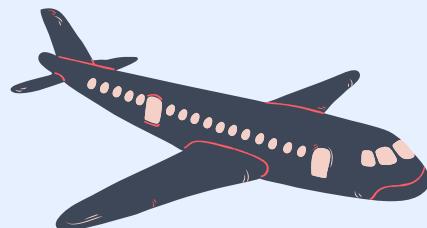


AUSTIN

Aqui comes rico.



AUTHOR'S NOTE

My sister Alina moved to Austin in 2021 to begin her MBA at UT (hook 'em). Naturally, instead of studying, her cohort busied themselves by partying on Lake Travis yachts and meticulously ranking barbecue spots. She has also hosted me on four separate occasions, during which I was treated to the best meals, hikes, swims, and drag shows Texas has to offer. The indoor-outdoor charm of this city is second to none – every casual hangout is a visual treat.

Driving through Austin, it's difficult to find a McDonalds. The fast food is Torchy's, the grocery is H-E-B, the movie theater is Alamo, and the bars are converted bungalows. Austin may think itself 'weird,' but I think every other city should get *weirder* and emulate Austin's stubborn refusal of homogeneity. If you're visiting for a few days, scheduling your SXSW itinerary, or planning a bachelorette weekend, this little ole' guide can help steer your way.

If you're moving to Austin, see Alina's complete guide [here](#).



DAY 1: TEXAS CLASSICS

Upon arrival, head over to your accommodations to drop off your things. Assuming you didn't rent a car, you're probably staying around [East 6th Street](#) or [South Lamar](#). First things first, you need coffee, breakfast tacos, and a pair of cowboy boots, stat. You'll find all of this on [South Congress](#). Stop by [Jo's Coffee](#) and grab an iced turbo, meander around [Allen Boots](#), and peruse the cute boutiques.

For dinner, you deserve to treat yourself after a long day of travel. Take a shower, suit up, and go to your made-in-advance reservation at [Suerte](#), a nationally-acclaimed Mexican joint run by Chef Fermin Núñez (he's famous 'round these parts). For the afterparty, head to [Cheer Up Charlie's](#), a vibrant indoor-outdoor gay bar with epic (and slightly traumatizing) drag shows and affordable drinks.



*Alternatives: [Canje](#) for dinner, [Barbarella](#) for partying



DAY 2: BARBECUE (AND HIKES, TO WORK IT OFF)

After a hearty breakfast, it's time to do a quick hike ([Barton Creek Greenbelt](#), [Lady Bird Lake Trail](#), or [Mt. Bonnell](#)). Or, you can hang around Zilker Park, home to botanical gardens, bike trails, and Austin City Limits.

Then, it's time for the main event: barbecue. There's [Terry Black's](#), an iconic barbecue joint that slaps, no cap. However, the real heavy-hitter is [la Barbecue](#), which features the most spectacular shells & cheese, spicy garlic pickles, and oh my, the beans. It's all about the sides here.

Around sunset, get your butt over to Lady Bird Lake and rent a boat (paddle, cruise, whatever). As long as you're there by sunset to see the giant bat exodus from the bridge. It's an insane sight, especially from the water.

I would be remiss if I did not mention these sick breakfast spots in East Austin: [Bird Bird Biscuit](#) and [Santa Barbacha](#). Do what the locals do, amirite.

DAY 3: ESCAPE (AND EMBRACE) THE HEAT

This morning, grab some breakfast before heading over to [Barton Springs Pool](#), a naturally-fed three-acre pool that averages 68-70 degrees year-round. Enjoy some lazy outdoor time. After that, you'll be hungry, so I graciously offer the following outdoor eateries/drinkeries that I love from the bottom of my heart:

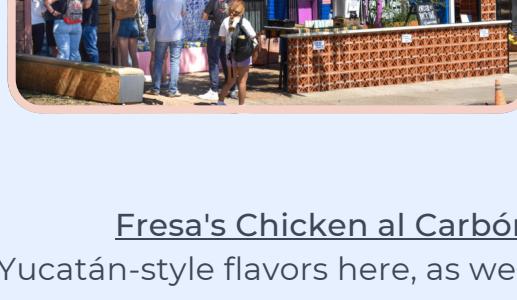
Cosmic Coffee & Beer Garden

A great spot for specialty coffee, local beers, craft cocktails & live music, plus food trucks featuring wings, tacos, and barbecue. Highly recommend Tommy Want Wingy's buffalo sauce.



