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Brenham/Washington County  
115 West Main Street  
Brenham, TX 77833  
979-337-7580  
[www.VisitBrenhamTexas.com](http://www.VisitBrenhamTexas.com)



## Brenham

From the vibrant reds and blues of blooming Indian paintbrush and bluebonnets to chilled scoops of Blue Bell Ice Cream, much of what defines the Lone Star State can be found in Brenham. This quaint community of just 19,000 people resides among the scenic sloping hills of South Central Texas near where the Republic of Texas was born. Shop or dine in the historic buildings of the Downtown National Register District, drink a glass of wine crafted at a nearby vineyard, stroll through a field of blooming lavender, experience the town's thriving cultural scene, or simply kick back and enjoy the area's scenic beauty. There's much to enjoy when you visit Brenham, and its



convenient location halfway between Austin and Houston makes it a popular destination for visitors.

Brenham was established, and voted as the seat of Washington County, in 1844 and named after Richard Fox Brenham, a veteran of the Texas War of Independence and a hero of the republic. The town was formed just 20 miles southwest of Washington-on-the-Brazos, where in 1836, 59 delegates representing the people of Texas drafted the Declaration of Independence and the republic's first constitution. This essential part of Texas history can be experienced at the [Washington-on-the-Brazos State Historic Site](#), which includes several attractions designed to teach visitors about the time period.

A mass of German and Czech immigrants arrived before the end of the 19th century, and their arrival would help shape Brenham into what it is today. Perhaps the best evidence of this is the [Maifest](#), begun in 1881 to honor the city's German heritage and the oldest festival in Texas. At some point in the late 19th century, a series of underground cisterns designed to collect rainwater for firefighting were built in Brenham, making the town possibly the first in Texas to provide a public utility! The

history of the cisterns is told at [Toubin Park](#), located in Downtown Brenham.

In 1907, several local farmers established the Brenham Creamery Company, which would eventually become the ice cream giant known as [Blue Bell Creameries](#). For more than 100 years, the creamery has produced and sold ice cream across the state of Texas and beyond, leading Brenham to become known as the "Ice Cream Capital of Texas!" Stop by the creamery's ice cream parlor to sample some of Blue Bell's famous confections.

Speaking of sampling, there are three wineries in the immediate area that offer a range of wines to sample at each of their on-site tasting rooms. In addition, a local brewery offers tasty brews in their taproom.

All of this is just a taste of what you can see and do in Brenham. A professional theatre that brings in actors from around the country ([Unity Theatre](#)), two state-of-the-art performance halls - [The Barnhill Center at Historic Simon Theatre](#) and [Dr. W.W. O'Donnell Performing Arts Center](#) - and murals, art galleries and antique shops are peppered throughout town. A few miles north, you'll find a large garden of magnificent roses and aromatic flowers at the [Antique Rose Emporium](#), which has won acclaim from the Great Rosarian Hall of Fame.



Ample scenic beauty, one-of-a-kind attractions, and a great location near the birthplace of the Republic of Texas make Brenham a great place to visit.

