

# DINING & ENTERTAINMENT



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## POPULAR CUISINE

Tex-Mex has only been a household word in Texas since the mid-1900s, but this cuisine took shape many years ago as Anglo settlers and Texas ranchers attempted to recreate northern Mexican cuisine with their ingredients of choice. Dishes are heavy on the starch but provide pure bliss with a heavy mix of shredded cheeses, meat (vegetarian options too), beans, peppers, spices and flour tortillas. Austin has no shortage of Tex-Mex restaurants, and a crowd favorite dish is queso — melted cheese, seasoned and served warm as a dip for tortilla chips.



FRANKLIN BARBECUE

Traditionally, Texas barbecue (BBQ) involves slow cooking various meats for extended periods of time. Here in central Texas, the typical style of preparation is to rub the preferred meat with spices, then cook over indirect heat with pecan or oak wood in a pit. Annual competitions determine the top barbeque here in Texas, and many award-winning pit masters can be found right here in Austin. In fact, in 2015, Aaron Franklin of Franklin Barbecue broke ground as the first ever pit master awarded a James Beard Award. At many of these restaurants, visitors will experience laid back, cafeteria-style vibes and should expect to get a little messy. Locals seem to know what's best.



DOWNTOWN FOOD TRUCKS

Explore Austin's vibrant mobile food vendor scene (food trucks) — an inexpensive, popular way to dine with locals. Many food trucks and trailers have stationary locations around the city, but be sure to check each truck's calendar for special pop-up dates and places. All over town, chefs are eschewing brick-and-mortar establishments and instead serving inexpensive, unpretentious cuisine whipped up in the back of refurbished Airstreams and concession trailers. The trend is so hot that officials estimate more than 1,000 mobile food vendors are in Austin. For more info, check out:

[www.austintexas.org/visit/food-and-drink/food-trucks](http://www.austintexas.org/visit/food-and-drink/food-trucks).

## CHEFS TO WATCH

- Barley Swine's Bryce Gilmore
- Emmer & Rye's Kevin Fink
- Olamaie's Michael Fojtasek
- Snow's BBQ Pitmaster Tootsie Tomanetz
- Launderette's Laura Sawicki

## FOOD TOURS

For a fun and unique dining experience, check out a food tour from one of Austin's many local tour companies, such as Austin Eats Food Tours or Rocket Electrics Austin Food Tours. Both companies showcase the best of Austin's culinary scene and are guided by knowledgeable foodies.

## FOOD RESOURCES

The city is home to a variety of other excellent dining guide resources, such as below:

- Austin Monthly's Best New Restaurants
- Austin American-Statesman's Best Restaurants in Austin
- Austin Chronicle's First Plate
- Do512's Best Food Trucks in Austin
- Eater Austin
- Austin Food Blogger Alliance

