

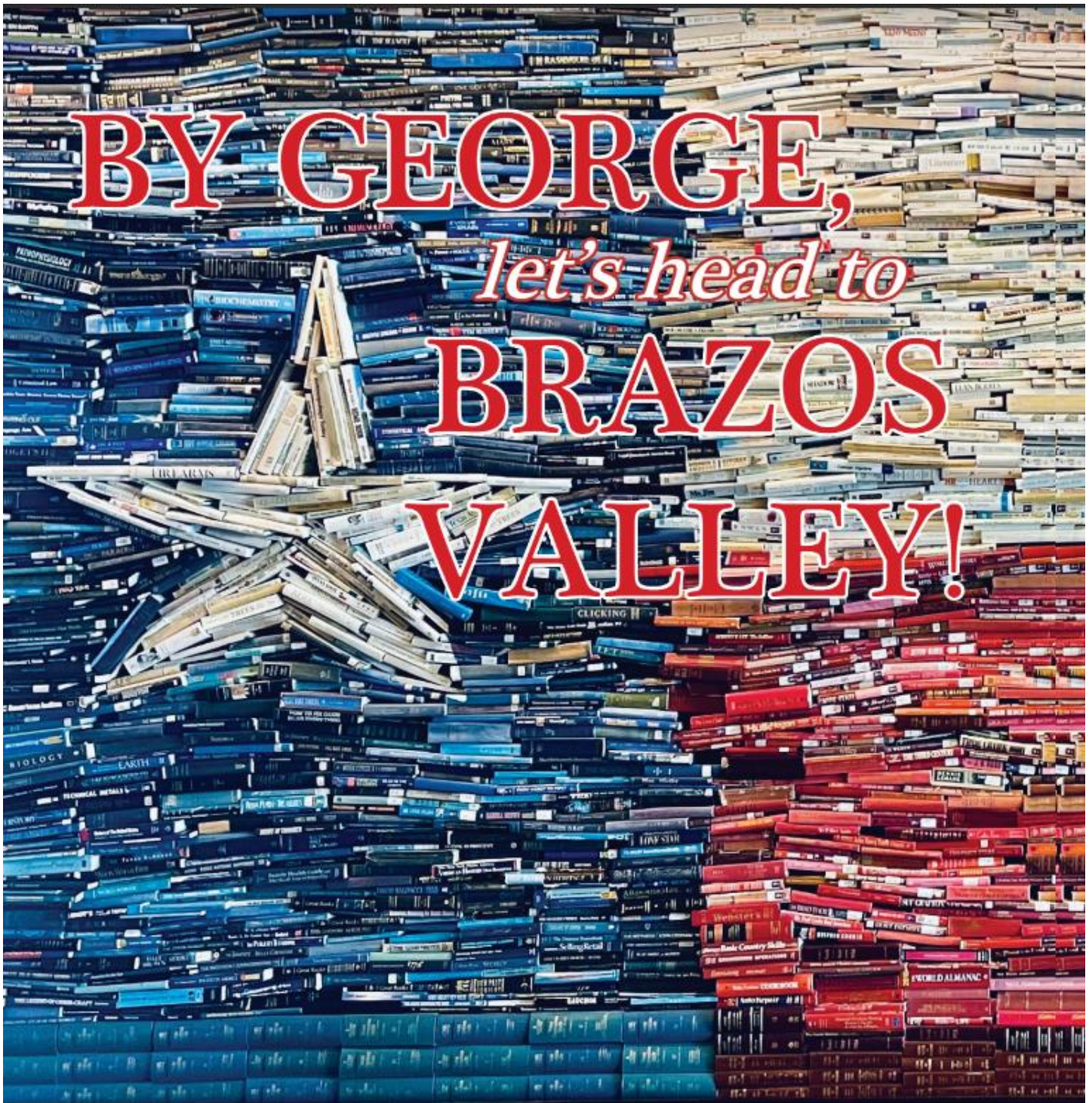
A photograph of an outdoor dining table set for a meal. The table is made of light-colored wood and is covered with a white tablecloth. On the table, there are several lit candles in gold holders, a centerpiece of flowers and greenery, and plates of food. The table is surrounded by wooden chairs, some with white cushions. In the background, there is a swimming pool and a patio area with lounge chairs. The scene is lit with warm, ambient lighting, suggesting a sunset or evening setting.

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Nestled in the heart of College Station and in the center of Century Square, a fabulous 60-acre mixed-use destination... you'll find The George™... a luxury four-star boutique hotel. "Rustic meets refined" describes its architecture and tactile design elements, and ordinary found objects have made their way into fascinating gallery-worthy art installations. Contemporary hipness is well-blended with Texas history (and beyond) throughout the 162-room hotel. Midway Co and Valencia Hotel Group ventures are well-branded, and yet they keep you guessing with layers of themes.





They are not into the obvious, but rather a magical mix of design gorgeousness and a touch of mystery. Their concepts have been self-described as “more stylish/less samchish,” and I fully concur. The hotel was beautifully curated by the design force of Houston’s MaRS Culture, a firm well-known for visual storytelling. The hotel name? According to The George™ website, it is named after “the notable Georges in the area and throughout history” and a name that has an “English elegance after Southern Connotation.” The themes? After a relaxing stay and some research, I’ve unravelled stories and my best guess is playfully categorized as “Texans, trains, trouble, and texture”.



