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ALL YOU NEED TO PLAN YOUR PERFECT TRIP



www.visitsanantonio.com

San Antonio in a Day

San Antonio, 1 Day

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Guide Description



AUTHOR NOTE: Here is a fabulous one-day San Antonio itinerary. It all starts with a Mexican lunch on the famous River Walk, followed by an afternoon of San Antonio history, and ending with a great Italian dinner on the River Walk. Drinks at two well-known watering holes to follow, if you have the energy!

Itinerary Overview

things to do
restaurants
hotels
nightlife

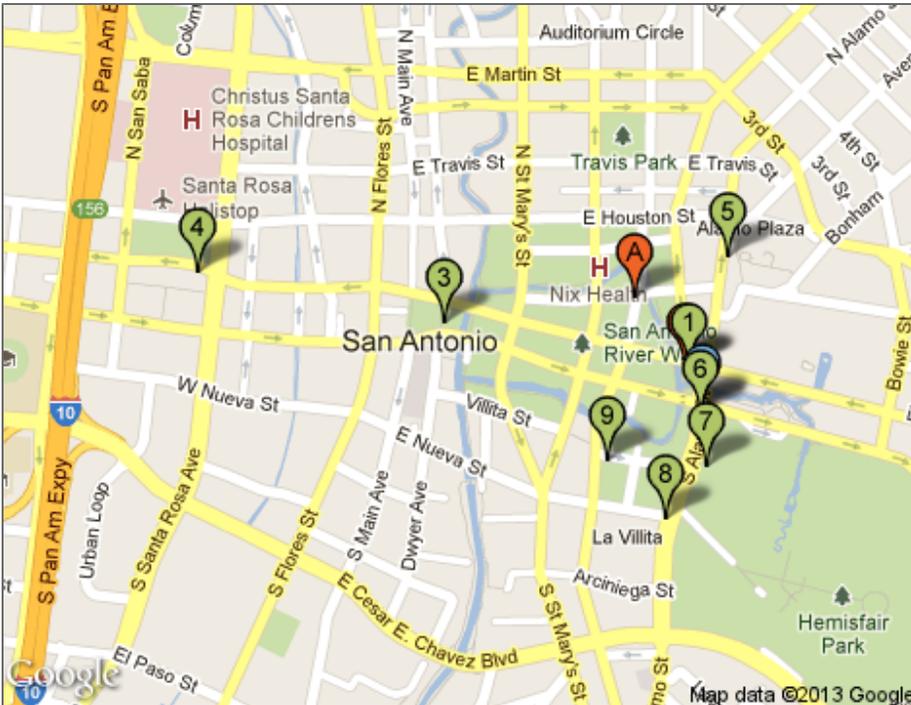
Day 1 - San Antonio

DAY NOTE: This one-day itinerary starts around 11am with a 45 minute narrated tour of the San Antonio River aboard a Rio San Antonio cruise. Board the river barge across from the Hilton Palacio Del Rio Hotel and learn all about the San Antonio River and it's rich history. After your cruise, have an authentic Mexican meal at Casa Rio. Sit outside along the river if you can, and watch the barges go by. Walk up to street level and get ready to burn off that lunch. Walk west on Commerce St. to the San Fernando Cathedral and take a look inside the oldest cathedral in the US. Then head a few blocks further west to the Market Square, where you can find great Mexican imports and souvenirs of your brief stay in San Antonio. After the Market Square, walk east on Market St. and turn left on Alamo Street to get to San Antonio's star attraction, the Alamo. You can spend anywhere from 30-90 minutes at the Alamo depending on what you want to see. I would highly recommend watching the 20 minute video on the history of the Battle of the Alamo, at a minimum. Head south on Alamo Street now to La Villita Historic Arts Village. Visit the galleries and the Little Church of La Villita. Cross Alamo Street to HemisFair Park, home of the Tower of the Americas. This park is nice and if you want to get a bird's eye view of the city, go up to the observation deck at the top of the Tower and see all of San Antonio as the sun begins to set! Hopefully you worked up a great appetite for some of the best Italian food in San Antonio. Take the River Walk to Paesano's and enjoy a nice outdoor dinner. If you still have the energy, go for drinks at the VBar (inside the Hotel Valencia) or Dirty Nelly's Irish Pub. Now, cry that you are leaving so soon!

