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Austin food guide

Photo by LoneStarMikeHack Your CityEach Friday we ask you for your best city tips: driving tips, restaurant recs, things to do, and all other advice for visitors and locals. Sometimes the weekly topic is a specific city; other times it is an aspect of all cities, so that everyone can participate. Austin is a small stretch of the liberal coast in central Texas, a southwestern version of Portland or San Francisco, with a fantastic music scene. The population has doubled since 1990 and is currently at one million; the tourist population is also growing, thanks to Austin's many festivals and conventions. Every Monday on Hack Your City, we ask readers for your best tips on a city: driving tips, restaurant recs, things to do, and all other advice for visitors and locals. Then on Thursday, we present the best comments. We work our way through the U.S. and around the world. Residents and frequent visitors, we would like to hear your tips about the city. Downtown tips are welcome, but what's good in the rest of the city? What's just a short drive away? How's the light rail going these days? What is the most overrated Tex-Mex place, and where do you go instead? Is there good sushi in Austin, or should we stick to the more obvious kitchens? What are some good bars to beat the crowds? Where's the best coffee? What's the trick to having a good time in the city? What are the best places to just take a walk? Is there a neighborhood to avoid? A bar that dilutes the drink? Is that banana quiet? And where's all the weird stuff you keep? G/O Media may be a commission we would like your opinion on life in the city as well. How did you hit the SxSW again? What are the emerging areas? What is easy to get or hard to handle in Austin? Are there weird local laws or customs? I'll start with a familiar tip: Between March and November, go to the Congress Ave Bridge around sunset and join the crowd watching the bats hiding under the bridge all day. Pay attention. Even when a million bats flow into the air, they can be hard to spot - they are eerily silent, and in late dusk they are invisible as rain. Page 2Photoof Cosmic TimetravelerHack Your CityEach Friday we ask you for your best city tips: driving tips, restaurant recs, things to do and all the other advice for visitors and locals. Sometimes the weekly topic is a specific city; other times it is an aspect of all cities, so that everyone can participate. We asked for your Austin tips and we got 182 of them, recommending Tex-Mex, local attractions, good and bad neighborhoods, and ways the light rail can go screw itself. Here are a few themes that came up. Springs Pool (Photo by Outdoor Craziness)Swimmin' holes are a real thing in downtown Texas, enjoy it when you are, says jumbo76. The most popular is Barton Springs Pool, a public audience pool filled by natural springs. If you have a four-legged friend, says Burning With Possums, sneak up the north side past the pool wall and watch Dog Springs where happy puppies frolic in the water all year round. Barton Springs gets busy in the summer. There are many more places to swim, says Men's Tights Activist: The pools and swimming holes are Austin's X-factor, especially to combat the summer heat. I love Gus Fruh like a swimming hole. Neighborhood pools are free, city pools are cheap; both are scattered throughout the city. G/O Media might get a commission The best swimming hole is Hamilton Pool, says jumbo76. It's a way out of town, but worth visiting. There are two Blue Hole Parks with swimming spots, in opposite directions from Austin. Island Feathers loves those in Georgetown; John loves the one in Wimberley.Drinking and Night LifePhoto by Whisler'sDowntown Austin, especially 6th St. is famously packed with raw bars with shot specials, live music, and a mechanical bull. But here are some less obvious alternatives. Eleven readers mention the brewery Naster King, which specializes in acid. Very beautiful, says Katie Keurig. I won't forget the sunset there even though I have a lot of sour beer. Hypermark has a few beer pickings: Austin has a thriving craft beer scene. There are some great IPAs, but where Austin is starting to shine is in our sour. Places like Blue Owl and Adelbert's are doing a really great job with sour beers (Jester King is great