

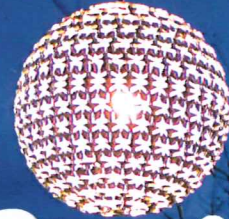
MAY/JUNE 2015



Texas

THE MAGAZINE FOR AAA MEMBERS

JOURNEY



Evolving Dallas

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GOINGPLACES: THE BEST SUMMER CONCERT VENUES

DALLAS

Great Trinity Forest

BY CLAIRE JURKIEWICZ

This 6,000-acre swath on the outskirts of downtown offers a chance to leave the land of concrete and high rises for an afternoon in the wilderness. Upgrades to several amenities located in and around the forest slated for completion by summer are drawing renewed interest in this natural attraction.

The city is putting finishing touches on an extension project that will link five **hike/bike trails**, forming a 10-mile loop ideal for distance athletes, though you can still tackle shorter segments

via several entry points. In another area, the 1-mile **Santa Fe Trestle Trail** crosses a historic truss bridge, which was built in 1879 to serve as a main river crossing for the Santa Fe Railroad. It's not used for that anymore, so the city worked with the Texas Historical Commission to restore the bridge's historic appearance and make it open to pedestrians. Tracks were removed and replaced with a concrete deck and benches, from which you can enjoy expansive views of the river, forest, and seasonal wetlands used by wading birds such as egrets, herons, and ibis.

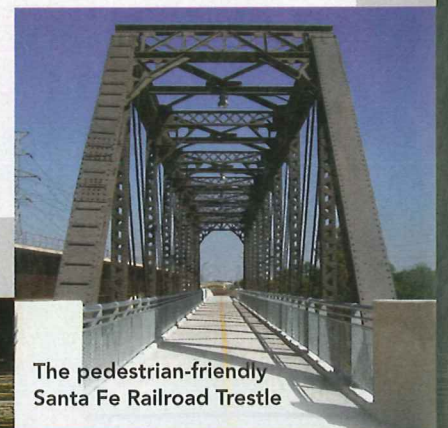
The Santa Fe Trestle Trail offers access to the **Dallas Wave**, a manipulated portion of the Trinity River that creates a whitewater-rafting experience for kayakers and canoeists (not recommended for beginners). You cannot rent or purchase gear at the site, so connect with local outfitters, such as Trinity River Expeditions (214-941-1757; canoedallas.com) and Trinity River Kayak Co. (214-513-0649; trinityriverkayak.com), both of which also offer general guided paddles in calmer sections.

Opened in fall 2008, the **Trinity River Audubon Center** was the first major attraction completed in the multiphase river corridor improvement project. It was an instant hit, and since then activity options have increased, both long-running events such as summer kids' camps as well as single-day activities.

For example, weekenders can join a two-and-a-half-hour River Adventure excursion, which offers a basic paddling and safety lesson before you hit the water in provided kayaks, canoes, and rafts. Guides share river history and identify wildlife along the trip.

The wetlands are home to many bird species, and the center's two-hour bird-watching classes will help you learn to identify them. An evening version called an Owl Prowl teaches how to hoot and attract these nocturnal birds to your yard. (214) 398-8722; trinityriver.audubon.org.

Guided kayaking with the Trinity River Audubon Center



The pedestrian-friendly Santa Fe Railroad Trestle



IF YOU GO

For more information about activities in the Great Trinity Forest, go to trinityrivercorridor.com/recreation.