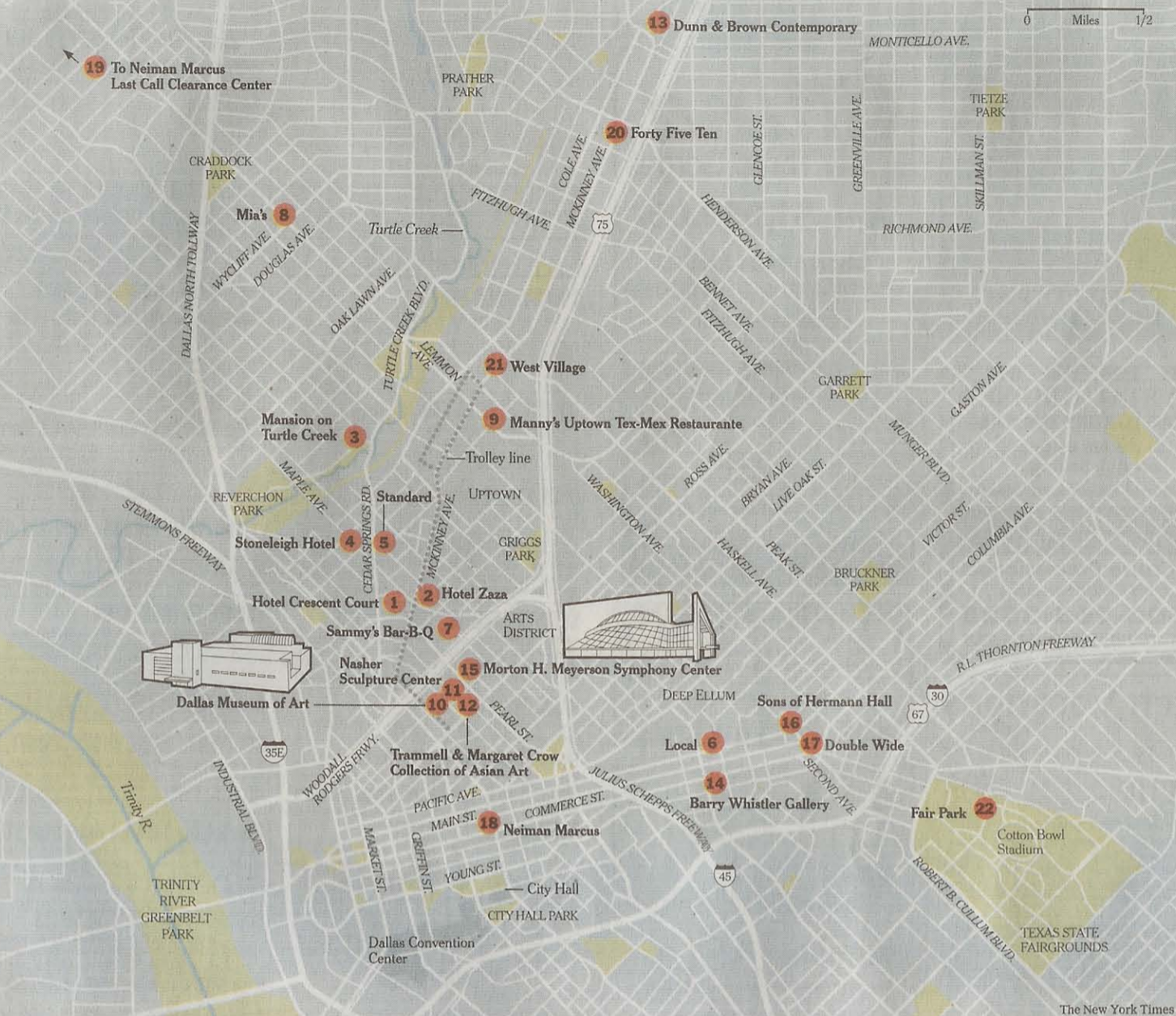


# GOING TO Dallas

By SALLY HORCHOW

**WHY GO NOW** With the unveiling of the Nasher Sculpture Center in 2003, this year's eyebrow-raising bequest of three major private collections to the Dallas Museum of Art and the announcement of plans for a Rem Koolhaas-designed Center for the Performing Arts, Dallas finally has cultural draws to eclipse Southfork and the Kennedy assassination for good. Long a shopping and foodie draw for Southwestern visitors, Dallas is now attracting international art connoisseurs, who formerly bypassed Big D's offerings in favor of Fort Worth and Marfa. The Dallas Arts District has created a focal city center out of a once-decrepit downtown. And gallery openings have become high-profile social events. Yet Dallas maintains an equal appreciation for high and low: getting a "Howdy" from Big Tex, the Texas State Fair's 52-foot talking cowboy mascot, has been a popular pastime every fall since he appeared in 1952.

**WHERE TO STAY** The Uptown neighborhood, a mix of historic homes and new high-rise residence towers, restaurants and shops, is adjacent to the Downtown Arts District and the best place to base a concentrated visit. Two choice hotels are off of the McKinney Avenue Trolley line, a free streetcar system that runs through the Uptown district to the Dallas Museum of Art. The Hotel Crescent Court, 1 400 Crescent Court, (214) 871-3200, www.crescentcourt.com, is the more classically elegant of the two, with 220 rooms, a 23,000-foot spa and a new outpost of Nobu restaurant. Doubles start at \$380. Cater-corner across McKinney Avenue, the see-and-be-seen Hotel Zaza, 2 2332 Leonard Street, (214) 468-3399, www.hotelzaza.com, is a stylish retreat for visiting celebs and cool-hunting hipsters. Inside the theatrically themed suites — like the velvet and Versace-clad Medusa (\$525) or the safari-themed Out of Africa (\$450) — the hotel lives up to its name. Request a room facing the quiet side street unless you want



