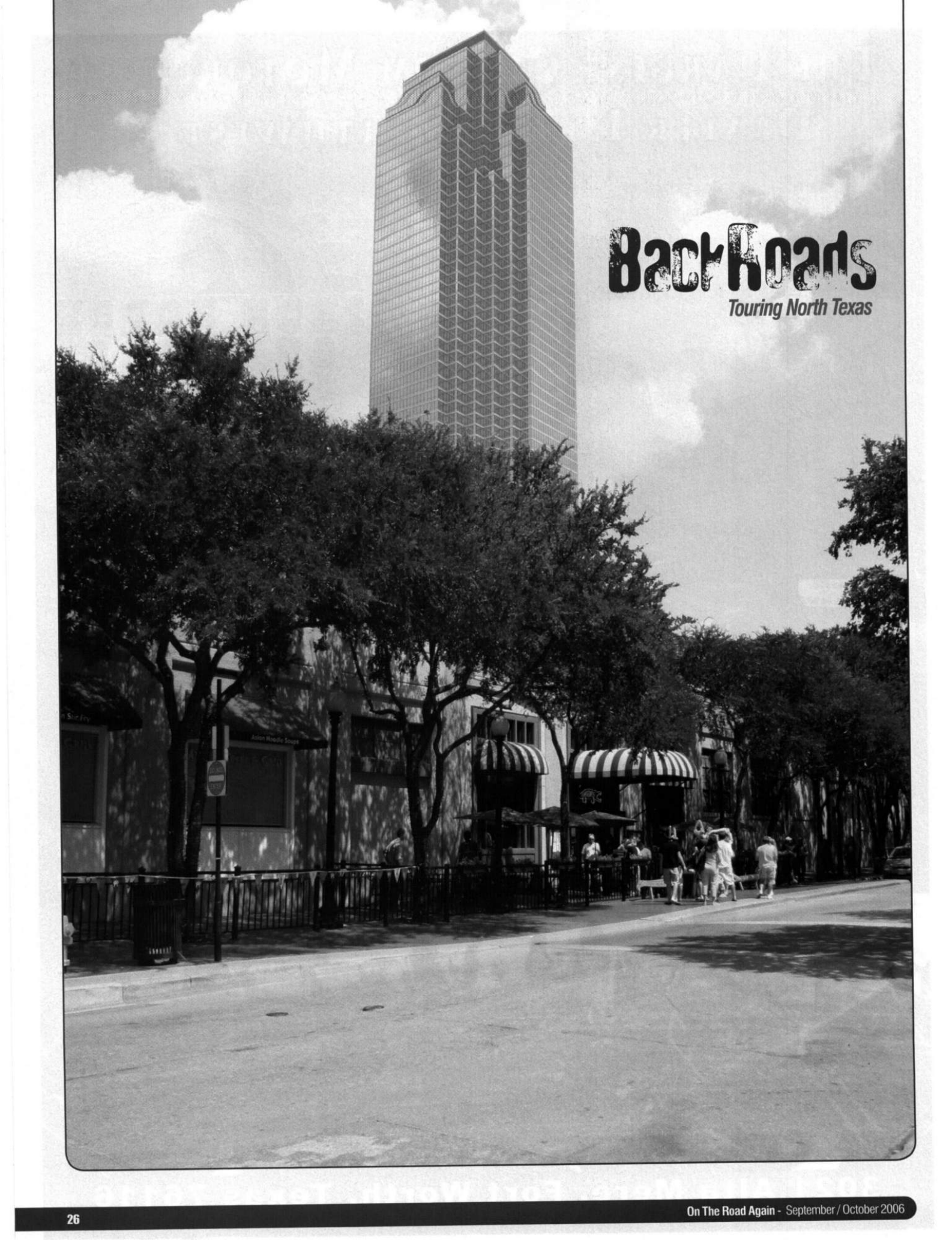




Back Roads

Touring North Texas

Plains, Lakes and Town Squares

The Dallas-Fort Worth metroplex sits smack dab in the middle of the north Texas plains region.

Lakes and water sports recreation abound here, but that hasn't always been the case. Step back to the dust bowl days when the years were marked either by excessive rain and flooding or the dry years when there wasn't enough water to support anything.

