

Houston Historical Tours

(713) 392-0867, houstonhistory@aol.com, www.houstonhistoricaltours.com

Revised on Thursday, February 18, 2016.

City of Houston Tour Price Chart

#	Tours	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
	Number of People	0.1 – 2.0 Per Person	2.1 – 3.0 Per Person	3.1 – 4.0 Per Person	4.1 – 5.0 Per Person	5.1 – 6.0 Per Person	6.1 – 7.0 Per Person	7.1 – 8.0 Per Person	8.1 – 9.0 Per Person
1	1	\$50	\$75	\$100	\$125	\$150	\$175	\$200	\$225
2	2	\$35	\$50	\$65	\$80	\$95	\$110	\$125	\$140
3	3	\$30	\$45	\$60	\$75	\$90	\$100	\$115	\$125
4	4	\$25	\$40	\$55	\$70	\$80	\$90	\$100	\$110
5	5	\$25	\$35	\$50	\$65	\$75	\$85	\$95	\$105
6	6	\$20	\$30	\$45	\$60	\$70	\$80	\$90	\$100
7	7	\$20	\$25	\$40	\$55	\$60	\$70	\$80	\$90
8	8	\$15	\$20	\$35	\$50	\$55	\$60	\$70	\$80
9	9	\$15	\$20	\$30	\$45	\$50	\$55	\$60	\$70
10	10	\$10	\$15	\$25	\$40	\$45	\$50	\$55	\$60
11	11 – 14	\$10	\$15	\$20	\$35	\$40	\$45	\$50	\$55
12	15 – 19	\$50	\$55	\$60	\$65	\$70	\$75	\$80	\$85
13	20 – 29	\$40	\$45	\$50	\$55	\$60	\$65	\$70	\$75
14	30 – 39	\$30	\$35	\$40	\$45	\$50	\$55	\$60	\$65
15	40 +	\$20	\$25	\$30	\$35	\$40	\$45	\$50	\$55

Children 0.1 to 3 years old are free.

Children 4 to 11 years old are half-price.

Non-Refundable Deposits to Guarantee a Reservation

All tours utilizing a van for 6 to 14 people **MUST BE PAID IN FULL FOR AT LEAST 6 PEOPLE** at least 7 days in advance of the tour to guarantee a reservation. This is non-refundable.

All tours utilizing charter buses **MUST BE PAID IN FULL** at least 14 days in advance of the tour to guarantee a reservation. This is non-refundable.

Guaranteed Personal Tours

If you would like to guarantee having a private tour for only you and your party, one must pay for either 5 seats in a small van or 14 seats in a large van.

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Miscellaneous

The prices above are based on your party or group. Like flying on a plane, riding on a train, taking a bus, or entering a movie theater, the price is not affected by anyone else who might be on the tour or attending.

At 15 or more people, we use chartered buses that are expensive. This is the reason for the price increase at 15 or more people. If people have luggage, we use charter buses at 11 or more people and the price will have to be adjusted.

Holiday Prices

Add \$10.00 per hour per party for groups of 1 or 2 people.

Add \$20.00 per hour per party for groups of 3 + people.

1. New Year's Day
2. First Night of Passover
3. Easter
4. Memorial Day Monday
5. Independence Day
6. Labor Day
7. Rosh Hashanah
8. Yom Kippur
9. Thanksgiving
10. Christmas Eve
11. Christmas
12. New Year's Eve

Meeting Sites:

Most driving tours begin at the Visitors Center (VC). It is open everyday.

Downtown tunnel and walking tours normally begin in the rotunda on the first floor in City Hall. The physical address is on the west side of the building at 901 Bagby Street, Houston, Texas 77002. Easier pedestrian access is on the east side of the building, by the reflecting pool. City Hall is only open Monday through Friday. We begin tours outside on the north side of the building on Walker Street on weekends.

Parking:

For tunnel and walking tours, underground parking is available at 510 Rusk Street, Houston, Texas 77002 in Theater Parking 2, underneath Tranquility Park. On many Saturdays, one has to use an alternative entrance for this parking garage. Enter across the street at 511 Rusk Street, Houston, Texas 77002. These are fictitious addresses to be used with a GPS. Do not expect to see these addresses on a sign at the park. Metered parking is available on both Walker Street on the north side and McKinney Street on the south side of the building. Metered parking is free on Sundays and after 6:00 PM on Monday through Saturday.

