

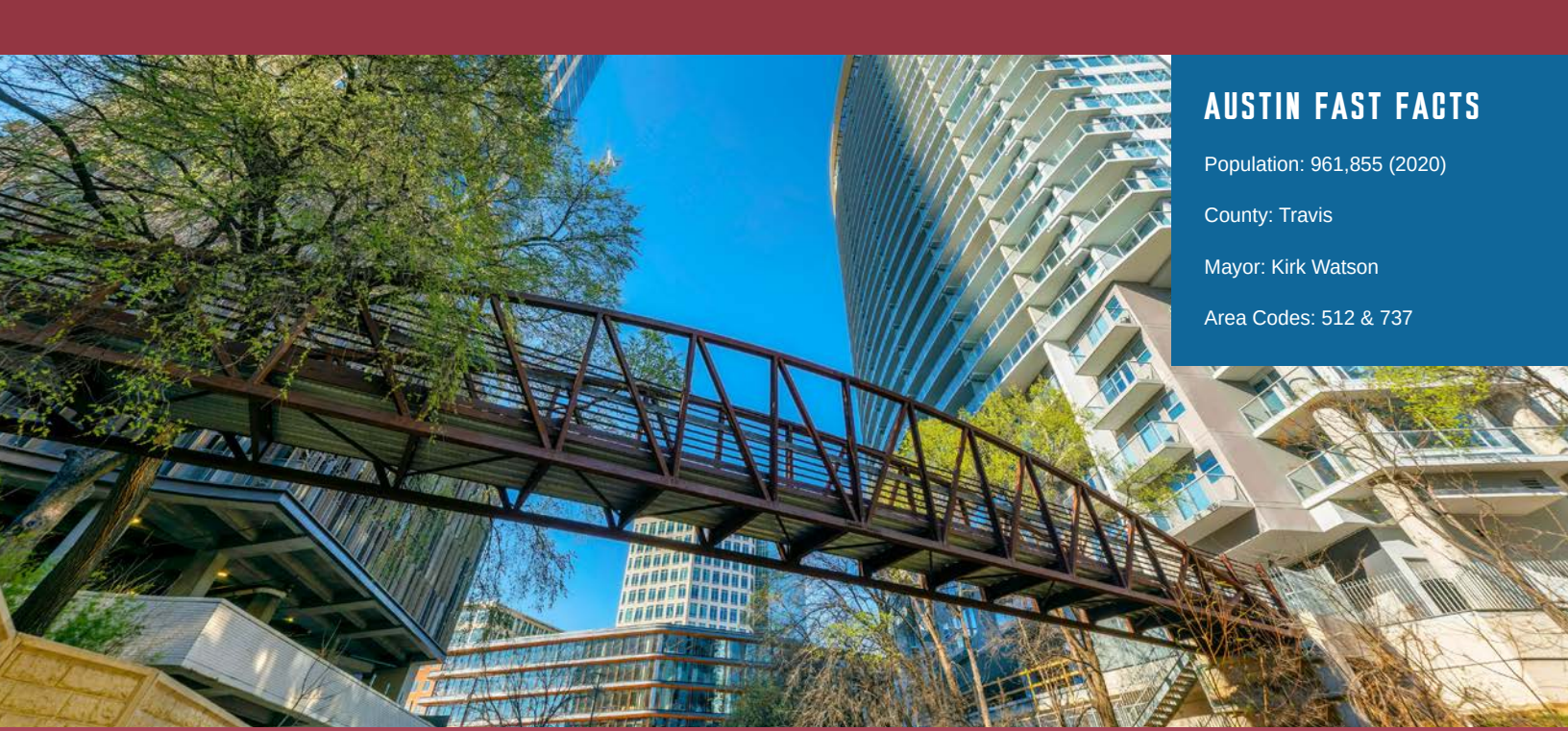
# How To Be An **AUSTINITE**

A Newcomer's Guide



Independence  
*Title*

[IndependenceTitle.com](http://IndependenceTitle.com)



## AUSTIN FAST FACTS

Population: 961,855 (2020)

County: Travis

Mayor: Kirk Watson

Area Codes: 512 & 737

## LOCAL LINGO

Austinites pride themselves on being weird. Often, the way we talk reflects it. Here's a rundown on some of the locations you should know, and a handy pronunciation guide so you can say them "different", just like us!

