

# The Top 10 Places to See Live Music in Austin

**Austin, 1 Day** 

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## **Guide Description**



AUTHOR NOTE: There's a reason Austin has been labeled the Live Music Capital of the World and the hundreds of live music venues has a lot to do with it. On any given night, musicians of all kinds take stages across the city--from coffee shops and cafes to nightclubs and concert halls. Steeped in blues, rock and country, Austin also welcomes punk, ska, rockabilly, electronica, hip-hop, acoustic--virtually any genre of music can be found. For a true taste of both local talent and touring acts, check out one of this town's Top 10 music venues.



## Day 1 - Austin

T	Antone's Classic blues & rock venue
Y	Stubb's Barbecue Relaxed outdoor barbeque
Y	Parish Room (The) A variety of popular music
Y	Broken Spoke Vintage honky-tonk, circa 1964
Y	Emo's Cutting-edge, alternative, cheap
Y	Elephant Room Underground bar with smooth jazz
Y	Continental Club Country, rock, and a distinctively Austin crowd
Y	Cactus Cafe Songwriter paradise
T	Zona Rosa (La) Live music from local and touring acts

**QUICK NOTE** 

#### contact:

tel: +512 320 8424 http://www.antones.net/

#### location:

213 West Fifth Street Austin TX 78701

#### hours:

Daily 8:30p-2a



#### Antone's

DESCRIPTION: Although Willie Nelson and crossover country-and-western bands such as the Austin Lounge Lizards have been known to turn up at Clifford Antone's place, the club owner's name has always been synonymous with the blues. Stevie Ray Vaughan used to be a regular, and when such major blues artists as Buddy Guy, Etta James, or Edgar Winter venture down this way, you can be sure they'll either be playing Antone's or stopping by for a surprise set. Clifford Antone died recently, and the response by the blues community was a large outpouring of performances to honor the man. Look for the club to continue the same trajectory set out by its former owner. © Frommer's



wcities

#### contact:

tel: 512 480 8341 http://stubbsaustin.com/

#### location:

801 Red River Street Austin TX 78701

#### hours:

Tu-W 11a-10p, Th-Sa 11a-11p, Su 11a-9p



## Stubb's Barbecue

DESCRIPTION: Within the rough limestone walls of a renovated historic building you'll find great barbecue and country Texas fare and three friendly bars -- plus terrific music, ranging from singer-songwriter solos to hip-hop open mics to all-out country jams. Out back, the Waller Amphitheater hosts some of the bigger acts that come to Austin. © Frommer's



wcities

#### contact:

tel: 512 479 0474 fax: 512 479 8646 http://www.theparishroom.co

## location:

m

214 East 6th Street Austin TX 78701

#### hours:

Tu-Su 7p-1a

## 3

## Parish Room (The)

DESCRIPTION: This is an intimate venue for those with sophisticated taste. From jazz to house, from acid rock to rap, from shoe-gaze to dub, the place runs the musical gamut. Touring acts such as Smog, Guided By Voices, Autechre and Black Rebel Motorcycle Club have graced the stage. Texas artists Sub Oslo, Lift To Experience, Explosions in the Sky, the Swells and more have also played here. © wcities.com



wcities

#### contact:

tel: 512-442-6189 http://www.brokenspokeaustin tx.com/

#### location:

3201 South Lamar Boulevard Austin TX 78704



## **Broken Spoke**

DESCRIPTION: The most reliable indicator of a high-quality dance hall in Texas is the presence of old people, particularly old people who skillfully dance and spin and seem unaware of anyone other than their partner. On some nights, the Broken Spoke is bursting with lively seniors who dance circles around the novices. Most of the time, there's a mix of young and old,



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#### hours:

Tu-Th 9a-12a, F-Sa 9a-2a

cowboys and hipsters, locals and tourists. The massive wooden dance floor splits the room in two, with seating areas on either side. The bands, whether they're young or old, play mostly traditional country music. Because that's the kind of music owner James White likes, he's been doing things this way since 1964, and he has no intention of changing. Another fan of traditional country music, a certain red-headed stranger, has been known to hang out here when he's not touring. © NileGuide

