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S A N A N T O N I O
ARCHITECTURE



THE CITY OF SAN ANTONIO

San Antonio de Bexar was founded in 1718 as the first civilian settlement in Texas and today the city of San Antonio offers unique culture, beauty, and rich and distinctive architecture.

San Antonio has so many historical buildings that reflect our city's heritage and significance. Architecture is the art of bringing an abstract idea to fruition, linking concept and form.

The city of San Antonio is rich with historic architecture, which reflects its Spanish and Mexican roots. Whether you take a guided tour or explore on your own, you will enjoy learning about San Antonio's significant and celebrated architecture.

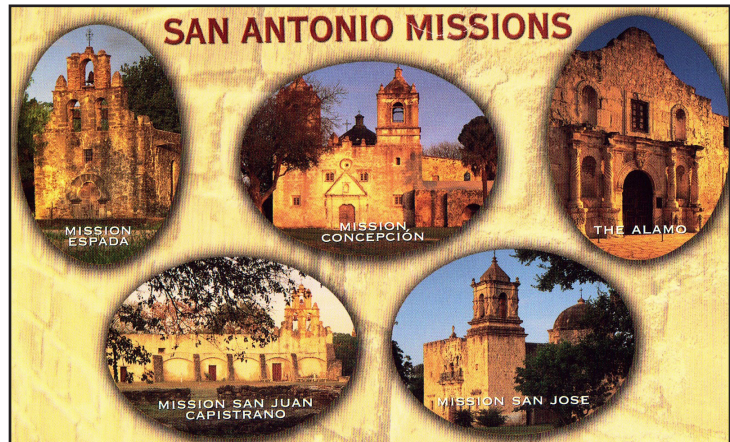


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THE SAN ANTONIO MISSIONS

In the 18th century, Spanish friars built the missions to convert Native Americans to Catholicism. Utilizing the materials and labor available at the time of construction, the missions were built about three miles apart in a southern line formation in downtown San Antonio.

They were strategically placed along the banks of San Antonio River, which was the only constant source of water in that area. Recently designated a World Heritage site, the San Antonio Missions consists of five complexes, which include The Alamo, Mission Concepcion, Mission San Jose, Mission San Juan, and Mission La Espada. The missions are a reminder of the ingenuity of monastics and architectural trends of Spanish America. Frescos (painted plasters) played a significant role in the architectural design of all the missions and most are still visible today. The missions remain active parishes with the exception of the Alamo.



THE ALAMO

300 Alamo Plaza, San Antonio, TX 78205

Although originally a Spanish chapel of the Mission San Antonio de Valero, the Alamo was established in 1718 for the education of area American Indians after their conversion to Christianity. In its roughly 300-year existence, the Alamo has played many roles, and only the bottom 23 feet of wall are part of the original. The Alamo has Spanish style architecture consisting of stone, mud, and wooden structures. The signature-scalloped roofline was not part of the Alamo until 1849. It was added by the US Army when it leased the building from the Catholic Church to use for storage of grain and hay. While some traces of its original integrity exist, the Alamo has become the number one tourist attraction in the State of Texas.