Alternative Meeting and Parking

If for some reason we cannot meet at the Visitors Center, we generally meet outside a Target store that has a bathroom and Starbucks, located at 2580 Shearn Street, Houston, Texas 77079, off of Taylor Street and I-10, Exit #767B.

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Pickup and Drop-off Service Within Downtown

As a service to our guests, we offer free pickup and drop-off service within downtown Houston. Our company began operations in 2000. At that time, downtown only had about 6 respectable hotels, including the Athens, Doubletree, Four Seasons, Hyatt Regency, Lancaster, and the Montagu that was bulldozed in 2008.

As of December 2016, downtown Houston has 24 reputable hotels. They are in alphabetical order the:

1. Aloft Houston Downtown – Opened in June 2016. This was the Stowers Furniture Building that was erected in 1913. It was last used in the 1970s as a Gordon’s Jewelry store. 820 Fannin Street, Houston, Texas 77002. At Walker Street.
2. Athens Hotel – Opened in 1920. 1308 Clay Street, Houston, Texas 77002. (713) 739-1960.
3. Club Quarters Hotel – Opened as the Club Quarters Hotel in 2005 after being abandoned and earlier existing as the Texas State Hotel from 1929 to 1987. Abandoned from 1987 to 2005. 720 Fannin Street, Houston, Texas 77002. By Rusk Street. (713) 224-6400.
4. Courtyard by Marriott Houston Downtown – Opened in 2003. It was built in 1921 as the Humble Oil Building. It was abandoned from 1963 to 2003. 916 Dallas Street, Houston, Texas 77002. Between Travis Street and Main Street. (832) 366-1600.
5. Crowne Plaza Houston – Downtown – Opened in 1963 as The Whitehall. Closed in the late 1990s. Reopened as the Crowne Plaza Houston Downtown, in 2001. 1700 Smith Street, Houston, Texas 77002. Between Pease Street and Jefferson Street. (713) 739-8800.
6. Doubletree by Hilton Hotel Houston Downtown – Opened in 1980 as the Hotel Meridien Houston; by 1990, it was the Doubletree. 400 Dallas Street, Houston, Texas 77002. Between Bagby Street and Smith Street. (713) 759-0202.
7. Embassy Suites (Downtown) – Opened in 2010. 1515 Dallas Street, Houston, Texas 77010. Between La Branch Street and Crawford Street. (713) 739-9100.
8. Four Seasons – Opened in 1981. 1300 Lamar Street, Houston, Texas 77010. Between Austin Street and Caroline Street. (713) 650-1300.
9. Hampton Inn Houston Downtown – Opened in April 2016. 710 Crawford Street, Houston, Texas 77002. Between Capitol Street and Rusk Street. (713) 224-0011.
10. Hilton Americas Hotel – Opened in 2003. 1600 Lamar Street, Houston, Texas 77010. Between Crawford Street and Avenida de Las Americas. (713) 739-8000.
11. Holiday Inn Express – Houston – Downtown Convention Center – Opened in 2001. 1800 Bell Street, Houston, Texas 77003. Between Hamilton Street and Chenevert Street. (713) 652-9400.
12. Holiday Inn Houston Downtown – Opened in December 2015. Built in 1966 and operated until the mid-1980s as the Savoy Houston Hotel and later as housing for students at the South Texas College of Law. It was abandoned from 1988 to 2015. 1616 Main Street, Houston, Texas 77002. At Pease Street. (713) 658-8888.
13. Homewood Suites by Hilton Houston Downtown – Opened in April 2016. 710 Crawford Street, Houston, Texas 77002. Between Capitol Street and Rusk Street. (713) 224-0710.
14. Hotel Alessandra – Opened in Fall 2016. 1201 Fannin Street, Houston, Texas 77002. By Dallas Street.
15. Hotel Icon – Opened in 2004 after being the Union Bank and vacant for about 20 years. Built in 1911. Marriott bought it, in 2011. 220 Main Street, Houston, Texas 77002. By Congress Street. (713) 224-4266.
16. Hyatt Regency Houston (Downtown) – Opened in 1972. 1200 Louisiana Street, Houston, Texas 77002. Between Dallas Street and Polk Street. (713) 654-1234.

