

# Welcome to Hays!

My partner is working on the PECAN project for six weeks based in Hays and since I lived most of my life in Hays, he asked me to put together a list of things to do and local places to eat. I would like to say that the Hays CVB is an excellent resource for event calendars and all local information. This is what I put together on the drive out from Boulder:

## Guide to Hays from a townie...

Hays is a great small town that marries a rural western Kansas town with the quirky youthful vibe you get with any college town. It has a heritage of being a military fort established to protect the railroad from the Native Americans, a rowdy cowboy town, a settlement for Volga German immigrants, and now houses one of the state's six regent universities, Fort Hays State University. If you pay attention you will see how this town's heritage is embedded everywhere. You can visit the Historic Fort Hays and see the original buildings and listen to the century old stories, take a walk down 10<sup>th</sup> Street downtown where the saloons were housed and shootouts ensued and then to Boot Hill Cemetery where they were buried. Stroll down the revitalized red brick roads of the historic Chestnut Street District to find the colloquial Volga German language naming the town's favorite diner, "Gella's". On your project you will likely travel through the original settlements of the Volga German immigrants; Catherine, Munjor, Schoenchen, Victoria, and Pfeifer; here you can always count on German culture to find a place to drink a beer and a beautiful Catholic church in the center of the small towns.

## TO DO

**June 9 7:30pm Hays City Band Concert – FREE** at FHSU on the Quad (behind Memorial Union)

**June 19 - Summer Art Walk - FREE**

This is a fun way to spend an evening if it happens to be a night off. There are many artist studios in the downtown area and they all open up with drinks and snacks and the local community wanders from gallery to gallery. Start at the Hays Arts Council for a list of the galleries, or just follow the crowd.

**July 4<sup>th</sup> weekend 4- 11pm Wild West Fest**

Concerts, carnival, craft booths, games, parade, huge fireworks display.

**Sternberg Museum – Mon-Sat 9-6, Sun 1-6**

This is mainly a natural history museum focusing on Western Kansas. There are dinosaur exhibits featuring casts of local dinosaur skeletons, mostly discovered by the museum's namesake, George Sternberg. There is also an interactive dinosaur exhibit: the moving life size dinosaurs (including a T Rex!) were state of the art when the museum opened more than a decade ago. Great place for kids! They have a discovery room with live local creatures (salamanders, snakes, turtles, and spiders) and lots of exploring for kids. They usually have a traveling exhibit as well.

**Historic Fort Hays Museum - \$5 adults, \$1 students, Wed-Sat 9-5, Closed Sun-Tues**

This is a great museum showcasing four of the original buildings of Fort Hays which was instated by the military in 1869 to protect the railroad from the Native Americans. Has a small nice gift shop, too.

**Ellis County Historical Society - \$6 adults, Tues-Sat 9-6, Sun 1-6, closed Monday**

Museum preserves the history of the county. The museum also has an 1879 Stone Church, Younker Harness Shop and the Volga German Haus that replicates an early immigrant dwelling.

**Hays Arts Center Gallery – FREE, Mon-Fri 10-4, Sat 10-1**

This is a small, but good, art gallery and gift shop in downtown Hays. Exhibits are always changing and the gallery's director, Brenda, is always very helpful and happy to chat.

**Stone Gallery– FREE**

Pete Felten is a local sculptor whose limestone sculptures you will see throughout town. He is often working in his gallery from 10-4 or outside on the lawn working on a project. Visitors are welcome.

**Hays Aquatic Park – adults \$4, \$40 for season pass**

If you need to cool off or have kids in town, this is a great place to be. They have water slides, a lazy river, kids pool and more. There is also a one neighborhood pool, too.

**Bison Herd- FREE**

There is a small bison herd next to Frontier Park and across the highway from the Historic Fort Hays museum that's fun to see.

**Frontier Park- FREE**

This is a nice park with lots of large shade trees. It surrounds the small 'Big Creek' that runs through it. It has a great Frisbee golf course. Nice place for a walk.

