

Keep Summer Cool Ideas

BY NATALIE LERNER

Let's face it, summer is H. O. T. — HOT! If you are like me, you take the kids to the pool almost 24-7, all summer long. Sometimes it is fun to not hit the pool a 100th time and to mix it up a little bit though. If you are short on ideas for where to go, here are some local spots to visit, and to keep summer cool!

Bowlero

This modern bowling alley encourages a chill vibe and includes an arcade and full bar, as well as offers upscale American eats. Summer passes are available at a discount. www.bowlero.com/location/bowlero-houston

Build-a-Bear

Kids can head to the mall to bring their own plushie to life. From picking the animal and filling it with cotton, to assembling an outfit, and possibly even adding a voice recording, song, or noise, these stuffed animals continue to be a big hit with kids of varying ages. www.buildabear.com

Candytopia

This Instagram-worthy exhibit in City Centre will be around through Labor Day, so if you had made plans to eventually see it, be sure to do so soon. This interactive art installation is a full-sensory experience reminiscent of a Candyland or Chocolate Factory. <https://tickets.candytopia.com/event/candytopiathx>

Dairy Ashford Roller Rink

This Roller Rink has lasted decades and is still in full swing with skate nights, parties, and more. Sessions for toddlers, youth, and even adults take place, and toddlers are offered rolling braces to safely assist in the learning process. www.skatedairyashford.com/

Edith Moore Nature Sanctuary

It took three years living on this side of town before I even knew this nature sanctuary existed. Edith Moore is a hidden gem for a good hike. Pine tree lined paths take you along the bend in the bayou and eventually to a log cabin built back in 1932! The Houston Audubon Society makes headquarters at a nearby building and holds nature walks and educational programs all year long. <https://houstonaudubon.org/sanctuaries/edith-moore/>

Escape Game Houston

For all you crossword puzzle-lovers, Sudoku masters, and Nancy Drew or Hardy Boys types, try taking the family out to one of the many escape room options at The Escape Game Houston. Be it prison, the playground, a gold rush or more, clues are left everywhere in order to solve your specific mission. Be mindful of the clock—you have to solve the clues before time is up if you want to escape the room! www.theescapegame.com/houston/

iFly

All those dreams of flying can be a reality at iFly, where skydiving indoors is actually a thing. All flyers are suited up and one by one step into a chamber to ride the wind of a giant fan that actually causes the participant to have lift. www.iflyworld.com/houston-memorial/

Library

Sometimes we all just need a moment to chill. Don't forget the local library when the need arises, or when a quiet escape in a book just sounds right. Check the library calendar for fun events happening all summer long. www.hcpl.net/branch/spring-branch-memorial-branch-library

Magic Moments Stable

Barn tours, lessons, camps, boarding, parties, leisure rides, and photoshoots are some of the services at the stable. Educational programs are designed to equip riders with a well-rounded understanding of riding, safety, horsemanship, stable management and equine anatomy. www.magicmomentsstable.com

Memorial City Mall Ice Rink

If the heat is really getting to you, head to the ice rink. I cannot think of a more direct way to say "Ha, ha heat, take that!" From amateur to pro, the rink hosts all ages all year long, as well as teams and classes. www.memorialcity.com/venue/ice-skate-memorial-city/

Nottingham Park and Splash Pad

Completely fenced in, this park offers up a splash pad as well as two elaborate play structures. A family favorite is the zip line that one of the structures includes. Beyond the fence are a running trail, fitness stations, and a disc golf course. www.pct3.com/Explore/Parks#nottingham-park

Paint Parties

There are a couple of local paint party venues nearby in which the instructor leads the class through the creation of a finished and painted canvas. Bringing your own beverage or snack is usually welcomed too. Each attendee gets to keep their creation at the end of class. **various options available**

Queensbury Theatre

If you have lived on this side of town long enough, you may have memory of the old community theatre, Country Playhouse. During the big development with City Centre, the entire venue was removed and the new Queensbury erected. Lovers of the theatre can get their fix here all year long. <https://www.queensburytheatre.org/>

Seismique

Words cannot really describe what you get when you visit Seismique. The

moment you set foot past the lobby, you are transported to another world. Each room is a full on art installation, from space ships, to galactic tunnels, to caves and more. The imagination runs wild at this venue and exploration is tied to an interactive app the guides you through the journey. www.seismique.com/

Typhoon Texas

Thrilling waterpark rides, a wave pool, a lazy river, and even cabanas—Typhoon Texas a great alternative to the pool. Sometimes you just have to take things up a notch, and boy does this place deliver! www.typhoontexas.com

West Houston Archery

This site offers archery lessons as well as a full supply store and repairs. Interestingly enough, the store also sells E-bikes. Anyhow, as far as getting the kids out for lessons, the instructor has won many national championships and helped developed more than one junior Olympian! www.westhoustonarchery.com/

Zero Latency

Virtual Reality is transported to a whole new level at Zero Latency. Players are untethered wearing a headset and backpack, plus holding a controller. All walk freely among an entire virtual world! <https://zerolatencyvr.com/locations/houston/>





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