



# Exploring Lake Highlands: Where Community and Diversity Thrive

Nestled within the heart of Dallas, Texas, lies an enchanting neighborhood that has captured the hearts of its residents and visitors alike – Lake Highlands. This vibrant area, characterized by its welcoming atmosphere, scenic surroundings, and diverse community, has become a haven for families, individuals, and the LGBTQ+ community. As we delve into Lake Highlands, we'll uncover the rich diversity of its neighborhoods, its educational excellence, its architectural charm, and its spirit of inclusivity.

## A Mosaic of Diversity and Community

Lake Highlands is more than just a geographical location; it's a mosaic of cultures, lifestyles, and stories. Comprising three main zip codes – 75231, 75238, and 75243 – this area has grown to be a vibrant mix of people from all walks of life. The 2022 census might show varying percentages of gay households in these zip codes – 17% in 75231, 12% in 75238, and 7% in 75243 – but these numbers, while interesting, only scratch the surface of the true essence of Lake Highlands.

The global pandemic of recent years has undoubtedly left its mark on communities across the world. However, attributing the fluctuations in these statistics solely to the pandemic might be an oversimplification. Lake Highlands has long been cherished by many LGBTQ+ individuals and families, providing a sense of belonging, safety, and support.

## Educational Excellence and Architectural Charm

Education is a cornerstone of any thriving community, and Lake Highlands takes this aspect seriously. The majority of the area is served by the Richardson Independent School District (RISD), known for its dedication to academic excellence and holistic development. RISD's commitment to nurturing young minds has contributed significantly to the area's allure, making it an ideal destination for families seeking quality education. But education doesn't stop at the classroom door. The architectural charm of Lake Highlands is a testament to its rich history and dynamic evolution. Charming homes, spanning from the classic rambler designs to the iconic mid-century modern style, dot the landscape. This architectural diversity reflects the area's commitment to preserving its heritage while embracing contemporary sensibilities.

## Community Oases and Modern Conveniences

Lake Highlands offers more than just picturesque houses and tree-lined streets. The community is dotted with tranquil greenbelts, inviting parks, and meandering trails that beckon residents to unwind and connect with nature. The proximity of White Rock Lake and its expansive parkland provides a respite from the hustle and bustle of urban life, allowing individuals and families to recharge and rejuvenate. The area's heartbeat resonates through its vibrant neighborhoods, each with its own unique character. Flag Pole Hill, The L Streets, and Mosshaven stand as pillars of community spirit and shared values, fostering bonds that extend beyond zip codes.

## Business Corridors and Enduring Institutions

Lake Highlands is not just a residential haven; it's a hub of economic activity. Numerous businesses and corporate establishments have found their home within the neighborhood's corridors, providing opportunities for growth and employment. The neighborhood's proximity to institutions like Presbyterian Hospital underscores its commitment to comprehensive community care. While some aspects of Lake Highlands have evolved, others remain cherished constants. The shopping centers, built between the 1950s and 1970s, boast unique architectural flair that captures the essence of bygone eras while undergoing contemporary revitalization. The public library, a symbol of knowledge and community, offers a tranquil space for learning and exploration.

## From Roller Rinks to Culinary Delights

For those who've witnessed Lake Highlands' evolution over the years, the memories of the past are intertwined with the present. The shuttering of the beloved White Rock Skate Center, once a youthful sanctuary, might evoke nostalgia for some. But times change, and so do the markers of community vibrancy. And speaking of vibrancy, Lake Highlands' culinary scene is a testament to its embrace of diversity. Among the many charming eateries, SoCo Coffee House stands out. What began as a coffee house at Lakeridge in 2019 has grown into a beloved spot for residents and visitors alike. With its cozy booths, delectable brunch and lunch offerings, and a welcoming atmosphere, SoCo has become a symbol of inclusivity and acceptance. Owners Jonny Bean and Charles Bader have cultivated a space that transcends labels and fosters genuine connections among people from all walks of life.

## **Embracing Love and Acceptance**

As Miss Ellie of Dallas aptly notes, the census statistics might not capture the true essence of Lake Highlands' LGBTQ+ community. Love and acceptance, after all, aren't quantifiable by numbers alone. This charming neighborhood, with its clean streets, picturesque homes, and diverse population, resonates with a spirit of openness and inclusivity that transcends statistics.

Lake Highlands is where stories converge, friendships flourish, and a sense of belonging takes root. From its educational institutions to its community oases, from its architectural diversity to its vibrant businesses, Lake Highlands embodies the spirit of Dallas – a city that celebrates diversity, fosters community, and embraces the evolution of its neighborhoods.