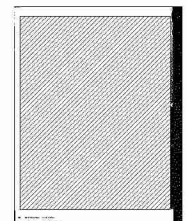
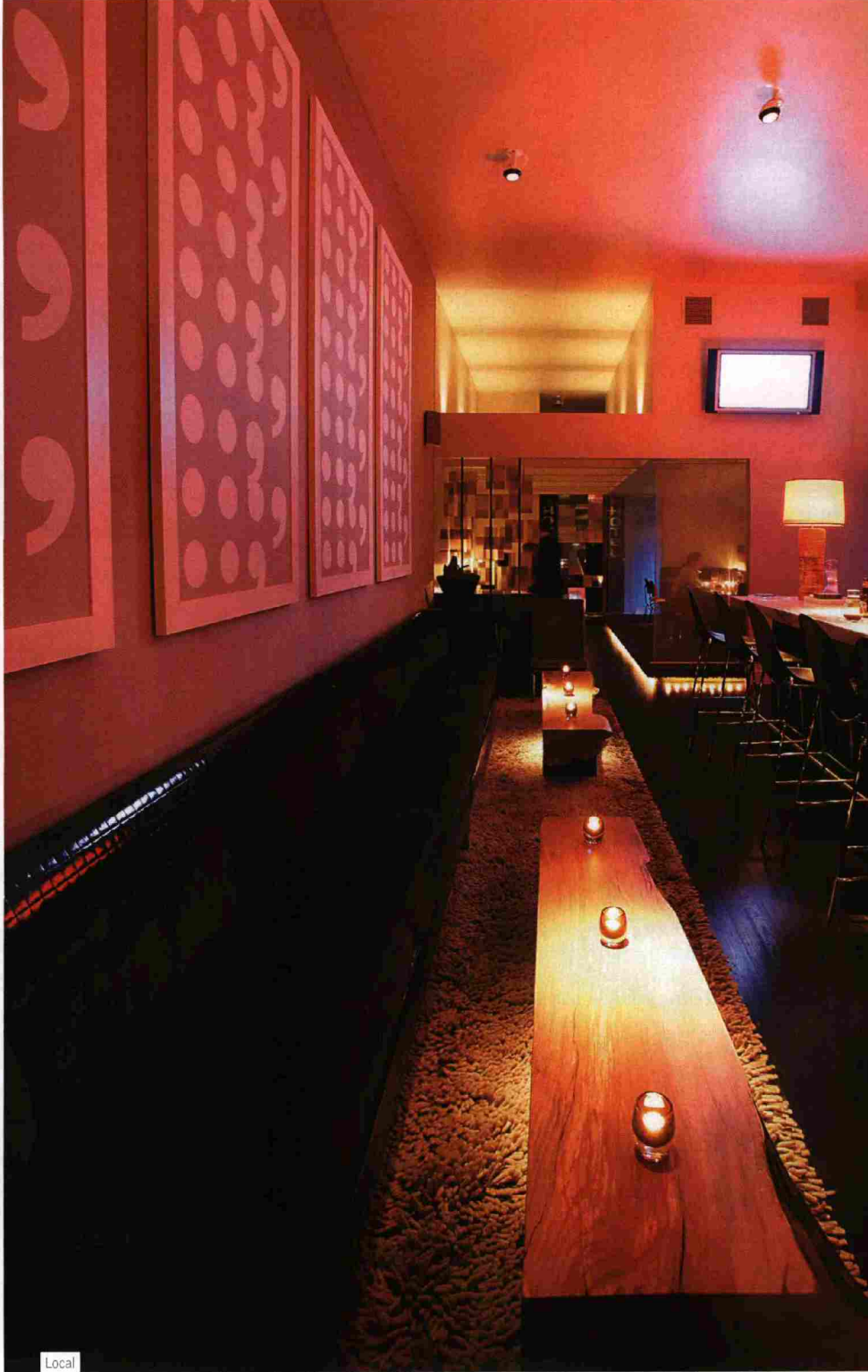