Peak Season: March 4 - Sept. 3, 9 am - 8 pm

Off Peak Season: Sept. 4 - March 3, 9 am - 5:30 pm



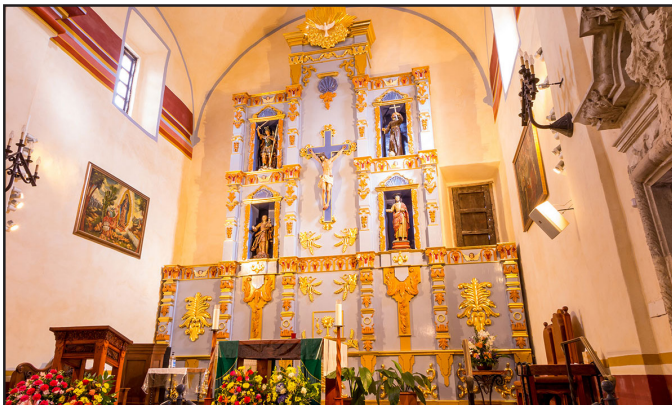
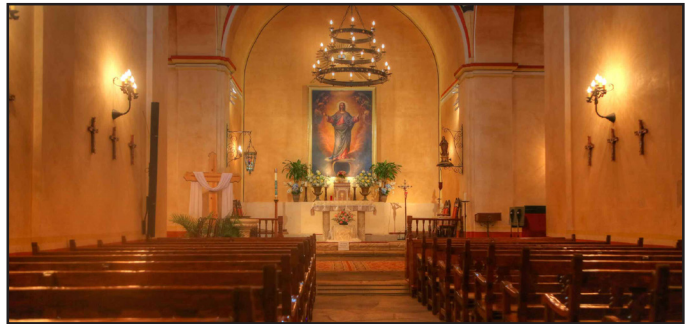
MISSION CONCEPCION

807 Mission Rd, San Antonio, TX 78210

Established in 1731, Mission Concepcion is the most preserved and unrestored stone church in America. The design, which was completed in 1755, includes twin towers, barrel-vaulted roof and dome ceiling. Art elements throughout the mission include Christian, Spanish, and Native American influence, while the legendary acoustics within the church remain. The mission buildings were damaged during the Texas Revolution in 1835, and repairs were later made to preserve Concepcion. While the original colorful designs on the exterior have faded, the original frescos can still be seen today at Concepción, an active Catholic parish that is a part of the Archdiocese of San Antonio.

Bilingual mass: Sunday at 10:00 am

Mariachi mass: Sunday at 12:00 pm



MISSION SAN JOSE

701 E Pyron Ave, San Antonio, TX 78214

Mission San José y San Miguel de Aguayo is an historic Catholic mission that was established in 1720. Like so many of the missions, San Jose moved locations before its current site, which was in 1739. Construction on San Jose's current church structure was begun in 1768 with Spanish Colonial style architecture. This mission consists of stone-walls, bastions, granary, and serves as a church. At its height, the community thrived with extensive fields and herds of livestock, and San José became known as the "Queen of the Missions." Over the years, the mission buildings deteriorated. Major renovations took place in 1933 and it is now viewed as a model among the Texas missions. Many buildings on the campus of Texas Tech University in Lubbock, Texas, borrow architectural elements from those found at Mission San José.

Saturday Mass: 5:00 pm (English)

Sunday Masses: 7:30 am (Spanish), 9:00 am (English),
10:30 am (English), 12:00 pm (Mariachi Bilingual Mass)

MISSION SAN JUAN

9101 Graf Rd, San Antonio, TX 78214

Mission San Juan Capistrano was founded in 1731 by Spanish Catholics along the eastern part of San Antonio River, and was the least developed and smallest of the missions in San Antonio. The mission is part of the largest concentration of Spanish Colonial Architecture in the United States, including an unfinished church that remains on the grounds. While initially struggling to survive due to disease and attacks, the mission community persevered. By 1762, it contained a friary and granary where Native Americans produced iron tools, clothes, and hides. There were also orchards of fruit and vegetables as well as livestock, which helped provide food for the other missions and community. The mission underwent a renovation in 2011 by Ford, Powell & Carson Architects & Planners that brought the structure back to its original architecture. Foundation piers were added, sections of walls were stabilized, 20th century buttresses were removed, and new lime plaster in an eggshell white color replaced its previously dark hue. The interior of the parish has been restored and now includes a devotional area with a replica of a stolen statue of San Juan Capistrano, a wooden altar table, and a presider's chair that was once used in San Fernando Cathedral.