### Burnet

Something that clearly identifies a non-Austinite is pronouncing Burnet in any way that emphasizes the "e" in the name of this major thoroughfare. Instead, make sure you pronounce it like "BURN-It."

### Guadalupe

Many people moving to Austin for the first time are students coming to the University of Texas at Austin. As a result, they will spend a great deal of time on Guadalupe, the street running along the west side of campus and beyond. However, most Austinites drop the last "e" entirely from the name, creating from this originally Spanish term a uniquely Austin piece of lingo. So remember, when referring to Guadalupe, it is accepted (if not expected) to say "GUAD-a-loop." You may also hear it called "The Drag."

### Koenig, Manor & Mueller

Koenig is pronounced "KAY-nig" by Austinites, Manor is "MAY-ner", and Mueller is "MILL-er."

### Manchaca

Another street name that has transcended its original pronunciation is Manchaca Road. Think the A at the end of this name should be pronounced? Think again. Manchaca is pronounced by Austinites as "MAN-Shack."

### Mopac

The Mopac Expressway is usually identified on street signs and road maps as Loop 1. It is always spoken of (fondly) as "MO-pac," so named for the Missouri Pacific Railroad.

### SoCo

Heard of SoHo? Meet SoCo. The South Congress district is a thriving community of restaurants, shops, and food trailers. Just don't look confused if someone refers to the street as SoCo instead; this is increasingly becoming the normal Austin slang for the district. It's starting to spread out to SoLa (South Lamar) and SoFi (South First).

## HOTSPOTS

### Downtown

It's the party mecca for our dear city, and over the years it's expanded so much that it's been sectioned into distinct districts with very different flavors:

**Sixth Street** | Sixth Street is distinctly Austin. With its colorful and bustling array of bars, restaurants and entertainment venues, it's a sure bet for experiencing local characters and the vibrancy of the city.

**West Sixth Street** | A thoughtfully curated section of town, find everything from craft cocktails and galleries to rustic beer gardens, cult-followed grub and the flagship Whole Foods Market.

**2nd Street** | East of I35, a much mellower place and a mecca for hipsters, with outdoor seating, and often art and music.

**Rainey Street** | Here you'll find many renovated houses-turned-bars, food trucks, and a relaxed atmosphere.

**Red River** | Nightclub heavy, droves of concert-seekers mill the streets of Austin's Red River Cultural District, dipping into watering holes for Lone Star beers while waiting for the lights to dim and shows to begin.

**Warehouse District** | Many of this neighborhood's bars and restaurants are housed in renovated, antique warehouses. The gritty backdrop makes for a vibrant scene that draws a diverse crowd thanks to its range of live entertainment, restaurants, LGBTQ scene and unique shops.

### South Congress

South Congress Avenue occupies a hilly and tree-filled part of Austin just south of the Colorado River. Walk along South Congress Avenue and you'll have your pick of restaurants, trendy shops, art galleries and more!

### Lady Bird Lake

Although the name was changed to "Lady Bird Lake" in 2007 after the death of our beloved Austinite Lady Bird Johnson, the name Town Lake has been so ingrained in Austin's local language that many people still refer to it, or at least think of it, as Town Lake.

### The Domain

The Domain in North Austin is a popular shopping and dining destination. Browse the shops by day, and check out the bars and venues by night!



