

Northern Hill Country- Young Couples & Friends Itinerary

Brady, Mason, and Menard are in the south part of the Texas Forts Trail Region and boast a fascinating glimpse into local and statewide history. Explore frontier history at the region's only Presidio in Menard.

Menard

Start your day at **Presidio de San Saba** in Menard. The fortress was built in 1757 to protect Spanish interests in the region but was burned down only a year after it was established. In 1936, the Texas Centennial Commission reconstructed the northwest side of the Presidio to help tell the history of the region. Take a tour around the Presidio and see what the Spanish Colonial period was like in Texas, it's the perfect way to soak up the sun while you stroll along the San Saba River and take in the beautiful landscape.

Brady

Next, travel east on US-190 E to the **Heart of Texas Country Music Museum** in Brady. The museum represents more than 100 country artists through memorabilia including stage costumes, autographs, instruments, and other collectable items that embrace the soul of country music.

After stepping back in time at the museum, recharge your batteries at **The Spread** in Brady. You can smell this barbeque for a mile away and your taste buds will surely thank you after. Enjoy the good ol' fashioned Texas barbecue and don't forget about their homemade pies.

Mason

Head south on US-87 S to Fort Mason to see Robert E. Lee's last command post in the Army before the Civil War. During the ten years leading up to the War, **Fort Mason** played a crucial role in the settlement of the region. The Fort was abandoned in 1869, and later, the rock buildings were taken apart by locals to construct other early homes in Mason. Now, you can still see the bases of many buildings as well as reconstructed officers' quarters.

After working up a thirst exploring the fort, your next stop will be **Sandstone Cellars Winery** in Mason, right off San Antonio Street. The boutique winery was started in the early 2000s and has since been a popular spot for tourists and locals alike. Winemaker Don Pullum is considered one of the finest winemakers in Texas with an incomparable passion for his craft.

Sandstone makes only one kind of wine a year, which consists of a blend of Mason County red grapes. They've won many awards and have even been featured in Texas Monthly. This is your chance to relax and pull up a seat at the bar and savor in the wonderful tastes of Mason County. After that, grab a bottle of wine and go next door to the renowned **Santos Taqueria**. This homemade Mexican food will fill you up and put a smile on your face. The food is made from scratch and is sure not to disappoint... and the gorditas are a must have!

Next, travel southwest of town to the **Eckert James River Bat Cave Preserve** which one of the largest bat nurseries in the country. Millions female bats inhabit the site from May to September and a couple of hours before sunset; the cave comes alive with the sights and sounds of the bats. This is definitely not a sight to miss.

Now that you've savored in some Texas Hill Country wine, seen memorabilia from the legends of country music and experienced the wonderful world of bats it's time to get back to reality. But don't forget, there are still more seven more forts and other attractions to explore on the Texas Forts Trail.

Presidio de San Saba
191 Presidio Rd, Menard, TX 76859

Heart of Texas Country Music Museum
1701 S Bridge St, Brady, TX 76825
(325) 597-1895
www.hillbillyhits.com/museum.htm

Heart of Texas Historical Museum
17 N High St, Brady, TX 76825
(325) 597-0526
www.heartoftexasmuseum.com

The Spread
2010 S Bridge St, Brady, TX 76825
(325) 597-1111
www.thespreadpitbbq.com

Fort Mason
302, 314 Spruce St, Mason, TX 76856
(325) 347-5758

Sandstone Cellars Winery
211 San Antonio St, Mason, TX 76856
(325) 347-9463
www.sandstonecellarswinery.com

Santos Taqueria
205 San Antonio St, Mason, TX 76856
(325) 347-6140
www.santostaqueria.com

Eckert James River Bat Cave Preserve
James River Rd, Mason, TX 76856
(325) 347-5970
www.texasfortstrail.com/plan-your-adventure/historic-sites-and-cities/sites/eckert-james-river-bat-cave-preserve