-  **River Walk**
Shopping, dining and nightlife on historic River Walk
-  **Casa Rio Mexican Foods Restaurant**
Classic Tex-Mex food on the River Walk
-  **San Fernando Cathedral**
The oldest active cathedral in Texas
-  **Market Square**
Largest Mexican market outside of Mexico
-  **Alamo (The)**
Historical shrine of Texas' independence
-  **HemisFair Urban Park**
Downtown park & playground

-  **Tower of the Americas**
750-foot tower overlooking downtown San Antonio
-  **Villita Historic Arts Village (La)**
San Antonio's first neighborhood
-  **Little Church (The)**
This one is for the pious
-  **Paesano's River Walk**
Italian at its finest
-  **Durty Nelly's Irish Pub**
Irish pub on the River Walk

Day 1 - San Antonio



QUICK NOTE

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contact:
tel: (210) 227 4262
fax: +1 210 212 7602
<http://thesanantonioriverwalk.com>

location:
454 Losoya
San Antonio TX 78205

1 River Walk

DESCRIPTION: The River Walk is a must-see for any traveler to San Antonio. The River Walk was conceived in 1929. Downtown had serious flooding problems, and a 27-year-old UT architecture graduate named Robert H. Hugman suggested that the city turn the San Antonio River into an asset rather than a hindrance. Hugman's brainchild has since become the essence of the city. Stairways down to the River Walk can be found on street level throughout downtown. Walk down anywhere you like, and wander and explore the great shops,



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galleries, restaurants and sights. To get the full story on the history of the River Walk, take the Rio San Antonio river barge cruise for a 45-minute narrated tour. It is well worth the price. For the romantically inclined, there are also dining cruises for two. It's a sight you don't see just anywhere: a couple eating at a finely appointed candle-lit table on a small, flat boat floating down the river. Service is great because the waiter is never more than a few feet away. © NileGuide

contact:

tel: 210 226 6718
fax: +1 210 225 2216
<http://casa-rio.com/>

location:

430 East Commerce St
San Antonio TX 78205

hours:

Daily 11a-11p

2 Casa Rio Mexican Foods Restaurant

DESCRIPTION: Casa Rio was the first restaurant on the River Walk and is still a must if you have never eaten riverside. With colorful décor, inside and outside seating, and a prime location for people-watching, this restaurant is a favorite among both tourists and locals. Add potent, thirst-quenching margaritas, waitresses bustling about in Mexican sundresses, and Mexican favorites such as enchiladas and tamales, and you have the makings of the classic Tex-Mex dining experience. Because no reservations are taken and this is a hot spot, you may want to arrive a little early to avoid long lines. © wcities.com



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contact:

tel: 210-227-1297
fax: 210-271-0149
<http://www.sfcathedral.org>

location:

115 Main Plaza
San Antonio TX 78205

hours:

Daily 6am-7pm; gift shop
Mon-Fri 9am-4:30pm, Sat
until 5pm

3 San Fernando Cathedral

DESCRIPTION: The San Fernando Cathedral was founded in 1731 and is the oldest active cathedral in Texas. Fifteen families from the Canary Islands were the church's first members. They were a part of King Phillip's efforts to colonize the area and claim it for Spain before the French could gain a foothold in the region. Considered one of the most historically significant churches in the U.S., it has been visited by a number of dignitaries throughout its long history, including President Lyndon Baines Johnson in 1966 and Pope John Paul II in 1987. Located midway between the city center and the Market Square, the cathedral welcomes up to 5,000 people for weekend masses. © NileGuide



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contact:

tel: 210-207-8600
fax: 210-207-4287
<http://www.sanantonio.gov/marketsquare/default.aspx>

location:

514 West Commerce St.
San Antonio TX 78207

4 Market Square

DESCRIPTION: A vibrant cultural and business center since the 1820s, Market Square is the scene of festivals and outdoor events year-round. Market Square is at its best in April, during the city-wide Fiesta celebration. The rest of the year visitors will find great Mexican restaurants, traditional Mexican handicrafts and an indoor shopping center where you are sure to find the perfect souvenir to commemorate your trip. Museo Alameda, which is affiliated with The Smithsonian, features exhibits of work by Latino artists. The square is located just west of the city center and walking distance from most downtown hotels. © NileGuide