The flood/drought cycle of the 30's spurred decades of dam building. Suddenly they weren't just prairies anymore, they were prairies accented with picturesque lakes. The feast or famine nature of the erratic weather cycles were harnessed and a level of predictability enabled the area to blossom.

The points covered in this article represent a 200-mile loop. This tour could be started from any point along the way and shortened or lengthened at the discretion of the riders.

The sophistication of Dallas, the western charm and friendliness of Ft. Worth and the old-time Town Squares of Glen Rose, Granbury and Grapevine make for a perfect weekend motorcycle trip.

Just as the different areas of the Metroplex each have their own unique personality and flavor, so do the local motorcycle dealers. For those who love to carve the curves a full line of Ducati Motorcycles are in Dallas at Advanced Motorsports on



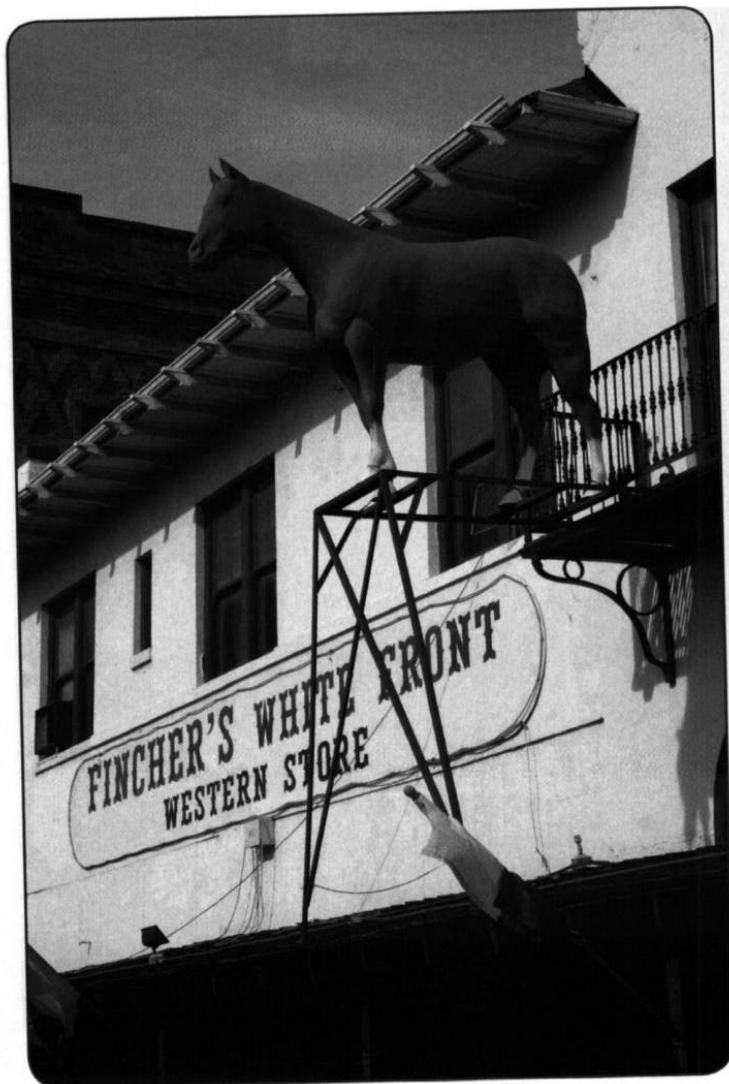
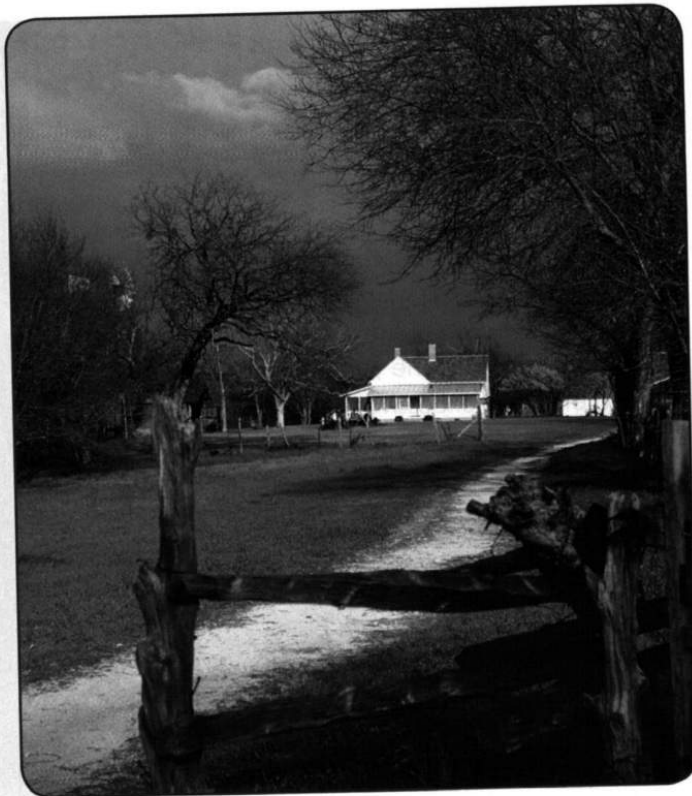
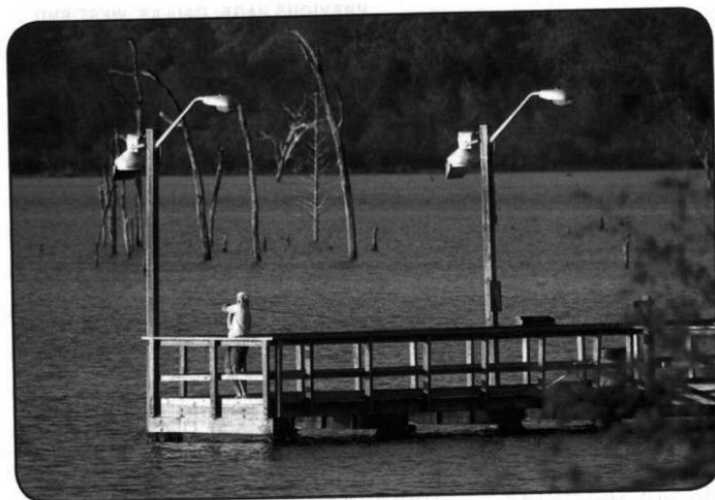
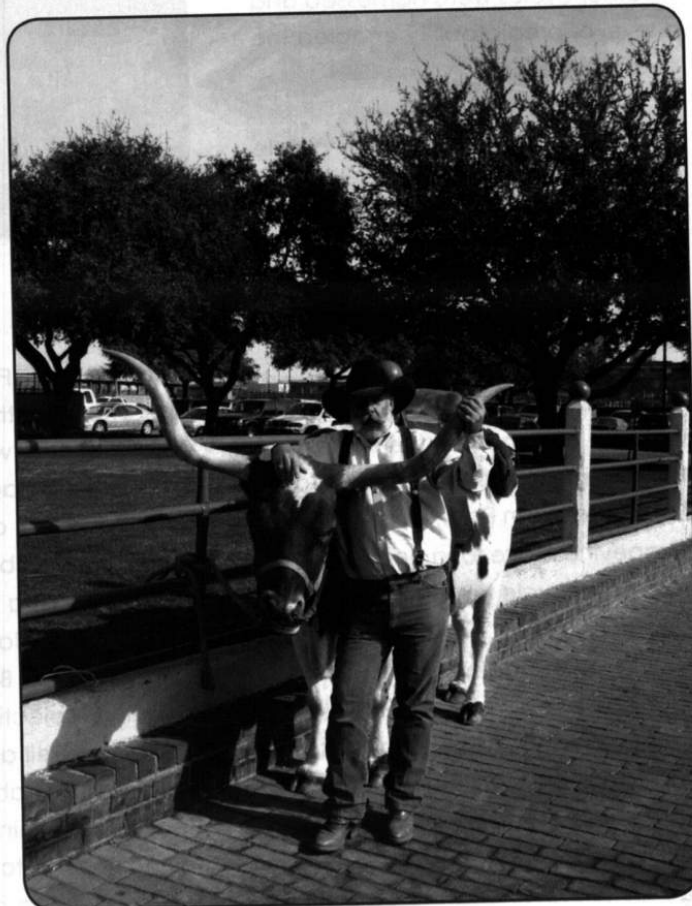
THIS PAGE: BONHAM STATE PARK TEXAS PARKS & WILDLIFE DEPT. ROBERT MCCORKLE

