

LONE STAR ADVENTURE

We have always been fascinated by the night sky. The billions of stars above our heads have captivated us for generations. Thankfully, there are still places where we can still look up at this celestial panorama and one of them is the big skies of Texas. Home to multiple International Dark Sky parks and the darkest skies in the lower 48 states. We truly believe there is no better way to experience this than camping in a Cruise America motorhome.

McDonald Observatory



Motorhome Itinerary

Day 1 > After a few days in the Dallas/Fort Worth area, collect your motorhome and head west into the wide-open spaces of rural Texas. Stop at the famous Wildcatter Ranch near the historic town of Graham which offers a host of activities from horseback riding, clay shooting and even tomahawk throwing. It is just a short drive from here to your accommodation on Possum Kingdom Lake.

📍 105 miles to Graham ★ Visit Dealey Plaza and the Sixth Floor Museum to learn more about the fateful day of the JFK assassination. Stop in Fort Worth and learn about the famous cattle drives at the legendary Stockyards and experience a rodeo every Friday and Saturday evenings followed by a two block walk to Billy Bob's, the world's largest Honky-Tonk. 🌐 <http://www.possumkingdomlake.org/possum-kingdom-state-park-camping/>

Day 2 > Continue your journey north and west and deep into the Panhandle Plains with its sprawling cattle ranches and endless horizons. Your stop is Copper Breaks State Park with its rugged terrain and Caprock Canyons State Park to see huge Bison herds and your accommodation for the night. *This park is classed 2 on the Bortle Scale.*

📍 242 miles to Caprock Canyon State Park ★ Hike the short but challenging Juniper Ridge Nature for great views of the red rock landscape. 🌐 <https://tpwd.texas.gov/state-parks/caprock-canyons/fees-facilities/campsites>

Day 3 > Start with just a short drive north to Palo Duro Canyon State Park. This is the 2nd largest canyon in the United States and the most spectacular scenic landscape in the Panhandle region. A paved road leads down into the canyon allowing you easy access to the adventures available to you. Stop in Amarillo for supplies



Cadillac Ranch in Amarillo

before heading south through the heart of West Texas to your overnight stop near the town of Lubbock. 📍 115 miles to Lubbock ★ Visit the famous Cadillac Ranch in Amarillo, an iconic symbol to the US love affair to the open road and automobiles. When in Lubbock stop at the Buddy Holly Center to learn about the city's most famous rock star. 🌐 <https://koa.com/campgrounds/lubbock/>

Day 4 > Continue south and stop at the remarkable Monahans Sandhills State Park for a break and some sand-based fun. This ocean of sand is sculpted by the wind to create sand dunes, peaks and valleys for you to explore. This is a great stop for families to allow the little ones to play in a giant sandbox! Continue to Davis Mountains State Park. One of your highlights of this Stargazing adventure is here at the McDonald Observatory high up in the Davis Mountains. Please prebook any visits to the observatory well in advance <https://mcdonaldobservatory.org/visitors>.

📍 290 miles to Davis Mountains State Park ★ Rent sand disks for hours of fun at Monahans State Park. In Fort Davis, stop at the Fort Davis National Historic Site as one of the best surviving examples of an Indian Wars' frontier military post. 🌐 <https://tpwd.texas.gov/state-parks/davis-mountains/fees-facilities/campsites>

Day 5/6 > Start the day by stopping in the tiny town of Marfa, famously used by Hollywood for several movies, it is also well known to art-lovers thanks to one of the world's largest installations of minimalist art and then to Big Bend Ranch State park, and nearby Big Bend National Park. These two parks feature rugged mountains, steep canyons and amazing views. As importantly, it also offers truly unrivalled stargazing opportunities. *Both parks are recognised as International Dark Sky Parks, rated Class 1 Bortle Dark-Sky Scale. These are some of the darkest and clearest night skies anywhere on earth.* 📍 120 miles to Big Bend Ranch State Park/ Big Bend National Park along the scenic River Road that borders Texas and Mexico ★ Visit the Chinati Foundation Museum for its internationally known contemporary art. Take part in the Night Sky Ranger Programs offered at Big Bend National Park. 🌐 <https://www.nps.gov/bibe/planyourvisit/rv-camping.htm>

Day 7 > Spend the morning enjoying the outdoor activities before leaving the Big Bend area and heading back north to the small town of Marathon.



Boulders in Big Bend National Park



Even though you have left the confines of the park, you are still in some of the least-populated regions of Texas and therefore the night sky is just as amazing. *Marathon is still Class 1 on the Bortle Dark-Sky Scale.* Overnight at the Marathon Skypark where you can rent out telescopes to enjoy the breathtaking night skies. 📍 70 miles to Marathon ★ Enjoy the many art galleries in town before settling in for a stargazing show like no other. 🌐 <http://www.marathonskypark.com/>

Day 8 > Back on the road again today as you are heading to Devils River State Nature Area. Clear spring-fed water tumbles past rugged ridges, scenic canyons and brushy banks. Spend some time in the relaxed and attractive historic town of Del Rio situated on the Mexican border. 📍 175 miles to Del Rio ★ See the ancient rock art left by early canyon dwellers at Seminole Canyon State Park & Historic Site. 🌐 <https://www.nps.gov/amis/planyourvisit/camping.htm>

Day 9 > Today you will be largely heading into the famous Hill Country region and specifically the charming 19th Century German settlement of Fredericksburg. The main street is lined with historic buildings with German restaurants and beer gardens. Your accommodation for the night is just on the edge of downtown. 📍 173 miles to Fredericksburg ★ Enjoy the tasting rooms of more than 50 wineries in the Fredericksburg area. Stop at Enchanted Rock State Park to view the mystical massive pink granite rock that rises about central Texas. 🌐 <http://fbgrvpark.com/>

Journey Details

DEPART	Dallas, Austin or Houston
DURATION	10 days
DISTANCE	1,540 miles

The **BORTLE SCALE** is a nine-level numeric scale that measures the night sky's brightness of a particular location, with 1 being the darkest and most suitable for stargazing.

- 1 An excellent dark-sky site - the Milky Way can be seen in all its glory.
- 2 Typical truly dark site - on clear nights, the Milky Way and other astronomical objects will be very clear with good detail.

Day 10 > You have 250 miles back to Dallas to return your RV, so if you have the time, we would certainly suggest spending a few nights in supercool Austin and enjoying everything the 'Live Music Capital of the World' and all-round great city has to offer before heading north to our Dallas depot and the end of your trip.

Also to note: Texas will be celebrating a total solar eclipse on April 8th, 2024. Places on the path are already booking quickly.