

This Week in Texas: A Guide for IITC Students (8 – 15 September 2025)

A Texas Welcome & This Week's Outlook

A Note from Your Guide

Welcome to your weekly guide for exploring Texas. The International Intelligence Apprentice Officer Course (IIAOC) is an intensive program that demands significant focus and dedication.¹ This guide is designed to complement your hard work in the classroom by providing opportunities for rest, recreation, and cultural discovery. Each week, this report will offer a curated look at events happening here in San Angelo and across the state. The goal is to help you connect with the local community, find a taste of home, and make the most of your time in the United States. Balancing rigorous training with well-deserved downtime is key to success, and this guide is a tool to help you achieve that balance.

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This Week's Weather in San Angelo

Planning your week, especially for outdoor activities, requires a look at the weather. West Texas in September is typically warm, with cooler evenings. Below is a general forecast for the upcoming week to help you prepare.

- **Monday, 8 Sep:** Sunny, High 90°F / Low 65°F
- **Tuesday, 9 Sep:** Mostly Sunny, High 92°F / Low 67°F
- **Wednesday, 10 Sep:** Partly Cloudy, High 91°F / Low 68°F
- **Thursday, 11 Sep:** Sunny, High 89°F / Low 66°F
- **Friday, 12 Sep:** Sunny, High 90°F / Low 67°F
- **Saturday, 13 Sep:** Mostly Sunny, High 93°F / Low 69°F
- **Sunday, 14 Sep:** Partly Cloudy, High 92°F / Low 68°F
- **Monday, 15 Sep:** Sunny, High 90°F / Low 66°F

Texan Term of the Week: Howdy

To help you navigate the local culture, each week will feature a common Texan term. Understanding local customs and vocabulary can make social interactions more comfortable and rewarding, reducing the cognitive load of operating in a new environment and allowing you to better focus on your training mission.¹

- **Term:** Howdy
- **Definition:** "Howdy" is a friendly, informal greeting that is a shortened form of "How do you do?"
- **Context:** While used throughout the United States, it is most famously associated with Texas. It is a warm and welcoming way to greet friends, acquaintances, and even strangers.

Your Guide to San Angelo (8 – 15 September)

San Angelo offers a variety of activities that reflect the core pillars of Texas culture: a love for

the outdoors, a strong Western heritage, and a vibrant local arts scene. The events below provide a window into the values and traditions of your temporary home.

Tuesday, 9 September: A Taste of the Town

- **Event:** 50th Taste of San Angelo.²
- **Details:** This is a large community event where dozens of local restaurants and caterers gather in one place to offer sample-sized portions of their signature dishes. It is an excellent and efficient way to explore the city's culinary scene and discover new favorite foods.
- **Time, Location, & Cost:** The event begins at 6:30 PM at the 1st Community Federal Credit Union Spur Arena. Ticket cost is not specified in available materials, so it is advisable to check the event website for pricing and to purchase tickets in advance.²
- **Good to Know:** Food festivals like this are very popular and can become crowded. Arriving a little early is a good strategy. It also presents a wonderful opportunity to practice your English conversation skills in a friendly and casual environment.

Friday, 12 September: A Night of Laughte

- **Event:** "Imprisoned" Comedy Night featuring Zach Shanahan.³
- **Details:** This is a live stand-up comedy performance. American stand-up comedy can be a fun and challenging experience for language learners, as it often involves fast speech, slang, and commentary on American culture.
- **Time, Location, & Cost:** The show starts at 7:00 PM at the Brooks and Bates Theater, part of the San Angelo Performing Arts Center complex. Ticket prices are not listed, so checking the venue's official website is recommended.³
- **Good to Know:** A similar comedy event at this venue was advertised for "18+ Mature Audiences only".³ It is possible this show may contain adult themes or language.

Saturday, 13 September: Art and the Outdoors

- **Option 1 - Get Creative:** Clay-te Night at the Museum.⁴
 - **Details:** For a more relaxed and hands-on evening, the San Angelo Museum of Fine Arts (SAMFA) is hosting a ceramics class. Working with clay is a creative and therapeutic activity that does not depend on language proficiency, making it an excellent way to unwind.
 - **Time, Location, & Cost:** The class is at 6:00 PM at SAMFA. The cost for the event is not specified, so please consult the museum's official Eventbrite page for pricing

and registration.⁴

- **Option 2 - Outdoor Exploration:** "Skins & Skulls" at the State Park.⁵
 - **Details:** Join a park ranger for an educational program about the diverse wildlife of West Texas. This interactive session allows you to see and learn about local animals through the examination of their preserved skins and skulls.
 - **Time, Location, & Cost:** The program starts at 9:00 AM at San Angelo State Park. The event itself is free, but it requires paying the park's daily entrance fee, which is \$4 per adult.⁵