PREVIOUS PAGE: DALLAS' WEST END

N. Industrial. DFW Honda in Grapevine offers anything you could possibly want. It is worth a trip here just to see the vintage motorcycle that they have on display around the store. Remember the little Honda 90 you had as a kid? They probably have a fully restored one on display.

In Hurst Full Boar Cycles has an amazing selection of pre-owned Harleys as well as custom bikes, apparel and just about any accessory item you can think of. Al Lamb's Dallas Honda is a toy store for big boys - and girls. The day we visited they

had a huge selection of Gold Wings on display, and not just the big bikes, they had a wide selection available of everything in their product line. In Fort Worth, Iron Horse of Texas just opened a new, larger store. They are the largest American Iron Horse dealer in the United States. The Iron Horse line, manufactured nearby in Fort Worth, has just about anything you can dream of in a custom bike. These are bikes will that turn heads as you ride down the street. If you want to drool over a new Harley, visit American Eagle Harley-Davidson in



TOP RIGHT: CEDAR HILL STATE PARK TEXAS PARKS & WILDLIFE DEPT. EARL NOTTINGHAM

BOTTOM LEFT: PURTIS CREEK STATE PARK
TEXAS PARKS & WILDLIFE DEPT. EARL NOTTINGHAM

just north of Dallas in Corinth. They have, in stock and ready for delivery, one of the largest selections of new Harleys I have ever seen.

Grapevine. This small town, sitting in the middle of the Metroplex area, has been able to retain the charm of its main street with small shops, wonderful restaurants, real bakeries, handmade crafts for sale on the Town Square and real Texas hospitality. In Grapevine be sure to visit Biker Alley for a full selection of motorcycle apparel and accessories. Get there hungry and enjoy the good food, the awesome salad bar and camaraderie with other riders at Wilhoites Restaurant.

Dallas. Dallas is the financial center of Texas. If you stand among the skyscrapers at noon oil executives, advertising gurus, bankers, land developers and office workers, will almost trample you. Everyone seems to be in a big rush as they scurry about with the ubiquitous cell phone seemingly implanted in their ear.

But look beyond that and you will find Dallas is a great place to visit. Dine in the revolving restaurant atop the Tower next to the Hyatt and enjoy a birds eye view as it completes its rotation every 60 minutes.

Back down at street level head over to the West End district. This is a shopping and entertainment district in what was originally a warehouse area. You can spend hours – and a lot of money – browsing through the unique shops that are tucked in just about everywhere.





Hungry? This is a diner's paradise. Choices range from steaks to Schechuan, lasagna to lobster. If you want to party late, there are many clubs featuring live music. Get a good seat, grab a few friends and enjoy Dallas' West End.

Cedar Hill State Park. Still in the metroplex, Grand Prairie is home to Joe Pool Lake and Cedar Hill State Park. A side jaunt to the lakeside on your way to Glen Rose will provide a welcome reprieve from the hustle and bustle of Dallas. Here a portion of what was originally the Penn Farm has been preserved just as it looked 125 years ago. This area, at the edge of the escarpment, provided the water and rich soil necessary for the early settlers to thrive. Just remember as you enjoy the pastoral view – these settlers lived in a pre-air conditioning Texas. They had to be of a hardy stock.

Glen Rose. Would you believe Dinosaur tracks in the stone? Nearby Dinosaur Valley State Park sits astride the Paluxy River. Over time the river has worn down the upper layers of rock to reveal one of the world's best-preserved dinosaur tracks. Two 70-foot fiberglass dinosaur models build originally for the New York World's Fair of 1964-65 are on display here. Nearby the Brazos and Paluxy Rivers offer visitors a chance to cool off with swimming, tubing, and fishing. In August qualified individuals have an opportunity to adopt a wild horse or burro in an event held by the Bureau of Land Management.