too, but it's 45 minutes out of town). Live Oak brewery at the airport is also fantastic, but they focus on more German style beers. So does Drew F: Austin Beerworks is my personal favorite, but Hops and Grain is also great and I hear good things about the new Southern Heights. I haven't been to the new Live Oak tasting room, but their beers are very good. Last Stand and Jester King are about 1/4 mile apart near Dripping Springs, and if you drop it there by Solara for some vino or Treaty Oak for one of their spirits (all on Fitzhugh Road). And so does bulletproofcharm: My personal favorites are Live Oak (the Hefeweizen is a staple part of a healthy diet), Zilber (Coffee Milk Stout is stupidly good) and Austin Beerworks (Pearl Snap is one of the most refreshing beers you'll have). You could go to different breweries for a few days. Hypermark also suggests mezcal bars: Mezcal bars are kind of a thing, and we have two that I really like. Whisler's is neat. It's above the actual bar, and the tasting room is small, dimly lit, and somewhat creepy. For some reason it's the perfect vibe or Mezcal. I hesitate to even the other because I don't want it to be so crowded I can't get in, but Techo Mezcaleria is my absolute favorite. It's above Mi Madre's. Madre, everything from the atmosphere to the selection of Mezcal is on point. Don't settle for the standard bar scene on 6th St, says DrNerdLove. Dirty 6th is overrated when you're over 22. There are good bars on 7th (including a secret one near The Driskill) and on East 6th that are not that bad. Rock Rose up at the Domain is up and coming, but isn't there yet "quite" there yet. Rainey Street is a slightly more mature bar scene, says JuanDonJAWN. Peter agrees: The Domain's Rock Rose is really well built. There's a bar that's not quite on Rock Rose. It has a nautical theme and has ropes and blue lighting on the outside. Peter forgets the name, so hunting now is a fun adventure for you. Dewmelon recommends The Good Life Bar Bar. Hut's (or get your burger with a milkshake), and Mort Subite, a sweet Belgian bar at The Congress. Baudboi loves Small Victory -So hipster, so very Austin-and dive bar karaoke at Ego's. Endlessshrimp knows a good time: Chicken shit bingo on Sundays at Ginny's Little Longhorn is the highlight of Austin's cultural scene, and it's not even close. If you're lucky, Dale Will play Watson, which is about a million times better than any crappy hipster band you see anywhere else. And weluckyfew201 has two honky-tonk picks: The legend is Broken Spoke, maybe a 10-minute Uber from downtown. From the outside it looks like one of those faux-old-chipped bars, but once you get in you realize it's actually an authentic chipped old bar. But it's a great time: great live music (mostly from people who've been playing there for 40 years) and the dance floor is always full. The hipper, younger version of this is White Horse, on the east side. I'm not saying 'hipper' in a derogatory way, the bands are still on point and the crowd is still there quite a lot to dance and have fun with. It's actually Broken Spoke: The Next Generation. CoffeePhoto by Cuvée CoffeeE need. You get good coffee all over town, if you go local. Austin Java, Ruta Maya, Cuvée Coffee are all excellent choices. —DrNerdLoveSummermoon. Oh god the eponymous Summermoon coffee is so good. —baudboiFor coffee hit up Houndstooth, Epoch, Cuvée, or Once Over. There is a small food truck outside of Once Over that sells great breakfast tacos too. —JohnMozart's coffee shop. —vtboyarcBreakfast TacosTaco Deli's breakfast tacos (Photo by Krista)Tacos are the ideal breakfast food: Not too much bread, lots of protein and a flavorful way to eat vegetables for the afternoon. I absolutely love Taco Deli. Go before 11am because their menu changes around lunchtime. Otto and Jess Special are two must tries. If you go to the North Lamar location, go to Houndstooth for a cup of coffee! -PeterTorchy's Tacos for great queso and fun taco (my fav breakfast tacos in Austin)-vtboyarcEl Tacorrido (best breakfast tacos in town IMO, and get the Equinox)-bassball1985 Tacodeli and Torchy's are good for what they are, but are what most native Texans would call white people Mexican food. So my recommendation would be Ñoños Tacos on Powell Lane. There is an abuelita in the kitchen hand making the tortillas. It is actually