#### contact:

tel: +1 512 477 3667 http://www.emosaustin.com

#### location:

603 Red River Street Austin TX 78701

#### hours:

Call for details



### Emo's

DESCRIPTION: This live venue provides music on the cutting-edge. Its main entrance is just off of 6th Street, attracting alternative and mainstream patrons looking for local and national acts. You are always greeted with a cold beer at the bar. The front room holds the pool tables, pinball machines and a small indoor stage, while out back the larger bands play on a partially covered outdoor stage. In between the stages lies a courtyard with picnic tables for lounging. © wcities.com



wcities

#### contact:

tel: 512-473-2279 http://www.elephantroom.com

#### location:

315 Congress Avenue Austin TX 78701

#### hours:

M-F 4p-2a; Sa-Su 8p-2a



## **Elephant Room**

DESCRIPTION: This basement bar is unpretentious yet unmistakably cool, offering live jazz seven nights a week. And there's usually no cover on weekdays. Michael Mordecai's Monday night Jazz Jam is a must-see; you never know who might show up. The Jazz Pharaohs play every Wednesday night; band member Stanley Smith can make the clarinet sound like a soulful saxophone. Touring acts from all over the U.S. also play regularly. Jazz superstar Wynton Marsalis has performed at the Elephant Room several times over the years. © NileGuide



citysearch

#### contact:

tel: 512-441-2444 fax: 512-443-5478

http://www.continentalclub.co

m/Austin.html

#### location:

1315 South Congress Avenue Austin TX 78704

#### hours:

Call for details



### Continental Club

**DESCRIPTION:** The Continental Club started out as a swanky dinner club in the 1950s, and it went through a series of ups and downs before emerging as South Congress' premier live music venue. When Steve Wertheimer bought the bar in 1987, the area around the bar was run-down and frequented by prostitutes. As the club developed a loyal following, with acts ranging from roots rock to country, other businesses, including antique shops, restaurants and clothing boutiques, popped up around it. The front area, where the band plays, is long and narrow, with only a smattering of tables and chairs; arrive early if you want a seat. Sitting at the small bar will give you an excellent sampling of Austin culture; bikers, bakers and lawyers drink together and bond over music. In a business where bartenders come and go daily, a few of the Continental Club's friendly, if a little edgy, servers have worked here for 20 years. Some of the popular acts include James McMurtry (son



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of novelist Larry McMurtry), Jon Dee Graham and Toni Price, whose Tuesday night happy hour show draws legions of slightly obsessive fans. © NileGuide

#### contact:

tel: 512 475 6515

http://www.utexas.edu/student/txunion/ae/cactus/index.php

#### location:

24th Street & Guadalupe in Texas Union Austin TX 78705

#### hours:

M-Tu 11a-12a, W-Th 11a-1a, F 11a-2a, Sa 8:30a-2a



### **Cactus Cafe**

DESCRIPTION: A small, dark cavern with great acoustics and a fully stocked bar, UT's Cactus Cafe is home-away-from-home for a lot of singer-songwriters. There's a crowd of regulars who come here to see the likes of solo artists such as Alison Krauss and Suzanne Vega, along with well-known acoustic combos. The adjacent Texas Union Ballroom (tel. 512/475-6645) draws larger crowds with such big names as the Dixie Chicks. © Frommer's



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#### contact:

tel: 512 263 4146 fax: 512 263 4194

http://www.lazonarosa.com/

#### location:

612 West 4th Street Austin TX 78701

#### hours:

Tu-Sa 5p-2a



## Zona Rosa (La)

DESCRIPTION: This is one of the most popular music venues in the city. With every genre from western to alternative rock played under the arched, open-air roof, you are bound to find a show to suit your particular music taste. Some acts to grace this stage includes Flaming Lips, Primal Scream, Guided By Voices, Mogwai, Bardo Pond and Stereolab. The space is large enough to hold a good-sized crowd and often fills to capacity for touring shows. The venue is located close to downtown, anchoring the new Warehouse entertainment District. © wcities.com



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## **Austin Snapshot**

#### **Local Info**

With its perfect proportions of adventurous spirit and laid-back atmosphere, Austin wins visitors over time and time again. Nestled in the southern portion of the Lone Star State, the capital city doubles as the hub of serious government affairs and the supreme getaway for outdoor recreation and cultural escape.