## RULES OF THE ROAD

Just remember that Mopac is Loop 1; Capital of Texas Hwy is Loop 360; U.S. 183 is Research Blvd., Ed Bluestein Blvd. and Old Bastrop Hwy; 2222 is Northland Dr. or Allandale Rd. or Koenig Lane. Don't try to figure it out. Just accept it. Here are some helpful tips making your way around Austin like a local:

1. The 8:00 am rush hour is from 6:30 am to 9:30 am. The 5:00 pm rush hour is from 3:30 pm to 7:15 pm. Friday's rush hour starts on Thursday morning.
2. If you actually stop at a yellow light, then you cannot be from Austin. You may only apply your brakes when the end of a yellow light and the beginning of the red light create a burnt-orange hue. This is Longhorn Country, after all.
3. If there is any moisture on the road, all traffic must immediately come to a screeching halt. Ditto for Daylight Savings Time, or a flat tire three lanes over.
4. Do not attempt to access any road during an apocalyptic event like frozen precipitation or South by Southwest.

## OTHER WAYS TO TRAVEL

### **MetroRail**

The advent of light rail is the latest attempt to lure Austinites out of their cars and is truly a giant step in that direction. These sleek trains run from Leander to downtown, with amenities including Wi-Fi and bike racks.

### **Car/Ride Sharing**

Zipcar allows Austinites to move from downtown and UT campus areas with ease, avoiding the hassles of parking, refueling and cleaning. Uber and Lyft ridesharing services are also available throughout the city.

### **Biking**

Austin is designated one of the nation's best bike cities, with dedicated bike lanes and trails all over the city. We also have a bike sharing program!

### **Pedicabs**

Available mostly in the downtown entertainment districts, pedicab drivers are licensed by the city, and offer relief from limping along in high heels on the club crawl.

### **Micromobility**

Micromobility devices may include kick scooters, bicycles or other small mobility devices that do not have a license plate. Providers include Bird, Lime, LINK, and Wheels.

# TOURS

## Austin Duck Adventures

[austinducks.com](http://austinducks.com)

An amphibious tour of downtown Austin and beautiful Lady Bird Lake inside a US Coast Guard Inspected Hydra Terra Vehicles.

## Haunted ATX

[hauntedatx.com](http://hauntedatx.com)

Haunted ATX offers the only mobile haunted tour in Austin. Guests will visit several historic Austin landmarks that are reportedly haunted or have experienced paranormal activity.

## Austin City Running Tours

[cityrunningtours.com](http://cityrunningtours.com)

These group running tours are 3 mile/5k led at a casual pace with designated stops along the way. Offered nearly every Saturday, these running tours range from Historic Downtown, UT Campus, and various beer/adult beverage tours!

## Austin Trolley Company

[austintrolley.com](http://austintrolley.com)

Another interesting way to tour the city is aboard the elegantly restored trolleys. Ride around and enjoy the scenic Hill Country in bygone style.

## Austin Biker Gang E-Bike Adventure

[yourbikergang.com](http://yourbikergang.com)

You can be a part of an e-bike biker gang! Ride the open road and experience TripAdvisor's #1 Outdoor Activity in Austin, filled with facts, fun, and photos!

## Austin Secret Foods Tour

[secretfoodtours.com/austin](http://secretfoodtours.com/austin)

Enjoy wonderful foods created for our city including BBQ fit for an American President.

## Austin Segway Tours

[nationtours.com/texas/austin-segway-tours](http://nationtours.com/texas/austin-segway-tours)

Austin Segway Tours is the perfect way to explore the capitol of Texas. Offered 6 times daily, there are options that visit many iconic austin locations.

## Double Decker Austin

[doubledeckeraustin.com](http://doubledeckeraustin.com)

Get the best views of Austin from an unobstructed upper deck of a double decker bus!

## Lone Star River Boat

[lonestarriverboat.com](http://lonestarriverboat.com)

Pick from one of Lone Star Riverboat's public tours down Lady Bird Lake with commentary by the captain.

