



Laredo, Texas
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Laredo

Narrow streets lined with stucco-walled storefronts lead to a vast plaza enclosed by aged red-brick roads and colorful arcade-style buildings. A cement gazebo with ornately-carved designs sits among numerous trees and freshly cut grass at the heart of the plaza. Towering above it all is a stunning Gothic Revival-style cathedral with a five-story tall bell and clock tower. Welcome to the San Agustin plaza in Laredo, a multi-cultural town nestled on the north bank of the Rio Grande River. Here you'll find a thriving town that combines its Mexican and American heritage to



form something unique. A fascinating history, a diverse arts scene, and plenty of outdoor recreation offer many reasons to visit Laredo, a large town situated about 150 miles south of San Antonio.

The city of Laredo traces its roots back to 1755, when it was founded by a Spanish captain and settled by three families. It quickly grew to be one of the most prominent cities along the Rio Grande River. In 1840, it was even the capital of the short-lived Republic of the Rio Grande, a revolution that sought to break from the Mexican states of Coahuila, Nuevo Leon, and Tamaulipas into an independent nation. Although the revolution failed, the republic's banner still flies over Laredo to this day, making it the only place in Texas where seven flags have flown, instead of six. The fascinating story of the republic is retold at the [Republic of the Rio Grande Museum](#), housed within one of the oldest structures in town. For a more

comprehensive look at Laredo's history, culture, and people, head to the [Villa Antigua Border Heritage Museum](#), located in a restored early 20th-century home two blocks to the east.

Although Laredo's history is fascinating, it's certainly not the only reason to visit. For starters, Laredo is one of the best birding destinations in South Texas. In its peak season, usually at the beginning of February, more than 240 species of native and migratory birds can be seen in and around town. There's also a thriving arts movement to experience. [Art galleries](#) full of vibrant paintings and expertly-crafted pottery can be browsed, while performances from a [professional orchestra](#) and two theater companies will delight.

As a long-time center of commerce between two nations, Laredo is a shopper's paradise. Its San Bernardo Avenue has more than 40 blocks of imported Mexican pottery, clothing, and jewelry from all over Mexico to browse. Several sprawling shopping malls with all the familiar department stores can be found in Laredo as well.



Laredo also has much to offer those who love playing and watching sports. The city is a true golfer's destination due to its friendly year-round weather and quality of its public courses, the [Max A. Mandel Municipal Golf Course](#) and the [Casa Blanca Golf Club](#). For those who'd rather spectate, there is a professional sports team in Laredo: the [Laredo Heat \(soccer\)](#).

Whether you're a history buff, wildlife enthusiast, arts connoisseur, shopaholic, or a sports fan, you'll find something to love about Laredo. The town's unique culture and wealth of things to see and do makes it a great destination for your next Texas vacation.

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