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17. JW Marriott (Downtown) – Opened in September 2014. Built in 1910 as the Samuel Carter Building; it was vacant for decades. 806 Main Street, Houston, Texas 77002. By Rusk Street. (713) 237-1111.
18. Lancaster Hotel – Opened in 1983. Built in 1926 as the Auditorium Hotel. 701 Texas Avenue, Houston, Texas 77002. By Louisiana Street. (713) 228-9500.
19. Magnolia Hotel – Opened in 2003. Built in 1926 as the Post-Dispatch Building. 1100 Texas Avenue, Houston, Texas 77002. By Fannin Street. (713) 221-0011.
20. Marriott Marquis Houston – Opened in September 2016. 1777 Walker Street, Houston, Texas 77010. Between Crawford Street and Avenida de Las Americas. (713) 654-1777.
21. Residence Inn by Marriott Houston Downtown/Convention Center – Opened in 2003. It was built in 1921 as the Humble Oil Building. It was abandoned from 1963 to 2003. 904 Dallas Street, Houston, Texas 77002. Between Travis Street and Main Street. (832) 366-1000.
22. The Sam Houston Hotel – Opened in 1924 and operated under the current name until the 1970s. Abandoned for decades, it reopened under various names, including the Alden Houston and Hotel Sam, in 2002. Adopted its original name in 2012. 1117 Prairie Street, Houston, Texas 77002. By San Jacinto Street. (832) 200-8800.
23. SpringHill Suites by Marriott Houston Downtown/Convention Center – Opened in August 2015. It was built in 1921 as the Humble Oil Building. It was abandoned from 1963 to 2003. It was an apartment complex from 2003 to 2015. 914 Dallas Street, Houston, Texas 77002. Between Travis Street and Main Street. (713) 655-0002.
24. The Westin Houston Downtown – formerly the Inn at the Ballpark from 2004 to 2013. 1520 Texas Avenue, Houston, Texas 77002. By Crawford Street. (713) 228-1520.

Of the above 24 hotels, half are properties of only 3 companies:

1. 5 are Hilton properties including the Doubletree Hotel, Embassy Suites, Hampton Inn Houston Downtown, Hilton Americas Hotel, and the Homewood Suites by Hilton Houston Downtown.
2. 5 are Marriott properties including the Courtyard by Marriott, JW Marriott, Marriott Marquis Houston, Residence Inn by Marriott, and SpringHill Suites by Marriott.
3. 2 are Holiday Inn properties including the Holiday Inn Express and the Holiday Inn Houston Downtown.

Some hotels claim to be in downtown and are not in downtown. In some cases, they are miles/kilometers from downtown.

Downtown is bounded by three highways that cover 5.4 miles/8.9 kilometers:

1. I-10 on the north.
2. I-45 on the south and west.
3. US 59 on the east.

For a Brief History of Downtown Houston Hotels Since 1945, the End of World War II, scroll down to the end of this page.

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Pickup and Drop-off Service Outside of Downtown

Pickup and Drop-off Service Within I-610

I-610 is a 38-mile/61-kilometer interstate highway circle around the inner city. This area includes the Medical Center and the Museum District areas. For groups outside of downtown and within the I-610 Loop of:

1. 1 – 5 people, a surcharge of \$10 will be assessed.
2. 6 + people, a surcharge of \$20 will be assessed.

Pickup and Drop-off Service Outside of I-610

This includes the Galleria and Uptown Park area.

For groups of 1 to 5 people:

A \$30.00 surcharge will be assessed for pickup and drop-off between I-610 and Beltway 8.

A \$60.00 surcharge will be assessed for pickup and drop-off between Beltway 8 and either State Highway (SH) 6/FM 1960/SH 146.

A \$90.00 surcharge will be assessed for pickup and drop-off between either SH 6/FM 1960/SH 146 and the Grand Parkway/SH 99.