# SIGHTS & ATTRACTIONS

## Live Music

Boasting two of the largest music festivals in the world (SXSW and ACL), Austinites are the authority on what's happening in the music world.

### ACL Live

[acl-live.com](http://acl-live.com)

### Antone's Nightclub

[antonesnightclub.com](http://antonesnightclub.com)

### Austin 360 Amph.

[austin360amphitheater.com](http://austin360amphitheater.com)

### The Backyard

[backyardaustin.com](http://backyardaustin.com)

### Continental Club

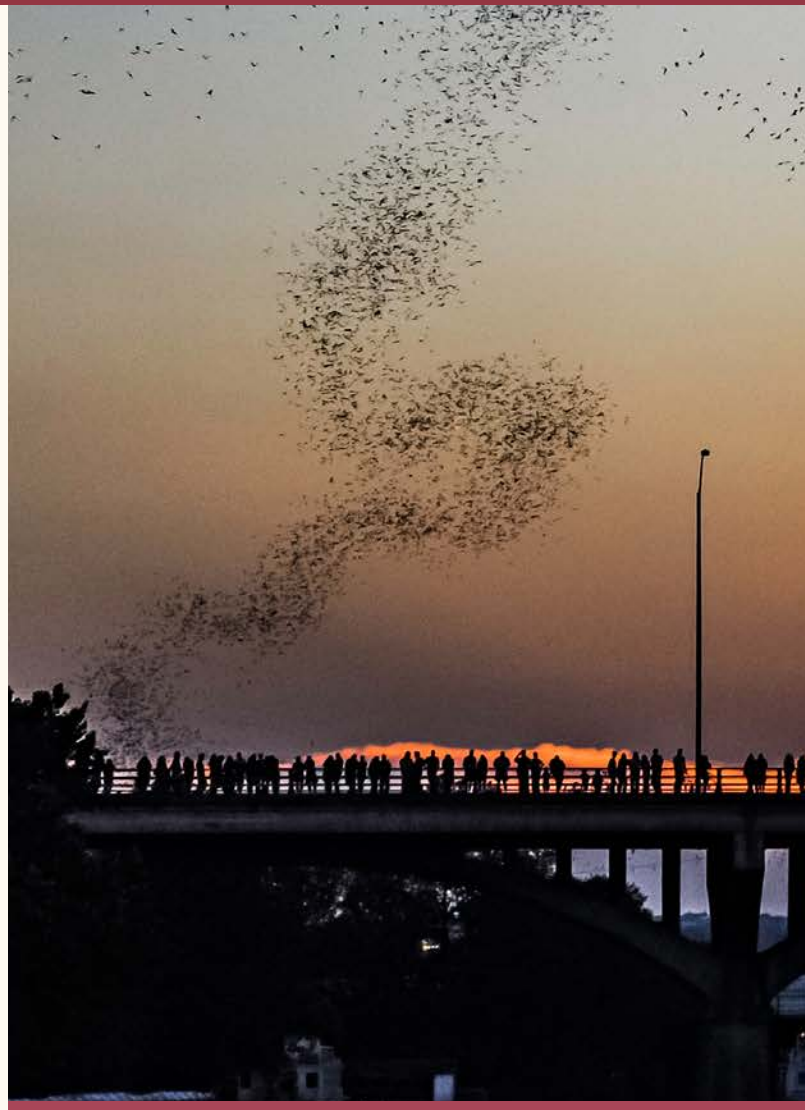
[continentalclub.com](http://continentalclub.com)

### Stubbs Bar-B-Q

[stubbsaustin.com](http://stubbsaustin.com)

## South by Southwest

South by Southwest proves why Austin is an international hotbed of innovation, with giants of the music, film, and tech industries converging in one place.



## ACL Fest

Inspired by the PBS concert series of the same name, The Austin City Limits Music Festival is an annual music festival held in Zilker Park on two consecutive three-day weekends.

