p> <p>DALLAS Texas Stampede 214/373-8000 or 972/647-5700</p> <p>FORT WORTH Symphony 817/665-6000</p> <hr/> <p>24-NOV 1</p> <p>FORT WORTH Boo at the Zoo 817/759-7555</p> <hr/> <p>25</p> <p>SEGUIN Hats Off to Juan Seguin 830/401-2448</p> <hr/> <p>25-27</p> <p>FLATONIA Czhillspiel 361/865-3920</p> <p>FORT WORTH Red Steagall Cowboy Gathering & Western Swing Festival 817/336-8791</p> <p>GLEN ROSE Fossilmania 817/579-0955 or 888/346-6CVB</p> <p>WAXAHACHIE Fiddler on the Roof 972/217-1791</p> <hr/> <p>26</p> <p>DALLAS Harambee Festival 214/670-8355</p> <p>ELGIN Hogey Festival 512/285-5721</p> <p>GONZALES Ottine Swamp Fest 830/672-3266</p> <p>GRAPEVINE Hangman's House of Horrors Train 817/625-RAIL</p> <p>GUNTER Ranch Roundup 903/433-0701</p> <p>HUBBARD Lord's Acre Festival 254/576-2313</p> <p>PALESTINE Hot Pepper Festival 800/659-3484</p> <p>Murder on the Disoriented Express 800/659-3484</p>	<p>26</p> <p>SALADO Texas Writers Roundup 254/947-9205</p> <p>SHERMAN Symphony Orchestra 903/813-2251</p> <p>VAN Oil Festival 903/963-5051</p> <p>WAXAHACHIE Beatles Revue 972/938-1390</p> <hr/> <p>26-27</p> <p>BELLVILLE Country Antiques Festival 979/865-3407 or 865-9116</p> <p>DALLAS American Indian Art Festival & Market 214/891-9640</p> <hr/> <p>26-27, 30-31</p> <p>SALADO Fright Trail Nights 254/947-9205</p> <hr/> <p>27</p> <p>HALLETTSVILLE Polka Fest 361/798-2311</p> <hr/> <p>28</p> <p>FORT WORTH Halloween Spooktacular 817/255-9408</p> <hr/> <p>30-NOV 3</p> <p>GLEN ROSE International Texas Longhorn Show 972/293-1032 or 254/897-4509</p> <hr/> <p>31</p> <p>FORT WORTH Stockyards Station Halloween Festival 817/625-9715</p> <p>GRAPEVINE Halloween on Main Street Bike Ride 800/457-6338</p> <p>LANCASTER Pumpkin Festival 972/227-1112</p> <p>MOULTON Pumpkin Trail & Chili Supper 361/596-8161 or 596-7047</p>	<p>5</p> <p>TILDEN Dog Town Days 361/274-3331</p> <p>TULETA Antique Button Collectors Show 361/375-2558</p> <hr/> <p>5-6</p> <p>SAN ANTONIO River Art Group Show 210/432-8752</p> <hr/> <p>6</p> <p>SAN ANTONIO Low & Slow Classic Car Show 210/226-1896</p> <hr/> <p>10-11</p> <p>McALLEN Wild Walk 956/682-2871</p> <hr/> <p>10-13</p> <p>FALFURRIAS Fiesta del Campo 361/325-3333</p> <p>SAN ANTONIO Texas Senior Pro Rodeo 210/698-3300</p> <hr/> <p>14-20</p> <p>SAN ANTONIO Senior PGA Tour SBC Championship 210/698-3582</p> <hr/> <p>17-20</p> <p>MISSION Texas Butterfly Festival 956/585-2727</p> <hr/> <p>18</p> <p>SAN ANTONIO Greek Festival 210/735-5051</p> <hr/> <p>18-19</p> <p>CARRIZO SPRINGS Brush Country Days Festival 830/876-5205</p> <hr/> <p>19</p> <p>GOLIAD Missions Tour de Goliad Bike Ride 361/645-3563</p> <hr/> <p>19-20</p> <p>SAN ANTONIO International Accordion Festival 210/207-6960</p> <hr/> <p>20</p> <p>EAGLE PASS Día del Rio Festival 830/773-1836</p> <hr/> <p>26-NOV 2</p> <p>SAN ANTONIO Día de los Muertos 210/207-8600</p> <hr/> <p>30-31</p> <p>SAN ANTONIO Zoo Boo 210/734-7184</p> <hr/> <p>30-NOV 2</p> <p>SAN ANTONIO Day of the Dead 210/822-9727</p> <hr/> <p>31</p> <p>SAN ANTONIO Day of the Dead 210/534-8875</p>
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SOUTH TEXAS PLAINS

<p>1</p> <p>SAN ANTONIO Mass of the Roses 210/734-4002</p> <hr/> <p>1-31</p> <p>EAGLE PASS Monarch Migration Month 830/773-1836</p> <hr/> <p>4-5, 11-12</p> <p>SAN ANTONIO Oktoberfest 210/222-1521</p> <hr/> <p>5</p> <p>BEEVILLE Bee County Family Fall Fest 361/358-3267</p>

WHERE IN TEXAS ARE YOU?

Tell us the location of the statue, and you could win a six-night Rio Grande Valley getaway (see contest rules at right).