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FAR LEFT Hodie Clark, left, and Tim Davis on the patio of Manny's Uptown Tex-Mex.  
LEFT Sons of Hermann Hall concerts attract eclectic crowds.  
RIGHT A bronze Taoist god sculpture sits outside the Trammel & Margaret Crow Collection of Asian Art.  
FAR RIGHT Sandra Looney at Forty Five Ten.



to overlook (and hear) the nightly scene at Urban Oasis, the hotel's trendy poolside nightclub. Doubles start at \$295.  
For Texas-style grandeur, there's no place to splurge like the Mansion on Turtle Creek, 3 2821 Turtle Creek Boulevard, (214) 559-2100, www.mansiononturtlecreek.com. The lavishly restored Italian Renaissance-style estate of a Texas cotton mogul is in a residential neighborhood, but the "house car," a Lexus sedan, will shuttle guests anywhere within a five-mile radius free. Doubles start at \$405.  
The Stoneleigh Hotel, 4 2927 Maple Avenue, (214) 871-7111, www.stoneleighhotel.com, covers the "historic hotel with character" category — a charming, if slightly fraying, midprice option. Built in 1923, the Art Deco and Federal-style Stoneleigh has 153 big rooms with high-speed wireless Internet access. A head-to-toe renovation is planned for the spring. Doubles start at \$129.

**WHERE TO EAT** In mid-November, Stephan Pyles, the local chef known for putting Dallas — and Southwestern cuisine — on the culinary map, will open a restaurant on Ross Avenue in the Arts District. Until then, try the new Uptown restaurant from a rising star chef, Tim Byres, at Standard, 5 2816 Fairmount Street, (214) 720-9292, whose New American cuisine — featuring his signature braised beef short ribs (\$28)

and steamed Alaskan halibut served in a copper pot (\$26) — attracts a society and fashion industry clientele. Lunch and dinner Tuesday to Friday; dinner only weekends. Closed Monday.  
Local, 6 2936A Elm Street, (214) 752-7500, www.localdallas.com, is a small, airy bistro in an old building on the edge of the Deep Ellum area, a center for blues musicians and artists in the 1920's that still features a young bohemian music scene — and, unfortunately, a rising crime rate. Local's 13 tables are packed nightly with a diverse group of sophisticated regulars — designers and artists, business people and fashion types — sampling the innovative American menu of Tracy Miller, the chef and an owner. Entrees include a Niman Ranch tenderloin filet with free-form hash browns and a petite herb salad (\$35) and a crispy Chilean sea bass with an asparagus sauté and citrus risotto (\$28). Open Wednesday to Saturday for dinner.  
Texans hold strong opinions about their barbecue, and at lunch, bankers, lawyers and stockbrokers with their ties thrown over their shoulders, down ribs, sausage and sides like fried okra, zucchini casserole and baked potato casserole at Sammy's Bar-B-Q, 7 2126 Leonard Street, (214) 880-9064, in a former grocery store near the Dallas Federal Reserve Building. Order a two-meat combo (\$9.80) with two sides in the

cafeteria-style line, and then take your tray out to the patio, and don't forget extra napkins. Lunch only; closed Sunday.  
Tex-Mex is the other indigenous cuisine of Dallas, and those passionate about it will tell you that Mia's, 8 4322 Lemmon Avenue, (214) 526-1020, is legendary. Now Manny Rios, Mia's brother, has branched off with his own spot, with Manny's Uptown Tex-Mex Restaurant, 9 3521 Oak Grove Avenue, (214) 252-1611. Manny's specialties include a new version of the original restaurant's popular brisket tacos (\$8.25) and a sour cream chicken enchilada (\$7.75).  
**WHAT TO DO DURING THE DAY** Though Arts District is rather large, the major sites are concentrated into one walkable area. Start at the Dallas Museum of Art, 10 1717 North Harwood Street, (214) 922-1200, www.dallasmuseumofart.org, established in 1903, which holds 23,000 works, including one of an important holding of American silver. Some recent, highly publicized acquisitions are on view to Jan. 8 as part of a show called "Dialogues: Duchamp, Cornell, Johns, Rauschenberg." The Museum store offers Kenneth Jay Lane jewelry, Nambé silver and crystal and regionally designed crafts. Admission \$10; closed Monday.  
Across the street, the Nasher Sculpture Center, 11 2001 Flora Street, (214) 242-5100, www.nashersculpturecenter.org, is a

glass-roofed and travertine-clad gallery designed by Renzo Piano to display a fine collection of modern sculpture donated by Raymond D. Nasher, a Dallas developer. Allow a couple of hours to walk in and around the dizzying array of Rodins, Picassos, Giacomettis and Calder's, both inside the understated gallery spaces and outside in the tree-lined sculpture garden. Admission \$10; closed Monday.  
Another impressive private collection on public view is the Trammel & Margaret Crow Collection of Asian Art, 12 2010 Flora Street, (214) 979-6430, www.crowcollection.org, a serene setting with 600 paintings, objects of metal and stone, and large architectural pieces from China, Japan, India and Southeast Asia. Admission is free, and guided tours of the permanent collection are offered Thursday at 6:30 p.m. and Saturday at 1 p.m.  
An afternoon of gallery hopping is the perfect antidote to hands-off museum visits. First stop for most visiting art groups is to Dunn & Brown Contemporary, 13 5020 Tracy Street, (214) 521-4322, www.dunnandbrown.com, a 10,000-square-foot U-shaped warehouse complex three miles north of the Arts District that has attracted much art-world attention for its success in building the international careers of its artists.  
The more intimate Barry Whistler Gallery, 14 2909B Canton Street, (214) 939-

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