#### Downtown

The heart of Austin lays downtown, among the busy streets and inner workings of the state government. The Texas State Capitol--built of pink granite and native limestone and standing 14 feet taller than the nation's Capitol in Washington, D.C.--anchors the area's main thoroughfare, Congress Avenue. The street that once paved the way for horses and carriages now houses some of Austin's tallest buildings, including the futuristic-looking Frost Bank Tower--the first high-rise to be constructed in the U.S. following the September 11, 2001 attacks.

The downtown area juggles work and play with a handful of areas organized especially for after-hours fun. Comparable to New Orleans' famous Bourbon Street, Austin's East Sixth Street is often the first place rowdy tourists visit for a memorable night out. Within an eight-block stretch, more than 100 shot bars, live music venues, dance clubs, restaurants and souvenir shops line the street, which is cordoned off from vehicular traffic most nights of the week.

The post-collegiate crowd heads a few blocks west to one of three nearby areas: the Warehouse District, West Sixth Street or the Second Street District. Each neighborhood offers an array of trendy eateries alongside classy pubs, bars and clubs and is only a pedicab ride away from one another.

As the self-described"Live Music Capital of the World," Austin touts a constant schedule of bands and musicians throughout the city, though most performances are concentrated in the downtown area. The Red River District, located one block west of IH-35 between Sixth and 10th Streets, attracts a mixture of punk, heavy metal and indie rock acts at venues like Emo's, Mohawk and Red-Eyed Fly, while Stubb's regularly schedules

big-time touring acts of all genres at the barbecue joint's outdoor amphitheater.

Other popular downtown music venues include Antone's, Austin Music Hall, La Zona Rosa, the Elephant Room and Cedar Street Courtyard, among others. All of these locations and hundreds of other venues host musicians, film premieres and interactive parties during the South by Southwest Music, Film and Interactive Conference held each March.

#### University of Texas/ The Drag

Part of Austin's draw is the highly ranked and centrally located University of Texas at Austin. The 40-acre campus sits right in the midst of the city's action, with more than 50,000 students enrolled each semester. The grounds also holds some of Austin's finest museums, including the Lyndon Baines Johnson Library and Museum, the Harry Ransom Humanities Research Center and the Jack S. Blanton Museum of Art. The campus' western border--Guadalupe Street--is known as the Drag, a mile-long section of coffee shops, cafes and Longhorn-centric stores like the University Co-Op. The open-air Renaissance Market houses local artisans peddling their wares under shady tents, while the nearby Toy Joy stocks the largest array of random baubles fit for all ages.

#### South Austin

Lady Bird Lake, formerly known as Town Lake, intersects the city just south of downtown, creating the unofficial divide between Central and South Austin. The Lady Bird Lake Hike and Bike Trail keeps Austinites and travelers alike in shape with nearly 10 miles of landscaped trails amid the hustle and bustle of downtown. Zilker Park, a 400-acre park along the southern shores of the lake, provides wide open space for kite-flying, Frisbee and other outdoor activities, including dancing at the Austin City Limits Music Festival each October. Kayak and canoe rentals let people enjoy a view of the skyline from the water, while Barton Springs Pool, a natural spring-fed swimming hole, offers up a cool and refreshing respite from the infamous Texas heat. A handful of quirky restaurants--namely Chuy's, Shady Grove, Romeo's, Austin Java Co. and Uncle Billy's Brew& Que--line Barton Springs Road, offering quick and easy meal options for

those enjoying the beautiful weather yearround.

Along with university students, musicians and outdoorsy-types, Austin also hosts the largest urban colony of Mexican freetail bats in North America, which take up residence under the Ann Richards Congress Avenue Bridge from March to November. Their nightly flight for food occurs around dusk and attracts hundreds of visitors eager to see the throngs of insect-eating bats take to the skies.

