

Dallas–Fort Worth Metroplex



Dallas and Fort Worth may be next-door neighbors but they're hardly twins – or even kissing cousins. Long regarded as divergent as a Beemer-driving sophisticate and a rancher in a Dodge pickup truck, these two cities have starkly different facades, but beyond appearances share a love of high (and low) culture and good old-fashioned Texas fun. So get ready to bust up plenty of preconceived notions of the proverbial city slicker and country cousin. Sure, you'll find cowboys in Fort Worth and socialites in Dallas, but these days you might exchange howdies with a socialite in cowboy boots in either city.

The Big D rocks an ego to match its nickname. Its very identity is Texas-sized: big hair, big SUVs, big guns and big malls. The reality is not far off. Hairstyles may have tamed, but the city remains image-conscious, with plenty of sophisticates and corporate types projecting a take-no-prisoners, outta-my-way confidence that's only softened by that friendly Southern drawl. Fort Worth isn't shy either, but like a cowgirl who can shoot from 30 paces and look good doing it, she doesn't need to brag. (Though there's plenty to brag about.)

Just 30 miles apart, the two towns anchor the biggest metropolitan area in the South – more than six million people and growing – known as the Metroplex. So ooh and aah at the excesses of the Big D and then cowboy up to unsung Fort Worth for at least a weekend – the Western sights and museums there may just be the state's best-kept secrets.

HIGHLIGHTS

Best Place to Get Country

Bull-riding and two-steppin' at the biggest honky-tonk on earth, the Stockyards' Billy Bob's Texas (boxed text, p105)

Best Place to Ride 'em, Cowgirl

Giddy-up to the National Cowgirl Museum & Hall of Fame (p101)

Best Place to Loosen Yer Britches

Eat your way through Fort Worth's foodie-paradise Magnolia Street (p103) or chichi Uptown (p89) in Dallas

Best Lil' Museum

The oldest museum in Texas, the Kimbell Art Museum (p99) packs a world-class punch in Fort Worth

Most Historical Moment

Relive the tragic day of JFK's fateful assassination at the Sixth Floor Museum (p81)

Best Place to Blow Your Mind

The Dallas Arts District (p83) inspires with top-notch museums, music, theatre and stunning modern architecture



