



AMERICAN
HORTICULTURAL
SOCIETY

PRESIDENT'S COUNCIL TRIP 2026

TEXAS BLOOMS IN SPRING: Gardens, Culture and Bluebonnet Fields

with AHS President & CEO Suzanne Laporte

April 12-17, 2026





Fort Worth Botanic Garden (photo by TXBowen)

Dear Friends,

I'm delighted to extend a warm invitation for you to join me next spring on an extraordinary President's Council trip to the Lone Star State from April 12-17, 2026 at the height of Texas wildflower season. Our cultural and horticultural journey begins in glamorous Dallas, includes a day in Fort Worth (the cultural center of Texas, in my opinion), and concludes in Austin, the famously vibrant capital of Texas. Each day will offer a curated blend of magnificent gardens, private estates, historic sites, and unforgettable culinary experiences, from beloved Tex-Mex to Michelin-recommended dining.

As a native Texan, I'm especially excited to share this journey with you. Texas holds a special place in my heart, and I can't wait to introduce you to the beauty, diversity, and spirit of the place where I grew up.

Timed to coincide with bluebonnet season and spring's floral beauty, our itinerary showcases the region's most spectacular displays, from the Rose Garden in Fort Worth to the sweeping landscapes of the Dallas Arboretum and the wildflower-strewn roadsides of the Hill Country. It's incredibly special that our journey will take place during bluebonnet season, when Texas landscapes are transformed by sweeping views of brilliant indigo blooms as far as the eye can see.

In the Dallas-Fort Worth Metroplex, we'll pair world-class horticultural visits with cultural and historic highlights. Enjoy VIP access and insider tours at the Dallas Arboretum & Botanical Garden, the Fort Worth Botanic Garden, the Native Texas Park at the George W. Bush Presidential Library, and several extraordinary private gardens. As 2026 marks the 250th anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence, we'll also reflect on pivotal moments in American history including a visit to Dealey Plaza and the impactful Sixth Floor Museum. In addition, we'll admire the architecture and collection at the world-renowned Kimbell Art Museum. Our home in Dallas will be the five-star Hall Arts Hotel, a striking property in the heart of the city's acclaimed arts district.

We'll then journey by private coach to Austin, where the historic and atmospheric Driskill Hotel will be our base. Special visits in the Austin area will include the acclaimed Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center and the largest wildflower seed farm in the United States. A full-day countryside excursion through the Hill Country will take us past fields of bluebonnet blooms, to the LBJ Ranch, and into the heart of Texas for a classic steakhouse lunch.

I sincerely hope you'll join me in Texas next April for a richly rewarding exploration of gardens, wildflowers, and culture, featuring Southern hospitality and Lone Star charm. Space is limited, so early reservations are recommended.

Warmest Regards,

Suzanne B. Laporte
President & CEO



When you travel with the AHS, you make a difference.

Designed for garden enthusiasts who love to explore horticultural wonders around the world, AHS Travel offers exceptional programs that include many exclusive experiences and unique insights. Your participation in an AHS Travel program supports the AHS' nonprofit work to increase knowledge among gardeners, inspire passion for plants and the natural world, and encourage responsible stewardship of the earth.

Itinerary

SUNDAY, APRIL 12

A Lone Star Welcome

Transfer independently from either DFW airport or Dallas Love Field into downtown Dallas for check-in at the beautiful Hall Arts Hotel. After meeting fellow travelers, enjoy an introductory tour of downtown. Visit Dealey Plaza and the fascinating Sixth Floor Museum, which chronicles President Kennedy's assassination and legacy.

Then, on the northern edge of downtown, discover the dynamic landscape of Klyde Warren Park, an 8-acre green space ingeniously built atop an 8-lane highway that once severed downtown from Uptown. We'll learn about the project and the plantings and garden spaces maintained there today.

After some time to settle in back at Hall Arts Hotel, gather for a grand welcome dinner at a fine dining restaurant.