Mass Times: Saturday 5:00 pm (English)
Sunday 9:15 and 11:00 am (English), 12:30 (Spanish)



MISSION ESPADA

10040 Espada Rd, San Antonio, TX 78214

Mission Espada (Spanish for “Sword”) was founded in 1690 in present-day Weches, TX and was transferred to San Antonio in 1731. The mission contained an aqueduct, friary, sacristy and granary. Many arches were included in the design, including an arched doorway. The roof later collapsed, and by 1777, only the façade and rear wall remained. Francis Bouchu, a priest who was also a bricklayer and stonemason, rebuilt the chapel and restored the convent. Inside the church, you will find a very simple layout and décor consisting of white walls and wooden beams along the ceilings. Espada’s living quarters and granary remains as they were built in 1745, and contains a small museum that displays items used during its peak in the mid-1700s.

Mass Times: Saturday 6:00 pm (English)
Sunday 10:00 am (English)

MCNAY MUSEUM OF ART

6000 N New Braunfels Ave, San Antonio, TX 78209

Marion Koogler McNay was a painter and art teacher who inherited her father's oil fortune. Her Spanish colonial home was designed by father-son-duo architects Atlee B. Ayres and Robert M. Ayres in 1927. Marion left detailed instructions in her final Will that pertained to how the home would be converted into the first modern art museum in Texas. In 2008, expansion to the McNay doubled the size of the museum with the addition of the Jane and Arthur Stieren Center, designed by French architect Jean-Paul Viguier. The Stieren Center is a long, two-story addition, which houses both permanent and temporary exhibitions. The building includes a ceiling made of layers of glass, which provides natural light to illuminate the art on display. Outside, you will find a new sculpture garden designed by TBG, Texas' largest landscape architectural firm. Today the McNay is the home of 19th and 20th Century modern art and can be rented for weddings, business meetings, and other receptions and celebrations.



TOWER OF THE AMERICAS

600 Hemisfair Way, San Antonio, TX 78205

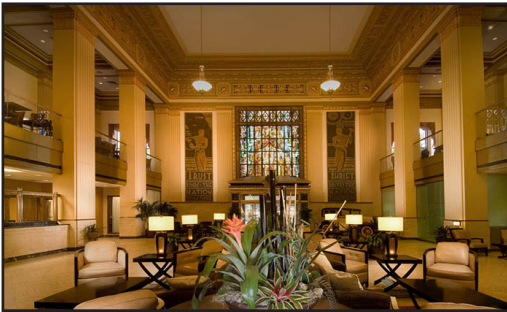
San Antonio's most iconic and visible structure, designed by O'Neil Ford, is the 730 foot modern observation tower known as the Tower of the Americas, which is the tallest in the state of Texas. The tower was built for the Hemisfair World's Fair in 1968 that celebrated San Antonio's 250th anniversary. At 800 feet-per-minute, it takes only 43 seconds for the elevators to climb to the top. The tower now features a revolving restaurant, an indoor and outdoor observation deck, gift shop and a 4D theatre.



DRURY PLAZA HOTEL

105 S St Mary's St, San Antonio, TX 78205

Formerly Alamo National Bank built in 1929 on San Antonio's historic Paseo del Rio, The Drury Plaza Hotel was opened in 2007. Robey Architecture served as the design architect for their redevelopment of the bank building. At 24 stories, the skyscraper was constructed of structural steel and concrete, has 50-foot ceilings, travertine floors and stained glass windows. The Drury 's interior is trimmed in granite and marble with elegant terra cotta embellishments, molded plaster and decorative bronze. There is a Neon spire that raises six stories above the building and has become a landmark of San Antonio's Riverwalk. The rooftop now contains a pool and observation deck with 360-degree views of the city.