## Alamo Drafthouse

[drafhouse.com](http://drafhouse.com)

The Alamo Drafthouse has become an Austin institution. Anyone claiming to be an Austinite has laughed their socks off at a Master Pancake show, participated in one of their dance parties or sing/quote-alongs, giggled through a Girly Night, nibbled fingernails at a Terror Tuesday, or bro-ed out at an Action Pack. Go see why Austinites love these shows so much!

## The Oasis

[oasis-austin.com](http://oasis-austin.com)

Food, drinks and live music! Its tiered decks overlook Lake Travis, and there's no better place to take in the sunset!

## Mexican Free-Tailed Bats

One of the most amazing sights in Austin takes place every evening from March to early November, when 1.5 million Mexican free-tailed bats emerge from their roosts under the Ann W. Richards Congress Avenue Bridge.

## Zilker Park

An Austin treasure, this green expanse is a popular venue for events of all kinds. There's always something going on here!

## Trail of Lights

Austin's favorite holiday celebration boasts a lit tree 155 tall and 120 feet wide! With 3,309 multicolored light bulbs and topped with a 10-foot lighted double star, you can't miss this Austinite favorite come holiday season.



## Austin Art Scene

Austinites have put their creativity to good use on the multitude of unique, offbeat signs, museums, and murals throughout the city, from Jeremiah the Innocent (Austin's beloved "Hi, how are you" frog), to the sweet love note of "I love you so much" on the side of Jo's Coffee.

**Art On 5th**  
**Art. Science. Gallery.**  
**Artworks**  
**Austin Art Garage**  
**Big Medium**  
**Capital Fine Art**  
**Davis Gallery**  
**Flatbed Press & Gallery**  
**Gallery Shoal Creek**  
**grayDUCK Gallery**  
**HOPE Gallery**  
**Link & Pin**  
**Modern Rocks Gallery**  
**The People's Gallery**  
**Photo Méthode Gallery**  
**Pump Project**  
**Russel Collection**  
**Stephen L. Clark Gallery**  
**Tiny Park**  
**Visual Arts Center**  
**Wally Workman Gallery**  
**Women & Their Work**  
**Yard Dog Art Gallery**

arton5th.com  
artsciencegallery.com  
artworksaustin.com  
austinartgarage.com  
bigmedium.org  
capitalfineart.com  
davisgalleryaustin.com  
flatbedpress.com  
galleryshoalcreek.com  
grayduckgallery.com  
hopecampaign.org  
linkpinart.com  
modernrocksgallery.com  
austintexas.gov  
photomethode.com  
pumpproject.org  
russel-collection.com  
artaustin.org  
tinyparkgallery.com  
art.utexas.edu  
wallyworkmangallery.com  
womenandtheirwork.org  
yarddog.com

## Comedy

Everyone loves to laugh, but Austinites take it to another level. Here are a few Austin-only specialty comedy venues:

### Esther's Follies

[esthersfollies.com](http://esthersfollies.com)

A modern-day vaudeville theatre on 6th Street downtown, named after actress Esther Williams. The acts incorporate magic, juggling, singing, dancing, and sketches on current events.

### New Movement Theater

[newmovementtheater.com](http://newmovementtheater.com)

An improv, sketch, and standup comedy theater and training center offering classes, corporate training, and shows ranging from comedy rap battles to open mic nights!

### Cap City Comedy Club

[capcitycomedy.com](http://capcitycomedy.com)

Cap City Comedy Club is home to some of the best comedy performances an Austinite could hope for. They also offer comedy classes, improv classes, and the most hilarious version of defensive driving permitted by the state of Texas!

### ColdTowne Theater

[coldtownetheater.com](http://coldtownetheater.com)

The tiny ColdTowne Theater is one of the most electric spaces in Austin, because the audience is practically on stage with the comedians. Here, local and touring improv, sketch, and stand-up comedians scramble to get their time in this highly coveted spotlight.



