

Grand Prix Houston 2018 Travel Guide

by Andrea and Ben Wallace



Introduction and Index

Hello fellow judges, my husband and I are L1 judges from Houston, Texas and we are so excited to welcome you to our great city for the GP! We sincerely hope this guide helps you prepare for the trip. If you need any additional information, please don't hesitate to contact me by email at mtgjudgewallace@gmail.com.

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A Few Things About Houston

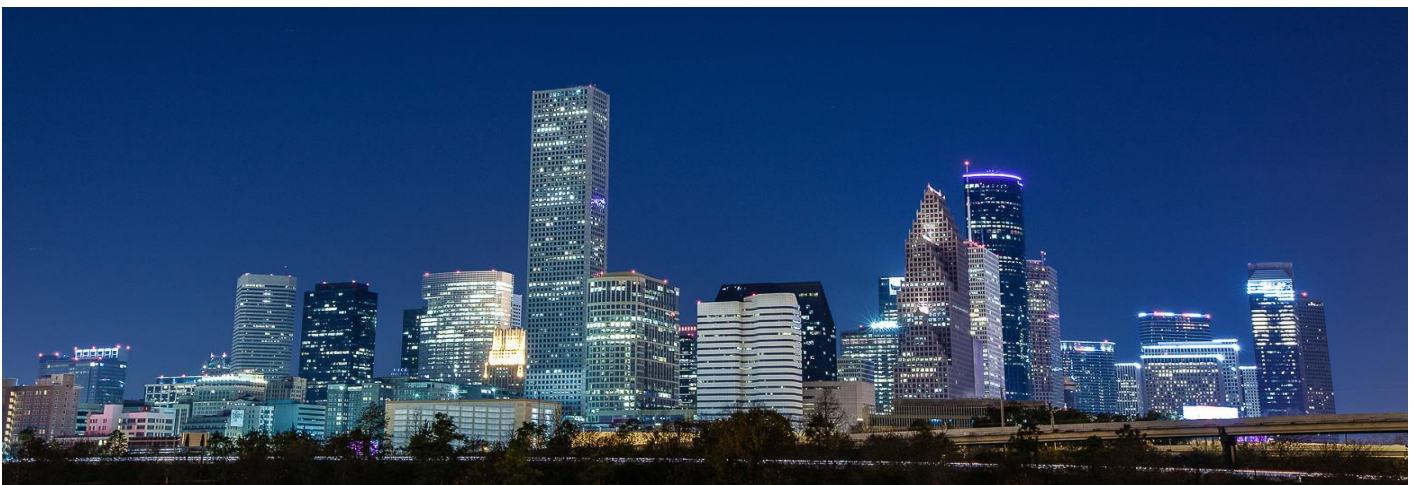
Houston is the 4th largest city in the US at just under 2.1 million people in 2010. However, this size triples when you include the entire metropolitan area to ~6 million people (that is the 6th largest metro area in the US).

The Houston metro area is just smaller than the state of Massachusetts, and larger than new Jersey including 8,778 square miles.

Houston is only 43 feet above sea level.

Houstonians eat out more than residents of any other city in the US. Mostly likely as a result of this, there are more than 11,000 restaurants.

Of US cities, only New York has more seats in its theatre district than Houston. Houston also has more than



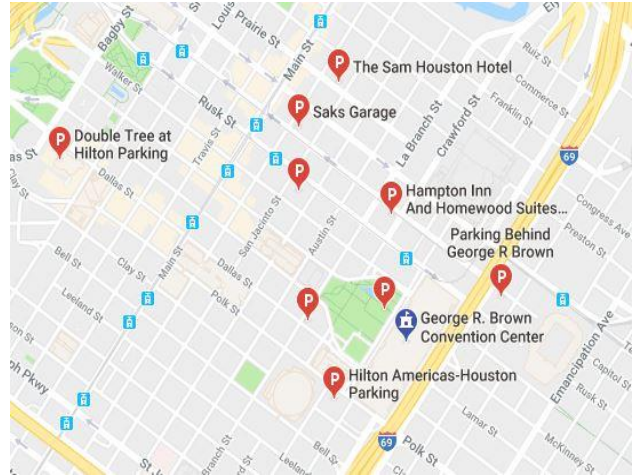
500 cultural, visual, and performing arts organizations.