Sunday, 14 September: Concerts, Film, and a West Texas Sunset

- **Option 1 - Music:** "Brass Without Borders" Concert.⁴
 - **Details:** The San Angelo Museum of Fine Arts continues its Chamber Music Series with a performance by the Lone Star Brass ensemble. The title, "Brass Without Borders," is particularly welcoming to an international audience, and the event promises an afternoon of high-quality classical music.
 - **Time, Location, & Cost:** The concert begins at 3:00 PM at SAMFA. Ticket information should be confirmed on the museum's website or Eventbrite page.⁴
- **Option 2 - Film:** "The American Southwest" Documentary Screening.³
 - **Details:** Enjoy a screening of a nature documentary focused on the unique wildlife of Texas. Because it relies on strong visual storytelling, this film is highly accessible for viewers of all English language levels.
 - **Time, Location, & Cost:** The film will be shown at 5:00 PM at the Brooks & Bates Theatre. Please check the San Angelo Performing Arts Center website for ticket prices.³
- **Option 3 - Outdoors:** Sunset Hike.⁵
 - **Details:** Experience one of the most beautiful sights the region has to offer on a guided hike at San Angelo State Park. The hike is timed to provide participants with a scenic view of a classic West Texas sunset.
 - **Time, Location, & Cost:** Meet at 7:00 PM at San Angelo State Park. The park entrance fee of \$4 per adult is required to participate.⁵

Local Sports: This Week's Games

Attending a local sporting event is a great way to experience American culture. While Angelo State University's teams are playing away games this week, you can still catch a local high school game or follow the ASU games online.

- **High School Volleyball (Local):** The TLCA San Angelo Eagles have a home game against Merkel High School on Tuesday, September 9. The varsity game begins at 6:30 PM at the TLCA Athletic Complex.⁶
- **ASU Rams Football (Away Game):** The Rams will play a conference game against Eastern New Mexico in Portales, New Mexico, on Saturday, September 13, at 7:00 PM.⁷
- **ASU Belles Soccer (Away Games):** The Belles soccer team is on the road in Colorado. They play against Colorado State Pueblo on Thursday, September 11, at 7:00 PM and against MSU Denver on Saturday, September 13, at 1:00 PM.⁸
- **ASU Belles Volleyball (Away Games):** The Belles volleyball team will be competing in the Colorado Premier Challenge in Denver. They have matches scheduled for Friday, September 12, and Saturday, September 13.⁹

Ongoing Events (All Week)

- **Bison & Longhorn Viewing:** At 9:00 AM on both Wednesday (Sep 10) and Saturday (Sep 13), you can visit San Angelo State Park for a self-guided viewing of the official Texas State Bison Herd and the State Longhorn Herd. Park staff will be available to answer questions about these iconic animals of the American West.⁵
- **"The Global Language of Headwear" Exhibit:** This long-term museum exhibition explores how headwear is used to express cultural identity, rites of passage, and spirituality across the world. This is a highly relevant and engaging topic for an international audience, offering a chance to see connections between your own cultures and others.¹⁰

Weekend Road Trips: Exploring the Heart of Texas (13 – 14 September)

A weekend trip is an excellent way to experience the diverse culture, history, and geography of Texas. The following destinations are all within a 4-6 hour drive from San Angelo and offer unique experiences.¹¹ This particular weekend marks the beginning of Hispanic Heritage Month in the United States, and the major cities are hosting large festivals. Attending one of these events is one of the most effective and enjoyable ways to understand the deep Hispanic influences that are a foundational part of Texas's identity.¹³

Destination	Approx. Drive Time	Primary Weekend Event	Vibe / Atmosphere
San Antonio	~3.5 hours	Diez y Seis Fiestas Patrias	Historic, Festive, Cultural
Dallas/Fort Worth	~4.5 hours	Hispanic Heritage Festivals	Modern, Artsy, Energetic
Austin	~4 hours	City-Wide Vintage Sale	Eclectic, Casual, Youthful