standing room only with a few outside seating. -STX2ATX Pretty much every road shack will have decent breakfast tacos. Get some or some migas. I still think it's weird putting potatoes in tortillas, but they're delicious. —katie_keysBBQFranklin Barbecue (photo by T.Tseng)Together with Tex-Mex, barbecue is Austin's main cuisine. Several readers recommend Franklin Barbecue, but others call it overrated, thanks to the legendary wait time. The thing about barbecue is that it's a game of small margins, says Marcelo: While Franklin is world class, you get 90% of the quality of Franklin's chest in a number of places, from Terry Black's to Ruby's to La Barbecue to Micklethwait. So the question with Franklin is whether you're willing to take all that effort and time for that extra 10%, which is what franklin takes into world-class territory. Franklin Barbecue is overrated unless you skip the line like Obama, says Ainomiaka. Go to Cooper's downtown. It's great.' For BBQ, Valentina's is in the far south of Austin but well worth it. Short lines (sometimes a 20 minute wait max) and reasonably priced. It's actually a Tex-Mex place, so they have a bit of both. Great breakfast tacos too. —ChalupaBatmanTry Micklethwait, Black's, Terry Black's, Cooper's, Stiles & Switch, Brown's or Freedmen's. -Drew FLA Barbecue is my go-to if I want quality BBQ. —afjaymz1Rudy's Country Store & BBQ. It's pretty awesome to go to a gas station that also happens to serve some pretty good BBQ. Also, people will fight against me, but I absolutely love the egg, potato and cheese breakfast tacos there with the standard Louisiana Hot Sauce they have on the tables. —Cooper's bulletproofcharm isn't the best barbecue, but it's better than it should be given its captive audience, and it has many moments of the Armadillo World Headquarters. -dewmelonTake a quick ride to Lockhart and eat at Smitty's. Smitty's is what Franklin is modeled after. You might as well get the real thing. And if Smitty's doesn't do it for you, try Kreuz's, also in Lockhart. —jumbo76The new man in Pflugerville, Brotherton's Black Iron Barbecue, has a boob ban mil —RIMPFFor a good (if not the best) bbq I always thought it was worth the trip to Driftwood for Salt Lick. They make my favourite coleslaw ever - it's made with sesame oil instead of bbq sauce. -katie_keysCounty Line BBQ in the west of Austin hills is a drive, but the building and riverfront area is great. —CroceliSushiA dish at Uchiko. That's beef, right? (Photo by Emily Goodstein) Several people answered our desperate call for an Austin sushi pick.If you absolutely have sushi, there is Uchiko right next to Taco Deli and Houndstooth on North Lamar. Great experience, and kind of pricey. Go during their social hours for some great choices in entrees for about half the cost of their normal menu. —PeterMusashino was my go-to for the longest time. —SurlyJuchi-in Austin was the top rated sushi restaurant in America a few years ago. Do yourself a favor and make a reservation and try it out. It's really phenomenal food. -World's Okayest CommenterHypermark has some other varied restaurant recs: Urban farms are a pretty big thing in Austin if you're into local, sustainable food, so try checking out places like Springdale, HausBar, or Rain Lilly farms. The Mueller Farmer's Market is also quite large. Eden East is an al fresco restaurant on Springdale farm, and if the weather is nice, it's a beautiful location and the food is always great (most vegetables come from Springdale itself). Social PicksWe also asked for tips on our Facebook and Twitter accounts. Some highlights from Twitter: And on Facebook:Overrated? Juan in a million. Where are we going? Amaya's Taco Village. -James NicholsMichi Ramen is great, but can be packed with a long wait at peak times, and no reservations. Bangers on Rainey is great food and beer, but don't be in a hurry because service is a little slower. Kelela PlaceGo to Habaneros. Real Austin Tex-mex. -Corey BoundsLuke's Inside Out at Gibson's, great food combined with great drinks. —Kathryn BiberPinbalz (Photo by Mike Prosser)Finally, we always love a pinball rec, and World's Okayest Commenter came through: There's a pretty cute BYOB pinball (and normal arcade) place called Pinbalz down the street from Trudy's North Star. Just say;

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