THE WESTON CENTER

112 E Pecan St, San Antonio, TX 78205

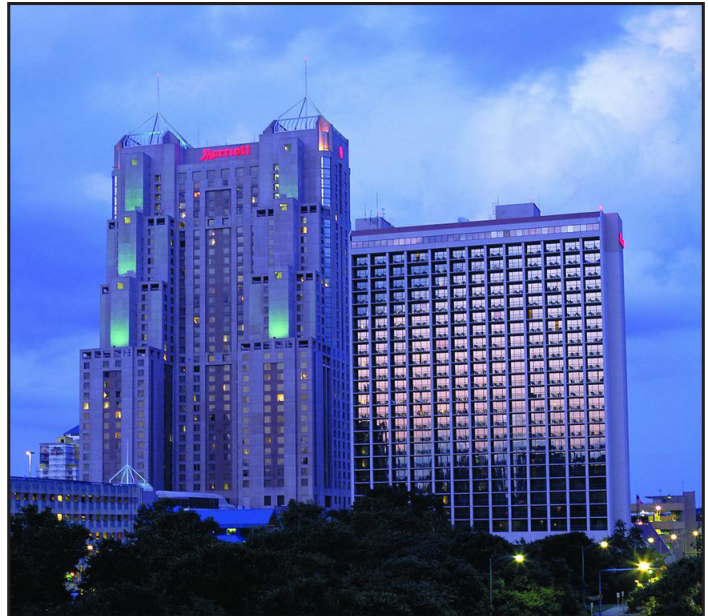
A landmark of San Antonio's skyline since 1989, the 32 story modern styled Weston Center is now a premier commercial office building located downtown, designed by Cambridge Seven Associates, Inc. featuring classic post-modern architecture. It is San Antonio's third tallest skyscraper in the city, faced with Texas granite and limestone. The San Antonio River flows to the east of the building, and a natural stone stairway leads to the San Antonio River Walk.



MARRIOTT RIVERCENTER

101 Bowie St, San Antonio, TX 78205

Marriott Rivercenter is San Antonio's tallest building, designed by RTKL Associates in post-modernism style. The Marriott was completed in 1988 and includes ornamentation on top of the hotel intended to emulate the twin bell towers of Mission Concepcion and San Fernando Cathedral. The external shape of the Marriott Rivercenter resembles a tall chair with a high back, and is connected to the Rivercenter Mall at two levels for added convenience.



NIX MEDICAL BUILDING

408-414 Navarro Street, San Antonio, TX 78205

Henry T. Phelps designed this art deco 23 story high-rise building and was the tallest and largest hospital in the United States when it was completed in 1931. The building embraces styles from Gothic Romanesque and Renaissance periods using strong vertical angles in its design. One of the unique features of this building is when viewing from the Riverwalk, it presents an optical illusion that the facing wall is one-dimensional. Today, the Nix is no longer a hospital but houses doctors' offices, emergency room, and includes other medical uses.



TOWER LIFE BUILDING

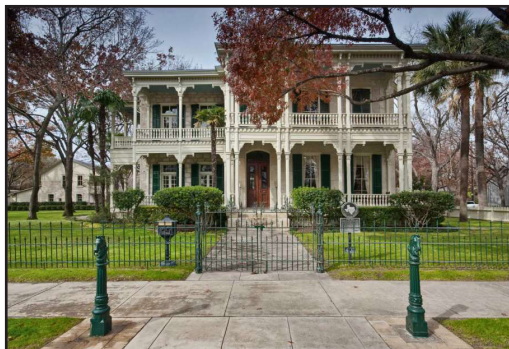
310 South Saint Mary's Street, San Antonio, TX 78205

The Tower Life Building is one of San Antonio's most recognizable downtown landmarks designed by local architectural firm Ayres & Ayres and built in 1927. It is 31 stories, eight sided, and is a "wedding cake-tiered" Gothic Revival tower built out of terra cotta and brick. It opened in 1929 to house a Sears & Roebuck store and office space overlooking the river. The original plan for the Tower Life was intended to be included as part of a larger complex called Bowen's Island Skyscrapers, which was halted by the Great Depression. At night, dramatic lighting adds height and intensity to the tower, making it an important structure in the city's skyline.