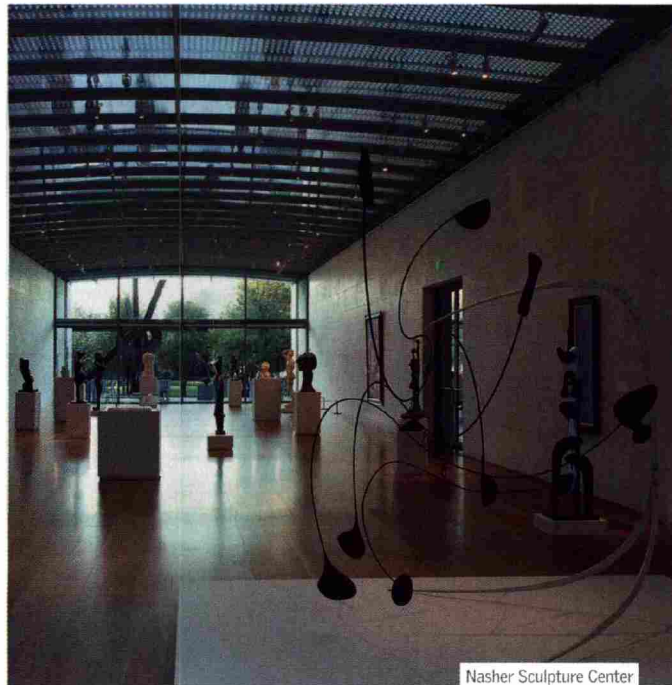
LONE STAR LAYOVER

Globally acclaimed cultural treasures and some of the nation's best dining and shopping lie less than an hour's drive from the tarmac of Dallas/Fort Worth International Airport. Just landing? Then you're just in time. By David House





The wheels are down, the flaps are rolling out, and the engines are being throttled back. During a plane's final approach into Dallas/Fort Worth International Airport, the view of North Texas from the air — of lakes, crazy quilt patterns of farmland, and highways dotted with traffic that connect every corner of the Metroplex — never fails to pique the curiosity of the passengers aboard. The view is, in essence, the definition of urban sprawl. ¶ East of DFW Airport, you'll find downtown Dallas's glittering skyline of high-rises, with the landmark ball that is Reunion Tower (home to the recently opened Wolfgang Puck restaurant Five Sixty, no less) juxtaposed against the hard angles of other towering skyscrapers. West of the airport, historic Fort Worth sprawls across ancient prairies; from the air, its skyline is a distant dot on the horizon. Just north of DFW Airport are Lake Grapevine's shimmering waters, near the majestic Gaylord Texan Resort & Convention Center. ¶ And south of DFW Airport, in Arlington, sits Texas's latest architectural marvel: the Dallas Cowboys' new billion-dollar stadium. A quarter of a mile long and the world's largest domed structure to date, it gleams like a futuristic silver starship, dwarfing the nearby Rangers Ballpark in Arlington and the Six Flags Over Texas theme park. ¶ What can't be seen during final approach can be imagined — the shopping galore and the joie de vivre that comes with the local arts, entertainment, and nightlife readily available. It's all there to be explored, and with the right amount of time planned between flights or an extended layover arranged with ticket agents after your arrival, you can squeeze plenty of it into your trip. After all, "everything's bigger in Texas" for a reason.



Nasher Sculpture Center

Shopping

NorthPark Center, on North Central Expressway and Northwest Highway in Dallas, draws more than 25 million visitors annually with its luxury retailers (including Neiman Marcus and Barneys New York) and market exclusives. NorthPark's signature event — Fashion at the Park — gives the public and international news media the privilege of a first look at the latest fashions.

Galleria Dallas, on Dallas Parkway, draws more than 19 million shoppers annually and has more than 200 stores, which range from trendy boutiques to megastores. The Galleria is uniquely designed around its centerpiece, the Galleria Ice Skating Center, located beneath its famous vaulted glass-ceiling atrium.

On a much smaller scale is **Highland Park Village**, set in the historic neighborhood of Dallas's elite Highland Park. Quaint and old-fashioned, the open-air shopping center, complete with an old-timey movie theater, is a throwback to old Dallas. Stores to hit include Chanel, Anthropologie, Rugby, Scoop NYC, and Kiehl's.

Grapevine Mills Mall, two miles north of DFW Airport, offers more than 200 outlet stores, including Neiman Marcus Last Call Clearance Center, Saks Fifth Avenue Off 5th, and JCPenney Outlet. Adventure awaits at the Bass Pro Shops Outdoor World, a super sporting-goods store, and the famed Rainforest Cafe, which has a jungle setting and tropical storms.