Just a couple blocks south of the bat haven sits the hip and trendy South Congress Avenue, referred to locally as SoCo. This strip, only a mile or so away from St. Edward's University, houses some of the city's most unique shops(Uncommon Objects, Parts& Labour, Lucy in Disguise) alongside hip hotels(Hotel San Jose, Austin Motel, Hotel Saint Cecilia) and locally owned eateries(Zen Japanese Food Fast, Home Slice Pizza, Guero's Taco Bar). On the first Thursday of each month, area businesses keep late hours while hundreds mingle along the street, shopping and enjoying live music during the free event appropriately dubbed First Thursday. Another SoCo highlight: Airstream trailersturned-food vendors, and not just of the sno-cone variety. From cupcakes to chicken cones(you have to try one to understand), the block of food trailers draws guite a crowd every night of the week. © NileGuide

#### **Restaurants Insights**

Spread out over roughly 300 square miles, Austin offers a limitless supply of dining options, ranging from festival-style handheld bites to indulgent, multi-course meals that last hours. Tex-Mex restaurants like Chuy's, Maudie's and Matt's El Rancho and barbecue joints such as Stubb's, Ironworks and Salt Lick might have put Austin on the map for their tried-and-true ways, but some of the city's most daring spots are the most popular. Uchi, a hip sushi restaurant along South Lamar, is the mastermind of nationally recognized chef Tyson Cole, serving innovative dishes to a capacity crowd. Flip Happy Crepes, an Airstream trailer-turned-creperie, has wooed patrons with their sweet and savory French delicacies, including celebrity chef Bobby Flay who challenged the owners



## Austin Snapshot continued

on a Season 3 episode of his Food TV competition, "Throwdown with Bobby Flay." (Spoiler: Flip Happy Crepes won!) Another local favorite, Baby Greens, brings healthy to the drive-thru with fresh salads and house-made dressings. With options like these, it can be difficult to make a decision on an empty stomach.

© NileGuide

## **Nightlife Insights**

Austin provides something for everyone when it comes to nighttime entertainment. The title of "Live Music Capital of the World" is well deserved, as live music bellows from not just bars and clubs, but restaurants, coffee shops, museums and more on a nightly basis. For some of the city's best up-and-coming acts, check out Antone's, the Mohawk or Hole in the Wall, while bigname touring groups stop by Stubb's, La Zona Rosa or Austin Music Hall. Couples(or courageous singles) can get their two-steppin' on with the help of house bands at Donn's Depot and Broken Spoke.

The bar scene in the capital city is varied-the collegiate crowd heads to the infamous East Sixth Street, where shot bars and dance clubs share the street with souvenir shops and tourist-driven restaurants. The Warehouse District and West Sixth Street areas attract more sophisticated clientele. Hotspots like the Belmont, Union Park and the Ranch couple breezy rooftop patios with swanky cocktails and skyline views. Casual spots like Opal Divine's, the Key Bar and Ginger Man serve pints and more to a laid-back crowd.

### Things to Do Insights

Part of Austin's appeal stems from the array of outdoor activities the area offers. From hiking and biking to window-shopping and bat-watching, there's something for every level of physical activity. Tourist hot spots are scattered throughout the city--Mount Bonnell offers a short 100-step trek to a sweeping view overlooking Lake Austin; Zilker Park provides hundreds of acres of wide open space for sports and the like right in the city center. Bicyclists take to the Hike and Bike Trail around Lady Bird Lake, while others opt for the Veloway, a paved closed course for bikes and rollerbladers only.