"The Promise" celebrating its 18th season in Glen Rose is an unforget-

table epic musical drama depicting the life of Jesus Christ. The show is presented every Friday and Saturday from September 1st to November 11th.

You have a range of choices on where to stay; modern hotels, quaint cottages, rustic cabins and cozy B&Bs. Check out the GlenRoseTexas.net website for more information.

Granbury. The Granbury Courthouse Square was the first one in Texas to be added to the National Register of Historic Places. It has been described as one of the most complete examples of a late 19th century courthouse squares in Texas.

The Brazos Drive-in is one of only a handful left in the state. Granbury's Opera House, dating back to 1866, is still a great venue for live theatrical performances. Stately turn-of-the-century homes now serve as bed and breakfasts.

History, Wild West history, abounds everywhere in Granbury and not just from the history books. Many of the tales, stories and yarns have been passed down from ancestors of the current residents – stories you won't find in any book. Tales of Davy Crockett, Jesse James, John Wilkes Booth and the hanging tower at the Old Jailhouse. This was a sparsely populated, rough-and-tumble fron-

Motorcycle Apparel & Accessories.

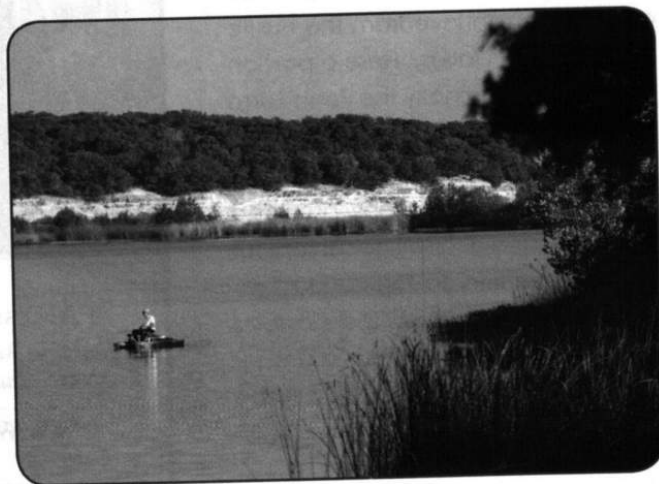
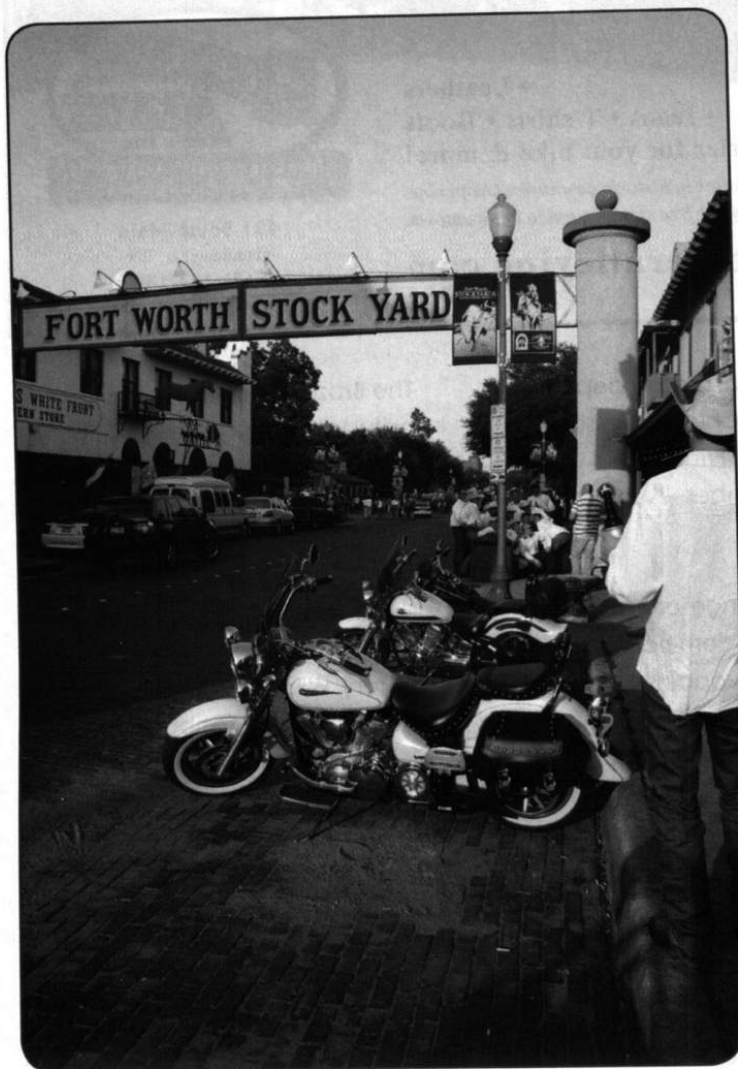
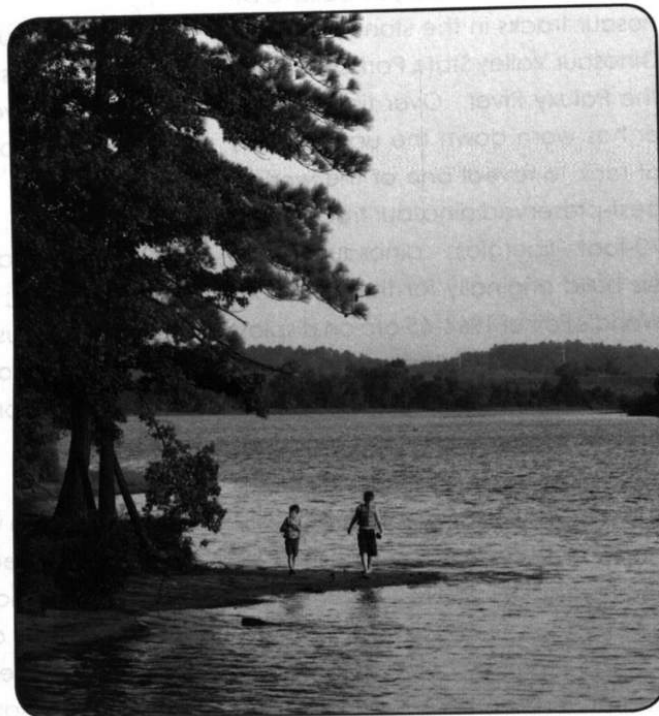
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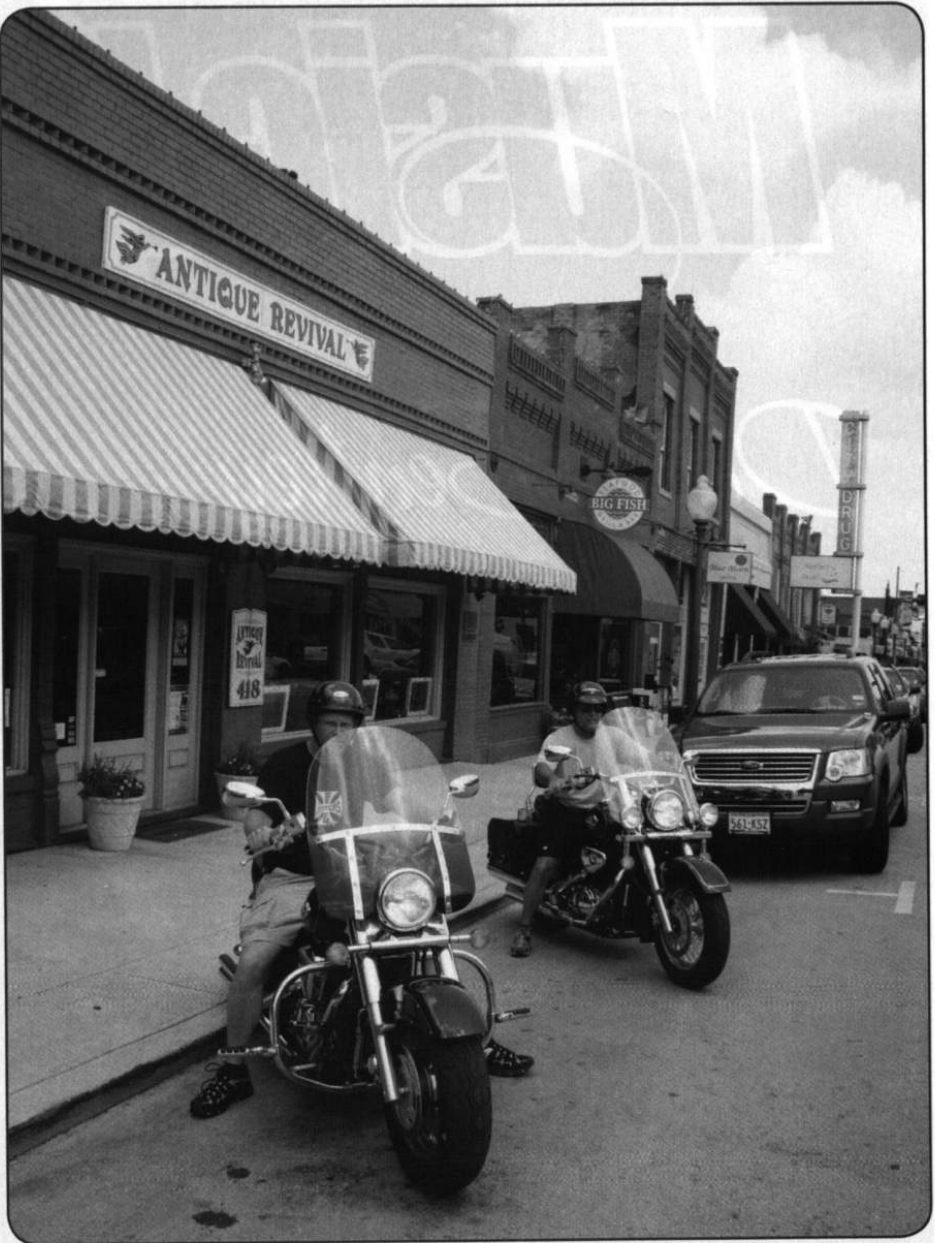
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tier town of yesterday. You can visualize the carriages and horse drawn wagons as they crowded along Granbury's town square on Saturday. Whether you are walking, driving, or riding plan on staying in Granbury long enough to see the sites and soak up some of the history.

