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Odessa



Odessa is known for its cowboy culture, the legion of oil rigs that stand on top of dusty plains, and *Friday Night Lights*, a book and film based on one of the town's high school football teams. Yet there's more to this West Texas town than meets the eye. Spend some time here and you'll discover more than a few surprises, such as a working recreation of William Shakespeare's Globe Theatre, a replica of Stonehenge, and second largest meteor crater in the United States. Not only that, but the Midland-Odessa area also has a thriving arts scene with top-class performers and a world-class performing arts center. All of these elements combine to make Odessa a top-class vacation destination that has something to offer everyone.

The city was established in 1881 as an important railroad stop for the Texas and Pacific Railway, and it didn't take long for it to develop into a major cattle shipping center. However, its real boom came in 1926, when the discovery of oil would change Odessa from a ranching and shipping community to an industrial one. Since then, it has grown to being a lively town that is part of the thriving Midland-Odessa area.

Although Odessa is a truly modern city, it still retains its cowboy spirit. Experience it for yourself at the [Sandhills Stock Show and Rodeo](#), one of Odessa's premier events that features a rodeo, livestock show, a competitive horse show, and plenty of live country music. Of course, Odessa's rodeo is just one of many events it hosts throughout the year. Other events include a craft beer festival, a car show, and a regional fair.

When you're ready to hang up your cowboy hat, catch a performance at the [Globe of the Great Southwest](#), the aforementioned recreation of Shakespeare's Globe Theatre located on the campus of the University of Texas of the Permian Basin. [The Permian Playhouse](#) is another theater in Odessa that produces a wide variety of plays and musicals throughout most of the year. Meanwhile, the [Midland-Odessa Symphony & Chorale](#) has much to offer you music lovers out there. The company includes a symphony and three instrumental ensembles that offer top-class performances at the [Wagner Noel Performing Arts Center](#), a world-class facility situated between Odessa and Midland. Finally, the [Ellen Noël Art Museum of the Permian Basin](#), one of only two Smithsonian-affiliated museums in Texas, presents the works of more than 400 American artists.

All of this just scratches the surface of what Odessa has to offer. Travel here and you'll understand why Odessa has so much to offer the West Texas visitor.