THE CONTEST WINNER WILL RECEIVE:

Transportation

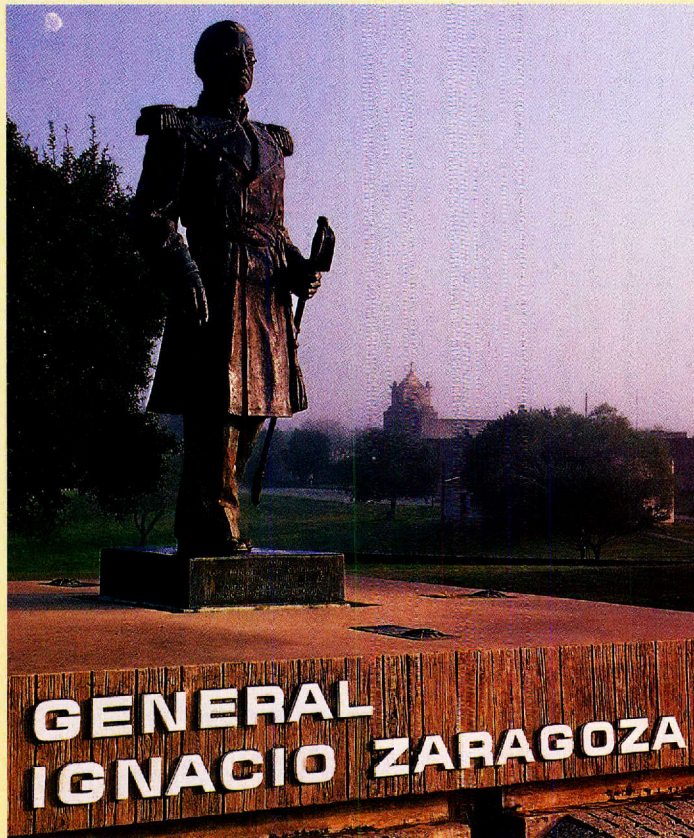
- ★ Two round-trip airline tickets to Harlingen from any city served by Southwest, courtesy Southwest Airlines
- ★ Rental car for one week, courtesy Advantage Rent-A-Car in Harlingen

Accommodations (for two)

- ★ Two nights at the Country Inn & Suites (Harlingen)
- ★ Two-night weekend stay at Four Points By Sheraton McAllen (includes breakfast buffet)
- ★ One night at Four Points By Sheraton Brownsville
- ★ One night at Hawthorn Suites (Brownsville)

Dining (for two)

- ★ Breakfast at Embassy Suites Remington's Restaurant (McAllen)
- ★ Lunch at Mother's Oven (McAllen)
- ★ Sunday brunch at Renaissance Casa de Palmas Spanish Room (McAllen)
- ★ Lunch at Palm Court Restaurant (Brownsville)
- ★ Dinner at Denny's Restaurant (Brownsville)
- ★ Dinner at Santa Fe Steakhouse (McAllen)
- ★ Cornerstone Grill (McAllen)



J. GRIFFIN SMITH

- ★ Dinner at Emilio's Steakhouse (Harlingen)

Sightseeing & Shopping (for two)

- ★ Free entrance to: Santa Ana National Wildlife Refuge, Sabal Palm Audubon Sanctuary, Brownsville Historic Museum, Brownsville Heritage Complex, CAF Flying Museum (Brownsville), Rio Grande Valley Museum (Harlingen)

- ★ Canoe trip by Friends of the Wildlife Corridor
- ★ Tour of historic Brownsville or Matamoros, Mexico, with Burlingame Bro-Mat Tours
- ★ Historic Harlingen Trolley Tour, operated by Vamonos Travel
- ★ \$50 gift certificate from Glory B's (Harlingen)
- ★ \$50 gift certificate for dining or shopping in Jackson Street Historic District (Harlingen)

Our thanks to the Brownsville Convention & Visitors Bureau, the Harlingen Area Chamber of Commerce, the McAllen Chamber of Commerce Convention & Visitors Bureau, and Southwest Airlines for putting together this choice prize package. Texas Highways readers love the Rio Grande Valley!

For travel information year round, write to the friendly folks at: **Brownsville Convention & Visitors Bureau** (650 FM 802), Box 4697, Brownsville 78523; 800/626-2639; www.brownsville.org; email: visinfo@brownsville.org. **Harlingen Area Chamber of Commerce**, 311 E. Tyler, Harlingen 78550-9121; 956/423-5440 or 800/531-7346; www.harlingen.com; email: visitorinfo@harlingen.com. **McAllen Chamber of Commerce Convention & Visitors Bureau** (1200 Ash Ave.), Box 790, McAllen 78505-0790; 956/682-2871 or 877/MCALLEN (622-5536); www.mcallenchamber.com; email: tour.sm@mcallencvb.com.

TEXAS
HIGHWAYS
CONTEST
Win a Rio Grande
Valley Getaway!

CONTEST RULES

(no purchase necessary)

1. Only one entry per person. Entries must be on postcards. To be eligible for the drawing, each entrant must include on the postcard the correct answer (judges' decisions are final), as well as his/her name, mailing address, and daytime phone number.
2. Entrants must be 18 years of age or older. Current employees of the Texas Department of Transportation and their immediate families are not eligible.
3. Send entries to: Texas Highways Contest, Box 141009, Austin 78714-1009. All entries must be postmarked by September 20, 2002. Texas Highways is not responsible for late, lost, or misdirected entries.
4. The winning card will be drawn on September 27, 2002. We will attempt to notify the winner the same day. If we cannot contact the winner directly by 5 p.m. on September 30, 2002, another card will be drawn.
5. Expiration dates on the various offers may differ. Some additional expenses are not included in the package. Lodging and transportation certificates are subject to availability; reservations required.
6. The winner is solely responsible for any income taxes incurred.
7. By entering the contest, contestants agree to the above rules and regulations.