A \$120.00 surcharge will be assessed for pickup and drop-off between the Grand Parkway/SH 99 and 50 miles from downtown Houston/Exit #47 on I-45 and Exit #769 on I-10.

A \$40.00 per hour surcharge will be assessed for pickup and drop-off beyond 50 miles. For example, if you request pickup and drop-off from:

- A. Austin, the mileage is 161 (259 kilometers) each way x 2 x 2 round-trips = 644 miles (1,036 kilometers). Each way is approximately 2.75 hours. Each trip has to be made 4 times for 2 round-trips. 2.75 hours x 4 trips = 11.0 hours. 11 hours x \$40 per hour = \$440. One-way = \$220.
- B. College Station, the mileage is 93.6 (151 kilometers) each way x 2 x 2 round-trips = 374.4 miles (603 kilometers). Each way is approximately 1.75 hours. Each trip has to be made 4 times for 2 round-trips. 1.75 hours x 4 trips = 7.0 hours. 7.0 hours x \$40 per hour = \$280. One-way = \$140.
- C. Galveston, the mileage is 53.6 (86 kilometers) each way x 2 x 2 round-trips = 214.4 miles (345 kilometers). Each way is approximately 1 hour. Each trip has to be made 4 times for 2 round-trips. 1.0 hours x 4 trips = 4.0 hours. 4.0 hours x \$40 per hour = \$160. One-way = \$80.
- D. San Antonio, the mileage is 196 miles (315 kilometers) each way x 2 x 2 round-trips = 784 miles (1,262 kilometers). Each way is approximately 3 hours. Each trip has to be made 4 times for 2 round-trips. 3.0 hours x 4 trips = 12.0 hours. 12.0 hours x \$40 per hour = \$480. One-way = \$240.

If individuals have luggage for 4 people, a larger van will be necessary. Please see the information below.

For groups of 6 to 14 people:

A \$60.00 surcharge will be assessed for pickup and drop-off between I-610 and Beltway 8.

A \$120.00 surcharge will be assessed for pickup and drop-off between Beltway 8 and either State Highway (SH) 6/FM 1960/SH 146.

A \$180.00 surcharge will be assessed for pickup and drop-off between either SH 6/FM 1960/SH 146 and the Grand Parkway/SH 99.

A \$240.00 surcharge will be assessed for pickup and drop-off between the Grand Parkway/SH 99 and 50 miles from downtown Houston/Exit #47.

An \$80.00 per hour surcharge will be assessed for pickup and drop-off beyond 50 miles. For example, if you request pickup and drop-off from:

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- A. Austin, the mileage is 161 (259 kilometers) each way x 2 x 2 round-trips = 644 miles (1,036 kilometers). Each way is approximately 2.75 hours. Each trip has to be made 4 times for 2 round-trips. 2.75 hours x 4 trips = 11 hours. 11 hours x \$80 per hour = \$880. One-way = \$440.
- B. College Station, the mileage is 93.6 (151 kilometers) each way x 2 x 2 round-trips = 374.4 miles (603 kilometers). Each way is approximately 1.75 hours. Each trip has to be made 4 times for 2 round-trips. 1.75 hours x 4 trips = 7.0 hours. 7.0 hours x \$80 per hour = \$560. One-way = \$280.
- C. Galveston, the mileage is 53.6 (86 kilometers) each way x 2 x 2 round-trips = 214.4 miles (345 kilometers). Each way is approximately 1 hour. Each trip has to be made 4 times for 2 round-trips. 1.0 hours x 4 trips = 4.0 hours. 4.0 hours x \$80 per hour = \$320. One-way = \$160.
- D. San Antonio, the mileage is 196 miles (315 kilometers) each way x 2 x 2 round-trips = 784 miles (1,262 kilometers). Each way is approximately 3 hours. Each trip has to be made 4 times for 2 round-trips. 3.0 hours x 4 trips = 12.0 hours. 12.0 hours x \$80 per hour = \$960. One-way = \$480.

If groups of 11 or more people have luggage, a bus will be necessary and will cost more money.

If any out-of-town request involves driving before 8:00 AM or after 9:00 PM, a \$100.00 charge will be added for a hotel expense to arrive early or stay late in the city of the pickup and drop-off.