## Circuit of the Americas

[circuitoftheamericas.com](http://circuitoftheamericas.com)

CoTA was first proposed in mid-2010 to be the first track in the United States purpose-built for Formula One. Austinites have embraced this enormous new venue and (of course) added a live music angle! The Austin 360 Amphitheater has become one of the largest venues in the city and sits at the base of the Observation Tower. Tours are given daily, including the view from the top!

## Moonlight Towers

Austin's Moonlight Towers are the only ones left in the United States and are on the National Registry of Historic Places. One of the towers was prominently featured in the film *Dazed and Confused* as the site of a high-school keg party, in which the character played by famous Austinite Matthew McConaughey exclaims, "Party at the moon tower!"

## Cathedral of Junk

Winner of Austin Chronicle's "Best Organized Chaos" award, the Cathedral of Junk is an Austin must for Austinites and visitors alike. Some 60 tons of discarded items are piled artfully in a suburban backyard in South Austin, towering over the home of Vince Hannemann. It's an ever-evolving shrine of the unwanted and discarded, a project that suits the attitude of free expression in Austin.

## Roller Derby

Flat track or banked, Texas Rollergirls, Texas Roller Derby, and Austin Anarchy put on a great show. Rooted in the '70's, Roller Derby is a fast paced brawl that you can't take your eyes off of!

## Chicken Sh\*t Bingo

You can't just play this quirky (and slightly smelly) game of bingo—you have to win. Here's how it works: stop by Ginny's Little Longhorn Saloon on Burnet Road on a Sunday night, line up and buy a ticket. Along with the 54 numbered squares, players can buy tickets on the line, the intersection of lines and the orange border around the board. After you've got your ticket, you just have to wait and see where the chicken, well, goes. The winning ticket-holder walks away with the cash pot!

## Pennybacker Bridge

This iconic bridge over Lake Austin is informally known as "The 360 Bridge". Surrounded by the rolling hills along Loop 360, it's part of what makes the road one of the most scenic urban drives in Texas. Be sure to take the nearby trail up to the overlook, where you can take in views of the surrounding hills.

# FITNESS AND NATURE

## Gyms & Fitness Clubs

There are many ways to stay fit in Austin. If hitting the gym is your thing, there's no shortage of choices.

**24 Hour Fitness**  
**Anytime Fitness**  
**Austin Simply Fit**  
**Castle Hill Fitness**  
**Crossfit Austin**  
**Crossfit Central**  
**Fit Austin**  
**Gym One**  
**Hyde Park Gym**  
**Lifetime Fitness**  
**Pure Austin Fitness**  
**Orangetheory Fitness**

[24hourfitness.com](http://24hourfitness.com)  
[anytimefitness.com](http://anytimefitness.com)  
[austinsimplyfit.com](http://austinsimplyfit.com)  
[castlehillfitness.com](http://castlehillfitness.com)  
[crossfitaustin.com](http://crossfitaustin.com)  
[centralathlete.com](http://centralathlete.com)  
[fitaustin.com](http://fitaustin.com)  
[gym-one.com](http://gym-one.com)  
[hydeparkgym.com](http://hydeparkgym.com)  
[lifetime.life](http://lifetime.life)  
[pureaustin.com](http://pureaustin.com)  
[orangetheoryfitness.com](http://orangetheoryfitness.com)

## Bike Trails

Cycling is huge in Austin and there are a wealth of scenic trails.

