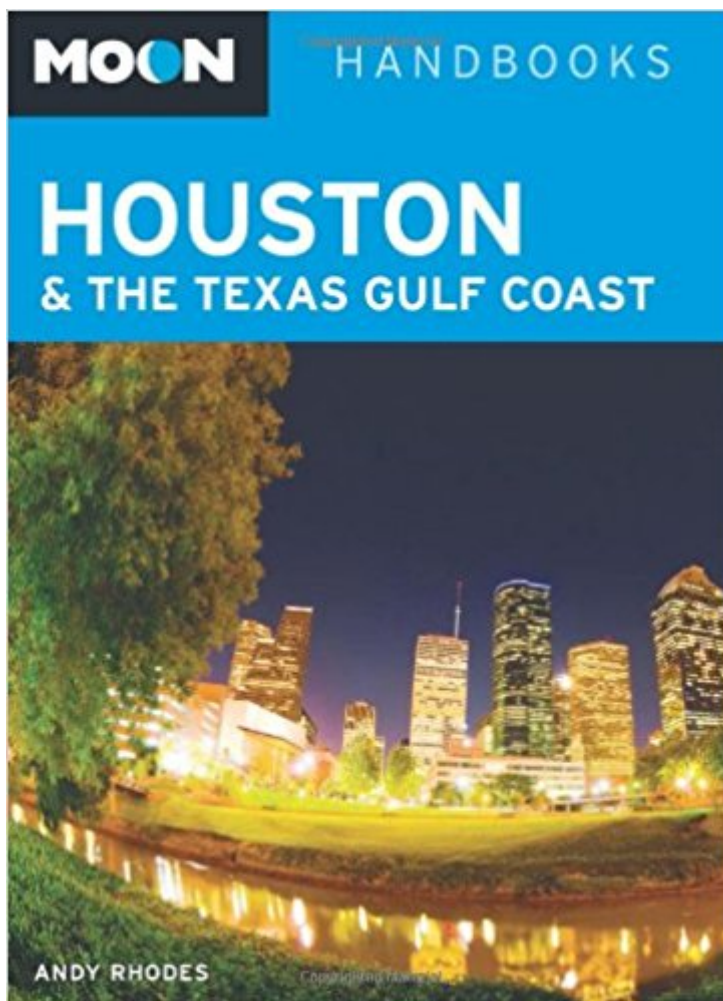




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Moon Houston & The Texas Gulf Coast (Moon Handbooks)



Synopsis

Texas resident Andy Rhodes knows the best ways to experience Space City and the surrounding areas, from catching a performance at The Orange Show Monument to hiking through one of the Piney Woods National Forests. Rhodes includes unique trip ideas like Texas Family Road Trip and Houston's Huge History, as well as information on dining, transportation, and accommodations for a wide range of travel budgets. Complete with details on everything from visiting the NASA Space Center to catching some sun in Corpus Christi, Moon Houston & the Texas Gulf Coast gives travelers the tools they need to create a more personal and memorable experience.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Andy Rhodes has been living and traveling in Texas since 1994. He calls Austin home, but regularly explores the Texas Hill Country, East Texas pine forests, and Gulf Coast beaches. His favorite destination is the Big Bend region of far West Texas, where the enormous sky and rugged mountains beckon with the promise of solace, serenity, and low humidity. Since 2002, Andy has thoroughly covered the state as editor of the Texas Historical Commission's magazine *The Medallion*, offering him an opportunity to experience the Lone Star State's compelling heritage in both colossal cities and tiny towns. In the process, he's developed a keen appreciation for Texas's vernacular architecture and savory barbecue. Andy's freelance articles have been published in *Home & Away*, *American Cowboy*, and *Austin Monthly* magazines, and his work has appeared in the *Austin American Statesman* newspaper. In 2009, Andy was named a featured

author and served as a panelist at the prestigious Texas Book Festival. Andy earned a journalism degree from Ohio's Miami University in 1993. He lives in Austin with his wife Paula and sons Max and Daniel.

This is an ok book. Not very thorough and is incomplete. Doesn't mention other Houston malls etc.. Best to look around for better guidebooks.

Quite good. Very complete.

I can't say it any better than Katherine Shilcutt did in her Houstonia Gastronomer article about this book, so I've included the text of the article below. The 10 Strangest Dining Recs in Moon Handbooks' Guide to Houston Try Corner Bakery for breakfast, and other dubious insights. Published Jan 29, 2014, 12:58pm By Katharine Shilcutt Absolutely not. Judging by his photo in the back of the 2013 edition of Moon Handbooks Houston & the Texas Gulf Coast, author and travel writer Andy Rhodes seems like a nice guy. He lives in Austin with his family, and has been the editor of The Medallion, the Texas Historical Commission's magazine, for over a decade. But then you read this line and something seems a little...off: "His ideal weekend includes a visit to Houston's Museum District, followed by a trip to Mustang Island for swimming and fresh seafood." That's a little over three and a half hours of driving for swimming and seafood, even on a weekend. But maybe Rhodes just really likes to cruise the Texas highways; I don't know. What I do know is that Rhodes doesn't exactly have the grasp of Houston I'd hope and expect from a long-time travel writer and self-professed Museum District fan. His inclination to drive to Mustang Island after a day spent walking through the MFAH and the CAMH somehow makes sense in the company of some of his other, stranger recommendations for a visitor to the Bayou City. 1. Houston isn't the fourth largest city in America, or anything. Says Rhodes: "Visitors and residents benefit from the city's enormous international population, offering authentic fare from all corners of the globe, including specific regional varieties not found in most midsize cities." Who you calling midsize? 2. Houston is smoking. Rhodes wrongly asserts: "This being Texas, the options also include a fair number of home-grown varieties, including some of the state's finest barbecue..." With all due respect to Killen's BBQ, Corkscrew, Gatlin's, and Pizzitola's...we know our place in the barbecue firmament; Houston is not a barbecue city. We have considerably more talent in other areas. 3. You can share a meal at Oxheart! No mention at all is given to the fact that Oxheart is a tasting

