



Kyle Field. Football tickets. Midnight Yell.

Yes, it's the college in College Station that draws most of the town's visitors. But as captivating as the sea of maroon can be, the hot sun, a late game time and then time to spare before march-in can inevitably take its toll on even the hardest of game-day revelers. Sound familiar?

Texas Aggie has some ideas on how you can spend your game day while leaving plenty of time to make it to your seat before kickoff.

College Station isn't called Aggieland for nothing. Former students, football fans and families have poured into the town by the Brazos for decades of autumn kickoffs. But beyond the sidewalk that winds its way round the Kyle Field main event, there are many other pockets of entertainment.

College Station as a town is as distinct as the Aggies that inhabit it. As the home of the 12th Man and the nearly 500,000-member strong Aggie Network, the town's matchlessness can sometimes be overwhelmed by its football massiveness. And that can leave Aggieland's

visitors feeling a little out of the loop when it comes to things to do on game day that don't involve the actual game.

Have you ever wanted to come early for Midnight Yell, but didn't know what you'd do before the next day's game? Always wanted to tailgate, but don't know how? Couldn't find football tickets, but still want to see the game live? Or, after so much driving, do you just want to park your car and stay awhile? Then tear these pages out. On campus and off, *Texas Aggie* has a few suggestions for your next trip to Aggieland, and all on a tight budget.

When You Arrive

You must visit the Clayton W. Williams, Jr. Alumni Center. Newly enhanced with extended hours during football season, your home on Texas A&M's campus truly has something for everyone.



Kicking off each home game weekend, the Singing Cadets hold an open rehearsal at The Association at 5 p.m. on Fridays. Internationally known as the voice of Aggieland, the Singing Cadets have been harmonizing Aggieland's favorites since 1893.

On Saturdays, The Association's complete game day experience starts three hours before kickoff, but the building opens for visitors at 10 a.m. (sometimes earlier for morning or early afternoon kickoffs). Come upstairs to venture through the extensive Aggie Ring collections. Walk the timeline from A&M's first years, through times of war and prosperity, through times of celebration and grieving, and remember how Texas A&M is part of you.

The world seems smaller when you stand in front of the wall-sized computerized global map with its pulsating red dots that show where Aggies live and serve in their communities. Listen and watch their stories of adventuring, justice-seeking and hard-working excitement.

Then, tell your own story. In the memories exhibit, add your recollections to The Association's broad collection of oral histories. Sit in the quiet of the partially walled exhibit and tell the video camera about your time at Texas A&M and the importance and impact it has had on your life.

But, don't leave after you're done. Stay and scroll through others' stories, like R.C. Slocum's memory of the emotional Bonfire football game of 1999, or his reaction to the Red, White and Blue game in 2001. Hear the stories behind Texas A&M's admission of women, why Aggies are men and women committed to service, and what it means to be a former student.

Step into the Traditions corner to watch game day at Kyle Field, Midnight Yell Practice, Aggie Bonfire and Silver Taps, all filmed using a 360-degree camera—the cleverest of inventions for traditions. If you like watching the Aggie Band at yell practice, or if you've always wondered what the view from

Kyle Field was like during a game, a joystick allows you to pick the direction you want to watch. Then, visit the Spirit exhibit and stand in front of a blue screen to be superimposed on an image of Kyle Field as you lead a Fightin' Texas Aggie yell practice.

"We hear so many comments about how visitors get goosebumps as they re-experience so much of what makes Aggieland unique," said Association Vice President Marty Holmes '87. "This is a must-see stop on your return to



Aggieland if you want to get your Aggie batteries recharged!"

If you don't have tickets to the game, visit the APO Ticketmart or stay at The Association and watch the game on the 49-panel Huddleston Video Wall—the largest LCD screen of its type in the world. With the live feed from Kyle Field's 12th Man TV, you won't miss a thing, from the Aggie Band's opening notes to football replays. Plus, you can



Each Aggie home game is shown on the Huddleston Video Wall via live feed from Kyle Field.



For tailgating regulations, visit tailgating.tamu.edu.



follow other college football games being played at the same time.

