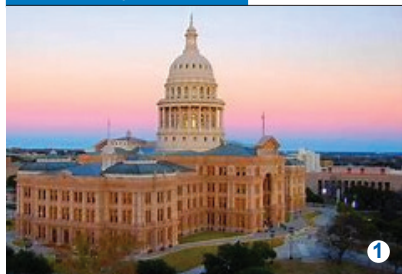




by VERONICA MEEWES

CENTERS OF GRAVITY



1 Texas State Capitol This Renaissance Revival-style capitol building offers free public tours — or go on your own to the whispering gallery and its beautiful rotunda.

2 South Congress Just down Congress Avenue from the Capitol, visitors flock to this entertainment district for its independent shops and old school Austin vibes.

3 East Austin Home to plenty of bars and restaurants plus a thriving arts scene (and the annual East Austin Studio Tour), this neighborhood is due east of I-35.

4 Ladybird Lake The stretch of the Colorado River running right through the city draws locals and visitors to its surface to kayak, canoe and stand-up paddle board both day and night.

5 Congress Avenue bats You can't visit Austin without experiencing the 1.5-million Mexican free-tailed bats that take flight from underneath the Congress Avenue bridge at sunset from mid-March until November. The majestic swarm is a sight to behold.

6 Spring-fed pools Find sweet relief from the often-brutal heat of summer at Barton Springs and Deep Eddy, two spring-fed public pools that are also important community gathering places.



With sunny skies shining on the better part of the year and nightly live music found all across town, it's no wonder Austin has become a destination for revelers of all sorts. The quirky capital of Texas has also become a hub for technology and innovation without losing site of its hippie roots. Spliced by the majestic Colorado River and surrounded by miles of trails and limestone bluffs, central Austin is an urban explorer's dream — and the city was recently *declared one of the most sustainable in the U.S.*

MAKE YOURSELF AT HOME



Fairmont Austin This 37-story luxury hotel joined Austin's skyline in March of 2018, becoming the city's second-tallest building, and the first hotel to connect to the Austin Convention Center. Local art can be found throughout the space, starting with a galloping horse sculpture in the lobby and a massive oak tree lit up with twinkling lights. The Fairmont Austin features five different restaurant and bar concepts, ranging from the poolside, cocktail-centric Rules & Regs to the elegant, live-fire-focused fine dining at Garrison.



TEXAS TIPPLES

Microbreweries With close to 300 breweries, Austin has more craft beer than any other city in Texas. Many are located centrally on the eastside (Lazarus Brewing Co., Batch Brewery, Hi Sign Brewing) or north of 183 (Celis Brewery, Adelbert's Brewery, Hopsquad), but Jester King's outdoor space and spontaneously fermented farmhouse ales are well worth the drive to the southwestern edge of town.



Speakeasies Must-experience Midnight Cowboy, in a former brothel, has some of the best cocktails in town. Here Nor There is a sexy subterranean lounge located in a historic downtown building. Milonga Room is hidden beneath the eastside Buenos Aires Cafe, and enter Small Victory through the parking lot of the Stephen F. Austin Hotel.

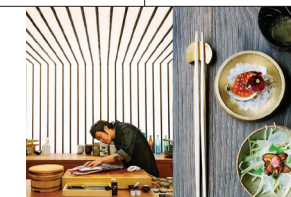
The Austin Winery If you don't have time to make it out to any of the state's notable Hill Country wineries, be sure to pay a visit to The Austin Winery, the first facility located within city limits.

LONE STAR PROVISIONS



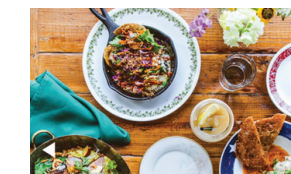
Fareground Austin's very first food hall, located in the heart of downtown, is also a sleek work-play space with plenty of options for both indoor and outdoor lounging.

Texas Barbecue There's a reason meatheads flock from all over the globe to eat their way through Austin's barbecue scene. See what all the hype is about by visiting Franklin Barbecue, La Barbecue, Micklethwait Craft Meats and Leroy and Lewis Barbecue.



Otoko If you're celebrating a special occasion, make a booking at Otoko, where chef Yoshi Otai serves an artfully conceived omakase menu inside the South Congress Hotel.

Odd Duck What started as a humble farm-to-trailer concept in Austin is now a family of three restaurants (Odd Duck, Sour Duck and Barley Swine) that embody the city's "keep Austin weird" mentality with dishes made using local, sustainable ingredients.



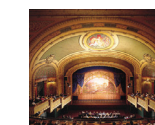
KEEP IT CULTURED



Ladybird Johnson Wildflower Center Discover native Texan plant species as you wander the beautiful gardens and grounds named after the former First Lady, an avid naturalist.



The Blanton Museum of Art Located on the University of Texas campus, the Blanton is one of the biggest university art museums in the U.S. Be sure to visit Ellsworth Kelly's stained-glass-bejeweled structure named "Austin".



The Paramount Theatre Opened as a vaudeville house in 1915, the Paramount Theatre now hosts film festivals, live music performances, and important movie premieres.

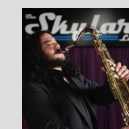
BOOT SCOOTIN' BOOGIE



Live Music Capital of the World Austin earned this superlative for a reason; it is indeed possible to catch live music any day of the week. Big venues like ACL Live and Stubb's host major acts, as does the more intimate Mohawk, while the divier stages at Barracuda and Hotel Vegas feature indie, punk and garage rock shows.



Classic clubs Austin was once filled with juke joints where blues musicians shared their soulful music with a small crowd. To feel like you've stepped back in time, check out Skylark Lounge, Continental Club and C-Boy's Heart and Soul.



Honkytonks Learn how to two-step at one of the city's honkytonks, like the iconic Broken Spoke, which features a spacious dance floor and a room full of country western tchotchkes, or prepare for an inevitably fun night at The White Horse, an eastside hipster honkytonk.



Music festivals Austin City Limits, the PBS live music performance series, put Austin on the music map and people have been flocking to the city for ACL Festival since 2002. And each year South by Southwest brings innovators from across the globe for cutting edge music, film and technology programming.