Venue

George R. Brown Convention Center
1001 Avenida De Las Americas
Houston, Texas 77010

Official Web Site: houstonconventionctr.com

Parking is available all around the venue and even under Discovery Green. Surface lots are \$10 a day, underground are \$12. The Hilton garage is \$20 per day. Downtown street parking is free on nights and weekends, so if you can find a spot, it's all yours.

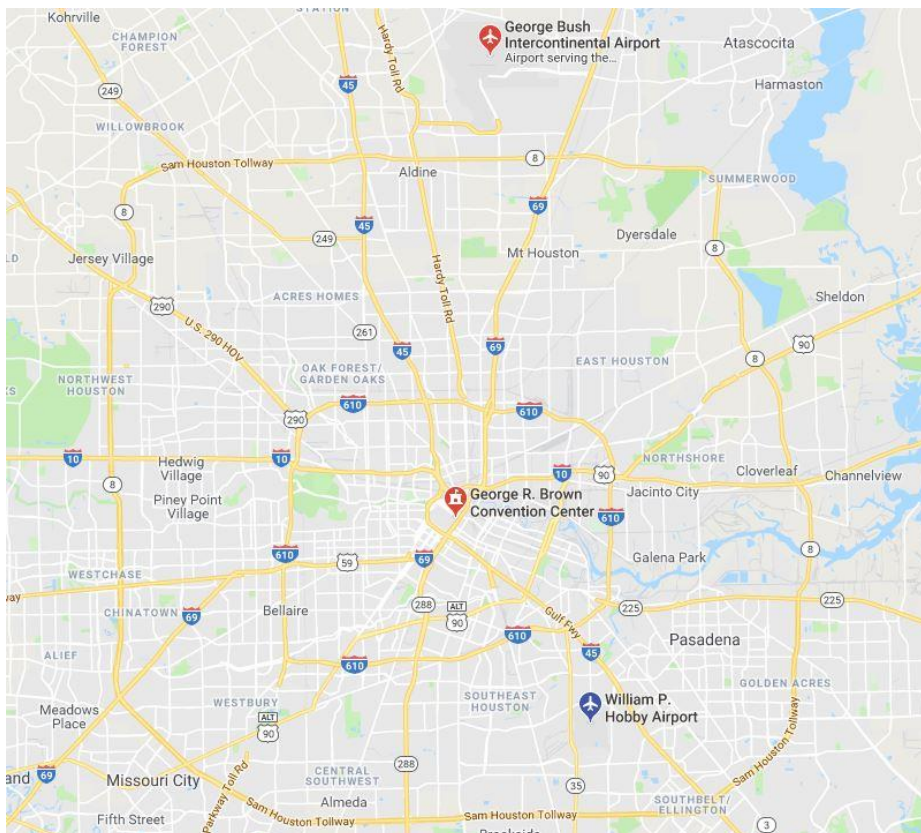


Airports

There are 2 major airports in Houston - George Bush Intercontinental (IAH) and William P. Hobby (HOU) - which are located on the Northeast and Southeast sides of town respectively. **IAH** is larger, further from downtown, and handles the international flights. **Hobby** is closer to downtown, handles all Southwest flights, and is smaller.

George Bush Intercontinental Airport
2800 N Terminal Road
Houston, Texas 77032

William P. Hobby Airport
7800 Airport Blvd.
Houston, Texas 77061



Airport Transportation Options

Here are a few ways to get to the Hyatt Regency (or any downtown location) from the airport:

SuperShuttle - this is what the Hyatt recommends, and unless you are renting a car, is more affordable than the other methods.

- \$23 from IAH
- \$19 from Hobby
- \$75 to rent the whole van, up to 7 passengers
- \$100 to rent the whole van, up to 10 passengers

Taxi Cab - this is going to be expensive, but I wanted to give the price for comparison. Remember, everything is pretty spread out in Houston. (These prices include a 15% tip.)

