

My Austin

This is a true hodge-podge of some of my favorite things to do, see and eat in Austin. It is in no way an exhaustive list. We'd need an encyclopedia for that.

♥ **Austin Central Library.** 710 W Cesar Chavez St.

Go for the architecture and the gorgeous view of Lady Bird Lake from the rooftop patio. The floating staircases are worth a peek inside. Great outdoor spaces too – maybe grab a bite from Royal Blue Grocery or chips & hillbilly queso from Torchy's Tacos and have a picnic.

♥ **Seaholm Power Plant.** 800 W Cesar Chavez St.

Go for the architecture and history. The Seaholm Power Plant is listed on the National Register of Historic Places and is a recorded Texas Landmark. Built in 1950, it was slated for demolition in 1997. A group of "friends of Seaholm" stepped in and saved the structure. By 1989 the plant had stopped generating power and the last burner was turned off in 1992. The structure sat unused for years. It has now been redeveloped into a mixed used space including residences, retail and offices. Many of the historical elements, including the original intake systems were preserved.

♥ **Farmers Market. Republic Square.** 422 Guadalupe St.

Saturdays 9am-1pm. In addition to product you'll find great pastries, coffee, sandwiches, etc. Usually have live music. Open green space to spread out or grab a shady spot under the sprawling Live Oak tree.

♥ **South Congress (SoCo).** Congress Ave, south of Lady Bird Lake. Go for the people watching, eclectic shopping and food.

♥ **South 1st Street.** From W. Monroe St. to W. Johanna St.

Go for the mural and yummy bites! South 1st is the sleepy sister to South Congress, but not as pedestrian friendly and less shopping. The Greetings from Austin mural is at South 1st and West Annie – great photo op and close to Fresa's, the Churro trailer and Elizabeth Street

Café. All listed below.

♥ **The Broken Spoke.** 3201 South Lamar

Go for the two stepping. The Broken Spoke is an old-school Austin institution for country music and two stepping. The low-slung wood building continues to hold on amongst its new steel-framed towering neighbors.

♥ **Rainey Street District (east of downtown)**

An ever-changing scene of hang-outs happy hours, restaurants, etc.

♥ **Texas State Capitol**

Beautiful building and grounds. Go for a serious dose of Texas pride. Guided and self-guided tours available.

♥ **Art & History at The University of Texas (UT)**

Lyndon Baines Johnson (LBJ) Presidential Library

Blanton Museum of Art

Bob Bullock Texas State History Museum

Harry Ransom Center

♥ **Lady Bird Lake.** Runs through downtown Austin. Go for a walk, run or paddle. Great hike and bike trail around the lake, pedestrian boardwalk, the Pfluger pedestrian bridge.

♥ **Barton Springs Pool. Zilker Park. Barton Creek Greenbelt.** Along Barton Springs Road. Go for the water and wide open spaces. This is a huge series of green spaces in the heart of Austin - pool, trail, creek, swimming holes, etc. Barton Springs Pool lies within Zilker Park. It is the crown jewel of Austin summer. It's about 3 acres in size and is fed by a natural underground spring which keeps the water at a cool 68-70 degrees.

♥ **Bats.** Congress Ave Bridge.

Austin is home to the largest urban bat colony in the world. 1.5 million Mexican free tailed bats live on the underside of the Congress Ave bridge. Watching them emerge at dusk is pretty cool. My favorite way to see them is on a "bat cruise" on Lady Bird Lake.

♥ **Yeti flagship store.** 220 South Congress Ave.

Austin is home to Yeti and their flagship store is on Congress Ave, just at the South end of the Congress Ave Bridge. All your Yeti gear plus a cool bar out on the front porch. Yep, retail and booze.

♥ **Home Grown Austin.** Corner of 5th and Lamar.

Go for some local hometown favorites. You'll find four Austin originals all on one street corner! Grab a book from **Book People**, head across the street for a smoothie and burger at **Whole Foods**. Get your groove on at **Waterloo Records** and finish with an ice cream at **Amy's**.

Book People. Fabulous locally owned independent bookstore. This is the one and only, no other locations.