Destination 1: San Antonio – A Celebration of History & Heritage

- **Focus:** The weekend's main event is the **Diez y Seis Fiestas Patrias** at Historic Market Square.¹⁴
- **Cultural Context:** "Diez y Seis de Septiembre" (September 16th) is the day Mexico celebrates its independence from Spain. Given Texas's shared history with Mexico, this is a major cultural celebration in San Antonio. The festivities include the "El Grito" ceremony, a dramatic re-enactment of the historic call to arms that began the war for independence.¹⁵
- **Activities:** The streets of Market Square will be filled with the vibrant sounds of live mariachi bands and the sights of folklorico dancers in beautiful, traditional costumes. Dozens of vendors will be selling authentic food and handmade crafts. This is an immersive experience of the culture that has shaped so much of Texas.
- **Logistics:** The festival is free to attend and runs Saturday from 12:00 PM to 10:00 PM and Sunday from 12:00 PM to 9:00 PM.¹⁴

Destination 2: Dallas & Fort Worth – Metroplex Marvels

The Dallas-Fort Worth (DFW) area offers two distinct, large-scale celebrations of Hispanic heritage set in beautiful botanical gardens.

- **Dallas Event:** The **Hispanic Heritage Celebration** at the Dallas Arboretum and Botanical Garden is a two-day festival featuring live music, a market with local vendors,

and a variety of food options.¹⁶

- **Cultural Highlight:** A central feature of this event is the **Quinceañera Fashion Show**. A Quinceañera is the traditional celebration of a girl's 15th birthday in many Latin American cultures, marking her transition from childhood to womanhood. The fashion show will display the beautiful and elaborate gowns worn for these important occasions.¹⁶
- **Fort Worth Event:** The Fort Worth Botanic Garden hosts **¡Celebremos!**, a high-energy festival kicking off a month of events.¹⁷
 - **Details:** Saturday, September 13, is a **Free Admission Day** for the entire garden. The day's festivities include a spectacular Latin American Flag Parade, live music, food trucks, and a local artisan market called the Mariposa Market.¹⁷

Destination 3: Austin – The Eclectic Capital

Austin offers a different, more contemporary slice of American culture, known for its relaxed and creative atmosphere.

- **Main Event:** The **City-Wide Vintage Sale** takes place this weekend.¹⁹
 - **Cultural Context:** This event provides insight into a popular trend in American youth culture. "Vintage" refers to clothing, furniture, and other goods from a previous era (typically 20+ years old). Shopping for vintage items is seen as a way to express unique personal style and promote sustainability.
- **Other Activities:** To further experience Austin's vibe, consider joining the **Slow Flow Yoga** class held by the pool at The LINE Hotel on Saturday morning.²⁰ The city is also famous for its countless food trucks offering diverse cuisines and its many venues for live music.

A Taste of Home: Cultural Connections for the Weekend

While San Angelo is your home base for training, the larger cities of Austin, Dallas-Fort Worth, and Houston serve as cultural hubs for many international communities. A weekend trip can be a great opportunity to connect with people from your home country, enjoy familiar foods, and find products you may be missing.

For Students from Thailand

- **Community & Worship:** The **Wat Buddhnanachatt of Austin** is a major Thai Buddhist temple and cultural center in Central Texas. It was founded in 1986, partly by Thai women who had married American servicemen, and it serves a large community of Thai, Laotian, and Cambodian families.²¹
- **Groceries:** Large Asian markets in the major cities carry a wide selection of Thai ingredients.
 - **Austin:** MT Supermarket (in Chinatown Center)²², Hanyang Market²³, and Asia Market.²⁴
 - **Dallas/Fort Worth:** Hong Kong Market (in Grand Prairie)²⁵, Good Fortune Supermarket (in Richardson).²⁶
 - **Houston:** Hong Kong Market (multiple locations)²⁷, Asia Market Thai Lao Foods²⁸, H-Mart²⁹, and Welcome Supermarket (in D-Square).³⁰

For Students from South Korea

- **Community Hubs:** The Dallas-Fort Worth area is home to the largest Korean American community in Texas.³¹ The city of **Carrollton**, a suburb of Dallas, has a large and vibrant **Koreatown** with hundreds of Korean-owned businesses, restaurants, and shops.³² Other community resources include the Korean American Association of Austin³³, the Korean American Association of Houston³⁴, and the Korean American Cultural Center of San Antonio.³⁵
- **Groceries:** Major Korean grocery chains and online services are available.
 - **Austin:** H-Mart at 11301 Lakeline Blvd.³⁶
 - **Dallas Area:** Komart at 2240 Royal Ln.³⁷
 - **San Antonio:** SA Korean Market at 6210 Fairdale Dr.³⁸
 - **Houston:** H-Mart at 1302 Blalock Rd.²⁹
 - **Online Delivery:** The service Weee! delivers Asian groceries, including Korean products, to Austin, Dallas, and San Antonio.³⁹
- **Cultural Highlight:** For fans of modern Korean culture, several K-Pop groups have concerts scheduled in Texas in the coming months, including **TOMORROW X TOGETHER** in Dallas on September 16 and **SEVENTEEN** in Austin in October.⁴²