Hall Arts Hotel, Dallas (Included meals: Dinner)

MONDAY, APRIL 13

Dazzling Garden Spaces of Dallas

The morning is devoted to an in-depth exploration of the remarkable Dallas Arboretum and Botanical Garden, where 66 acres burst with color during the peak of spring bloom. Featuring 11 display gardens and a fine collection of rare Texas and southwestern trees and plants, we will be hosted by top arboretum staff and experts for a memorable guided look at the site's many treasures.

Following a delicious lunch with hosts at the Arboretum, the afternoon continues in University Park with a brief guided tour of the 15-acre Texas Native Park at the George W. Bush Presidential Center. Opened in 2013 and named in honor of First Lady Laura Bush, the park was built to LEED Platinum certification standards.

Later in the afternoon, we are fortunate to be invited to visit two remarkable private gardens in the nearby Highland Park neighborhood – special chances to see “behind garden walls” and meet local gardeners. Drinks will be offered at one of the homes. Tonight, gather for a fun, casual dinner together at a popular Uptown eatery.

Hall Arts Hotel, Dallas (Included meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Reception, Dinner)



Cattle Drive Trail Boss in Pioneer Plaza by Robert Summers
(photo by Jed Record)



Dallas Arboretum and Botanical Garden (photo by Carol M. Highsmith)

TUESDAY, APRIL 14

Where the West Begins: Fort Worth and its Gardens

Drive westward to Fort Worth, Dallas' sister city, home to over one million residents. Known as "where the West begins," Fort Worth embraces its cowtown roots - once the start of the Chisholm Trail - and its railroad heritage. The city's laid-back spirit is unmistakable, as are the abundance of belt buckles and cowboy hats. The day begins at the Fort Worth Botanic Garden, the oldest botanical garden in Texas and soon to celebrate its 100th anniversary. A special highlights tour includes the tranquil Japanese Garden and the historic Rose Garden, which will be approaching full bloom.

Later in the morning, enjoy a private, curator-led tour of the renowned Kimbell Art Museum, widely considered one of the world's finest small art museums. We'll discover the collection's top masterpieces, the groundbreaking Louis Kahn architecture, and the surrounding horticultural design, along with the elegant Renzo Piano addition.

After an authentic Tex-Mex lunch at a longtime local favorite, the afternoon features two magical private garden estates. The gracious owners will open their homes and expansive gardens, sharing personal stories and inspirations behind their lush Texas landscapes.

Returning to Dallas in the early evening, dinner is independent tonight.

Hall Arts Hotel, Dallas (Included meals: Breakfast, Lunch)

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 15

The Road to Austin: Home of Weird and Wildflowers

This morning, a 4-hour drive (including comfort stop) carries us south into the "Heart of Texas," with our first Austin-area stop being the wonderful Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center. Opened in the early 1980s, this one-of-a-kind space - envisioned by First Lady Lady Bird Johnson and now operated by the University of Texas - continues to uphold its original mission: inspiring the conservation of native plants. Enjoy a light lunch at the site's café before joining top staff for a private guided tour of the 25 acres of cultivated gardens, arboretum, and research centers.

Driving into Austin proper, we are making plans for a special guided visit in a beautiful garden environment, with more information available in the coming months.

Then check into the grand old dame of central Texas hotels, the Driskill, a superior four-star hotel in the heart of downtown Austin. Tonight, we celebrate our arrival in Austin with a delicious dinner featuring seasonal Texas cuisine.

The Driskill, Austin (Included meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner)



Fort Worth Botanic Garden Terrace (photo by Kgredi76)



Ziiler Botanical Garden (photo by Daderot)

THURSDAY, APRIL 16

Bluebonnets, LBJ, and More in the Texas Hill Country

Our final full day takes us out into the Texas countryside, crisscrossing the wild open landscapes of Texas Hill Country, just west of Austin. Our touring will be flexible, in order to take the best possible advantage of ongoing wildflower blooms, including the legendary bluebonnets that occur between Austin and Fredericksburg. Our stops will include the country's largest wildflower seed farm, the LBJ National Historic Park on the site of the former president's ranch, and a delectable country lunch. Along the way, we will stop to marvel at nature's beauty in both landscapes and the colorful swaths of wildflowers that typically dot the Hill Country in mid-April.

