DALLAS FORT WORTH

Lone Star Sophistication: Where Cultivation and Cowboys Collide

With Qatar Airways commencing flights to Dallas Fort Worth on July 1, Dallas-born and fifth-generation Texan Leah Walker explores the cities' Western heritages and cultural scenes.

NEW ROUTE
July 1

Thirty minutes on the Tom Landry Freeway separates Dallas and Fort Worth, two cities steeped in Texas tradition. 'DFW' rolls off the tongue as if it were one, but the two cities couldn't be more different in terms of reputation.

THE BIG 'D'

Dallas has produced its fair share of polarising people. Boisterous and boot-wearing billionaire businessmen H. Ross Perot Sr and Jerry Jones embody popular society's idea of a typical Dallasite, a stereotype no doubt pervaded by the over-the-top 1980s soap opera *Dallas*.

Despite its glitzy persona, Dallas began humbly. What was intended as a Trinity River trading post for Native Americans became a permanent settlement growing steadily through the Civil War and Reconstruction periods. In the 1870s, the railroad arrived, and brought with it new residents, including Wild West legend Doc Holliday. It wasn't until 1930 that Dallas's future as a prosperous business centre was solidified. While the country was reeling from the Great Depression, oil was discovered near the city, leading to economic growth for Dallas.

The city was built on the backs of men who pulled black gold from the area's ground. As fortunes grew, so did the city's swagger and reputation for grandiose ways. The skyline became crowded, and the demand for more cultural offerings grew. Today Dallas is filled with world-class museums, theatres, and public art.

The Old Red Museum, which recounts the history of Dallas County, sits adjacent to the **Sixth Floor Museum**. Here, the chain of events leading to the assassination of President John F. Kennedy is chronicled through photos, videos, and relics. On the SMU (South Methodist University) campus is the **George W. Bush Presidential Library and Museum**, which houses artefacts and records associated with his presidency. In **Fair Park**, the **African American Museum** highlights the heritage and works of black artists. Dallas's newest addition is the ultra-modern **Perot Museum of Nature and Science**.

When the **Dallas Arts District** opened in 2009, it became the largest of its kind in the country. Comprised of 19 adjoining blocks and 28 hectars, this cluster of culture is the nucleus of Dallas's art scene. An opera house and theatre make up the AT&T Performing Arts Center. Featuring the private collection of its founders, the Crow Collection of Asian Art has over 600 permanent pieces on display.

Cattle-drive sculptures, Pioneer Plaza, Dallas.

The Dallas Museum of Art's extensive collection spans styles, times, and continents, and the **Nasher Sculpture Center** showcases the work of modern and contemporary masters like Picasso and Koons.

No matter how cosmopolitan Dallas appears, it's still Texan at its core. This identity is celebrated in the names of their beloved sports teams (Cowboys and Mavericks), as well as Big Tex, the 16m-tall cowboy statue that greets visitors at Fair Park. In downtown's **Pioneer Plaza**, a herd of 49 bronze longhorns are herded by three cowboys, a Texas-sized art piece commemorating Dallas's cattle-drive past. And from June through until August, cowboys and cowgirls compete on Friday and Saturday nights at the Mesquite Rodeo, just east of downtown.

Dallas hasn't forgotten its Western heritage, although it's more muted than its neighbour to the west.

COWTOWN

On any given day, it's possible to find Bob Moorhouse around **Fort Worth's Stockyards**. The city is known for its Western legacy, and the Stockyards are one of Moorhouse's favourite places. Distinguishable by the bushy, grey moustache spanning the width of his face, Moorhouse's vehicle of choice isn't a stereotypical pick-up truck, but instead a cream Volkswagen Thing with a massive Watusi skull for a hood ornament.

After two decades as general manager of the famed Pitchfork Ranch, Western photographer and lifetime cowboy Moorhouse retired and left behind the wide-open country plains for the confines of city life. This could be the plot of a *Beverly Hillbillies* sequel if the city wasn't Fort Worth.