- ~\$60 from IAH
- ~\$40 from Hobby

Houston Metro Buses - The extent of my experience with the buses is that my sister took a bus to jury duty and lived. Oh, and the Hyatt acted like the routes to and from the airport didn't even exist. Bear in mind that the buses only take exact change. If you wish to learn more about this method, you can use the transit part of [maps.google](https://maps.google.com) or go to ridemetro.org.

- \$1.25 from IAH (from terminal C - Bus 102) ◦ picks up @ IAH from 5:04am - 12:34am ◦ get off at Milam & Dallas stop for the Hyatt, a 0.1 mile walk ◦ get off at Milam & McKinney stop for the venue, a 0.7 mile walk ◦ Google estimates this ride will take ~1 hour

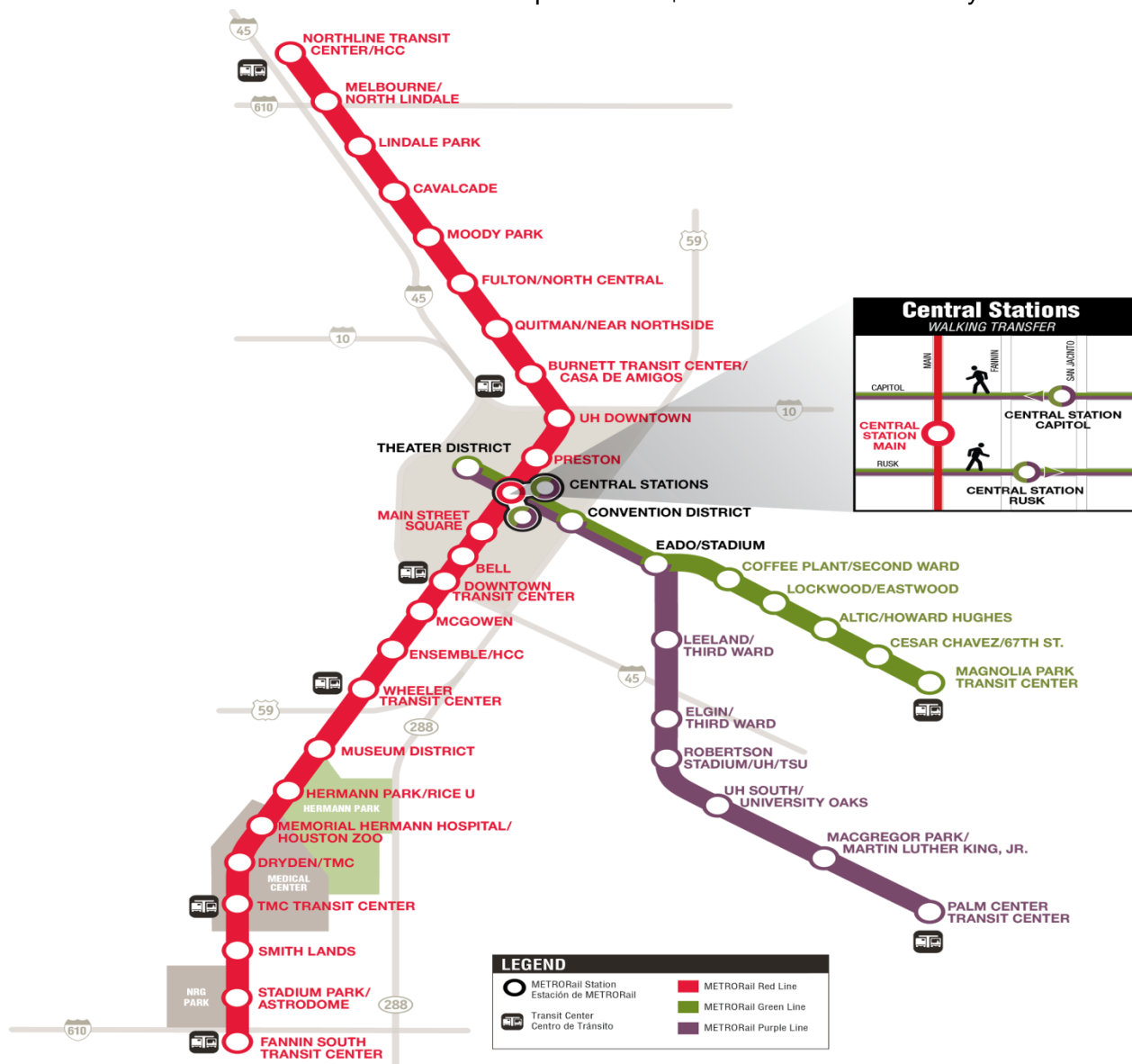
- \$1.25 from Hobby (They have been remodeling Hobby some, I would suggest asking at a customer service desk where the Houston Metro buses pick up - Bus 040) ◦ picks up @ Hobby from 4am (weekdays) or 5am (weekends) to midnight ◦ get off at Lamar & Milam stop for the Hyatt, a 0.2 mile walk ◦ get off at Polk & Avenida de las Americas stop for the venue, a 0.2 mile walk ◦ Google estimates this ride will take ~1 hour