Cultural opportunities also abound in Austin, with a combination of museums, music and special events. The Jack S. Blanton Museum of Art--the latest addition to the University of Texas campus--spans centuries and genres of painting and sculpture, while the Bob Bullock Texas State History Museum encompasses the pride of the Lone Star State with its larger-than-life exhibits and state-of-the-art technology that makes taking a step back in time fun for all ages. Smaller museums and galleries make way for the local artisans--Wally Workman Gallery exhibits oils, watercolors and other media from area artists, as does Women& Their Work, Yard Dog, Flatbed Press and a handful of other galleries. © NileGuide

# **Travel Tips Getting There**

#### Air

Austin-Bergstrom International Airport(ABIA)+1 512 530 ABIAhttp:// www.abia.org/

ABIA is located eight miles from Austin and is serviced by the following airlines:

American Airline(+1 800 433 7300/http://www.aa.com) America West(+1 800 235 9292/http://www.americawest.com) British Airways(+1 800 247 9297/http://www.british-airways.com) Continental(+1 800 525 0280/http://www.continental.com) Delta(+1 800 221 1212/http://www.delta.com) Frontier Airlines(+1 1 800 432 1359/http://www.frontierairlines.com) Southwest(+1 800 435 9792/http://www.southwest.com) Northwest(+1 800 225 2525/http://www.nwa.com) United(+1 800 241 6522/http://www.ual.com)

Car Rental: Alamo( +1 800 327 9633/ http://www.alamo.com) Avis( +1 800 831 2847/http://www.avis.com) Budget( +1 800 527 0700/http://www.budget.com) Dollar( +1 800 4000/http://www.dollar.com) Enterprise( +1 800 325 8007/http:// www.enterprise.com) Hertz( +1 800 654 3131/http://www.hertz.com National( +1 800227 7368/http://www.nationalcar.com) Thrifty( +1 800 367 2277/http:// www.thrifty.com)

Shuttles: SuperShuttle( +1 800 BLUE VAN(258 3826)/+1 512 258 3826) Carey

Austin( +1 512 929 5009/http://www.carey-austin.com)

Train Amtrak services Austin daily from nationwide locations( +1 800 872 7245/ http://www.amtrak.com).

Bus Greyhound( +1 800 231 2222;+1 512 458 4463/http://www.greyhound.com) accesses Austin daily.

**Highway** The I-35, I-10, and the US-290 will take you into Austin from any direction.

#### **Getting Around**

#### **Train**

Take the historic Austin Steam
Train( +1 512 477 8468/http://
www.austinsteamtrain.org) through Austin.
Open year-round on weekends only.

#### Bus

The Capitol Metro Bus( +1 512 474 1200/ http://www.capmetro.org) serves the airport as well as all areas of the city.

#### **Taxi**

Ace Taxi( +1 888 582 8646) American Yellow( +1 452 9999;+1 800 874 0278) Austin Cab( +1 478 2222;+1 800 TAXICAB) Roy's Taxi Inc.( +1 482 0175;+1 800 845 ROYS)

#### **Traffic Information**

To find out city traffic information go to:http://www.traffic.com/

If traveling overseas, take the safety precaution of registering your trip athttps://travelregistration.state.gov and for helpful, practical advice about traveling technicalities and safety standards check out:http://travel.state.gov/

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#### **Fun Facts**

#### **Austin**

**State:** Texas

Country: United States Austin by the Numbers:

Population: 710,000 Elevation: 597 feet

Average Annual Rainfall: 32 inches Average Annual Snowfall: 9 inches



## Austin Snapshot continued

Average January Temperature: 50 degrees

F

Average July Temperature: 85 degrees F

#### **Quick Facts:**

Major Industries: Oil, Electronics, Computers, Automobile Manufacturing, Aerospace Industries, Agriculture, Telecommunications, Higher Education

Ethnic Mix: Caucasian(65%), African American(10%), of some Latino descent(30%), Asian(4%)

Electricity: 110 volts, 60Hz, standard two

pin plugs

Time Zone: GMT- 6 Country Dialing Code: 1 Area Code: 361& 512

#### **Did You Know?**

Austin is not only the state capital of Texas, it is also home to the University of Texas,

Austin. On further note, Austin is the site of the President Lyndon B. Johnson Library and Center.

#### **Orientation:**

Austin is located deep in the heart of Texas, about 160 miles west of Houston, 80 miles northeast of San Antonio, and 200 miles south of Dallas.

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