menu. Instead, Rhodes suggests sharing a "dessert treat of tomato tart on shortbread crust," which can't be ordered a la carte, and praises chef Justin Yu's famously subtle dishes for their "bold flavor combinations."4. Forget what we said above about home-grown varieties. Rhodes suggests downtown visitors head to Corner Bakery Cafe for breakfast. •a chain restaurant that can be found from San Diego to Salt Lake City. Sure, The Breakfast Klub (which is in Midtown) gets a nod, but what about the amazing Macondo Latin Bistro? Or Niko Niko's in Market Square Park? Or Barnaby's? Or Irma's? And if you're randomly including Midtown in your purvey, why not suggest Harry's? Or Natachee's? Or Tacos a Go-Go?5. You know: the Montrose-Kirby corridor. I'm not sure what this area of town is supposed to be exactly, but it seems like Rhodes's catch-all designation for Montrose, River Oaks, Rice Village, West University, and Upper Kirby. They're all roughly the same place anyway, right? Here, Rhodes manages to make some good recommendations, with all the standards making an appearance: Uchi, Underbelly, Hugo's, Backstreet Cafe, Mark's American, Da Marco, Hay Merchant, Churrascos, Indika, and Local Foods, among others. But sprinkled throughout are strange non-sequiturs, like this appraisal of Underbelly's Korean braised goat and dumplings: "...a wonderfully savory meal brimming with rich flavors you'd never expect from goat meat." Have you eaten goat before, Rhodes? How about the suggestion of Fajita Pete's for Tex-Mex? Or Ra Sushi for Japanese? •without a single mention of Kata Robata?6. "The Heights" In Rhodes's book, The Heights really means the Washington Corridor and/or Shady Acres. As a result, no real Heights restaurants are even mentioned save Happy Fatz on White Oak. No Down House, no Revival Market, no Zelko Bistro, no Shade, no Liberty Kitchen, no Glass Wall. It makes no sense to specifically call out one of the city's richest dining neighborhoods, only to completely disregard its best offerings. Instead, in the "Heights," we're told to eat at Sushi Tora, Mam's House of Snoballs, and the Bernie's Burger Bus that's...occasionally parked at Little Woodrow's.7. You know what's really worth the drive? TopWater Grill. No, wait. It's totally not. Yet that's the sole seafood destination Rhodes lists in his "Greater Houston" section. If you're going to drive that far, go to Gilhooley's. TopWater is so painfully average as to be perhaps the biggest embarrassment on this list.8. "Houston has a sizable Chinese population." While this isn't untrue •Houston has over 72,000 Chinese residents •we're not known for our Chinese cuisine, as Rhodes is suggesting with this statement. We're known for Vietnamese, thanks to having the second-largest Vietnamese population in the country. Despite this, Rhodes fails to send readers to Chinatown at all. Instead, he suggests three restaurants nowhere near our most fascinating dining corridor: Fung's Kitchen, Yao Restaurant & Bar, and Kim Son. (Earlier in the book, it should be noted, Rhodes did

throw a bone to Chinatown—except that he listed it as existing on Harwin, and being a "concentrated collection of Chinese establishments" with no mention of dining whatsoever.)⁹. Doneraki. Done-freaking-raki. There is no excuse for this. None. At least Rhodes gave a nod to Pico's Mex-Mex and Taco Keto, although he called the latter a "sample of Houston's burgeoning food truck scene," despite the fact that it's 15 years old, and incorrectly placed it in a Kroger parking lot.¹⁰ No Ninfa's. No Tony's. No Pondicheri. No Trinita. No Haven. No Cove. No Reef. No Hubcap. No Pass & Provisions. No Phoenicia. No Mahatma Gandhi District. No Chinatown. Look, I understand wanting to direct visitors to some more underappreciated, less busy, "hidden" gems. Houston is rich with those. But failing to mention some of Houston's best and brightest restaurants, cuisines, and neighborhoods—the very things that have made Houston a dining destination—so that you can save room for the more standard fare at places like Ill Forks Steakhouse, Divino (great wine list; mediocre food), Chama Gaucha, Becks Prime, Mary's, and the others already noted above makes absolutely zero sense. My suggestion for culinary visitors to Houston: take some of Rhodes's own advice and go with something home-grown. Houstonia's own guide to Houston's top 50 restaurants, of course. Also: the Eater Houston Essential 38, the My Table Ultimate Food Lover's Guide to Houston, and the Fearless Critic Houston guide.

I got a copy of this book as a gift and I've enjoyed reading through it for ideas as a new Houston resident. It covers a lot of territory and does a good job explaining all the places people would want to see in Houston. I saw the other review from a blogger and not sure why they didn't like it for not having all the trendy foodie news (it's a general travel guide book, right?). I enjoyed the humorous writing and will buy it for gifts for people coming to Houston!

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