**Rolling Hills Park- FREE**

Great 9 hole Frisbee golf course

**Golf**

Municipal Golf course  
Smoky Hills Country Club Golf Course  
Driving range at Precision Valley

**Miniature Golf adults \$5.50**

Precision Valley

**Bicycle Shop** – Precision Valley is also the only bicycle shop in town. If you're into cycling, check out BikeHays. Longer rides out to the Volga German towns would be fun, too.

**Hays 8 Movie Theatre –Before 6pm \$4, after 5pm \$6, always \$4 for students**  
INEXPENSIVE MOVIES!!

**Take a walk on the prairie- FREE**

Dr. Howard Reynold's Nature Trail just west of Sternberg museum  
Hays Medical Center has some trails behind the hospital  
Vineyard Nature Trail behind Home Depot  
FHSU Dike Trail (There is some work being done to stabilize the dike in certain areas)  
Outdoor Wildlife Learning trail behind O'Loughlin Elementary school.

**Historical Downtown Walking Tour- FREE**

Great map from the CVB: <http://www.haysusa.net/DocumentCenter/View/18>

**Hays Larks Baseball Games - FREE**

Hays Larks are a semi pro summer league team and the FHSU Tiger Baseball team. Check the schedule online. They play at Larks Park which is one of the oldest baseball facilities in the state of Kansas

**Pottery Works**

Paint your own ceramics.

## To Eat

I won't include the chain restaurants, we do have most of the fast food joints you are used to. I believe the only 24/7 restaurants in Hays are IHOP and the north McDonalds.

Pizza Hut Delivery delivers local until 3 am on Friday and Saturday, but closes at midnight Sun-Thurs.

Jimmy John's delivers local until 3 am on Friday and Saturday, but closes at 10 Sun-Thurs.

You may want to call and check on hours for places before you head over to avoid frustration. A lot of the smaller Mom and Pop places are only open half days.

**American**

**Gella's**

Hays' favorite local brewery and diner. You can try some of the Volga German cuisine such as green bean dumpling soup or a bierock, but everything is good. I recommend the Oatmeal Stout, if you want a pint.

**The Soda Shoppe**

If you remember having a Soda Fountain in your five and dime, this will be a delicious and charming nostalgic stop. They do simple lunches and a salad bar on weekdays and

also your favorite ice cream sodas and sundaes, with a fun retro themed space. You have to enter through the Northwestern Office Supply store. Closed Sunday and Lunch is served 11-2, but they are open until 4 or 5 for sodas and ice cream.

#### **TK's Smokehaus**

Local family barbeque. I haven't eaten here yet to give it a review, and I think they just got their own space this year.

#### **Golden Q**

This is a local favorite for your burger and fries, and they have a decent beer selection, too. It's a sports bar, so a great place to watch the game and shoot a game of pool. It's also a favorite for the college students so it gets loud if you stay late. It's only a few blocks from the University, too!

#### **Vernie's Hamburger House**

A classic hamburger joint. You MUST order the onion rings. They have also perfected a traditional Green Bean dumpling soup recipe, which is a traditional Volga German dish you should definitely try this if you want to experience local cuisine.

#### **Thirsty's Brew Pub & Grill**

Large sports bar and grill run by locals.

#### **Augustine's Bakery**

If you want to try some Volga German food like bierocks or blackberry kuchen, this or Rose Garden will be your best bet. It's a local couple and their lunch offerings change daily, but you won't be disappointed with their baked goods, especially their cinnamon rolls!

#### **Rose Garden Steakhaus**

They do weekday lunches, one different special everyday and they used to have one day that was German day. I've also heard they do the salad bar daily as well. They do Friday and Saturday night steak dinners- and other entrees, too.

### **Fried Chicken**

#### **JD's Country Style Chicken**

Local chicken place. Try the chicken and noodles over mashed potatoes or the hot roast beef sandwich!! Their fried chicken is great, too.

#### **Al's Chickenette**

This place is the local greasy spoon that seems to keep closing and reopening by local demand. This is the spot to get your fried chicken fix.

### **Pizza**

#### **Lomato's**

This is a local family pizza place. They have wings and a few other it's a yummy place. If you've never had it, try cream cheese on your pizza!