**Barton Creek Greenbelt**  
**Bull Creek District Park**  
**Bull Creek Greenbelts**  
**Butler Hike & Bike**  
**Emma Long Metro Park**  
**MetCenter Hike & Bike**  
**Shoal Creek Greenbelt**  
**Slaughter Creek Trail**  
**Veloway**  
**Walnut Creek Metro. Park**

[austinparks.org](http://austinparks.org)  
[austinparks.org](http://austinparks.org)  
[austinparks.org](http://austinparks.org)  
[thetrailfoundation.org](http://thetrailfoundation.org)  
[austintexas.gov](http://austintexas.gov)  
[metcenter.com](http://metcenter.com)  
[austintexas.gov](http://austintexas.gov)  
[austinparks.org](http://austinparks.org)  
[austintexas.gov](http://austintexas.gov)  
[austintexas.gov](http://austintexas.gov)

## Dance & Yoga

**Ballet Austin**  
**Black Swan Yoga**  
**Austin Swing Syndicate**

[balletaustin.org/getfit](http://balletaustin.org/getfit)  
[blackswanyoga.com](http://blackswanyoga.com)  
[austinswingsyndicate.org](http://austinswingsyndicate.org)



## SWIMMING HOLES

When summer arrives, it brings the urge to hit the water! Here in Austin, you'll find plenty of opportunities to cool off in the pools, lakes, and rivers.

### Barton Creek

Barton Creek is part of the Edwards Aquifer recharge zone and one of the most beautiful urban natural areas in the U.S.

### Barton Springs Pool

This gorgeous swimming hole is one of the top 10 tourist attractions in Austin. The spring-fed water is a consistent 68 degrees year-round.

### Deep Eddy Pool

Featuring a bathhouse built during the Depression era, the historic Deep Eddy Pool is the oldest swimming pool in Texas, with its waters fed from a hand-dug well.

### Hamilton Pool Preserve

Acquired by Travis County in 1985, the site has been a popular spring-fed swimming hole since the early 1900s. The pool is in a box canyon fed by a 45-foot waterfall with a sandy beach and giant boulders. Reservations required.

### Sculpture Falls

Within the Barton Creek Greenbelt lies Sculpture Falls, a clear, cool, dog-friendly swimming hole.

### Big Stacy Pool

This is the place to swim during cold weather, heated by a natural warm spring. It's a special favorite, particularly with lap swimmers.

## PARKS & SCENERY

Austinites love nature and Austin is home to many beautiful parks.

### Austin Nature and Science Center

[ci.austin.tx.us/ansc](http://ci.austin.tx.us/ansc)

Centrally located on the western edge of Zilker Park in the Zilker Nature Preserve, it offers indoor and outdoor exhibits, plus environmental science education programs to schools and the community in and around Austin.

### Emma Long Metropolitan Park

[austinparks.org](http://austinparks.org)

Originally called City Park, it is situated on the shores of Lake Austin. Campsites are available.

### Lake Travis

[laketravis.com](http://laketravis.com)

Formed by Mansfield Dam, it winds through steep, scenic hills for 65 miles with 270 miles of shoreline. More than a mile long with 24 floodgates, the dam is one of the largest masonry structures in the world.

### Mayfield Park

[mayfieldpark.org](http://mayfieldpark.org)

A historic cottage, gardens and nature preserve in west Austin, on a bluff overlooking Lake Austin.

### McKinney Falls

[tpwd.state.tx.us](http://tpwd.state.tx.us)

Camp, hike, bike, and just enjoy nature alongside Onion Creek as it flows along the limestone landscape.

### Mount Bonnell

[austinparks.org](http://austinparks.org)

At 775 feet, Mount Bonnell is considered to be the highest point in Austin. It's a favorite for Austinites to catch stunning views of the surrounding hills.

### Wild Basin

[wildbasin.org](http://wildbasin.org)

Founded in 1974, the Wild Basin preserve covers 227 acres and offers 2.5 miles of hiking trails. Bikes, pets, smoking and picnics are all prohibited within the preserve boundaries.

### Zilker Botanical Garden

[zilker garden.org](http://zilker garden.org)

Often called "the jewel in the heart of Austin", it contains theme gardens such as rose, herb and Japanese gardens, which are interconnected with streams, waterfalls and koi-filled ponds. Within, the Hartman Prehistoric Garden recreates local dinosaur habitats.