KING WILLIAM HISTORIC DISTRICT

German nationals immigrated to Texas in the 19th century and built Greek Revival, Victorian, and Italianate mansions along the San Antonio River. The King William Historic District is comprised of 25 blocks in downtown San Antonio. Following World War II, the area began to decline and homes were neglected. In the 1950's, preservationists began to restore these homes and in 1968 was named San Antonio's first designated historic district. King William District expanded in 1984 to include cottages built between South Alamo and South St. Mary's streets. Today, the King William District contains homes that have been preserved and/or converted into cafes, art galleries, bed and breakfasts, and shops.



MAJESTIC THEATRE

224 E Houston St, San Antonio, TX 78205

The Majestic Theater was designed by architect John Eberson and built in 1929 with a Spanish Mediterranean style. The Majestic Theater is San Antonio's oldest and largest theater and was the home of the San Antonio Symphony for 25 years. With 2,264 seats, the Majestic is the host of a variety of concerts and performing arts attractions and currently features productions of the "Broadway in San Antonio" series.



AZTEC THEATRE

104 N St Mary's St, San Antonio, TX 78205

The Aztec Theatre is a historic theater in San Antonio built in 1926. Located in the heart of downtown, The Aztec Theatre was designed by local architects Robert Kelly and R.O. Koenig in a Mayan Revival Style. The theater's interior contains furnishings inspired by the Aztec, Mixtec, Zapotec, Toltec, and Mayan cultures. Today, the Aztec is a 3,000 seat multi-purpose theater for entertainment and events and is one of the Alamo City's most cherished architectural and historical landmarks.



SAN FERNANDO CATHEDRAL

115 W Main Plaza, San Antonio, TX 78205

The cornerstone for San Fernando Cathedral was laid in 1738. Today it is the oldest cathedral in Texas. San Fernando has undergone several renovations and expansions, and the original walls, which form the sanctuary, are still present. In 1868, architect Francois P. Giraud re-designed the front half of the cathedral, changing the style to Gothic. San Fernando was later designated a cathedral in 1874 when the Diocese of San Antonio was formed, and the rear half of the church remains as it was in the 1700's, keeping the original colonial style in tact.

In 2014, French artist Xavier De Richmont created "**San Antonio-The Saga**", the first US video projection onto the façade of the cathedral using technology known as video mapping. The 24 minute movie, depicting the history of San Antonio, covers the entire 7000 feet of the front of the cathedral using video, graphics, paintings and drawings, all choreographed to music.

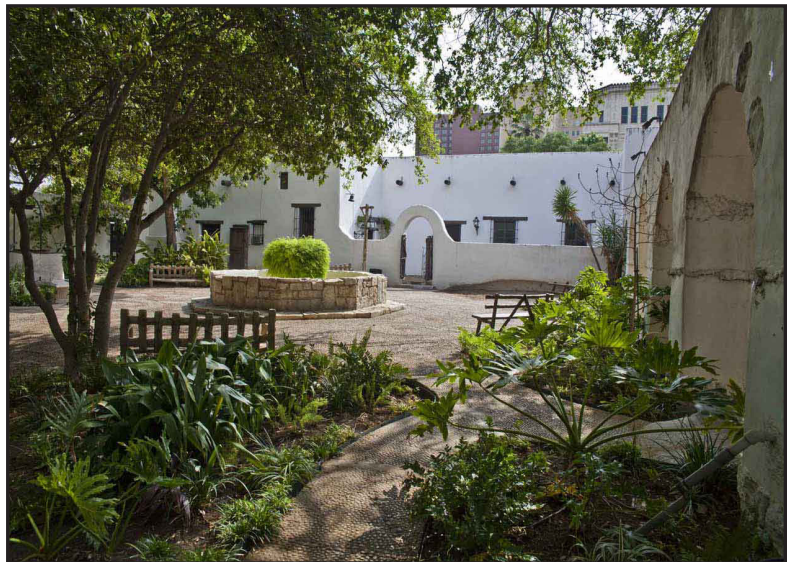
"**San Antonio-The Saga**" plays Tuesday, Friday, Saturday, and Sunday evenings at 9:00 pm, 9:30 pm, and 10:00 pm.