Museums

A trip to the downtown Dallas Arts District should include a visit to the **Dallas Museum of Art**, where "Tutankhamun and the Golden Age of the Pharaohs" presents priceless artifacts from the boy king's tomb and other ancient Egyptian sites.

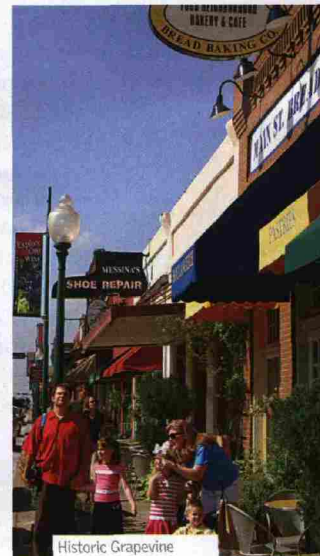
Across the street from the Dallas Museum of Art is the acclaimed Renzo Piano-designed **Nasher Sculpture Center**, which is devoted to modern and contemporary sculpture. Its 1.5-acre sculpture garden features large-scale pieces from the renowned Raymond and Patsy Nasher collection.

This October, experience the architecturally splendid **Dallas Center for the Performing Arts**, a state-of-the-art multiveneue facility for opera, music, theater, and dance. Under construction at the moment, it's being viewed as the most significant new performing-arts complex to be built since New York City's Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts.

Other Dallas Arts District gems include



NorthPark Center



Historic Grapevine

the stunning **Morton H. Meyerson Symphony Center**, where daytime tours are available, and the **Trammell & Margaret Crow Collection of Asian Art** museum, which focuses on artwork from China, Japan, India, and Southeast Asia.

A few blocks away, you'll find the **Sixth Floor Museum** at Dealey Plaza in the former Texas School Book Depository, where evidence of the November 22, 1963, assassination of President John F. Kennedy was found. Exhibits there explore that tragedy. Next door is the **Dallas Holocaust Museum/Center for Education and Tolerance**, dedicated to remembering the Holocaust and to teaching the moral and ethical response to prejudice, hatred, and indifference. Parental discretion is advised.

At Fair Park, east of downtown, the **Museum of Nature & Science** presents everything

from dinosaurs to the stars and includes the **Children's Museum**, which has hands-on exhibits designed for exploration and discovery. Fair Park's other jewels include the **Women's Museum** and the **African American Museum**.

In Fort Worth's Cultural District (the country's third largest), the **Modern Art Museum** presents "The Collection and Then Some," an exhibit of nearly 100 works from the museum's 3,000-plus-piece permanent collection, which includes art by Jackson Pollock, Andy Warhol, and Pablo Picasso, as well as guest pieces from area collections. With the nation's second-largest modern-art collection, this is one museum not to miss.

Just across the way from the Modern, the **Kimbell Art Museum** offers "Art and Love in Renaissance Italy," showcasing approximately 150 paintings and art objects dating



Bass Performance Hall



Nobu

Itchin' for Nightlife?

Near the airport, in Grapevine, there's the dazzling **Glass Cactus** nightclub at the Gaylord Texan Resort & Convention Center. Billed as "39,000 square feet of temptations," the Glass Cactus features live entertainment nightly from top national and local acts.

Over yonder, in Fort Worth, go boot scootin' at cavernous **Billy Bob's Texas** or the historic **White Elephant Saloon** in the Stockyards. Downtown, in Sundance Square, there's live jazz at the **Scat Jazz Lounge**, and there are four dance clubs with music ranging from techno to hip-hop at **City Streets**. Hear the blues on Friday and Saturday nights at **J&J Blues Bar**, north-west of downtown. For a neighborhood spot where everybody knows your name (well, maybe not yours, but you get the idea), try the **Mule Pub, Ye Olde Bull & Bush**, or the **Ginger Man**. All offer pool, darts, great jukeboxes, and loads of beer. What else do you need?

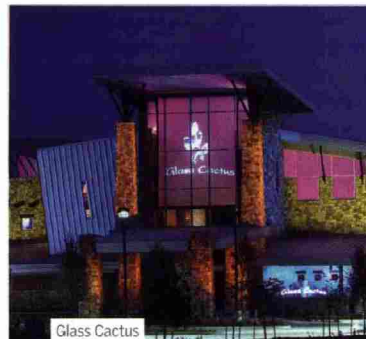
Hot spots in Dallas include storied Lower Greenville Avenue, where the landmark **Granada Theater** has carved out a reputation as one of the city's best live-music venues. Touring acts take the Granada's big stage and put its spectacular sound system to work.