For Students from Indonesia

- **Community Networks:** Several organizations exist to support the Indonesian diaspora.

These include the **Indonesian Diaspora Network (IDN) Austin** ⁴³, religious groups like the Indonesian Catholic Community DFW ⁴⁴ and Soli-Deo Indonesian Church in the Dallas area ⁴⁵, and the

Indonesian American Muslim Community (IAMC) in Houston.⁴⁶

- **Groceries:** While dedicated Indonesian markets are rare, many large Asian grocers carry Indonesian products.
 - **Austin:** Twin Panda has a small Indonesian grocery selection.⁴⁷
 - **San Antonio:** Saraga International Grocery stocks Filipino and Indonesian items.⁴⁸
 - **Dallas/Fort Worth & Houston:** Large markets like Hong Kong Market and H-Mart often have sections with Indonesian goods.²⁹
 - **Online Stores:** Websites like **IndoGroceries** ⁴⁹ and **IndoMerchant** ⁵⁰ can ship items directly to you.
- **Upcoming Event:** Mark your calendars for the **Indonesian Bazaar 2025**, a major cultural and food event celebrating Indonesia's 80th anniversary of independence. It will be held on Saturday, September 27, in Richland Hills (part of the DFW metroplex).⁵¹

For Students from the Middle East

This section is for students from countries such as Qatar, Oman, and Saudi Arabia. While the "For Muslim Students" section below covers resources for religious practice, this section focuses on finding cultural connections and familiar products during a weekend trip.

- **Community & Student Organizations:** Many Texas universities have organizations that can be a great resource for connecting with other students from the Middle East.
 - **Saudi Student Association at the University of North Texas (Denton):** This group highlights the culture and traditions of Saudi Arabia and organizes events for students and the community.⁷³
 - **Arab Student Association at Texas Tech University (Lubbock):** This organization aims to foster a community for Arab students and educate the wider student body about Arab culture.⁷⁴
 - **Arab Students' Association at the University of Texas at Austin:** This group serves as a central hub for the Arab student community on campus, focusing on culture, history, and identity.⁷⁵
- **Middle Eastern Groceries:** For finding familiar spices, coffee, dates, and other goods, these specialty markets in major cities are excellent options.
 - **Austin:** Phoenicia Bakery and Deli ⁷⁶, Afghan Halal Market ⁵⁷, and Istanbul Market ATX (in Round Rock).⁷⁷
 - **Dallas/Fort Worth Area:** Sara's Mediterranean Market (Richardson) ⁷⁸, World Food Warehouse (Dallas) ⁷⁹, and Oasis International Market (Plano).⁸⁰

- **Houston:** Phoenicia Specialty Foods ⁸¹, Jerusalem Halal Meats ⁸², and Two Brothers Halal Market.⁸³

Essential Resources for Your Stay

This section provides practical information for daily life in San Angelo and the surrounding area. Anticipating and addressing specific needs, such as religious observance and dietary requirements, is a priority. By providing clear solutions to potential challenges, this guide aims to be a trusted and useful tool, allowing you to focus on your mission here.¹

For Muslim Students: Religious Observance in West Texas

This section is intended for all Muslim students. A thorough search of local resources indicates that there is no dedicated public mosque (masjid) or Islamic Center located within the city of San Angelo. The following information is provided to assist with religious observance.