Thanks to State Farm in its role this year as the presenting sponsor of game day at the Alumni Center, The Association has a floored, climate-controlled tailgating tent open to all at no charge. Spend your pregame in the 80-foot by 90-foot State Farm Aggie Tailgate tent, outfitted with flat screen televisions programmed to show the weekend's biggest football games, along with food and drinks for purchase.

"State Farm Texas is proud to support The Association's Game Day efforts this season," said Ronnie Vandiver, zone marketing manager for State Farm's Texas Zone. "On behalf of the more than 40 Aggies who are State Farm agents in Texas, we are proud to support The Association's mission to serve Texas A&M and its student body."

You'll find the State Farm Aggie Tailgate tent behind The Association's 12-foot Aggie Ring Replica, another must-see destination on game day weekend.

The Association brings the Aggie Network together. Make the Clayton W. Williams, Jr. Alumni Center your game-day headquarters.

The Tailgate Tradition

First, there's a bit of jargon that needs definition before you read further. On Texas A&M's tailgating website you'll see several mentions of the term "Open



Corps March-In

Access Sites." These are tailgating spots open to anyone who agrees to follow the rules. Though none of the regulations are hard to stick to, there are still a good number of them—so many that it is best you check them out for yourself at tailgating.tamu.edu.

With that settled, haul your gear to Spence Park or the grass around Reed Arena and check out our tailgating tips:

- Tailgating is free, so splurge for steaks for the grill!
- Don't get too comfortable in your lawn chair. The Aggie Fan Zone, located between the MSC (which is closed for construction) and Kyle Field, opens three-and-a-half hours before kickoff. Get your autographs, listen to KBTX-TV's "Aggie Gameday" pregame show, get your 12th Man towel, and bring the kids over for games and free entertainment. You might even visit the Texas A&M Bookstore, now located on the floor of G. Rollie White Coliseum.
- While you're up, head to Joe Routh Boulevard to watch the Aggie Band lead the Corps of Cadets March-In one hour before kickoff. Or, if you want to march in behind the Corps, head over and join the crowd on the Quad, 90 minutes before kickoff.
- Don't just stick to your tailgate. Walk around. This is Aggieland, you'll probably run into old friends. There's no doubt you'll make new ones.
- Follow the horses. The Parsons Mounted Cavalry keeps their horses in Spence Park prior to

March-In. Go take a look.

- Have a favorite tailgating spot that you want to verbally claim before anyone gets there? You'd better get there first. No claiming allowed. The earliest you can set up your site is noon on the Friday before a Saturday home game.
- Bring your pets, but don't forget the leash.

If you're traveling in an RV and plan on using it for tailgating, your best bet, according to Transportation Services, is to get a pass for Lot 50, over by the Bonfire Memorial. An RV parking pass in Lot 50 is going to



run you, depending on the size you want, \$60, \$75 or \$90 for the whole weekend starting Friday at 6:30 p.m.

You've undoubtedly seen the other lots—like 100e, R, Olsen Park, and Penberthy—full of RVs, Aggie flags and lawn chairs. However, the waiting lists for some of those sites run about 350 deep. And, as you can imagine, the turnover is very slow as families have been tailgating in the same spot for years.

There's hope for the newcomer, though. Sometimes a RV pass holder can't make it to a game and will post his pass for sale. So, if you plan it right, you can buy an unused pass, crank open



Bonfire Memorial



Fan Zone



Alumni Center exhibits

your RV's awning and relax with the rest of the seasoned tailgaters. Check out the RV space exchange online at transport.tamu.edu/account.

If you end up in Lot 50, there are a couple of things to remember. You'll be parked in a parking lot. That means that there aren't any electrical hook-ups and you'll have to use a generator. And, a generator can be loud. Moreover, tailgating can be loud. It can even smell like BBQ smoke. The University asks that everyone be mindful of the neighbors and cover the generator to muffle the sound.

Lots Lots Everywhere But Not A Slot To Park

If you don't have a parking permit, and you want one, Transportation

Services can help you out at transport.tamu.edu. If you don't have a parking permit and you don't want one, check out *Texas Aggie's Five Parking Time Savers*:

1. Before pulling into town, check lot locations by clicking "Sporting Events" at <http://transport.tamu.edu>.
2. Don't forget your wallet—lots and garages are cash only, with costs ranging from \$10 to \$20 depending on location.
3. Disabled parking is available in University Center Garage or Lot 50—check the transportation site to see if you can park here for free.
4. Or save yourself the hassle



Shuttle stop at Post Oak Mall

and expense by riding the free game day express shuttles from Post Oak Mall to Kyle Field. Shuttle runs: three hours prior to kickoff and one hour after the game ends. Shuttle stops: Mall parking lot between JCPenney and Dillards, and on campus at Lubbock Street (across from the arches on the Quad).