SPANISH GOVERNORS PALACE

105 Plaza De Armas, San Antonio, TX 78205

The Spanish Governor's Palace is an historic American Colonial style adobe which served as the original residence and working office for the Captains of the Spanish military troops from 1722 until the early 1800's. The palace was originally intended to protect the nearby Alamo, and the palace is one of the oldest remaining residential structures in Texas. The building has housed a variety of businesses including a pawnshop, a produce store, saloons, and a clothing store. It was purchased by the city in 1929 and in 1930, architect Harvey P. Smith added a new wing and designed a courtyard on the backside of the palace. There is also a garden designed by local landscape architect Homer Fry that includes exotic trees, plants and an elaborate foundation and wishing well. The palace is now a museum, is open to the public, and can be rented for private events.



Monday - Saturday: 9 am to 5 pm; Sunday: 10 am to 5 pm; Admission is \$5 for adults, \$3 for Military/ Seniors 60 & Up Children ages 7 to 13- \$3; Children under 7 are free.

BEXAR COUNTY COURTHOUSE

600 Dolorosa, San Antonio, TX 78205

The Bexar County Courthouse was designed by New York architect James Riley Gordon in the Romanesque Revival style. Gordon, who specialized in the design of public buildings, designed 72 courthouses as well as hundreds of other public buildings. This striking four-story courthouse was completed in 1897 and has an exterior of red sandstone and native Texas granite with red and green tiled roof. During the design, Gordon carefully considered the South Texas heat and strategically designed it to utilize the entry of natural breezes into the building to keep it cool. It has been said that even on the hottest of summer days, the courthouse temperatures were often 20 degrees cooler than outside. The courthouse has undergone four major additions and remodels since its construction.



PEARL STABLE

307 Pearl Pkwy, San Antonio, TX 78215

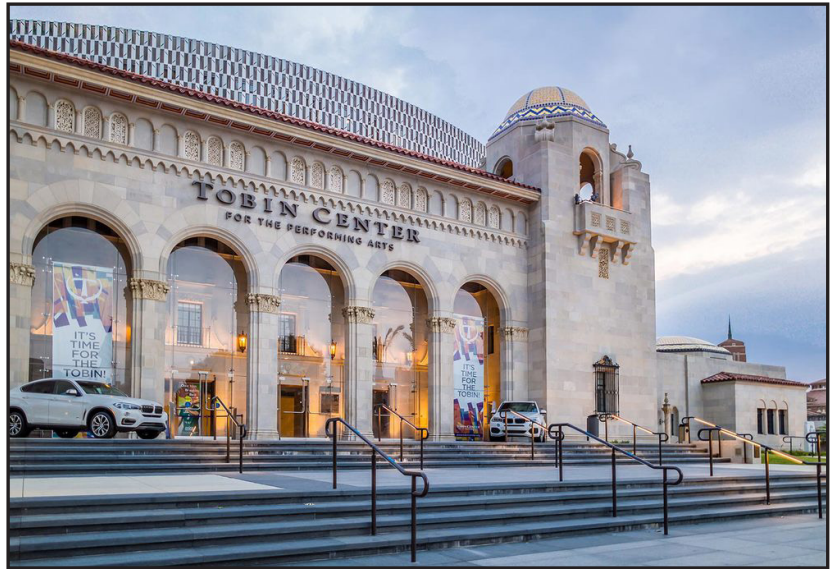
The Pearl Stable was designed by architect Otto Kraemer and built in 1894 in a 19th century Victorian style oval shaped building with intricately laid brick. The stable was originally the home to the draft horses that pulled the beer wagons of the Pearl Brewery. The 5,500 square foot building has undergone several remodels, which covered the original architectural design. Some of the original features have been restored or re-created using old photos and architectural drawings from the 1890's, and preserved items have been incorporated into the design throughout the facility. Inside the stable, the steel columns, beams, and wood roof rafters from 1894 are still visible. The stonework at the entrance has been replicated, as has the cupola (small dome) in the center to match the original drawings. This old horse barn is a striking venue that is elegant and is used for weddings, business meetings, conferences, and other functions.



