

In a February 2017 survey, *U.S. News and World Report* named Austin, Texas the #1 best place to live in the United States. It's not hard to see why—downtown Austin is a relatively compact area with an abundance of museums, libraries, shops, outdoor activities, restaurants, and bars to enjoy. To help you get acquainted with this year's Annual Meeting host city, we've created an insider's travel guide to point out some of the many ways to enjoy this great city in July.



## AUSTIN EATS



Before delving into AALL's exceptional educational programming, it's important to start the day on a full stomach. Stop by Franklin Barbecue, located at 900 E. 11th Street, and come early and be prepared to do a little waiting as people line up for this tasty food. In fact, the only person to date who was allowed to cut in line was former President Obama when he visited a few years back. If barbecue is not your fare, there are plenty of other choices. You can't go far without running into an interesting restaurant or food truck, all

offering a wide variety of cuisines. Use the restaurant guide on [AALL's Annual Meeting webpage](#) or check in at the hospitality booth at the conference for specific suggestions on great places to eat.

## THE GREAT OUTDOORS

Despite sampling all the great food around town, locals keep in shape by taking advantage of the great outdoor activities that are available. Lady Bird Lake (really the Colorado River) meanders through the center of town, separating North Austin from South Austin. It is home to a wonderful 10 mile trail that circles around the lake and is the perfect location for walking,



running, and biking. The downtown area is also home to B-cycle, a bike-sharing program. With more than 50 stations, it's easy to hop on a bike to travel around the city.

If you prefer your exercise of the cool and refreshing nature, Barton Springs Pool is a short distance from downtown. Measuring three acres in size, the pool is fed from underground springs and sports an average temperature of 68 to 70 degrees. This is a great place to relax and keep cool on a hot summer afternoon.

Now that you have the low-down on eating and outdoor exercise, we suggest a relaxing walking tour to take in the urban architecture.

## LIVE MUSIC & ENTERTAINMENT

From the conference hotels, it's a short walk to Austin's legendary 6th street—the people-watching alone is worth the trip. There are more than 75 bars, restaurants, clubs and boutiques located on 6th street alone. One tradition that Austin particularly enjoys is Esther's Follies. For more than 40 years, this comedy troupe has been entertaining visitors with political fun and satire. Austin is best known as the "Live Music Capital of the



World," and 6th street is just one of a variety of downtown venues to enjoy. Additional hot spots include the Warehouse District, Rainey Street, and Red River Cultural District. Stop by the hospitality booth for specific ideas on music venues and locations.

## FOR THE HISTORY BUFFS



Just a few blocks north of the convention center, the Texas Capitol anchors an area that will warm the heart of history aficionados. Taller than the U.S. Capitol, the Texas Capitol was dedicated in 1888. A massive renovation project was completed in 1995, including a large underground extension. To get the lay of the land, start your history tour at the Capitol Visitor Center located at the edge of the Capitol grounds. There you can view short films and exhibits about Texas and the Capitol, visit a gift shop, and pick

up more information about things to do and see in Austin. You will also find the Texas

State Library and Archives as well as the State Law Library adjacent to the Capitol grounds, with the Legislative Reference Library located on the second floor of the Capitol. The Governor's Mansion is a block away (note: tours of the mansion require advance booking). To round out your historical pursuit, visit the Bob Bullock Texas History Museum, just four blocks from the Capitol. It is home to an incredible variety of exhibits and features an IMAX theater as well as an awesome gift shop. Just look for the big granite star and you will know you are at the right spot!

## SHOPPING

Venturing fifteen blocks to the west of the convention center, you will run into a terrific group of specialty stores, anchored by the Whole Foods mother ship (yes, it started in Austin in 1980). This is a terrific place to browse and eat—from a wonderful sushi bar to barbecue, in addition to lots of ethnic food around the store (check out the great dim sum on Sunday mornings). Across the street from Whole Foods,



you will find a couple of other homegrown favorites. BookPeople is a wonderful independent bookstore. Go for the great book selection and stay to check out the great gift ideas as well as the BookPeople Café and its selection of coffee drinks, sodas, sandwiches, and desserts. Waterloo Records (one of BuzzFeed's best record stores in the world) is an Austin institution and the knowledgeable staff and expansive collection will have you adding to your personal holdings. Wildflower Organics is a lovely calming treat for the senses offering furniture, accessories, gifts, and a full line of natural bedding products. At this point in your exploration, you will probably be ready for another tasty treat, so top off your day with a visit to Amy's Ice Cream, another homegrown Austin tradition.

## TEXAS TRADITIONS

It's time to cross Lady Bird Lake and venture into South Austin. Take a short walk across the Congress Avenue Bridge and pay a visit to SoCo (South Congress Avenue). This is the area that probably does the most to "keep Austin weird" and has become not only an iconic street, but a Texas landmark. You will get the flavor of the place in perusing the names of some of its outrageously fun shops including: Lucy in Disguise, Yard Dog, and Uncommon Objects. It is also home to great restaurants and to the legendary Continental Club, the premier spot for live music in Austin since 1957.



The University of Texas has long surpassed its original 40-acre footprint. It anchors the North side of downtown Austin and is well worth the trip in terms of the variety of things you can experience. The Blanton Museum of Art has a permanent collection of almost 18,000 works and is recognized for its “European paintings, prints and drawings, and modern and contemporary American and Latin American art.” The Harry Ransom Center is a premier humanities research library and museum. The collection covers literature, photography, film, art, and the performing arts, including such items as Vivian Leigh’s dress in *Gone with the Wind* to an original Gutenberg Bible to the Woodward and Bernstein Watergate papers. The Lyndon Baines Johnson Library and Museum are in the northeast quadrant of campus and right across from the Law School/Law Library complex.

## WHAT TO READ

For all the literary fans, Austin has been the setting of a number of interesting books. Following are a few of our favorites to pick up prior to starting your adventure in Austin:

- *How Perfect is That* by Sarah Bird - This book takes on Austin high society in a hilarious comedy of manners. It takes place in central Austin and the UT area, and paints a vivid, accurate picture of this locale.
- *Alamo House* By Sarah Bird - This is delightful fun, but also offers a poignant look at sorority life at the University of Texas in the 1980s.
- *Monday, Monday* by Elizabeth Crook - For a change of pace from Sarah Bird, try this fictionalized account of Austin’s most infamous moment—the deadly shooting from the UT tower in 1966. The story follows three students (based on real people), who were pulled together during the shooting and depicts how they reunited decades later to confront the event that changed their lives forever.
- *Midnight Assassin* by Skip Hollandsworth - Staying with the theme of murder, this is a riveting tale of America’s first serial killer. In 1885, Austin was terrorized by someone crisscrossing the city killing women. The author provides a vivid depiction of life in Austin in the late 1880s and shows how woefully inadequate crime forensics were at that time. These crimes were never solved, and one theory that still exists is that the perpetrator could have been the infamous Jack the Ripper, who terrorized London three years later.
- *Keep Austin Weird: A Guide to the Odd Side of Town* by Red Wassenich - This book does a great job of showing the characters, places, and happenings that make Austin a special, unique place.

We hope this brief tour of our wonderful city has given you a head start on setting up an itinerary for your trip. Please refer to the [Austin Survival Guide](#) on the [AALL Annual Meeting webpage](#) for more details. Also, stop by the hospitality booth for additional information and suggestions. We can't wait for you to experience Austin and hope you will have a wonderful visit.