The INSIDE SCOOP

28 THINGS to See & Do

When in Southeast Texas, do as the Southeast Texans do, and make every moment count! In fact, if you add up all of these moments, you’ll have one truly memorable trip.

PET A BABY GATOR’S BELLY (ever so carefully) at Gator Country Wildlife Adventure Park. When was the last time you held a real-life alligator? Never? So don’t miss this opportunity to cradle a gator at Gator Country.

FIND THE BABY IN A KING CAKE. A Mardi Gras tradition, each king cake includes a toy baby baked inside. The person who finds the slice with the toy brings the next king cake.

DIVE INTO CRAWFISH before two-stepping your way across the dance floor at Larry’s French Market. Ooh la la! Dig into a boiled crawfish platter at the legendary Larry’s. Then hit the floor to boot scoot and two-step to a live band. Can’t dance? No problem. The restaurant offers free Cajun dance lessons on Saturday nights.

SEE THE GUSHER BLOW at Spindletop.
To catch a crab, you’ve got to think like one. Try “old-school” crabbing with a net and a chicken bone tied to a string. Or go “high-tech” with a ring trap. Either way, you’re bound to haul in enough for a Southeast Texas crab boil.

Go crabbing

Reel in the big one on Sabine Lake. No need for “the one that got away” excuses when you’re fishing on Sabine Lake. Chances are good that the redfish, trout or flounder are biting.

Have your own EUREKA MOMENT at the Edison Museum. Learn all about the genius of Thomas A. Edison, “America’s inventor,” through the interactive exhibits of this Beaumont museum.

HUNT FOR GHOSTS down Sarah Jane Road. When the night is inky black drive down Sarah Jane Road between the cities of Groves and Port Neches in search of the namesake specter said to haunt the roadway and bridge.

CHEER on the home team at a high school football game. Check out the Bum Phillips Bowl (a.k.a. Mid County Madness)—a 91-year-old tradition between rivals Nederland and Port Neches-Groves high schools. According to “Texas Sports & Polls,” the yearly match between the Bulldogs & Indians earned the no. 1 spot out of 100 for the most loved rivalry in Texas, with an average of 14,000 fans filling the stands.

BRUNCH WATERSIDE at the Neches River Wheelhouse.

Feed the koi at the Beaumont Botanical Gardens.

RUN A HALF MARATHON

Or 10k (or less) over the MLK Bridge. Lace up your running shoes and hit the streets for the Pleasure Island Bridge Half Marathon, 10k and 2 mile.
**Eat your weight in pecan pie**
There are carnival rides, arts and crafts, fair food and a parade, but the number one reason to attend the Groves Pecan Festival is to fill up on all of the slices of pecan pie you can want!

**GO ANTIQUING**
For vintage finds, explore Beaumont’s Old Town Antique District on Calder Avenue, Groves’ Lincoln Avenue, Nederland’s Boston Avenue, or the 36,000-square-foot Snooper’s Paradise in Groves.

**CATCH A FLICK in Jefferson Theatre’s Classic Movie Night series.**
There is no better place to watch old and new than in this historic movie theater in Beaumont.

**SPUR ON THE TUNNEL BOATS as they compete at the Port Neches RiverFest’s Thunder on the Neches races.**

**STUFF YOURSELF with BBQ crabs at Sartin’s Seafood.**
This iconic crab shack is the place to go to try barbecued crabs—no other place compares!

**POSE WITH A PAINTED PORSCHE.**
Take your photo beside a replica of Blues singer—and Port Arthur native—Janis Joplin’s psychedelic-painted 1965 Porsche 356C Cabriolet at the Museum of the Gulf Coast. It’ll have you humming, “Oh Lord, won’t you buy me a Mercedes Benz” the rest of the day.

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FERRY THE KIDS TO Tugboat Island
Put a smile on your kids’ faces by bringing them to the imaginative playground Tugboat Island, where they can storm the castle or captain the tugboat.

MEDITATE
at the Buu Mon Buddhist Temple.
Reflect on the beauty of the lotus gardens at this temple in Port Arthur. Or enjoy hot tea and conversation with resident monks.

MUNCH ON A JUDICE’S HAMBURGER AND WATCH THE SHIPS PASS BY. Some of the best burgers around can be found at Judice’s Cajun Café. Grab one and watch the big boats go by on the ship channel as you sit on the boardwalk.

SNAP A SELFIE in front of the Fire Museum’s gigantic, dalmation-spotted fire hydrant.

CATCH SOME MARDI GRAS BEADS.
Southeast Texas’ Mardi Gras parades are epic celebrations, complete with decked-out floats, prancing horses, unusual characters and those coveted beads.

TRICK OR TREAT at the John Jay French Museum. Each year this historic home hosts a Pumpkin Walk and Haunted Halloween Tour. Decorate pumpkins before going on a ghostly tour of the property. Maybe the ghost of John Jay French himself will join you! ★

AND WE’RE JUST GETTING STARTED! For more ideas about things to see and do in Southeast Texas visit visitbeaumonttx.com and visitportarthurtx.com.

CHART YOUR FAMILY TREE at the Tyrrell Historical Library. If you have roots in Southeast Texas, you’ll want to explore the collections at the Tyrrell Historical Library. Featuring diaries, newspapers, documents, photographs and more, the library is a treasure trove for amateur—and professional—genealogists.