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contact:
tel: (210) 225 1391
fax: +1 210 229 1343
<http://www.thealamo.org>

location:
300 Alamo Plaza
San Antonio TX 78205

hours:
9a-5:30p Mon-Sat; 10a-5:30p
Sun

5 Alamo (The)

DESCRIPTION: Originally the Mission San Antonio del Valero, the Alamo is by far the most famous historical site in Texas, playing a significant role in Texas' quest for independence from Mexico. Under the command of Col. William Travis, 189 Texan soldiers bravely defended this fort for 13 days before finally succumbing to Santa Anna's massive Mexican army in early 1836. The chapel and the Long Barrack are all that remain of the fort. Saved from civilian apathy by the Daughters of the Republic of Texas, the mission is now a museum containing relics from the era. Texans take the Alamo very seriously. Silence, or at least a hushed tone of voice, is insisted upon both in the chapel and on the grounds. Narrated tours are available. Admission is free, but donations are encouraged. © wcities.com



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contact:
tel: (210) 207 8572

location:
200 South Alamo St
San Antonio TX 78205

hours:
Dawn-dusk daily.

6 HemisFair Urban Park

DESCRIPTION: Originally created as the grounds for the 1968 Worlds Fair, this park is a favorite of locals and visitors alike. Stroll through the park's 12 acres of fountains, pools, and beautifully landscaped grounds or cavort on the Downtown All Around Playground. Built entirely by volunteers, this playground features wooden play areas designed by kids, including a space tunnel and a castle— perfect for letting little imaginations run wild. Also located on the park grounds are the Institute of Texan Cultures and the Tower of the Americas. © wcities.com



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contact:
tel: 210-207-8615
<http://toweroftheamericas.com>

location:
600 Hemisfair Park
San Antonio TX 78205

hours:
Sun-Thurs 10am-10pm; Fri-Sat 10-11pm

7 Tower of the Americas

DESCRIPTION: Built for the 1968 World's Fair, the 750-foot Tower of the America's is now a multifaceted tourist attraction, with an upscale bar, two restaurants, an observation deck, and a movie theater. Instead of paying \$10.95 for a ticket to the observation deck at the top of the tower, you may want to apply that money toward lunch or dinner at the Chart House restaurant or drinks at the bar (the ride is free for restaurant and bar customers). The top of the tower slowly rotates for an ever-changing view. Check out the Tower of the Americas Plaza, at street level, during the summer. Every Friday night from 7 p.m. to midnight, there are live music performances, car shows, and other free events. © NileGuide



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contact:
tel: 210-207-8610
fax: 210-207-4390
<http://www.lavillita.com>

location:
South Alamo at Nueva
San Antonio TX 78205

8 Villita Historic Arts Village (La)

DESCRIPTION: La Villita means "Little Village" and it is the original home of the first settlers of San Antonio. Today, people visit La Villita for its quaint cobblestone paths, art galleries, and history. It is located on the south bank of the San Antonio River and hosts many outdoor festivals and events with live music and dancing, especially in the springtime. Don't miss a weekend dance performance of Ballet Folklorico at The



Villita Historic Arts Village

Arneson River Theater, an amphitheater in La Villita, with the stage located across the San Antonio River. The Little Church, built in 1879, features a gorgeous stained-glass cross along the back wall. It's now an active non-denominational church that is also available for weddings and other events. © NileGuide

contact:
tel: (210) 226 3593
<http://www.lavillita.com/church/>

location:
418 Villita Street
San Antonio TX 78205

9 Little Church (The)

DESCRIPTION: Established on March 2, 1879, this church forms an integral part of the history of La Villita. No particular denomination met here consistently, but it continues to exist, and is the favorite local wedding venue. The church also supports and hosts the Starving Artist Art Gallery's annual show. © wcities.com

contact:
tel: 210 227 2782
fax: +1 210 212 5346
<http://www.paesanosriverwalk.com>

location:
111 W Crocket St
San Antonio TX 78205

hours:
11a-11p daily

A Paesano's River Walk

DESCRIPTION: This River Walk incarnation of a longtime San Antonio favorite relinquished its old Chianti bottle-kitsch decor for a soaring ceiling, lots of inscrutable contemporary art, and a more up-to-date menu. But the one thing the restaurant couldn't give up, at the risk of a local insurrection, was the signature shrimp Paesano's. The crispy crustaceans are as good as their devotees claim, as are the reasonably priced pizzas, including the one topped with grilled chicken, artichokes, basil pesto, and feta cheese. Other good values are the hearty southern Italian staples such as lasagna with meat sauce. Standouts among the pricier entrees include the grilled pork chops with potato gnocchi, as well as the veal Francesa. Locals tend to go to the newer -- and somewhat quieter -- Paesano's, across from the Quarry Golf Club, at 555 Basse Rd., Ste. 100 (tel. **210/828-5191**). © Frommer's