- Daily Prayer Times for San Angelo (8 – 15 September 2025)

This schedule is calculated using the Islamic Society of North America (ISNA) method.⁵²

Date	Day	Fajr	Dhuhr	Asr	Maghrib	Isha
Sep 8	Mon	5:48 AM	1:48 PM	5:27 PM	8:35 PM	9:49 PM
Sep 9	Tue	5:49 AM	1:48 PM	5:27 PM	8:34 PM	9:47 PM
Sep 10	Wed	5:50 AM	1:48 PM	5:27 PM	8:33 PM	9:46 PM
Sep 11	Thu	5:51 AM	1:48 PM	5:27 PM	8:32 PM	9:45 PM

Sep 12	Fri	5:51 AM	1:48 PM	5:27 PM	8:32 PM	9:44 PM	
Sep 13	Sat	5:52 AM	1:48 PM	5:26 PM	8:31 PM	9:43 PM	
Sep 14	Sun	5:53 AM	1:48 PM	5:26 PM	8:30 PM	9:42 PM	
Sep 15	Mon	5:54 AM	1:47 PM	5:26 PM	8:29 PM	9:41 PM	
(Source : Islamic Finder ⁵³)							

- **Nearby Masjids for Jumu'ah Prayer:**

- **Closer Options (1.5–2 hours):**

- **Abilene (approx. 1.5-hour drive):** The **Abilene Muslims Group** is located at 505 Pine Street.
- **Midland (approx. 2-hour drive):** The **Muslim Association of West Texas** is at 1200 S Midland Dr.⁸⁴ The **Islamic Center of Midland** also welcomes visitors for prayers and provides helpful information on its website.

- **Options for Weekend Travel (3.5–4 hours):**

- **San Marcos Masjid:** Located between Austin and San Antonio, this mosque serves the local university and is welcoming to travelers. It is open 24/7 for prayer, and the Friday Jumu'ah prayer is held at 2:00 PM.⁵⁴
- **Islamic Center of San Antonio (ICSA):** A large and established center serving a diverse Muslim community. It offers numerous programs and holds two Jumu'ah prayers, one in Arabic (12:30 PM) and one in English (2:00 PM).⁵⁵

- **Finding Halal Food:**

- **In San Angelo:** There are currently no dedicated Halal butchers in the city. Major grocery stores like **Market Street** at 3121 Sunset Dr. may carry some packaged goods that are Halal-certified.⁵⁶
- **Grocers & Butchers in Major Cities:** Weekend trips provide an excellent opportunity to purchase a wide variety of Halal meat and groceries.
 - **Austin:** Afghan Halal Market⁵⁷, Famous Meats⁵⁸, Halal Stop Shop⁵⁹, and Quality Halal Market.⁶⁰

- **Dallas/Fort Worth:** Green Vine Market ⁶¹, Royal Halal Meats ⁶², and Deccan Meats. ⁶³
- **Houston:** Al Huda Grocery & Halal Meat ⁶⁴, Jerusalem Halal Meats ⁶⁵, and Texas All Grass Fed (in nearby Sealy). ⁶⁶
- **San Antonio:** Ali Baba International Food Market ⁶⁷, E&A Meats ⁶⁸, and Man Pasand Indian Pakistani Halal Groceries. ⁶⁹

Exploring San Angelo: Must-See Local Spots

For a quiet afternoon or weekend in town, San Angelo has several unique attractions worth visiting:

- **Fort Concho National Historic Landmark:** A beautifully preserved 19th-century U.S. Army fort that tells the story of life on the Texas frontier. ⁷⁰
- **The Concho Riverwalk:** A scenic path along the river in the heart of downtown, perfect for walking and relaxing. ⁷¹
- **The International Waterlily Collection:** Located in Civic League Park, this is a world-renowned collection of rare and beautiful water lilies. ⁷⁰
- **Miss Hattie's Bordello Museum:** A unique and quirky museum that offers a glimpse into the city's "Old West" past. ⁷⁰
- **San Angelo Museum of Fine Arts (SAMFA):** Home to a diverse collection of art, including a significant ceramics collection and works by Texas artists. ⁷⁰

Understanding Texas: Fun Facts & Conversation Starters

Here are a few interesting facts about your host state that can be great conversation starters:

- The name "Texas" comes from the word "teycha," meaning "friends" or "allies" in the language of the native Caddo people. ⁷²
- The official state sport of Texas is **Rodeo**. ¹³ The world's first rodeo was held in Pecos, Texas, in 1883. ⁷²
- The popular soft drink **Dr. Pepper** was invented in Waco, Texas, in 1885. ⁷²
- The "Six Flags" amusement park is named for the six different national flags that have flown over Texas: Spain, France, Mexico, the Republic of Texas, the Confederate States of America, and the United States of America. ⁷²
- Certain brands are a big part of Texas culture. You will often hear Texans speak passionately about the fast-food chain **Whataburger**, the massive convenience store

Buc-ee's, and Blue Bell ice cream.⁷²

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