Where can I go?

Restrooms near Spence Park:

- Clayton W. Williams, Jr. Alumni Center
- Koldus Building
- Rudder Theatre Complex
- Portable toilets line the sidewalk
- Important to note: Other campus buildings will not be open for public restroom use

Lodging Options

Staying the night? The Bryan-College Station Convention and Visitors Bureau receives weekly updates from hotels regarding room availability. They don't make reservations, but they can point

you to the hotels likely to have rooms available. You can get those updates at (979) 260-9999. To reserve rooms, you can also go to visitaggieland.com and scroll down to the reservation calendar to find all available rooms.

Pick A Park, Any Park

Game-day traffic can leave a visitor feeling a little crowded, but there are surprising pockets of tranquility in this city that can almost double its population in a single game weekend. Bryan-College Station has more parks than Kyle Field has yard lines. (Complete lists of parks are posted on www.cstx.gov and www.bryantx.gov.) With 83 choices dotting the map, ranging from the quirky to the sun-kissed, *Texas Aggie* will simplify its focus here on parks defined by attitude—the splash and dog parks.

The splash parks of Bryan-College Station are made of fountains and water buckets that fill up to turn over and splash down on the grinning, soaked Aggie wearing squeaky flip flops below. You can find them at Tanglewood Park, Tiffany Park in Bryan and at the Lincoln Center in College Station.

For a park where fun and sun are still the rule, but dogs are given a near warmer welcome than humans, set your blinkers for a turn into Steeplechase Park or University Park. Both heavily wooded and around nine or 10 acres, University Park offers a four-acre fenced canine station specially designed so that dogs can be taken off the leash. Inside the fence are swimming ponds, agility equipment and lots of room to play.



Lake Break

Sunscreen smells the best at high noon. Make ours waterproof, because about 12 miles from Kyle Field is a lake full of Ol' Roc big-fish stories. Stocked with largemouth bass, catfish, crappie, tilapia, carp and sunfish, Lake Bryan is a place you bring your fishing pole. Though it's a smaller lake—around 829 acres and a max depth of 45 feet—it can also handle water sports, from water skiing and wake boarding to wind surfing, sailing and kayaking. The boat dock is easily accessible. For Aggie landlubbers, around the lake are some of the most adventurous bicycle trails in the area. Learn more by searching for Lake Bryan at www.tpwd.state.tx.us.

A Little Art With Your Football

There are a number of museums and galleries open on Saturdays in Aggieland, and you can visit them all with a 12th Man towel tucked proudly in your back pocket. Aggies love their history and tradition, so that Bryan-College Station is actively preserving its history isn't a headline in itself. However, the sheer number of museums in Bryan-College Station should convince you to visit at least one.

- If you are tailgating in Spence Park, turn around until you see the 12-foot Aggie Ring replica in the direction of George Bush Drive. Then walk toward it. Though it's already been covered, the entertainment and educational qualities of

The Clayton W. Williams, Jr. Alumni Center can't be repeated enough. The building opens on game days at 10 a.m. or three hours before kickoff, whichever is earlier. For a preview, go to AggieNetwork.com/building.

- The Texas A&M Sports Museum, located in the Bernard C. Richardson Zone at Kyle Field, shows in mediums as varied as black and white photos or DVD-quality replays the story of Aggie athletics. Every sport is included.
- The George Bush Presidential Library and Museum can be found at the appropriately addressed 1000 George Bush Drive in College Station. Using around 1 million photographs, 38 million pages of official and personal papers, 2,500 hours of video and numerous artifacts, the museum shares the stories, challenges and influences which shaped our 41st president's life. Visit the museum's website, bushlib.tamu.edu, or call (979) 691-4000 for more information.
- The Cushing Memorial Library and Archives is the home of rare books, exceptional manuscripts and uncommon special collections. Saturday hours are 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.
- The Sanders Corps of Cadets Center offers a strong finale

for the list of museums open on Saturdays on campus. Displaying the history from its start with the school in 1876 to the present, the museum incorporates tradition—like the Aggie Band and the Parsons Mounted Calvary—into exhibits honoring Texas A&M's famed Corps of Cadets. For more information: www.aggiecorps.org or (979) 862-2862.