Paesano's River Walk

contact:
tel: 210 222 1400

location:
715 River Road
San Antonio TX 78212

hours:
Mo to Su from 11:30 AM to 02:00 AM

B Durty Nelly's Irish Pub

DESCRIPTION: When you think of San Antonio, you don't necessarily think of an Irish pub, now do you? Well, think again. Durty Nelly's, located on the River Walk on the river level of the Hilton hotel, is a rollicking good time. Pull up a chair, order a beer (or two, or ten) and sing along with the pianist. A versatile guy, the pianist takes requests and can play just about anything. Probably the most fun thing to do is munch on the peanuts and toss the shells on the floor. Yes, it is allowed! © wcities.com



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San Antonio Snapshot

Local Info

San Antonio is a vibrant city that is growing rapidly. The heart of the city's tourism business beats along the River Walk and in the downtown area. Densely packed with hotels, attractions, restaurants and bars, a visitor could conceivably spend their entire trip right here. The area bustles with activity nearly every night of the week and almost all year long, with locals and tourists alike enjoying mouth-watering cuisine at Boudro's or Paesano's River Walk, singing their hearts out at Howl at the Moon, or dancing the night away at Polly Esther's. Not your average tourist trap, the River Walk entices many locals to brave the crowds and enjoy their city.

King William/Southtown

If San Antonio gets funky, this is where it happens. Once primarily residential and neglected, the area has seen a resurgence of interest and an infusion of capital. Urban professionals are snatching up historical homes and refurbishing them, entrepreneurs are launching hip new businesses, and the locals are taking notice. Wander just a few blocks from downtown and discover Espuma Tea & Coffee Emporium and Rosario's. If you can, check out the area during a First Friday celebration. This community-wide celebration held the first Friday of each month draws crowds from all over the city

for art openings, theater productions, dining and shopping.

Alamo Heights

One of the original suburbs of San Antonio, Alamo Heights harbors some of the city's finest dining establishments and upscale shopping opportunities. And with good reason, as a huge portion of the city's wealth resides in this neighborhood. For dinner, locals flock to Paloma Blanca or Cappy's. Beer and pool preside at the Broadway 50/50. For a gift for that special someone, you can't go wrong at Sloan-Hall. At Twin Sisters, pull up a chair and get your daily dose of neighborhood gossip over breakfast or lunch.

Monte Vista/Olmos Park

Neighboring Alamo Heights, this area is home to some of the most exquisite mansions in the city. At the very least it is worth driving through just to gawk. You will find some wonderful neighborhood secrets, such as the thick chocolate shakes at Olmos Pharmacy or superb take-out at WD Deli.

North East/North Central

Shopping centers, housing developments and highways are popping up all over North East and North Central San Antonio as many new residents move in, both from out of town and from within the city's more central neighborhoods. This kind of rapid

growth seems to require predictability, as is evidenced in the plethora of restaurant and shopping chains. If you want to shop at Old Navy, use the phone book. Otherwise, be a rebel and shop at a place like James Avery Craftsman. Likewise with dining, enjoy the down home cooking at Casey's Bar-B-Q.

Northwest/Medical Center

The medical industry is big business in San Antonio, so this area continues to grow at a steady pace. Sort of a hodgepodge of strip shopping centers, restaurants, residences and office complexes, the atmosphere of the neighborhood seems a bit disjointed. Still, you can find great dining at Jacala Mexican Restaurant, Texas Land & Cattle Steak House and Bob's Smokehouse. Shopping is somewhat limited to chain stores. For a fun night out in this part of town, you can't beat the Fox & Hound English Pub & Grille.

Far Northwest

When big money folks are tired of paying city taxes, they flee outside the city limits. Locals that feel the need to escape the city head out this way to dine at Rudy's BBQ and then dance the night away at Leon Springs Dance Hall. The next day, shop at all the antique stores in Boerne or spend the day at Six Flags Fiesta Texas or Sea World.

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