## THE PIT

**John Mueller Meat Co.**  
201 E. 9th St., Georgetown  
[blackboxbbq.com](http://blackboxbbq.com)

**La Barbecue**  
2027 E. César Chávez  
[labarbecue.com](http://labarbecue.com)

**Louie Mueller Barbecue**  
206 W. 2nd St., Taylor  
[louiemuellerbarbecue.com](http://louiemuellerbarbecue.com)

**Stiles Switch BBQ & Brew**  
6610 N. Lamar Blvd.  
[stileswitchbbq.com](http://stileswitchbbq.com)

**Stubb's Bar-B-Q**  
801 Red River  
[stubbssAustin.com](http://stubbssAustin.com)

## FANCY FARE

**Jacoby's Mercantile**  
3235 E. César Chávez St.  
[jacobysAustin.com](http://jacobysAustin.com)

**Lenoir**  
1807 S. 1st St.  
[lenoirrestaurant.com](http://lenoirrestaurant.com)

**Parkside**  
301 E. 6th St.  
[parkside-austin.com](http://parkside-austin.com)

**Vespaio**  
1610 S. Congress Ave.  
[austinvespaio.com](http://austinvespaio.com)

## MEXICAN WITH A TWIST

**Chuy's**  
Several locations  
around town  
[chuys.com](http://chuys.com)

**Maudie's**  
Several locations  
around town  
[maudies.com](http://maudies.com)

**El Arroyo**  
1624 W. 5th St.  
[elarroyo.com](http://elarroyo.com)

**El Mercado**  
1302 S. 1st  
1702 Lavaca St. and  
7414 Burnet Rd.  
[elmercadoresta.com](http://elmercadoresta.com)

**Trudy's**  
Several locations  
around town  
901 Little Texas Ln. C  
[trudys.com](http://trudys.com)

**Matt's El Rancho**  
2613 S. Lamar Blvd.  
[mattselrancho.com](http://mattselrancho.com)

**Fonda San Miguel**  
2330 W. N. Loop Blvd.  
[fondasanmiguel.com](http://fondasanmiguel.com)

**Curra's Grill**  
614 E. Oltorf St.  
[currasgrill.com](http://currasgrill.com)

**El Chile Café y Cantina**  
1809 Manor Rd.  
[elchilecafe.com](http://elchilecafe.com)

**Juan in a Million**  
2300 E. Cesar Chavez St.  
[juaninamillion.com](http://juaninamillion.com)

**La Condesa**  
400 W. 2nd St.  
[lacondesa.com](http://lacondesa.com)

**Polvos**  
2004 S. 1st St. and  
14735 Bratton Ln., Ste 205  
[polvosaustin.com](http://polvosaustin.com)

**ASIAN-INSPIRED EATERIES**  
Top Chef: Texas winner chef Paul Qui owns the popular East Side King ([eastsideking.com](http://eastsideking.com)), with trailers around East Austin and brick-and-mortar locations near the University of Texas campus and on South Lamar.

**Elizabeth Street Café**  
1501 S. 1st St.  
[elizabethstreetcafe.com](http://elizabethstreetcafe.com)

**Ramen Tatsu-Ya**  
8557 Research Blvd. #126  
and 1234 S. Lamar Blvd.  
1600 E. 6th St.  
[ramen-tatsuya.com](http://ramen-tatsuya.com)

**Komé**  
5301 Airport Blvd. #100  
[kome-austin.com](http://kome-austin.com)

**Shanghai Chinese Restaurant**  
6718 Middle Fiskville Rd.

**Sway**  
1417 S. 1st St.  
[swaythai.com](http://swaythai.com)

**The Clay Pit (Indian)**  
1601 Guadalupe St.  
[claypit.com](http://claypit.com)

**Koriente**  
621 E. 7th St.  
[koriente.com](http://koriente.com)

**Korea House Restaurant & Sushi Bar**  
2700 W. Anderson Ln.  
Ste. 501  
[koreahouseaustin.com](http://koreahouseaustin.com)

**Pho Van**  
8557 Research Blvd.  
Ste. 120

**Uchiko**  
4200 N. Lamar Blvd.  
[uchikoaustin.com](http://uchikoaustin.com)

**PIZZA PIES**  
**Home Slice Pizza**  
1415 S. Congress Ave.  
[homeslicepizza.com](http://homeslicepizza.com)

**Bufalina**  
1519 E. Cesar Chavez St.  
[bufalinapizza.com](http://bufalinapizza.com)

**East Side Pies**  
1401 Rosewood Ave.  
5312 Airport, Ste. G and  
13265 N. Hwy. 183, Ste. B  
[eastsidepies.com](http://eastsidepies.com)

**The Backspace**  
507 San Jacinto Blvd.  
[thebackspace-austin.com](http://thebackspace-austin.com)

**Pieous**  
166 Hargraves Dr.  
[facebook.com/Pieous](http://facebook.com/Pieous)

**Little Deli & Pizzeria**  
7101 Woodrow Ave.  
[littledeliandpizza.com](http://littledeliandpizza.com)

**Mangia**  
12001 Burnet Rd., Ste. D  
[mangiapizza.com](http://mangiapizza.com)

**Southside Flying Pizza**  
2206 S. Congress Ave. and  
1224 S. Lamar Blvd.  
11600 Manchaca Rd., A  
[southsideflyingpizza.com](http://southsideflyingpizza.com)

**Via 313 Pizza**  
1802 E. 6th St.  
700 W. 6th St.  
61 Rainey St. (at Craft Pride)  
3016 Guadalupe St.,  
Ste. 100 and 6705 U.S.  
Hwy. 290, #503  
[via313.com](http://via313.com)

