

The New York Times

36 Hours: Austin, Tex.



Matt Rainwaters for The New York Times

James Chauncy at East Side Showroom, a bistro with live music. [More Photos »](#)

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THE laid-back capital of [Texas](#) has long been a haven for countercultural types, with tattoo artists, bohemian coeds and techies [biking](#) side by side along the glistening shores of Lady [Bird](#) Lake. But these days, [Austin](#) is more chic than shabby. New upscale restaurants — many that rely on local, organic ingredients — are popping up all over the city, along with bars featuring artisanal concoctions. Meanwhile, the [South by Southwest](#) (SXSW) [music](#), film and interactive festival (this year March 9 to 18) continues to draw an affluent crowd of technology geeks and celebrities. [On April 27 to 29, Food and Wine Magazine will court foodies with its first culinary fête in Texas.](#) Then, in November, the Circuit of the Americas Formula One track will open, drawing race car fans from around the world. But the old Austin isn't hard to find: You can still hear the twang of a country guitar in many doorways and chug of Lone Star at just about any bar.

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