General Transportation Options

1. **Uber** - Houston does allow Uber to service the entire metro area.
2. **Renting a car** - If you plan on sightseeing extensively or would like to go outside the downtown area you may decide that renting a car is a good solution for you. If so, there are several rental car agencies available at either airport.
3. **Cabs** - Houston has a variety of cab companies. Here are a few of the choices with their phone numbers.

Yellow Cab	Lone Star Cab	National Cab	My Houston Taxi Limo
713--236--1111	713--444--4444	713--649--4145	713--291--3420
4. **Public Transit** - This includes buses and the MetroRail. The MetroRail has 3 lines that service downtown and surrounding areas. I have been told it is the best way to get from downtown to the eateries and bars in midtown. The MetroRail has ticket stations at all the platforms - \$1.25 for a 3 hour one way ticket.



Where to Stay

Hyatt Regency Downtown

ChannelFireball has arranged a discounted room block at the Hilton Americas-Houston. The hotel is attached to the convention center and rates start at \$164 per night. Rooms are available for reservation until Monday January 10th or until the room block is fully booked, whichever comes first.

Hilton Americas - Houston
1600 Lamar Street
Houston, TX 77010
713-739-8000

To reserve your room, please visit the link below:
<http://goo.gl/zzzunv>

Note: Parking at the Hyatt is \$24 per night for self parking and \$34 per night for valet. (Refer to the venue section for other options.)

Other Hotels within walking distance:

Hyatt Regency Houston - 713-654-1234 - 1200 Louisiana Street, Houston, TX 77002 This hotel is less than a mile from the convention center

Embassy Suites by Hilton -- 713--739--9100 -- 1515 Dallas St., Houston 77010 -

Club Quarters - 713--224--6400 -- 720 Fannin St, Houston 77002 -

The Westin Houston Downtown -- 713--228--1520 -- 1520 Texas St. Houston 77002 -

Athens Hotel & Suites -- 713--739--1960 -- 1308 Clay St, Houston 77002 -

Four Seasons Hotel Houston - 713--650--1300 -- 1300 Lamar St., Houston 77010 -

Where to Eat

Houston has a wide variety of eating establishments to choose from. Unfortunately, many of the places close to the venue are closed on the weekends. However, we have found a few places that are close (and will be open) for lunch, dinner, drinks, or a romantic evening.

Lake House - - Small burger and taco joint across the street from the venue in the Discovery Green. (~\$10 for a burger, fries, and a drink)

MKT Bar - - Light bites and drinks across the street from the venue on the other side of Discovery Green. (~\$15 or less for entrees)

Benihana - - Japanese Hibachi (yes, that Benihana) near the Hyatt (Lunch Entrees \$10--\$15, Dinner Entrees \$20--\$35)

Spindletop - - Romantic fine dining experience in a rotating glass room with a view of the city atop the Hyatt (Dinner from \$40 -- \$\$\$\$)

McDonald's -- Quintessential American fast food between Hyatt and venue

Guadalajara Del Centro - - Upscale Mexican food between Hyatt and venue behind Discovery Green to the NW. (Lunch ~\$15 and Dinner ~\$25)