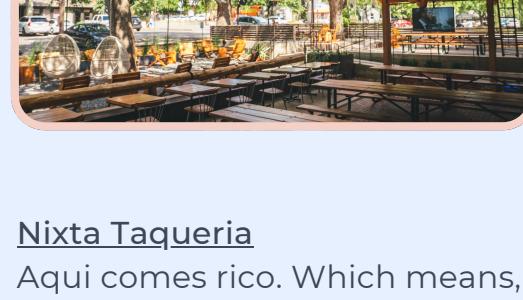
Loro

Loro, an Asian fusion smokehouse and bar, was one of the first meals I bought for my whole family after becoming employed! Corn fritters and coconut rice are top-tier.



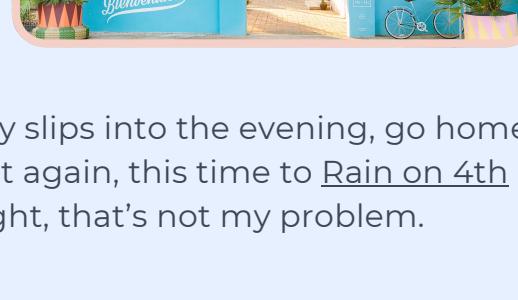
Patrizi's at the Vortex

The Vortex Theater is a non-profit org that houses The Butterfly Bar and Patrizi's, a delicious pasta food truck in the theater's garden. Can't go wrong with the carbonara.



Nixta Taqueria

Aqui comes rico. Which means, **here, you eat good**. It's also a nod to their James Beard award-winning chef, Edgar Rico. Their duck carnitas taco is a must.



Fresa's Chicken al Carbón

Amazing Yucatán-style flavors here, as well as the best queso I've ever had. Definitely get one of the wood-grilled meals.

After having a boozy afternoon that inevitably slips into the evening, go home and power down. Or, if you're not a lil' bitch, go out again, this time to [Rain on 4th](#) in the Warehouse District. If you're straight, that's not my problem.

DAY 4: MAKE IT RAIN

You need a last hurrah before your flight home. Enter, [Rainey Street](#). Three years ago, when my sister first moved to Austin, Rainey Street was a hidden gem – a street of bungalow homes that had been converted into bars, each one uniquely themed and adorned.

These days, large shadows loom over Rainey Street as residential highrises spring up on Rainey to house Austin's booming tech population. It's the most glaring, disastrous example of gentrification I have ever seen. Apparently, Rainey has always been in the crossfire of gentrification, and this may just be the latest wave of change. Upsetting nonetheless.

I still think it's well worth a trip to Rainey. Enjoy a Manmosa at [Banger's](#) (with an entire bottle of champagne in it), bop to the best live music on [Icenhauer's](#) patio (shout out PDA Band), and gorge on mini donuts from [Little Lucy's](#). But really, go to whichever bar that best fits your vibe in the moment.

BONUS: BACHELORETTE

I had the fortune of planning my sister's bachelorette weekend in March 2022, and it was a cactus-themed hit. Here's what we did: started with charcuterie + champagne in her apartment before moving to the [private sunset boat](#) on Lady Bird Lake and dinner at [Edge Rooftop Bar](#).

We then kicked it to this gorgeous, affordable [Airbnb](#) in wine country. The following morning, we boarded our [party bus](#) that took us to three different wine-tasting sessions in a perfect loop: [Duchman Family Winery](#), [Driftwood Estates Winery](#), and [Desert Door Distillery](#).

After getting sufficiently fucked up, we stopped by world-renowned [Salt Lick BBQ](#) and picked up the goods. We then spent the rest of the night in the Airbnb's hot tub, delirious.

The next morning, we drove back to Austin, got tattoos at [True Blue Tattoo](#) and partied on Rainey. All of this only cost around \$450 per person!