



WHAT'S NEW IN AUSTIN?

Whether it's a friendly vibe, a creative culture, or an active community, there's something special about Austin, the Live Music Capital of the World®. As the city's popularity as a travel destination grows, so does the demand for entertainment, [new attractions and distinct accommodations](#). Please access our online [Press Resources](#) for more information on specific industries and interests. For information about upcoming hotels projects and meetings and conventions, please reference the [Hotel Updates](#) page and the [Austin Convention Calendar](#) page. Here's what's new or upcoming in the city:

TOP OF THE CHARTS

Austin continues to gain favorability as one of the nation's top travel destinations. But don't take our word for it – check out what leading publications and research firms are saying:

[J.D. Power](#) conducted their first destination experience satisfaction study in 2016 and Austin is the recipient of the [J.D. Power and Associates 2016 Destination Experience Satisfaction Award](#). Austin ranked #1 in the Southwest U.S. and #2 overall in the U.S. (Oct. 2016)

- Austin ranked #1 on U.S. News's list of "[100 Best Places to Live in the USA](#)" (February 2017)
- Travelocity ranks Austin on their list of "[Ten U.S. Cities Foreign Travelers Should Not Miss!](#)" (Dec. 2016)
- Austin places on Conde Nast Travelers – 2016 Readers' Choice Awards for "[The Best Big Cities in the U.S.](#)" (Oct. 2016)
- Austin earns perfect score of 100 in Human Rights Campaign's [2016 Municipal Equality Index](#) (Oct. 2016)
- Austin has been awarded best destination at the [News UK Travel Awards](#), including the Sunday Times Magazine editor's award. (Sept. 2016)
- Bicycling Magazine names Austin #7 on list of "[The 50 Best Bike Cities of 2016](#)" (Sept. 2016)
- Conde Nast Traveler names Austin #5 friendliest on list of "[The 2016 Friendliest and Unfriendliest Cities in the U.S.](#)" (Aug. 2016)
- Travel + Leisure places Austin-Bergstrom International Airport #4 on list of "[The Best Domestic Airports](#)" (July 2016)
- Austin named #4, "2016 LGBT Travelers Rising Stars Destinations" by gogobot awards. (April 2016)
- Austin ranks in the top 20 large cities with the most vibrant art community in America, according to [SMU's National Center for Arts Research](#). (March 2016)
- The Austin Convention Center was named one of the Best Convention Centers by Smart Meetings (2016)
- [Travel + Leisure](#)'s named Austin No. 12 out of 20 for the best on the continent as part of the magazine's annual World's Best survey (February 2016)

To check a list of recollected mentions of Austin as a top travel destination please visit our [Rankings](#) page.

FLIGHTS

New Non-Stop Service:

- [Volaris](#) from Guadalajara, Mexico (August, 2016)
- [Aeromexico](#) from Mexico City, Mexico (November, 2016)
- [Allegiant Air](#) from Pittsburgh, PA (December, 2016)
- [Allegiant Air](#) from St. Petersburg/Clearwater, FL (February, 2017)
- [Allegiant Air](#) from Cleveland, Ohio (CLE) (February, 2017)
- [Delta](#) from Raleigh-Durham (RDU) (March, 2017)
- [Condor Airlines](#) from Frankfurt, Germany (May – October, 2017)
- [Allegiant Air](#) from Indianapolis International Airport (IND) (May, 2017)
- [Allegiant Air](#) from Destin/ Ft. Walton Beach, Fla. (VPS) (May, 2017)

SPORTS

[Dell Match Play](#)

March 22 – 26, 2017

Golf fans will want to check out the [PGA World Golf Championships](#), coming to Austin again in 2017. The Austin Country Club will host and Dell will sponsor this major sporting event through 2019.

ATTRACTIONS

[NLand Surf Park](#)

Opened October 7th, 2016

NLand Surf Park is the only inland surfing destination in North America for surfers and wave sport enthusiasts from novices to world-class competitors. The lagoon features 11 surfing areas with four levels. The waves create one, four and perfectly tubing six foot waves every 60 seconds with a lengthy surfing experience of 35 seconds per wave. Created in conjunction with the Spanish engineering firm [Wavegarden](#), widely regarded as a leader in wave technology, both companies are dedicated to environmental stewardship in lockstep with ocean surfing. Even in the most challenging drought conditions, the lagoon is self-sustaining with rainwater.