Whole Foods. Whole Foods was born and raised in Austin. (Let's not discuss the buyout by Amazon.) Yes, it's a grocery store, but this one's a little different. There are multiple small "restaurants," huge hot and cold food bars, and a bar in the store.

Waterloo Records. Pleasing Austin music lovers since 1982. If you want it, they probably have it.

Amy's Ice Cream. Opened in 1984, Amy's handcrafts artisan super premium ice creams. Home of the world famous Mexican Vanilla Ice Cream.

♥ RESTAURANTS

Listed in no particular order, this list only scratches the surface of great places to eat.

La Condesa. Modern Mexican in a snazzy 2nd Street location

Gueros. Old school Tex Mex on South Congress.

Justine's Brassiere. French. Lovely steak & pomme frites. Great atmosphere (but loud). I think it's the sexiest restaurant in Austin.

Food trucks. All over Austin! You have to try at least one.

Torchy's Tacos. LOVE their hillbilly queso. Rest of the menu is standard tex mex tacos.

Lauderette. Tucked away in the Holly neighborhood in East Austin. Much celebrated desserts by pastry chef Laura Sawicki.

El Meson. Classic family run Mexican, South Lamar location. Good food. Friendly, but lousy service.

Lamberts. For Sunday brunch. This is an upscale BBQ place. How anyone thinks upscale and BBQ go together I don't know, but I really love their Sunday brunch.

Hopdoddy. Delicious burgers and shakes.

Chuy's. Austin institution for tex-mex and a shrine to Elvis. I know they've expanded across the country now, but the original is always nice. Barton Springs Rd location has the best vibe.

Summermoon Coffee. Try the moon milk...made with magical secret ingredients. Seriously, it's crack in a cup! A must try.

Fonda San Miguel. Interior Mexican cuisine. Family run. Old world Mexico City feel.

Josephine House for stylish brunch.

Elizabeth Street Café. A pitcher of their "punch" is always in order.

Perla's and Clark's Oyster Bar for seafood. Seafood purists love these places.

Fresa's. Delish wood fired chicken. The North Lamar location is drive thru and walk up only. The South 1st location has a big outdoor dining area. (Get your pic at the Greetings from Austin mural, grab dinner at Fresa's then head down the street to the churro trailer for dessert.)

Churro Co. food trailer on South 1st. Best churros in Austin. On busy weekends they can sell out. Check their Instagram for updates @churrocoastin

Loro. Delish! A partnership between two of Austin's heavy hitters – Aaron Franklin of Franklin BBQ and Tyson Cole of Uchi. Brings together Asian and Texas cuisine.

Uchi and it's sister, **Uchiko**. Considered the best sushi in Austin.

Juice Land for all your fresh juice & smoothie needs. The most Austin vibey locations are Barton Springs (1625 Barton Springs Road) and my fav, Lake Austin Blvd (2307 Lake Austin Boulevard). It's hard not to enjoy yourself while sipping green juice on the grotto-like patio or sitting next to a giant gorilla wearing sunglasses.

Dai Due. Committed to only using food found regionally. The menu regularly changes to reflect what is in season. Dai Due started as a butchery. As such, a lot of care is given to the sourcing and treatment of meats.

♥ **BBQ has now become hip. Who knew! I can't keep up with all the new places.**

Franklin's is famous for their hours long line and limited supply of BBQ.

Some Central Texas BBQ standards have recently opened Austin locations like **Terry Black's & Cooper's**. Both are excellent. Some other good choices are **Rudy's, Stiles Switch, Micklethwait, and La Barbecue.**

BBQ Outside of Austin.

The Salt Lick in Driftwood, Texas. Food is great, and it's all about the pre-show wait on the shady lawn with fresh made lemonade, live music and BYOB. They do not take reservations. Be prepared to wait. Cash only (ATM on premises).

Lockhart, Texas is home to **Black's**, **Kreuz** and **Smitty's**.

The original **Cooper's BBQ** is in Llano. I love the pork chop.

Luling, Texas is home to **Luling BBQ** and **Original City Market BBQ**. I prefer City Market. Cash only! Standing in line to enter the "meat room" is part of the charm. The sausage is my favorite.

♥ ENJOY!!! ♥