© DCVB

© Ralph Lauer

Originally founded as a military camp during the Civil War, **Fort Worth** served as a main stop for cowboys driving longhorns along the famous Chisholm Trail. Even after the cattle-drive days, Fort Worth remained key to the cattle industry, earning the nickname Cowtown, a moniker the city still embraces.

Fort Worth is a place that holds steadfastly to its authentic Western roots, as opposed to a hyper-Vegas version of what others imagine as genuine Texas. A nod to the city's livestock legacy is most prevalent in the Stockyards. Twice daily, real cowboys on horseback lead longhorn cattle down the brick-paved heart of this **National Historical District**. Home to the world's first indoor rodeo, the Stockyards continue that tradition every Friday and Saturday night. In Fort Worth, the Old West is alive and celebrated, but the city is no one-trick pony.

Beyond saddles and sawdust, Fort Worth is known for more urbane pursuits as well. Thanks in large part to wealthy oil and cattle families, Cowtown also has world-class cultural offerings, such as the downtown 2,056-seat **Bass Performance Hall**, home to the city's symphony, ballet company, and opera. And just outside of downtown is the **Cultural District**. With five museums, it's the epicentre of the city's art scene.

Establishing a museum for the citizens of Fort Worth was the vision of newspaper publisher and oil baron Amon Carter. What began in 1961 predominantly as a place for Western art, the **Amon Carter Museum** has developed into a pre-eminent collection of American art. This Cultural

Longhorn cattle drive demonstration for tourists at Stockyards National Historic District.

© Amy Moore

Donor Reflecting Pool, Sammons Park, AT&T Performing Arts Center in Dallas.

Plaza at night, Perot Museum of Nature and Science.

© Mark Knight Photography

FORT WORTH FIREWORKS AND FESTIVALS

On July 2–4, the Fort Worth Botanic Garden plays host to the Old-Fashioned Family Fireworks Picnic. As part of the Fort Worth Symphony Orchestra's Concerts in the Garden Summer Music Festival, this annual event features patriotic music and a grand fireworks display in conjunction with the nation's Independence Day celebrations. Pack a picnic and blanket for a seat on the grass or book a table and pre-order light bites from the Central Market menu. Tickets go fast for this Fort Worth favourite.
fwsymphony.org

4TH OF JULY PICNIC

Since 1973, Texas musical legend Willie Nelson has been hosting his 4th of July Picnic at various locations throughout the state. This year's iconic event will take place outside Billy Bob's in the Fort Worth Stockyards. The historical music festival will have three stages featuring an all-star line-up that includes Texas musicians Ray Wylie Hubbard, Billy Joe Shaver, the Josh Abbott Band, and of course, Willie Nelson.
williespicnic.com

Dallas Museum of Art.

The Rock Crystal Ewer is one of only seven existing examples of rock crystal ewers of this calibre from the entire medieval Islamic world. Dallas Museum of Art.

District museum has an extensive collection of paintings and bronzes from great Western artists Frederic Remington and Charles M. Russell, many of which came from Carter's private collection.

Works by masters such as Warhol, Picasso, and Lichtenstein are in **The Modern's** permanent collection, and at **Kimble Art Museum** is the first painting by Michelangelo to enter a US collection. The only one of its kind in the world, **The National Cowgirl Museum and Hall of Fame** honours women of the American West.

Fort Worth has transformed from a lawless pit-stop for cowboys to a major player in the cattle industry to a proper US city, all without losing touch with its Old West heritage. It's a delicate balance, but that's what attracted Bob Moorhouse to Fort Worth.

"I was born and raised in the country, so when I retired, I wanted to live where there was always something going on, a place that's also deeply rooted with my same Western values." It looks like he found both in Fort Worth.

MY DALLAS FORT WORTH

BY LEAH WALKER

NEIMAN MARCUS

Neiman Marcus has been outfitting the well-heeled citizens of Texas since its opening in 1907. What started in Dallas as a speciality store selling ladies' outerwear and hats has morphed into a national department store chain with an international reputation for selling the highest-quality luxury goods. Known for fantasy gifts like a US$2.64 million outdoor entertainment system found in its annual Christmas Book, a stop at one of Neiman Marcus's downtown flagship locations is a must for the serious shopper.