Fort Worth or "Foat Wuth" is a world away from Dallas. Ft. Worth is true Texas from the tip of its 10-gallon hats to the toes of the well-worn wrangler boots. Frequently referred to as "where the West begins" Fort Worth is charming, friendly and down home. Here the famous Ft. Worth stockyards grew from its origins as a location on the open range where ranchers gathered to show and trade their stock in open pens. From its position as a center for cattle trading the area has grown to become a very popular tourist destination and entertainment district. From all over the world people come to enjoy the Old West atmosphere of the stockyards. What were once cattle pens, holding areas and warehouses have now become shops, restaurants, bars and hotels. The nearby Billy Bob's is the World's largest honky-tonk with over 127,000 square feet with over 40 bar stations, a huge dance floor, an indoor arena with bull-riding and a capacity of over 6,000 people.

For a real experience stay a night in the Stockyards Hotel. Recently renovated and restored the flavor of the old west pervades the place. Experience a time when cattle and cotton were common currency, outlaws were folk heroes and this single hotel was known around the world for Texas-style hospitality and com-



ABOVE: GRAPEVINE

PREVIOUS MIDDLE: CLEBURNE STATE PARK TEXAS PARKS & WILDLIFE DEPT. EARL NOTTINGHAM

PREVIOUS BOTTOM RIGHT: MARTIN CREEK STATE PARK TEXAS PARKS & WILDLIFE DEPT. EARL NOTTINGHAM

fort. It is expensive, but for that very special occasion when you want to create memories, it is worth the cost.

There is so much to see and do in the Metroplex that no single article can begin to do it justice. Plan a trip to the area.

The local shops will welcome you call and will be happy to make additional suggestions about where to ride and what to see.

Texas-style hospitality is not limited to Ft. Worth and the Stockyards Hotel, you will find it all over the Metroplex area.