Victory Park, just north of downtown Dallas, is home to the **W Dallas-Victory** hotel and its futuristic **Ghostbar** on the 33rd floor. Be sure to get some fresh air on the smaller of the bar's two outdoor balconies — the glass floor affords some unique views below. Just down the street from the W, you'll find another music-junkie favorite: the **House of Blues**. In Uptown, **Stopelegh P** offers late-night solace with good company, food, and drinks in historic digs that at one time were a pharmacy (hence the P in the name).

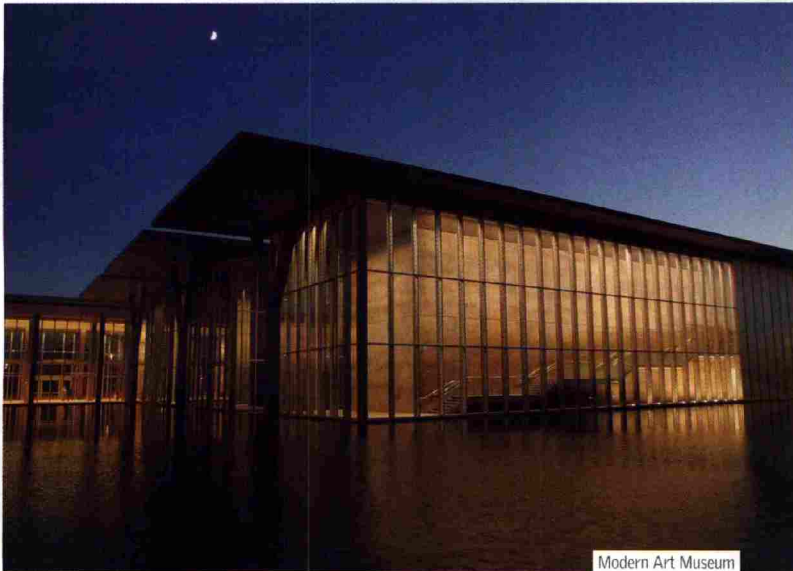
Up for an indie movie and a martini? Then hit Dallas's historic **Inwood Theatre**. Restored to its original palatial glory, the landmark features a family-style theater downstairs — outfitted with sofas, love seats, and overstuffed seating — and two regular theaters upstairs. Across the lobby, the adjacent (and popular) **Inwood Lounge** offers excellent drinks, amiable service, and the ambience of bygone days.

Travelers feeling lucky can head to Irishman Peter Kinney's **Capitol Pub**, a freewheeling neighborhood spot known for high-end bar food, international beers, and a homey wraparound porch. For some hole-in-the-wall excellence, try **Lakewood Landing**, which serves what some say are Dallas's best BLTs, along with thick fries, wings, and ice-cold beer. And it has an awesome jukebox.

And for the best views of downtown Dallas, the hands-down winner is **BarBelmont** at the historic art moderne **Belmont Hotel**, which is perched atop a man-made cliff on the outskirts of town.



Glass Cactus



Modern Art Museum

from between 1400 and 1600.

Along with its collection of Remingtons and Western and other American art, the **Amon Carter Museum** presents photographer Barbara Crane's exquisite work.

At present, there's a two-for-one ticket that allows entry to the **National Cowgirl Museum and Hall of Fame** and the **Museum of Science and History**. Both are temporarily housed under the National Cowgirl Museum and Hall of Fame roof while construction proceeds on the new Museum of Science and History facility.

Sports

For the opening of Major League Baseball's 2009 season, tour the Texas Rangers' grand **Rangers Ballpark in Arlington** and visit the **Legends of the Game Baseball Museum and Learning Center**. Upgrades to the ballpark

include new scoreboards and premium home-plate seating — just in time for home games this month against the Cleveland Indians, the Baltimore Orioles, the Kansas City Royals, and the Oakland Athletics.

Fort Worth's **Texas Motor Speedway**, one of the world's largest sports venues, offers tours of its 1,500-acre facility, which challenges America's best race-car drivers.

Just north of downtown Dallas is the **American Airlines Center**, the high-tech home of the National Basketball Association's Dallas Mavericks and the National Hockey League's Dallas Stars. It's also a leading venue for concerts and other major events. Tours take the public inside operations.