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Miscellaneous Pricing Information:

The prices are based on your party or group. Like flying on a plane, riding on a train, taking a bus, or entering a movie theater, it is not affected by anyone else who might be on the tour or attending.

At 15 or more people without luggage, we use chartered buses that are expensive. This is the reason for the price increase at 15 or more people. If people have luggage, we use chartered buses at 11 or more people and the price will have to be adjusted.

A gas surcharge of \$5.00 is added to the total when gas is between \$4.00 and \$4.99 per gallon.

A gas surcharge of \$10.00 is added to the total when gas is between \$5.00 and \$5.99 per gallon.

If any out-of-town request involves driving before 8:00 AM or after 9:00 PM, a \$150.00 charge will be added for a hotel expense to arrive early or stay late in the city of the pickup and drop-off.

Payment Methods:

1. Check, if received at least 2 weeks in advance.
2. Money order, if received at least 2 weeks in advance.
3. Cashier's check, if received at least 2 weeks in advance.
4. Western Union wire transfer.
5. MoneyGram wire transfer.
6. Bank transfer only if using Bank of America domestically.
7. Overnight check via FedEx.
8. Cash at the outset of a tour if the tour is called in less than 24 hours before the tour.

Note: You will need to inquire from us to give you more information if you select #4, 5, or 6.

All money is to be paid in United States currency; no foreign currency is acceptable.

Payment should be made payable to **Houston Historical Tours** at:

**Houston Historical Tours
P.O. Box 262404
Houston, Texas 77207-2404**

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Basic Information to Provide with Your Payment:

With any checks or money orders sent through the mail, please include the following information on a separate sheet of paper that is **not stapled** to the check or money order:

1. Your name. If you are scheduling a tour for someone else or some other group, please provide the name of the lead person.
2. The day and date of the tour.
3. The category and letter of the tour. For example, Haunted Tour B, City Tour A, or African American Tour C.
4. The number of people in your party.
5. Your email address, so we can send you an acknowledgment to confirm your tour.
6. A domestic cellular telephone number that you or the lead person will have turned on, on the day of the tour. We need to be able to contact you.
7. The name, address with the city and zip code, and the telephone number of the place if Houston Historical Tours is picking you up at a hotel, motel, bed and breakfast, hostel, private residence, or other location.

Scheduling:

All of our tours are scheduled by appointment. Tours are scheduled on a first come, first serve basis. If Houston Historical Tours has a scheduled tour for a specific party or person, we have reserved a tour guide and possibly an assistant tour guide or driver, as well as a vehicle, van, or bus for that party or person. We may have turned away other tours to accommodate that party or person. Furthermore, we have spent time and fuel to meet that party or person somewhere and if the tour requires a step-on guide, we have probably spent money for parking. Thus, Houston Historical Tours is losing money by not accepting other tour requests as we planned to serve that party or person who originally made a reservation and Houston Historical Tours has spent money in preparation to meet and greet that party or person when we arrive to conduct a tour and the customer does not come.

Cancellation Policy:

Failure to arrive for a tour without any or appropriate notification is a cancellation. See the categories below. Any money put down for a tour is forfeited and will not be refunded.

A \$50.00 cancellation fee exists for any potential client who had not previously paid a deposit and who cancels less than 48 hours in advance.

Rescheduling Policy:

One must notify in writing via email at least 48 hours in advance of the tour to be able to reschedule. One will have 6 months from the time of the original tour to take a tour subject to the availability of Houston Historical Tours, also. If one does not reschedule a tour to take place within 6 months of the original tour date, it is a cancellation. See the cancellation policy.

Weather Rescheduling:

Houston Historical Tours has **never** canceled a tour due to weather. If a client wants to reschedule a tour due to inclement weather, the client must notify in writing via email or text message on the day of the tour at least 2 hours in advance of the beginning of the tour that the client wishes to reschedule. See the cancellation policy.

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Late Policy:

Tours are scheduled for specific times with a beginning and ending time. We normally wait 10 minutes before departing for large groups using a bus. If a tour departs late because the group arrives late or has members who arrive late for whom we wait, the tour will still end at the same scheduled time.