## UNBEATABLE BURGERS

**Hop-doddy Burger Bar**  
1400 S. Congress, Ste. 190A  
[hopdoddy.com](http://hopdoddy.com)

**Casino El Camino**  
517 E. 6th St.  
[casinoelcamino.net](http://casinoelcamino.net)

**Sandy's**  
603 Barton Springs Rd.

**P. Terry's Burger Stand**  
Multiple locations  
[pterrys.com](http://pterrys.com)

### **Counter Café**

626 N. Lamar Blvd. and  
1914 E. 6th St.  
*countercafe.com*

### **24 Diner**

600 N. Lamar Blvd.  
*24diner.com*

### **Gourdough's Public House**

2700 S. Lamar Blvd.  
*gourdoughs.com*

### **Dan's Hamburgers**

844 Airport Blvd.  
4308 Manchaca Rd. and  
5602 N. Lamar Blvd.  
*dans-hamburgers.com*

### **Dirty Martin's**

2808 Guadalupe St.  
*dirtymartins.com*

### **Top Notch Hamburgers**

7525 Burnet Rd.  
*topnotchaustin.com*

### **Hat Creek Burger Co.**

Several locations around town  
*hatcreekburgers.com*

### **Shady Grove**

1624 Barton Springs Rd.  
*theshadygrove.com*

### **ENTERTAINMENT DISTRICTS**

Across Austin there are many neighborhoods and entertainment districts, each with their own unique character and filled with many things to do, eat and drink.

### **South Congress (SoCo) District**

Just south of Lady Bird Lake, "SoCo" is a vibrant and walkable Austin neighborhood packed with eclectic boutiques, murals, eateries and music venues. Pick up a pair of boots at Allens, or discover something new at Parts & Labour.

### **6th Street District**

For nightlife stroll down Austin's most famous street for more than

a dozen blocks of restaurants, bars and live music venues including Maggie Mae's, Parish, Midnight Cowboy and Shakespeare's Pub.

### **West Sixth Street**

#### **Entertainment District**

Head west on Sixth Street from Lavaca to Lamar to shop and dine at Austin's most iconic home-grown retailers, eateries and dives including the flagship Whole Foods Market, Waterloo Records, Ranch 616, Dirty Bill's, BookPeople and more.

### **Red River Cultural District**

From big-name acts to local icons, Red River Street rocks with the sounds of the Live Music Capital of the World®. Stroll from venue to venue to tune into a diverse showcase of sounds. Dance the night away at Empire Control Room, dive into the local scene at the Sidewinder, see your favorite touring band at Mohawk or party it up at Cheer Up Charlies.

### **Rainey Street Historic District**

Rainey Street has a laid-back vibe and is home to a row of converted bungalows that provide an only-in-Austin live music and bar experience. Roam the district to find local craft beers at Craft Pride, top shelf cocktails at Half Step, award-winning cuisine at Emmer & Rye, artisan sausages at Banger's and food trucks of every flavor.

### **Warehouse District**

The industrial Warehouse District rests in the heart of downtown Austin. Sip on craft cocktails at upscale bars such as Peché and Garage, dance the night away on Rainbow Row at Oilcan Harry's or Rain, and relax with some local music at Cedar Street Courtyard or Speakeasy.

### **2nd Street District**

Keep things local at some of Austin's newest retail shops and boutiques in the 2nd Street District. Upscale coffee-houses, wine bars and restaurants rest between favorites including Violet Crown Cinema, Eliza Page and the first brick-and-mortar ModCloth.

### **South Austin**

South Austin is a fresh taste of old Waterloo. A mix of quaint and contemporary houses, long-running vintage shops and eateries by some of the city's top up-and-comers populate this lively nook of town. Visit expansive Zilker Park, stop by the Long Center or ZACH Theatre for a performance or explore everything from coffee shops to art galleries on South First Street.

### **East Austin**

Head to East Austin to experience one of the fastest-growing and most alternative areas in town. Roam East Sixth Street for quirky bars and graffiti-style murals, taste some of the biggest flavors in town on East Cesar Chavez and don't miss Six Square, the city's African American Cultural District, for a tour of the city's most historic cultural attractions.

### **Central Austin**

Just ten minutes north of downtown, near the sprawling University of Texas at Austin campus, Central Austin is quickly becoming home to some of Austin's best local eateries and shops. Cafes and vintage thrift stores rest comfortably between quaint neighborhood homes and bars along the North Loop and Burnet Roads.