# GOOD EATS

## Food Trucks

Austin runs on food trucks, and there sure are a lot of them. There are over 1200 food trailers, according to the city's state of the food report.

<b>Chi'lantro BBQ</b>	<a href="http://chilantrobbq.com">chilantrobbq.com</a>
<b>East Side King</b>	<a href="http://eskaustin.com">eskaustin.com</a>
<b>Hey Cupcake!</b>	<a href="http://heycupcake.com">heycupcake.com</a>
<b>The Peached Tortilla</b>	<a href="http://thepeachedtortilla.com">thepeachedtortilla.com</a>
<b>Torchy's Tacos</b>	<a href="http://torchystacos.com">torchystacos.com</a>
<b>Veracruz All Natural</b>	<a href="http://veracruzallnatural.com">veracruzallnatural.com</a>
<b>Baton Creole</b>	<a href="http://batoncreole.com">batoncreole.com</a>

## Breakfast Tacos

This Austin staple deserves a category all to its own. Breakfast tacos are an Austinite's primary food group!

<b>Bouldin Creek Café</b>	<a href="http://bouldincreekcafe.com">bouldincreekcafe.com</a>
<b>Fresa's Chicken al Carbon</b>	<a href="http://fresaschicken.com">fresaschicken.com</a>
<b>Juan in a Million</b>	<a href="http://juaninamillion.com">juaninamillion.com</a>
<b>Papalote Taco House</b>	<a href="http://yumpapalote.com">yumpapalote.com</a>
<b>Tacodeli</b>	<a href="http://tacodeli.com">tacodeli.com</a>
<b>Veracruz All Natural</b>	<a href="http://veracruzallnatural.com">veracruzallnatural.com</a>

## Tex-Mex

No Texan, or Austinite, can make it a week without their beloved Tex-Mex. In Austin, you could probably eat at a new Tex-Mex restaurant every night and still never get sick of it.

<b>Chuy's Tex-Mex</b>	<a href="http://chuys.com">chuys.com</a>
<b>El Arroyo</b>	<a href="http://elarroyo.com">elarroyo.com</a>
<b>Fonda San Miguel</b>	<a href="http://fondasanmiguel.com">fondasanmiguel.com</a>
<b>Matt's Famous El Rancho</b>	<a href="http://mattselrancho.com">mattselrancho.com</a>
<b>Maudie's</b>	<a href="http://maudies.com">maudies.com</a>
<b>Trudy's Texas Star</b>	<a href="http://trudys.com">trudys.com</a>



## Barbecue

Texas knows barbecue, and Austin is no exception. Getting the meat-sweats is a rite of passage here!

<b>Black's Barbecue</b>	<a href="http://blacksbbq.com">blacksbbq.com</a>
<b>Freedmen's</b>	<a href="http://freedmensbar.com">freedmensbar.com</a>
<b>Franklin BBQ</b>	<a href="http://franklinbbq.com">franklinbbq.com</a>
<b>Iron Works BBQ</b>	<a href="http://ironworksbbq.com">ironworksbbq.com</a>
<b>Kerlin BBQ</b>	<a href="http://kerlinbbq.com">kerlinbbq.com</a>
<b>La Barbecue</b>	<a href="http://labarbecue.com">labarbecue.com</a>
<b>Lamberts</b>	<a href="http://lambertsaustin.com">lambertsaustin.com</a>
<b>Micklethwait Craft Meats</b>	<a href="http://craftmeatsaustin.com">craftmeatsaustin.com</a>
<b>Salt Lick BBQ</b>	<a href="http://saltlickbbq.com">saltlickbbq.com</a>
<b>Stiles Switch</b>	<a href="http://stilesswitchbbq.com">stilesswitchbbq.com</a>
<b>Terry Black's BBQ</b>	<a href="http://terryblacksbbq.com">terryblacksbbq.com</a>



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Make us your personal title company!



Learn more at  
[IndependenceTitle.com](http://IndependenceTitle.com)