[Kahahari Resorts and Conventions](#)

2020 - Round Rock, Texas

A family-friendly African-themed water park and convention center is slated to open 2020 in Round Rock, Texas, slightly north of Austin. This resort will feature an indoor and outdoor water park, 1,000 guest rooms, spa, fitness centers, restaurants and more.

[Austin Distilleries & Breweries](#)

Whether you like your martinis with vodka or gin, or prefer a gourmet Bloody Mary Mix, Austin has you covered. The distillery scene is bursting in Central Texas with [Genius Gin](#), [White Hat Premium Texas Rum](#), [Tequila 512](#), and [Revolution Bloody Mary](#). Each distillery has their own unique story that explains why they were born in Austin, TX.

DINING/ENTERTAINMENT

Austin is host to a wide range of premier dining in the United States:

- James Beard Award finalists for 2016 include:
 - [Launderette](#) nominated for Best New Restaurant
 - Bryce Gilmore of [Odd Duck](#) and [Barley Swine](#) for Best Chef Southwest
 - Grae Nonas of [Olamaie's](#) for Rising Star of the Year

- Aaron Franklin was awarded a James Beard Award in the category of Best Chef: Southwest in May 2015.
- James Beard Award semifinalists for 2015 include: Aaron Franklin of [Franklin Barbecue](#), David Bull of [Congress](#), and Bryce Gilmore of [Barley Swine](#) for Best Chef Southwest.
- [Uchi](#) places on Conde Nast Traveler’s list of the [World’s 207 best restaurants](#).
- [Lauderette](#), [Juniper](#), [Vox Table](#) and [Emmer & Rye](#) are listed on *Texas Monthly’s* ten best new restaurants. (2016)
- [Franklin Barbecue](#) tops the charts at #8 on *Yelp’s* “Top 100 Places to Eat in US for 2016”. [Uchi](#) and [Uchiko](#) place #59 and 97.
- Kevin Fink of [Emmer & Rye](#) named one of the Best New Chefs of 2016 by Food & Wine magazine. (April 2016)
- According to Time Out magazine, two of Austin’s favorite eateries have been named the best in the country.
 - [Ramen Tatsu-ya](#) – No. 1 Ramen spot (March 2016)
 - [Uchi](#) – No. 1 Sushi restaurant in the country (October 2015)

MUSIC

[Sound on Sound Fest](#)

November 10 – 12, 2017

Margin Walker Presents reveals plans for the first Sound on Sound fest to benefit HAAM and feature major names such as, Beach House, Explosions in the Sky and Phantogram. You can decide to camp at this festival and your experience will be completed with comedy club, late night live sets, outdoor dance club and more.

[Top of the Charts](#)

Three Austin music venues make “The 100 Greatest American Music Venues” list: Stubbs (6th), The Mohawk (24th) and Moody Theater (42nd). (2016)

[3TEN - Austin City Limits Live](#)

The TV show “Austin City Limits” has been one of the highlights of the Austin music scene since 1976. With great success, five years ago the production was moved into “The Moody Theater” at the W Hotel in Downtown Austin. A new smaller venue has been announced creating large buzz around [Austin’s Block 21](#). The space will be called 3TEN ACL Live and will host over 200 concerts per year.

[Antone’s](#)

Since first opening on Sixth Street in 1975, his club has hosted the likes of B.B. King, Buddy Guy, Eric Clapton, and Stevie Ray Vaughn. Now the legendary club has moved to the corner of Fifth and Lavaca streets, but it remains the home of the blues in Austin offering space for 650 or less.

[Grizzly Hall](#)

New to the east side this music and events venue is introduced by a team well known in Austin. Jason Sabala of Grizzly Discovery, Kevin Crutchfield, Kurt Fasse and Dave Curren come together to run this new 7,000 square foot venue. Taxidermy and timber line the walls, perfect if you’re looking for a log cabin feel. Complete with a state of the art sound system, full bar, pool tables and TVs, Grizzly Hall will bring a fresh new atmosphere to this building situated on East Riverside.

UNIQUE DINING EXPERIENCES

- [Austin Alfresco](#)
 - Happening annually at Carson Creek Ranch, this culinary overnight escape is limited to 300 attendees, connecting the outdoor beauty of central Texas with the comforts and convenience of home. This glamping experience will feature more than 28 local Austin chefs, workshops and talents.