- Fulfilling its mission as a child-centered, hands-on, interactive environment for learning and discovery is the Children's Museum of the Brazos Valley. Found at 111 E. 27th St. in Bryan, this museum counts its visitors at more than 40,000 annually. Website: www.mymuseum.com.
- The Brazos Valley African American Museum is one of only three museums in the state dedicated to African American heritage. You can find it at 500 E. Pruitt St. in Bryan. Call (979) 775-3961 or visit www.bvaam.org for more information.
- Displaced while the MSC is under construction, the MSC Forsyth Center Galleries is now in downtown Bryan, at 110 N. Main St. in Bryan. Website: www.forsyth.tamu.edu.
- The Museum of the American



GI, located at 1303 Cherokee in College Station, displays restored, working military vehicles used by the United States. Call (979) 777-2820 or visit www.magicstx.org.

- The Arts Council of Brazos Valley is at 2275 Dartmouth St. in College Station and works to make the arts accessible to all seven counties of the Brazos Valley. Website: www.acbv.gov.
- At the Brazos Valley Museum of Natural History, times past come rushing to times present. With fossils, animal mounts. Visit at 3232 Briarcrest Drive in Bryan or www.brazosvalleymuseum.org.
- Finally, if you're in downtown Bryan, visit the Carnegie Public Library. Of all the Carnegie Libraries in Texas, the one here is the oldest one still used as a library. It's at 111 S. Main St. in Bryan. Website: www.bsclibrary.org.

Botanical Bliss

There's a garden on West Campus. Blooming with flowers, herbs, trees, fruits, vegetables and other specimens, the Holistic Garden is one of diversity. Found behind the Horticulture building, the growing green space on campus even has a Maroon & White Garden. Looking to learn how to plant a kitchen garden, compost facility, butterfly garden or wetland ecosystem? Texas

A&M has a legendary horticulture department. Take advantage of their expertise by learning from the garden's demonstrations scattered along the paths.

Touring Texas A&M

Texas A&M's campus, plausibly thought of as the heart of the Brazos Valley, has changed remarkably in the past 40 years. Several new buildings, new pathways and new ways to honor A&M's past are fresh out of the construction stages. Take a walking tour hosted by the Appelt AggIELand Visitor Center. There's much narrative that goes into exploring the campus. Hear the tales that go along with our cherished AggIELand. The visitor's center has special game-day hours of operation, so check their website, visit.tamu.edu, to get tour times. And bring your walking shoes for a beautiful mixture of academia proper, with an informal trip down memory lane.

If an organized tour isn't your style, still take time to walk your old paths. A slow stroll may jog a rush of memories. Or, take yourself on a self-guided sculpture walking tour. Pick up a brochure with information and the best paths at the Stark Galleries, or call 979-845-8501. A&M's website also offers an extensive list of things to see on campus. Visit www.tamu.edu and search for campus attractions.

Bicycles Welcome

In 2003, the city of College Station was designated as a Bicycle Friendly Community by the League of American Bicyclists. The city has about 32 miles of bicycle lanes, 50 miles of bicycle routes and five miles of multi-use paths and greenway trails. There's a Bike Loop Project under way to construct a bike loop system to connect the University, College Station parks and residential areas.

Just Call ...

For more questions about your home on campus, call The Association of Former Students at (979) 845-7514.
 Need help on campus because of a disability? Call Disability Services at (979) 845-1637.
 For further questions about parking on campus, visit transport.tamu.edu or call (979) 862-PARK
 For questions about RV permits, call (979) 862-2551. (To buy permits, go to transport.tamu.edu/account.)
 The University Police Department is reachable at (979) 845-2345.
 Visitor Center: (979) 845-5851.
 And if we didn't list it here, the folks who answer the phone for the University Operator can help you at (979) 845-3211.