Example #1: If someone has scheduled a tour from 6:00 PM to 9:30 PM, and arrives at 6:30 PM to begin the tour, the tour will still end at 9:30 PM.

Example #2: If a group has scheduled a tour from 9:00 AM to 3:00 PM, and some members of the group have slept late or are still eating or about to eat breakfast and someone who is present tells Houston Historical Tours that we should wait for the late people, the tour still ends at 3:00 PM. Houston Historical Tours is paying by the hour for the tour guide and the transportation. The price of the tour remains unchanged, as Houston Historical Tours was present at the time that was scheduled for the tour. The tour guide, driver, and/or vehicle may also be used for another tour later that afternoon.

Meals:

Unless specified otherwise, no tour includes the prices of meals and or snacks. Bring lunch money if necessary. Let the tour guide know if you have any preferences for food. We will be glad to accommodate you. **All** tours of 5 or more hours have a stop for lunch or dinner. This is indicated on the descriptions of the tours. If no tourist wants to eat, our tour guides still receive 1 hour for lunch.

Tips:

For groups of 6 or more and for customized tours, it is normal to add a 15% gratuity.

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Brief History of Downtown Houston Hotels Since 1945, the End of World War II

Decades Opened and in Continuous Use.

Decade – # – Names

1920s – 1 – The Athens.

1970s – 1 – The Hyatt Regency.

1980s – 3 – The Doubletree, the Four Seasons, and the Lancaster.

1990s – None.

2000s – 10 – Club Quarters Hotel, Courtyard by Marriott, Crowne Plaza Hotel, Hilton Americas, Holiday Inn Express, Hotel Icon, the Magnolia Hotel, Residence Inn, the Sam Houston Hotel, and Westin Houston Downtown.

2010s – 9 – Aloft Hotel, the Embassy Suites, Hampton Inn, Holiday Inn Houston Downtown, Homewood Suites, the Hotel Alessandra, JW Marriott, Marriott Marquis, and SpringHill Suites by Marriott.

Decades the Buildings Were Erected

1910s – 3 – Aloft Houston Downtown, Hotel Icon, and JW Marriott (Downtown).

1920s – 8 – Athens Hotel, Club Quarters Hotel, Courtyard by Marriott, Lancaster Hotel, Magnolia Hotel, Residence Inn by Marriott, Sam Houston Hotel, and SpringHill Suites by Marriott.

1930s – 0.

1940s – 0.

1950s – 0.

1960s – 2 – The Crowne Plaza and the Holiday Inn Houston Downtown.

1970s – 1 – The Hyatt Regency.

1980s – 2 – The Doubletree Hotel and the Four Seasons Hotel.

1990s – 0.

2000s – 3 – The Hilton Americas, Holiday Inn Express, and the Westin Houston Downtown.

2010s – 5 – Embassy Suites, Hampton Inn Houston Downtown, Homewood Suites by Hilton Houston Downtown, Hotel Alessandra, and the Marriott Marquis Houston.

Historical Downtown Hotels Gone in Alphabetical Order:

1. Ben Milam Hotel at 1521 Texas Avenue – 1925 – 2012 when it was bulldozed. It was abandoned since the 1970s.
2. Cotton Hotel, later the Montagu at 804 Fannin Street – 1913 – 2008 when it was bulldozed.
3. Days Inn at 801 St. Joseph Parkway. It was originally a Holiday Inn when opened in 1972 and until 1990. It was the Days Inn from 1990 to 1993. The Beatles former spiritual advisor Maharishi Mahesh Yogi led a group who owned it from 1993 to 1997 and operated the Heaven on Earth Inn and used it as a Transcendental Meditation school. It was briefly the Houston Downtown Plaza Hotel, in 1997. It has been abandoned since 1998. This structure still stands.
4. Lamar Hotel at 921 Lamar Street and Main Street – 1927 – 1983 when it was bulldozed.
5. Rice Hotel at 909 Texas Avenue – 1913 – 1977. It closed briefly in 1975 – 1976 and then reopened as the Rice Rittenhouse from April 1976 to August 1977 before it closed again. It was expanded from a C shape to an E shape in 1925 with the addition of a 3rd wing. It was abandoned for 21 years until April 1998, when it reopened as an apartment, known as The Post Rice Lofts. It was sold in 2014 and is now known as The Rice.