This evening, back in Austin, we toast our fellow travelers and the great gardens of Texas during a festive farewell dinner at one of Austin's top restaurants.

The Driskill, Austin (Included meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner)

FRIDAY, APRIL 17

Farewell to Texas

After breakfast at the hotel, transfer independently to the Austin airport for return flights home.

(Included meals: Breakfast)



Texas Bluebonnets (photo by OKJaguar)

Hotel Accommodations



Hall Arts Hotel, Dallas (3 nights)

Opened in 2019, the Hall Arts Hotel immediately brought a dynamic, colorful elegance to the Dallas luxury hotel scene. With an excellent location surrounded by museums and performing arts venues on the northern edge of downtown, this five-star property offers an art-filled haven from the bustle of Dallas. The creation of a renowned Napa Valley wine-producing couple, the hotel is a magnet for locals and visitors alike, with its lush lounge spaces and buzzy bars. Rooms are large and well outfitted, and guests can enjoy the large state-of-the-art fitness center or the amazing rooftop sundeck and pool.



The Driskill, Austin (2 nights)

This stately historic building is Austin's oldest hotel, and it works hard to stay among its finest. Near the state capital, the Driskill has been hosting VIP visitors for well over a century, and its grandiose architecture and dazzling public spaces are sure to inspire. Rooms are an elegant crème and tan palette, with design featuring modern clean lines and many antique touches, like brass fixtures, vintage luggage-style tables, and Texas woodwork. The atmospheric bar, with its cowhide barstools and nightly pianists, has been an important Austin scene for as long as anyone can remember, with some of the best drinks in town and several bartenders who have been fixtures at the Driskill for decades.



April 12-17, 2026

Tour Information

AHS SOJOURNS

This custom trip is offered in collaboration with ISDI and is part of the AHS Sojourns travel program collection. For more information, visit ahsgardening.org/travel.

TOUR COST:

Land Package.....\$7,495
Single Supplement.....\$1,095

Land Package is per person, based on double occupancy and a minimum of 12 paying participants.

Note: President's Council members receive a \$500 per-person discount.

AHS TRAVEL ACTIVITY LEVEL DESCRIPTION: AHS Travel programs are designed to offer immersive experiences and often involve long days filled with exploration and extensive walking on uneven terrain. To participate in a program, it is recommended to be in good physical condition and prepared to walk for a minimum of two miles each day.

HEALTH: At AHS Travel, ensuring the health and safety of our guests is our top priority.

All participants will be required to follow safety/sanitization protocols set forth by ISDI Travel, local staff, and host country laws. By forwarding the deposit for passage, the passenger certifies that he/she does not have any physical or other condition or disability that would create a hazard for him/herself or other passengers.

DEPOSIT & FINAL PAYMENT: A deposit of \$1,000 per registrant is required to reserve space on the tour, of which \$500 is nonrefundable for ISDI's registration and planning fee unless the tour is cancelled due to low enrollment. This deposit may be paid by check or by Visa, MasterCard, or American Express. Final balance will be invoiced and is due on December 19, 2025, and must be paid by check or wire/ACH transfer to International Seminar Design, Inc. Registrations are accepted after this date on a space-available basis.

TRAVEL INSURANCE: Travel Insurance is not included in the tour cost, but *participants are strongly encouraged to purchase a travel protection plan* in conjunction with this tour, including coverage of trip cancellation, trip interruption, emergency evacuation/repatriation, medical expenses, lost or damaged baggage, and other expenses and/or losses incurred due to unexpected situations. Should a participant cancel at any time after registering for the tour, ISDI must strictly abide by the cancellation policy outlined herein. Travel insurance information will be provided upon receipt of your registration. One travel insurance provider to consider is USI Affinity Travel Insurance Services. For more information on the plan for AHS travelers, visit www.ahsgardening.org/travel. Information is also available at this link regarding optional flight and travel arrangement services.

