



TRAVEL TIPS

Houston: An Exciting City For Sports Fans

(NAPSA)—Travelers who have a love of the game may want to give the city of Houston a sporting chance. That's because there's plenty of sporting action—both professional and participatory—in SpaceCity.

For example, the Houston Astros—one of Major League Baseball's winningest teams over the past nine years, with four division titles—play their home games at Astros Field, a retractable-roof stadium that opened in 2000. This 42,000-seat downtown ballpark incorporates historic Union Station, a former train depot, into the design. It will also be the site of the 2004 All-Star Game.

Football fans can look forward to the August debut of the Houston Texans, the 32nd NFL team. The team, which kicks off its season against the Miami Dolphins, will play in Reliant Stadium, a new 69,000-seat, retractable-roof football facility. The stadium will play host to both Super Bowl XXXVIII (in 2004) and the 2002 Big XII Championship.

In 2003, a downtown basketball arena will open its doors, giving a new home to the four-time WNBA champion Houston Comets and the two-time NBA champion Houston Rockets, as well as the Houston Aeros, champions of the International Hockey League.

For racing fans, the Sam Houston Race Park showcases thoroughbred and quarterhorse racing year-round. Gulf Greyhound Park, the world's largest pari-mutuel



Sports fans can get in the game—or just watch—when they take a trip to Houston.

greyhound racing complex, offers fast-paced action in nearby La Marque.

In addition, Houston is a place where golfers don't have to put their game on ice during the winter. Mild temperatures—averaging between 42 and 65 degrees—mean that the fairways aren't covered with snow; duffers can tee off on more than 100 courses, at any time of year. The city's 334 municipal parks provide a world of fitness activities, including jogging, cycling, in-line skating, canoeing, tennis, golf, basketball and disc golf.

Trivia buffs will recall that Houston is home to the Astrodome, the nation's first domed stadium, and is the birthplace of AstroTurf. It's also one of the few cities to have experienced an increase in tourism both prior to and since September 11.

To discover the possibilities a Houston vacation has to offer, call the Greater Houston Convention and Visitors Bureau at 1-800-4-HOUSTON or visit the Web site at www.houston-guide.com.