- [Fareground](#)
 - Austin's first food hall will be located downtown in Austin in the One Congress Plaza Lobby. The Fareground will be open for lunch, dinner, happy hour and weekends, and will include a variety of local food and beverage vendors, and is projected to open in 2017.
- [Blue Cat Cafe](#)
 - This café brings adoptable cats to a diner /coffeeshop / pet supply store setting. Order a latte or try one of the many "cat dogs" (hot dogs with a variety of toppings), samiches or Tex-Mex dishes, while considering which fluffy friend you might adopt.

DEVELOPMENTS

[Moody Amphitheater](#)

This new amphitheater and lawn will be located at Waterloo Park, will accommodate 5,000 people and is made possible from a \$15 million grant provided by the Moody Foundation. The Waller Creek Conservancy spearheaded this effort to assist their current mission to remake downtown's Waller Creek. Project is said to be complete by 2019.

[Rock Rose at Domain NorthSide](#)

Rock Rose is Austin's new rapidly developing entertainment district in the Domain NorthSide portion of the Domain area. Rock Rose features the convenience of some of Austin's favorite bars, restaurants, event spaces, coffee shops, yoga studios and spa all on one street with easy access and plentiful parking.

[Waller Creek Development](#)

Running from Waterloo Park at 15th Street to Lady Bird Lake, Waller Creek has the potential to become Austin's vital green artery. This \$500 million dollar project envisions a community emulating that of San Antonio's Riverwalk, complete with retail shops, restaurants and residences. The mixed-use development would change Austin's skyline by adding three new towers, including a high-rise with condominiums and hotel rooms that could become Austin's tallest building. Further information on the proposed hotel projects, such as Fairmont Austin and Hotel Van Zandt, can be found on the [hotel updates](#) page along with the other emerging hotel projects in the downtown area. The Sutton Co., the real estate investment and development company leading the charge, hopes to build this project on three acres near East Cesar Chavez and Red River Streets, along the banks of Waller Creek.

[Seaholm Power Plant Development](#)

Seaholm is a future urban oasis on the Southwestern edge of downtown Austin. Built in the 1950s, the long-dormant power plant offers a unique opportunity to preserve a key piece of Austin's past and unite it with the region's vibrant future. Thanks to a unique partnership with the City of Austin, Seaholm will combine cultural and community needs in an exceptional setting for residents and visitors to enjoy for generations to come. This \$130 million re-development includes a mix of 143,151 sq ft of office space, 280 high-rise condos, 48,363 sq ft of retail shops and restaurants, and meeting space; all surrounding a dramatic and accessible plaza. The new site, located on Cesar Chavez Street just east of Lamar Boulevard opened June 2015. The site will include the preserved power plant building and two new buildings to serve as apartment, office and retail spaces. In 2012, Trader Joe's specialty grocery store signed on to be the site's first retail location.

[The Dell Medical School at The University of Texas at Austin](#)

The new project will improve health in Travis County and throughout the country by training new physicians, providing treatment in a new teaching hospital and conducting research to expand knowledge of medicine and medical technology. The medical school was created in unprecedented partnership with local taxpayers, who in 2012 voted to support a vision for better health in Austin and Travis County. The school, which is at the heart of a burgeoning medical district in downtown Austin, will welcome its first class of 50 students in the June of 2016. As part of the campus of one of the nation's leading research universities, it will pursue excellence in transdisciplinary and interprofessional

education. As part of a visionary partnership with Seton Healthcare Family, a regional health care system, and Central Health, a public health care district, a new teaching hospital will be constructed adjacent to the new Dell Medical School.

St. Elmo's Market

To be located on South Congress Avenue, the St. Elmo project will house a 40,000 square foot public market similar in setup to the D.C. Union Market, Denver's The Source and Atlanta's Krog Street. Food and drink vendors will be locally oriented, and the space will house 25 to 30 businesses, including retail. Other development space will include office space, indoor and outdoor communal seating with rooftop spots, brewery, beer garden and more. This 11.5 acre space has a projected opening date of 2018.

The Yard

From creative offices and breweries to maker and artist studios, The Yard will be a community built on confluence. The design is aimed to inspire connection, collaboration and enrichment in South Austin and is being developed by founding members of Penn Field, 04, Canopy and Vuka. The Yard's collaborative mix of workspaces will span 135,000 square feet on 8.2 acres off South Congress, and will be located directly adjacent to the new St. Elmo's Market development on St. Elmo Road.