1618 Main St #2, Dallas, Tel: +1 214-741-6911

neimanmarcus.com

CHEF DEAN FEARING

With a personality as big as his smile, chef and author Dean Fearing has been a culinary leader in Dallas since his days at The Mansion on Turtle Creek. In 2007, the 'Father of Southwestern Cuisine' opened his namesake restaurant, Fearing's, at Dallas's Ritz-Carlton (see page 34). Fearing has since been collecting accolades (Restaurant of the Year and Table of the Year by *Esquire*) like he does custom-made Lucchese boots. Fearing's sophisticated take on traditional Texas dishes is not to be missed.

2121 McKinney Ave, Dallas, Tel: +1 214-922-4848

fearingsrestaurant.com

BILLY BOB'S TEXAS

As the largest honky tonk in the world, Billy Bob's is an institution. Located in the Fort Worth Stockyards, Billy Bob's is 100,000 square feet of Texas kitsch. There's a mechanical bull, pool tables, live bull riding, a massive dance floor, and concert venue. With live music almost every weekend from Texas artists like Pat Green, Kevin Fowler, and the legendary Merle Haggard, Billy Bob's is the place to go for a little taste of Texas.

2520 Rodeo Plaza, Fort Worth. Tel: +1 817-624-7117

billybobstexas.com

INCREASED BAGGAGE ALLOWANCE

- First Class is now 50kg
- Business Class is now 40kg
- Economy Class is now 30kg

FLIGHT FREQUENCY

Starting July 1, Qatar Airways will commence daily flights from Doha to Dallas Fort Worth

© Sten-Erik Armitage/flickr

wish list

Head to these authentic stores in Dallas and Fort Worth to get kitted out in real cowboy gear.

PINTO RANCH

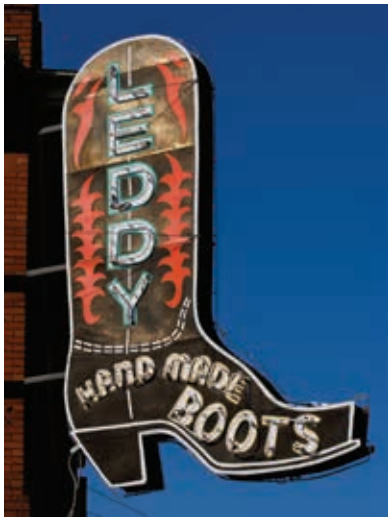
For contemporary Western wear, look to Pinto Ranch. This sophisticated Dallas shop features the finest in men's and ladies' clothing. A sport coat with Western styling is essential for the stylish cowboy about town. **US$295–US$695** *pintoranch.com*

SADDLE UP

Designed to fit each horse and rider, Joey Jemison has been making custom saddles since 1970. Just west of Fort Worth from his shop in Weatherford, Joey and his wife Connie also create tooled leather horse tack, chaps, belts, and even home décor. **US$3,950–US$20,000+** for a custom saddle *joey-jemison.com*

BAD BRONC BUCKLES

For cowboys and cowgirls, buckles are wearable art and an expression of their personality. Nick Cunningham is the silversmith and artist behind the custom and one-of-a-kind buckles and ladies' jewellery at Fort Worth's Bad Bronc Studio & Gallery. **US$1,250+** for a custom buckle and **US$550–US$32,000+** for custom jewellery *badbronc.com*



THE ESSENTIALS

The hat a cowboy wears says a lot about the man, and one from Fort Worth's iconic M.L. Leddy's helps send the right message. Pick a hand-shaped hat from the store's Private Label collection, then shop for handmade, custom-designed boots, in traditional calfskin or exotics like alligator, where handwritten foot measurements are recorded in vintage bank ledgers. Hats **US$90–US$1,500** Boots **US$700–US$10,000+** *leddys.com*

GYPSY SOULE

In the hot Texas summers, a cowgirl requires a cool option. The flamboyant Swarovski-encrusted flip-flops from Fort Worth-based Gypsy Soule are a stylish alternative to boots. **US$250–US$1,750** *gypsysoule.com*