

GOURMET

FESTIVAL FOOD

Check out *AW*'s restaurant recommendations for dining during festival season.

BY MACY MOORE

Of course, your main focus will be on the panels, screenings, readings and music, but sometimes you need a break and a good meal to complement your festival experience. *Austin Woman* set out to sort through the many choices available to festivalgoers and townies alike, and make recommendations for gourmet dining within walking distance of each festival.

Juliet's Salsicce pizze

ACL AND BARTON SPRINGS RESTAURANTS

Drawing more than 75,000 people each day, the Austin City Limits Music Festival is possibly the most anticipated event in Austin. With so many music lovers searching for food to get them through the festival, these restaurants surrounding Zilker Park will be cooking up a storm.

Juliet Ristorante

Fresh scents, cool colors and Italian vibes fill the air of Juliet Ristorante. Opened within the last year, the classy restaurant with a modern twist has won us over. The bar is a featured highlight, as it pops out upon entering the restaurant. The quaint outdoor bar is great for hanging out and getting a drink while waiting to be seated. The bar staff suggests trying the traditional Italian drink, negroni. The Negroni Tiki has tropical elements and is even served in a painted glass in the shape of a hula girl, garnished with pineapple leaves and cherries. Don't miss out on tasting the olive oils, cheeses and salumi (Italian cold cuts). As for entrees, there are unordinary selections like Texas quail, seared scallops and tuna conserva torchio. Of course, there are classic entrees, like pizza, pasta and ravioli. And even the traditional selections have twists and surprising elements. But whatever you do, don't skip out on dessert. From the customary Italian delicacies, such as tiramisu and gelato, to the non-traditional selections, like the olive oil cake and chocolate ganache tart, you can't go wrong. No matter the menu selection at Juliet, your taste buds will be unquestionably pleased.

Gemma Love

This Jamaican cuisine spot's Barton Springs-area location is nestled in the South Austin Social Food Park on Jessie Street. If you're feeling confident to try food of a different culture or are a Jamaican-food junkie, head to this fun-loving food truck.

Chuy's Mexican Grill

Stop at the original Chuy's for the famous salsa and spicy Mexican food. At happy hour, all drinks are offered for \$1 off of the normal price, and you can snack at the complimentary queso bar, served exclusively during happy hour.

Shady Grove

Aside from the homey, rustic and modern vibe here, Shady Grove has a great menu for ACL goers. Perfect for dining on American food, the eatery offers the classics, such as cheese fries, baby back ribs and various burgers, as well as selections from the Tex-Mex section of the menu. Try the Hippie Sandwich for a healthy option that screams Austin.

Baby Acapulco's

Another classic Mexican-food eatery in Austin, Baby A's always satisfies spicy cravings. The famous purple 'rita is \$1 off during happy hour, along with the other margarita selections.

Austin Java

Going to ACL requires early mornings and long days. Caffeine is absolutely necessary. Austin Java has you covered, with lattes, iced coffees and lunch.

JuiceLand

With all the walking you'll be doing, you'll need some refreshing, nutritious drinks. JuiceLand's small establishment, located across the street from Shady Grove, will be sure to fix you up with sweet drinks and light snacks.

P.Terry's

Sometimes, nothing sounds better than a juicy burger from beloved P.Terry's. Though it's a farther walk than some of the other restaurant choices, you can get in and out with a cheap, savory burger, complete with P.Terry's special sauce.



TEXAS TRIBUNE FESTIVAL

Oct. 16-18, 2015

This year's Texas Tribune Festival, where wonks, hopefuls and other influential figures will talk political issues affecting all Texans in a three-day event, will be again held at the University of Texas. Of course, it's easy to grab a quick bite between sessions at the familiar strip of Guadalupe we Austinites refer to as The Drag. But we invite you to try a few of our own recommendations (although some do happen to be on The Drag). Consider these digs and dine-in options before you attend the festival!

Arturo's Underground Cafe *314 W. 17th St.*

Stop by Arturo's Underground Cafe before your first TTF session of the day for an elaborate yet economical breakfast in an ambience so quintessentially Austin—only two blocks from the conference center. We recommend the Caribbean French toast, complete with a rich rum-based sauce, and a can't-go-wrong plate of migas.

Sushi Junai *1612 Lavaca St.*

If you're a sushi lover who'd rather not pay \$12 for a single roll and leave with too much room than there should be in your stomach, check out Sushi Junai. Prime time to stop in is before 3 p.m. for a \$19.95 set price for all-you-can-eat (albeit made-to-order) sushi. This price also includes appetizers, dessert and pretty much the whole menu except sashimi. The low price by no means compromises the quality; the dishes are equally as good as or better than traditional sushi places throughout town. So, when you get a hankering for sushi during a midday TTF session, walk a few blocks and check out Sushi Junai. We recommend the fish-filled, riceless Cucumber Passion Roll and the eel-topped, soft-shell-crab-filled Spider Roll.

Coco's Cafe *1910 Guadalupe St.*

Coco's Cafe is the area's No. 1 bubble tea go-to, and we recommend it for any TTF attendees craving a sweet tapioca pearl drink. There's a wide selection of bubble teas, and as far as food goes, the spot brags quite a few great Taiwanese dishes. We recommend the peppercorn chicken and the eel steak with rice.