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6. Savoy Hotel in the 1600 block of Travis Street – 1906 – 1909 as a hotel, later an apartment. This was the first of two Savoy hotels. It was abandoned from 1988 until it was bulldozed in 2009.
7. Sheraton Lincoln Hotel (1962 – 1974), later the Sheraton Houston and the Houston Hotel Downtown at 711 Polk Street and Louisiana Street – 1962 – 2011 when it was bulldozed. It was abandoned since 1986.
8. William Penn Hotel at 1423 Texas Avenue and La Branch Street – 1925 – 2006 when it was bulldozed. It was vacant from 1994 onward.

Causes for the Decline of Downtown Hotels 1945 – 2000:

1940s and 1950s – 1. White flight.

2. The formation of the Texas Medical Center (TMC) to the southwest by 5.2 miles/8.4 kilometers in 1945, resulting in the relocation and establishment of new hospitals in that area. The most famous and largest (until 1972) hotel in this period of Houston history was established there: The Shamrock (1949 – 1954 and the Shamrock Hilton 1954 – 1987 when it was bulldozed). This area has over two-dozen hotels.

1960s – 1. The Greyhound Terminal in the former City Hall on what is now Market Square Park burned in 1960. Greyhound relocated outside of downtown. This resulted in fewer people staying in hotels close to the bus station in downtown.

2. The opening of the Astrodomain complex to the southwest by 6.6 miles/10.6 kilometers in 1965, with new hotels established in that area for conventions, professional baseball (Astros) and ultimately football (Oilers) teams, the collegiate University of Houston (UH) Cougars, and the relocation of the rodeo from downtown.

3. The opening of the amusement park AstroWorld in 1968 and later WaterWorld in 1983 further to the southwest as major tourist attractions. These institutions closed on October 30, 2005.

4. The opening of the Intercontinental Airport of Houston (IAH), later also known as Bush IAH to the north by 18.8 miles/30.3 kilometers, in 1969. This led to the growth of hotels and the movement of people in that area and the decline of people and rail service into the heart of the city.

1970s – 1. The opening of The Galleria to the west by 8.4 miles/13.5 kilometers in 1970 that cemented a geographic shift in shopping patterns and led to new hotels built in that area. The Galleria is the most popular tourist attraction in Houston.

2. The opening of The Summit, later known as the Compaq Center and Lakewood Church to the southwest by 5.8 miles/9.3 kilometers, in 1975. It became the home of the Houston Rockets basketball team (1975 – 2003), Houston Aeros hockey teams (1978 – 1980 and 1994 – 2003), Houston Comets basketball team (1997 – 2003), concerts, the circus, high school graduations, and more. More hotels opened in the Greenway Plaza area.

3. The closure of the Union Pacific Railroad Station in 1977 that ended the desire for incoming visitors to have a place to stay in that vicinity.

Causes for the Resurgence of Downtown Hotels 2001 – the Present:

2000s – 1. City tax abatement and incentives.

2. The opening of The Ballpark at Union Station (2000)/Enron Field (2000 – 2002)/Astros Field (2002)/Minute Maid Park (2002 – the Present) resulting in the relocation to downtown of the baseball team.

3. The opening of the Toyota Center in 2003 resulting in the relocation to downtown of the basketball teams (Rockets 2003 to the present, Comets 2004 – 2007), hockey team (2003 – 2013), concerts, the circus, high school graduations, and more.

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4. The 650,000 square foot expansion of the George R. Brown (GRB) Convention Center in 2003 to attract major international conventions and conferences.

5. Super Bowl XXXVIII on February 1, 2004.

2010s – 1. Final Four of the NCAA Men's Division I Basketball Championship – April 2011.

2. Final Four of the NCAA Men's Division I Basketball Championship – April 2016.

3. Super Bowl LI on February 5, 2017.

Note: Houston hosted the Final Four in the Astrodome in 1971 and the Super Bowl in Rice Stadium in 1974, but these were not the moneymakers that they would become by the next century.