Papacito's - - Houston local Tex-Mex chain two blocks behind Discovery Green (Prices are kinda like a Chili's or Applebees)

Home Plate Bar and Grill - - Bar fare by Minute Maid stadium to the NE of venue. (~\$10 -- \$15)

Neil's Bahr - - "Houston's nerd/gamer/intellectual hangout" on the opposite side of venue from Discovery Green (Mostly just a bar... food on select nights) (MTG tourney Sunday @ 4 - format unknown)

Pete's Dueling Piano Bar - - "Texas original rock 'n' roll dueling piano bar" on San Jacinto NW of venue. (mostly just drinks, \$10 burgers, chocolate chip cookies)

Events in Houston

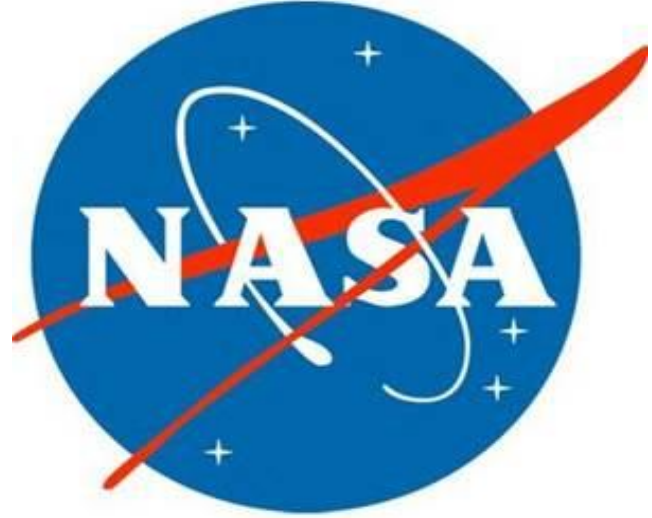
Here I will provide a list of some events happening in Houston around the dates of the tournament. If you are interested in dates before or after that, please see the Houston Event Calendar. Also, note that there are several museums, NASA Johnson Space Center, the zoo (my personal favorite!!), the aquarium, and lots of theatres.

Ongoing

- Interactive Art Installation, Discovery Green
- Craft Brewery Tours with Brew Trek Houston, Saturday 11-4
- Houston Museum of Fine arts, Free on Thursday. Drinks and food trucks.

Jan. 27-28

- Felines, Football, & Fun! , Deer Park 9-4
- Outdoor ice skating at Discovery Green, \$14
- Houston Tea Festival, 10-9, \$12



Local Game Stores

Asgard Games

3302 S Shepard
Houston, Tx 77098
7, 713--677--0699

Asgard has been the only game store inside the smaller loop around town.

It has a pretty good magic scene and has a bar in the store.

Mondays - Standard @ 6:30, Tuesdays - Draft @ 6:30, Wednesday - Modern @
Thursday - Legacy @ 7, Friday - FNM Draft @ 6:30, Saturday - Legacy @ 1

Empire Central

2047 W Main St Ste B2
League City, Tx 77573
-632--2417

Located SE of town, near NASA, this is a laidback store with lots of limited players. Extensive collection of singles (including vintage and legacy).

Tuesday - Standard @ 7, Sunday - Standard @ 2, Friday - FNM Draft @ 7 832-
and Legacy @ 7:30

Dragon's Lair

2115 1a State Highway 249
Houston, TX 77070
832-761-0072

Located NW of town, this is a new store with a ton of space for card games and tabletop games. FNM is draft @ 6:45

Strike Zone

10904 Scarsdale Blvd Ste 245
Houston, Tx 77089
281--484--7875
Southeast

Cards and Comics Connection

1201 N Loop 336 W Ste B
Conroe, Tx 77301
936--756--4839
Far North

Heroes Collectables

1801 S Dairy Ashford Rd Ste 120
Houston, Tx 77077
281--497--0221
West

There are definitely more game shops than those listed here. I threw in a few that were further out in case people wanted to stop on the way into or out of town.