And the thoroughbred-horse-racing season is off and running this month at Grand Prairie's Class 1 **Lone Star Park**, just miles from the airport.

Food

More than 10,000 restaurants can be found in the Metroplex, and the best, according to the 2008 Zagat survey, is the nation's number one hotel restaurant: **Fearing's at the Ritz-Carlton, Dallas** in trendy Uptown. Legendary chef Dean Fearing, inventor of tortilla soup, serves brilliant adventures — dishes of buffalo, tamales, quail, and other Southwestern cuisine — in an environment of rich woods, leathers, textures, glass, and earth tones. Downtown, Japanese fusion chef Nobuyuki Matsuhisa creates sublime culinary transcendence at **Nobu** in the elegant Rosewood Crescent Hotel. (Tip: Keep an eye out for NBA and NHL players while dining here.)

With fresh local ingredients arriving daily and head chef Graham Dodds's home-produced honey, **Bolsa** in the Bishop Arts District serves inventive homemade fare that earns raves from each and every person who passes through the restaurant's doors.

In Fort Worth, visit the widely acclaimed **Lonesome Dove Western Bistro** in the Stockyards. Chef and owner Tim Love, who has cooked at the renowned James Beard House in New York, explores the potential of cuisine from the Old West with dishes such as buffalo rib eye and wild boar — all served in rustic environs accented by white tablecloths, old brick walls, and Western art.

Nearby is legendary **Joe T. Garcia's** Mexican restaurant, which has an enchanting, heavily landscaped expanse surrounding the tiled patio. Downtown Fort Worth must include rooftop patio dining at **Reata**, where inventive Texas cuisine mixes with stunning views. Barbecue lovers should head to **Risky's** in Sundance Square or good ole **Angelo's**, west of downtown.

Back in Dallas, at **Local** in Deep Ellum, which is east of downtown, chef and owner Tracy Miller serves inspired American dishes. On McKinney Avenue, **Abacus**, with its entrancing minimalist environment, explores contemporary global cuisine. **The Porch**, on North Henderson Avenue, pulls in crowds hungry for home-style food and heavy, happy socializing.

Burger devotees will find nirvana on Currie Street in Fort Worth at funky **Fred's Texas Cafe**. And in Deep Ellum, half pounders rule at the popular **Angry Dog**.

Places

Visitors revel in delightful **Sundance Square**, Fort Worth's history-packed downtown entertainment and shopping district, and in Dallas's **West End Historic District**, which has an array of restaurants, clubs, and historic sites. Paying court to Sundance Square is Fort Worth's majestic **Bass Performance Hall**, complete with 48-foot angels blowing bugles on either side of the main entrance. The hall, which sits on one full city block, is home to the Fort Worth Symphony Orchestra, the Texas Ballet Theater, the Fort Worth Opera, and the Van Cliburn International Piano Competition.


The **Fort Worth Stockyards National Historic District** offers Western museums and a host of restaurants and shops along its red-brick streets. Cattle drives begin at 11:30 a.m. and four p.m. daily — cowboys in authentic gear saddle up and herd Texas longhorns along East Exchange Avenue.

The internationally acclaimed **Fort Worth Zoo**, southwest of downtown, is the oldest in Texas and one of the finest in the United States, featuring the country's most elite herpetarium, the Museum of Living Art.

Historic Grapevine, just north of DFW Airport, preserves old-time architectural charm. Hop on the **Grapevine Vintage Railroad** for an open-air trip to and from Fort Worth's Stockyards.

Five minutes southwest of downtown Dallas, the **Bishop Arts District** presents an eclectic mix of boutiques, shops, and restaurants that showcase everything from local artists' works to exotic soft drinks.

For a little more adventure, parents and children can whoop it up at **Six Flags Over Texas** in Arlington, where shows and more than 50 rides promise a thrilling break from travel.

With all these options to choose from — and loads more that we didn't get to tell you about — don't be surprised if you find yourself extending your 24-hour stay to one that lasts the whole weekend. We won't be. 

For contact information on all the places mentioned in this story, please go to www.americanwaymag.com.

DAVID HOUSE is a freelance writer based in Texas. He has been a reporter and an editor at the *Dallas Morning News*, the *Denver Post*, the *St. Petersburg Times*, and the *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, where he served as senior editor/reader advocate.