FLIGHTS: Airfare is not included in the tour price. Participants are responsible for their own air arrangements. Please do not purchase airline tickets until the operation of the tour is confirmed by ISDI.

TERMS & CONDITIONS: Upon receipt of registration, ISDI will send registrant a Participant Tour Agreement detailing the full terms and conditions for this tour. This document must be signed and returned to ISDI before participant's registration is considered complete and any arrangements can be confirmed. ISDI will send all documents pertaining to the tour by email unless specifically requested otherwise.

TOUR PRICE INCLUSIONS:

3 nights at Hall Arts Hotel, Dallas; 2 nights at The Driskill, Austin; 5 breakfasts, 4 lunches, 4 dinners, 1 reception; water, soft drinks, coffee, tea included with all meals; 2 glasses of wine or beer included with dinners; ground transportation by private motor coach; entrance fees to sites per itinerary; services of an ISDI Tour Manager; expert local guides; personal listening devices for duration of the tour; handling of 2 pieces of luggage per person at hotels; gratuities for guides, drivers, and restaurant staff at included group meals; bottled water on motor coach; service charges and taxes.

TOUR PRICE EXCLUSIONS: Airline tickets, airline taxes and surcharges, and baggage fees; airport portage; airport transfers; meals other than those specified in the itinerary; gratuities for hotel housekeeping; personal items such as telephone calls, room service, valet service, à-la-carte orders, specialty wines and liquors, laundry charges, travel extensions, or tour deviations; travel insurance; any other items not specifically included in the itinerary.

CANCELLATIONS & REFUNDS: Cancellation by participant must be made in writing to ISDI and is effective only upon acknowledged receipt by ISDI. There is a nonrefundable registration and planning fee of \$500 per person regardless of cancellation date. Written cancellation received by ISDI on or before December 19, 2025: full refund minus the \$500 per person registration and planning fee. Written cancellation received by ISDI between December 20, 2025 and February 27, 2026: refund of all monies paid minus \$3,500 per person cancellation fee (includes the registration and planning fee). Written cancellation received by ISDI on or after February 28, 2026: no refund. Tour registration is non-transferable. In the case of cancellation, substitutions are not allowed. After the tour has commenced, no refunds will be issued for any reason including, but not limited to, unused portions of tour. If the tour is cancelled by ISDI or the American Horticultural Society due to low enrollment, active registrants will receive a full refund of all tour payments.

FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT AHS TRAVEL PROGRAMS:

Please contact travel@ahsgardening.org or 703-768-8801.

Information is also available at www.ahsgardening.org/travel.



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Registration Information

TO REGISTER BY PHONE, CALL:

International Seminar Design, Inc. at 202-244-1448 ext. 1

or

COMPLETE AND RETURN THIS FORM TO:

International Seminar Design, Inc., 5614 Connecticut Ave NW, #295, Washington, DC 20015

or by email at info@isditravel.com

Name - Participant 1

Name - Participant 2

Address

City

State

Zip

Home Phone

Cell Phone

E-mail Address - Participant 1

E-mail Address - Participant 2

ROOMING OPTIONS: (please select)

- ☐ Double Occupancy; I will share a room with _____
☐ We prefer separate beds
- ☐ Single Occupancy (\$1,095 single supplement)
☐ I would like a roommate but will pay the single supplement if one cannot be found

DEPOSIT (\$1,000 per person):

_____ # of persons _____ Amount Enclosed

☐ Visa ☐ MasterCard ☐ American Express ☐ Check (make check payable to International Seminar Design, Inc.)

Card Number

Exp. (mm/yy)

Name as it appears on card

CVV Security Code

By registering and paying the deposit for this tour, registrant acknowledges that he/she has carefully read and understands all information contained in the tour brochure, recognizes and accepts any risks therein, and agrees to be bound by the terms and conditions outlined above.

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