#### **Gutch's**

Yummy wood-fired pizzas! And he (Kenny Gottschalk, or 'Gutch') serves Defiance beers which is a youngling local brewery. It's only a five blocks from the University, too!

## **Asian**

### **Sake2Me – Open 11-2 and 5-10, closed Sundays**

Great little local Japanese place with fresh fish and eel. They mostly serve Americanized maki rolls, but I haven't had one I didn't like. They even have some without seafood, the Jackass roll has pulled pork and avocado. They have a couple noodle dishes and outdoor seating. It's only six-seven blocks from the University, too!

### **Schilecci's Bakery & Deli - Lunch**

This used to be another bakery and place for Volga German food, which I think they still make, but it was purchased by a Vietnamese family, and now it is the perfect place to get a Vietnamese meal.

### **China Garden**

Typical Chinese menu, run by a sweet Laotian family. Awesome 70's/Chinese décor.

### **Lucky Buffet**

If you want Chinese buffet, we have one.

## **Mexican**

### **Jalisco**

This is a great Mexican food place! It was the first of these three more authentic places in town. I love the pollo loco, chicken chimichanga, the guac, and the margaritas!

### **El Dos De Oros**

Great Mexican food place!

### **Cancun Mexican Grill**

This is a great Mexican food place! The first one is in Ellis, about 10 miles west of Hays and the locals there will tell you theirs is better. I love the California burrito, pollo Cancun and wet burritos. They are just a couple blocks north of the University

### **Gutierrez Cocina Mexicana**

Local family restaurant. Very Americanized Mexican food, or Tex-Mex style food.

### **Taco Shop**

For some reason this place is a local favorite. I am convinced it is some sort of acquired taste. It is fast food Mexican, although not that fast. I love it although unsure why, and every local has to come back here when they are in town. It's a couple blocks east of campus on 8<sup>th</sup> street.

## **Coffee**

### **Union Station Coffee**

These local guys just opened this place this spring and they roast their own coffee. Easily the best coffee in town! If you are a coffee snob, this is where you will want to frequent! Sadly, their hours are not posted so can be tricky getting a cup of joe here. Free wifi.

### **Moka's Bakery**

I think Moka's is from Salina. They have a drive thru, good coffee, sandwich lunches and tasty baked goods. Only coffee place open on Sundays. Free wifi.

### **Paisley Pear**

I haven't been here since they started serving espresso drinks, but I hear they do.

**Starbucks** – there is a Starbucks in the University's Student Union, but their hours are wacky.

**Food Trucks** – You have to get on Facebook to track down their daily locations.

**Smokin Co. BBQ** – KC style BBQ

**JR's Burger Bus** – Burgers

### **Breakfast**

#### **Pheasant Run Pancake House**

This is where you will get your local hearty diner breakfast of pancakes, eggs and bacon.

#### **Daylight Donuts**

Opens at 4:30am, if you're just getting back to town! You have to get here before 9 to get donuts!!

### **Beer**

**Gella's Lb Brewery** – award winning brewery and great diner

**TRIO Taphouse** – decent beer selection

**Defiance** - local brewery, just opened a tap room last week!

**Golden Q** - decent beer selection

**Wine** –TRIO probably has a wine selection, but the German heritage has created beer country here.

### **Grocery Stores**

#### **Dillon's**

There are two in town, often referred to as 'big Dillon's' and 'little Dillon's', it's the western Kansas Kroger, equivalent to King Sooper's.

The 'big Dillon's', on Vine St, also has the best salad bar in town.

#### **Wal-Mart**

**Tang's Market** - Asian grocery store.

**Farmer's Market** – there are two different markets

Both are Saturday morning 8-Noon and Wed 5-8pm

1. 10<sup>th</sup> St between Main St. and Fort St.
2. Orscheln Farm and Home parking lot

The **Hays Convention and Visitor's Bureau** is a great resource and has a great website with updated hours and fees. They also have an up to date Calendar of local events! <http://www.haysusa.net/>

**We're so glad to have you and hope you have a pleasant stay! -Christina Tippy**