THE TOBIN CENTER

115 Auditorium Circle, San Antonio, TX 78205

The Tobin Center for the Performing Arts, previously San Antonio's historic Municipal Auditorium, was transformed into a multi-purpose performance hall located next to the River Walk. Seattle-based architecture firm LMN Architects and San Antonio's Marmon Mok Architecture successfully renewed the historic building in 2014 while keeping the original Spanish Mission façade and combining old and new architectural components. Behind the Tobin stands a massive and bold asymmetric folded metal screen of 18,000 interlocking panels designed to match the building's limestone blocks. This intricate pattern allows light to reflect in different directions, resulting in bold lighting effects both during day and night, and contains embedded LEDs that are choreographed with the evening's performance. The Tobin contains three performance spaces and is one of the best architectural sights in the city. What makes the internal space unique is a special floor system that allows the orchestra level to be transformed within moments from a traditional seating layout to a variety of options, depending on the performance taking place. Although the public will not be able to see this transformation while it occurs, it allows the same space to be used in different ways by different performance groups.



HOTEL EMMA

126 E. Grayson Street, San Antonio, TX 78215

San Antonio's Pearl Brewhouse was designed by Chicago architect August Maritzen in the Second Empire Style in 1894, and the abandoned building became Hotel Emma in 2015. The name "Emma" was chosen to honor Emma Koehler, the wife of Pearl Brewery's founder Otto Koehler. The boutique style 135-room hotel has a rugged yet refined design, including concrete beams, exposed pipes, chipped plaster, and original wood ceilings. The interior also contains leftover machinery and industrial artifacts all incorporated into the design. Hotel Emma has three culinary venues within the hotel; Supper, Larder, and Sternwirth. Hotel Emma has become one of the city's most desired destinations for locals and visitors to experience the history of this legendary building.



ALAMODOME

100 Montana St, San Antonio, TX 78203

In the late 1980's, San Antonio leaders began looking into the possibility of a facility that could be used for a number of events, specifically to attract a professional football franchise and increase the city's convention traffic. In 1993, the Alamodome was constructed in downtown San Antonio as rectilinear five level stadium, which can seat up to 65,000. The modern multi-purpose facility was designed by Populus, a worldwide architectural firm that specializes in sports arenas and facilities. The San Antonio Spurs played in the Alamodome for a decade before moving to new arena now called the AT&T Center. Amenities within the Alamodome include 6,000 club level seats and over 50 luxury suites. The facility also includes 30,000 square feet of meeting rooms and 160,000 square feet of exhibit space. Today, the Alamodome is used for sports, conventions, concerts, and other events.



SAN ANTONIO PUBLIC LIBRARY

600 Soledad St, San Antonio, TX 78205

Known by locals as the “Red Enchilada,” the San Antonio Public Library is a contemporary style six-story library designed by renowned Mexican architect Ricardo Legorreta, built in 1995. The library is a cubist geometric structure with giant red “marbles” appearing to cascade down one of the facades. Legorreta was both criticized and praised for his bold color choice of the library and has been quoted as saying, “I wanted to break the concept that libraries are imposing.” The 240,000 square foot modern design contains several landscaped outdoor plazas for reading, but books aren't the only thing you'll find. The library provides free computer access, Wi-Fi, free meeting rooms, a children's playground, and much more.





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