Clay Pit *1601 Guadalupe St.*

If you find yourself in the mood for an Indian lunch buffet during a day at the fest or a sit-down dinner after your last session, head to Clay Pit, downtown's resident Indian restaurant. Be sure to order the popular jalapeno & cream cheese naan, and we recommend the tandoori chicken or tikka masala for an entree.

The Carillon *1900 University Ave.*

TTF's main venue is the AT&T Executive Education and Conference Center, which conveniently houses The Carillon, a cool, swanky option for Texas-American cuisine. The menu boasts a wide variety of innovative plates. We recommend the chicken-fried quail, prepared in a classic Southern style—dipped in buttermilk and fried—on a bed of sauteed greens and a to-die-for maple gravy sauce. Also a standout on the menu is the crispy pork belly. The fatty factor is impeccable. It proves to be a melt-in-your-mouth sensation of a dish. Where the chefs push their culinary creativity is with the red snapper crudo: raw red snapper paired in a fold with thin peach slices topped with grilled (think popped) corn, cilantro and a chipotle sauce. The flavor combination is eccentric but enticing. If you are looking for a quiet sit-down dinner far from the maddening crowd, this is a perfect choice. The Carillon also hosts a lunch buffet from 11:30 a.m. to 2 p.m., with offerings changing daily on weekdays.



The Carillon's Thai-cured hamachi

TEXAS BOOK FESTIVAL

Oct. 17 and 18

This year's Texas Book Festival will feature a record 300 authors. Texas literary geeks will converge on the Capitol and surrounding venues to celebrate literary lions and their newest tomes.

You never know who you might run into at your favorite bar or restaurant. Check out our recommendations for restaurants within walking distance of both festival gatherings.

JW Marriott

110 E. Second St.

Only a few blocks from each of the downtown festival venues are two must-try spots for attendees, both a part of the JW. Marriott. The two joints are newbies to Austin but are already receiving rave reviews.

Corner

Think gourmet street food. Three short rib tacos served on brown paper, not bedded in a disposable paper tray but, rather, on a white porcelain plate. The short rib in each of the tacos is adequately portioned, impeccably juicy and topped with crispy shallots and chimichurri sauce. The restaurant brags a number of menus and a wide variety on each. From the Southern-style cornbread appetizer to the slow-roasted pork-shoulder sandwich, each dish is a bite of Texas. Corner has a brunch menu, a lunch menu, a dinner menu, a taco-bar menu, a late night menu, a drink menu and, of course, a dessert menu. Depending on the time of day you come, your selection will vary to some extent. We recommend the previously described braised short rib tacos and each of the other two taco choices: the pork carnitas tacos and the crispy fish tacos.

Burger Bar

Rushing to hear your favorite author or grab the hottest film offering? Stop by Burger Bar, a sidewalk window walk-up also located at the JW. Marriott. The gourmet burgers are as affordable as they are appetizing—we're big fans of the Big Mouth Burger, a double-patty beef burger topped with cheddar cheese, blistered peppers, jalapeno jam, and bacon. Even the memory of the beautiful monstrosity is mouthwatering. Just as good is the classic cheeseburger. And every other burger offered. Also to die for are each of the three shakes on the menu: Oreo, strawberry shortcake, peanut butter pretzel. The convenience and delectability of Burger Bar makes it a top-choice for TBF and AFF attendees.

AUSTIN FILM FESTIVAL

Oct. 29-Nov. 5

Four days of panels and eight days of film screenings, late-night parties and star-studded gatherings centered on Congress Avenue emanating from the Driskill Hotel, the Stephen F. Austin and the Paramount means that Hollywood comes to town for their favorite blowout.

Quattro Gatti

908 Congress Ave.

Look no further than Quattro Gatti for a night of Italian cuisine, only a block from the Capitol. The spot is also a lunch favorite. The Montanara pizza is an impressive san-tomato sauce dish with mozzarella, prosciutto di parma, and wild arugula. Another must-try is the Ai Formaggi, a four-cheese pizza, also without tomato sauce, with ricotta, mozzarella, Parmigiano and stilton.

Planet Sub

906 Congress Ave.

For meat-lovers, vegetarians and gluten-free eaters alike, Planet Sub has a diverse menu of subs. Order takeout and eat your sandwich on your walk down the block during the TBF, or sit down for a casual bite to satisfy your sandwich cravings, no matter what they may be. A favorite is the Super Hero, complete with salami, pepperoni, spicy capicola, provolone, red onions, lettuce, banana peppers, oregano, oil and vinegar.

Texas Chili Parlor

1409 Lavaca St.

With a classic Texas ambiance (The wall is lined with Texas memorabilia.) and its 1976 opening, this hole-in-the-wall is a well-known spot to many. For first-time festivalgoers, Texas Chili Parlor is a must-try. It's less than a block from Congress and has a variety of renowned chili dishes and other Texas staples. The black bean chili and the chili cheeseburgers are local favorites.



Photo courtesy of JW Marriott Austin.