TEXANS

With the George I.W. Bush Presidential Library and Museum just minutes away, the 41st President of the United States, who transplanted to Texas around 1948, is most definitely one of the honored and notable "Georges"! His beloved wife is also recognized just inside The George™. Enter the front doors and you'll immediately be in awe of an incredible floor-to-ceiling art installation. Approximately ten thousand books with red, white, and blue spines are meticulously stacked and arranged to form an artistic rendition of the Texas state flag. The books were not only collected by the artist Thedra Cullar-Leford for spine color, but they all somehow relate to Texas. The Texas Book Wall has been dedicated to former first lady Barbara Bush, also known as The First Lady & Champion of Literacy. On the opposite wall, don't miss the design details inspired by the hands-on lifestyles of hardworking Texans. Six thousand linear feet of rope was dipped in Texas sweet tea (is that cool, or what??) for that workin' cowboy patina, then woven and installed as a wall treatment opposite of the book wall. One hardworking "George" was petroleum engineer George Mitchell, Texas A&M Class of 1940, a native Texan and successful pioneer in shale gas.

TRAINS

The name College Station was designated by the postal service in 1877 and derived from the train station in the Brazos Valley. Paying homage to those early railway days of College Station, The George™ has included a train theme. Classic shoe shine seating with hand-painted aqua letters greet guests with a happy thought reminder (tops of soles *and* souls?) to SHINE. Another celebrated "George" is industrialist George Pullman, legendary for inventing the clean and comfortable Pullman sleeping car. I believe he'd give a nod to the train theme and the overall ambiance of the hotel and guest rooms. You'll find comfy beds, crisp linens, fabric headboards with a "luggage strap" detail, leather throw pillows...and a black & white tile message in your shower! Look for tile messages, quotes, and quips all around the property. Guest room bars are fashioned as open steamer trunks. Vintage movie clips of railroad days gone by entertain guests while waiting for the elevator. Even the custom carpet carries out the theme. The hallway flooring has "handwritten" train schedules for various Texas stations and the carpet in the rooms are woven as railroad switch patterns.

TROUBLE

The historical Whiskey Rebellion was one of the first signs of major opposition to the authority of government when our great nation was first formed. In 1791, President George Washington was put to the test of peaceable diplomacy when an excise tax on whiskey became law, which caused a bit of "trouble" with farmers, and led to an all out rebellion. He didn't consume much whiskey himself, but in 1796, our first president started a successful distillery in Mt. Vernon. Alas, I'm presuming that another remarkable "George", President George Washington and his association with whiskey, must be linked to the 1791 Whiskey Bar. You'll find it anchored at the far end of the expansive lobby. Enjoy a craft cocktail under a glowing custom light fixture. About 1,200 whiskey bottles from Yellow Rose Distilling of Houston were used to warmly illuminate the bar area. The front of the bar is cleverly covered with all styles of vintage black leather belts. Peek around the corner for another touch of Texas. Well-loved cowboy boots are perched against a patchwork denim wall covering. Ohhhh...if only those boots and belts could talk! Common areas with mismatched sofas and chairs easily accommodate larger groups. Intimate settings...like a cozy pair of wooden rocking chairs with a chess table, seem to invite long, rich conversations. Southern design features include a wide variety of cowhide rugs, denim throw pillows and ottomans intermixed with "English elegance"...carved wooden sofas covered in linen with touches of blue and maroon plaid. Live music fills the open bar and lobby area on weekends. Passing through, I was drawn in by Rahim Quazi...a singer-songwriter whose talented hands interchanged guitar and piano with a playlist that danced back and forth between meaningful covers and poetic originals. Check the hotel website for their event calendar!

TEXTURE

Boutique hotels speak my design love language! The George™ finish out is full of texture! Architectural elements, interesting building materials, and planned pops of color play into the vibe. Reclaimed wood, steel, concrete, velvet, linen, belts, boots, denim, rope, paper, ceiling tin, leather, cowhide, brick, a collection of mirrors, and tile are all artfully combined for the "wow factor." Pantone perfect Texas flag-red double rockers overlook the sunken pool where you can sit and sip, or play a game of giant Jenga. In the center of the open lobby, you'll find a quaint boutique with craftsman made fixtures full of trending merchandise, including the hotel's Oak & Ember (mmmm) signature scent products. Watch for the sheep sculptures which mysteriously move around the property daily. Dine next door at the The Canteen Bar & Grill, or choose from one of the other wonderful dining establishments in Century Square.



Go big or go home type? Book the Presidential Suite! Open the door to find a full length wall of bottle openers leading to great outdoor views and Georgina, the cash cow sculpture. The 1900 sq ft room (!!!) is complete with luxe seating areas, a conference table, an extensive bar, a giant bedroom, and a plush bathroom with...yes...a message on the tile! No matter which room you choose (thegeorgetexas.com), you will enjoy the multi-layered theme and the commitment to excellence at this property. You will love chatting with the staff, because they love their jobs... which speaks volumes about management.

*Keep wandering...
don't squat with spurs on...
and forever SHINE!*

-Melissa

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