

Tex's Best

Savor something beyond Tex-Mex:

Bohanan's Prime Steaks and Seafood

The quest for the perfectly grilled steak has to include a stop at this opulent, independent steak house, which serves up a finely marbled Akaushi beef that even outshines Kobe and Wagyu. *bohanans.com*

Boudro's

This wellspring of Southwestern cuisine on the River Walk serves up blackened prime rib, braised short ribs, guacamole prepared tableside, and prickly-pear margaritas. Grab a table and watch the barges glide by. *boudros.com*

Josephine St. Café

The electric-blue gleam of neon in the windows forecasts steaks and "whisky." And this Texas steak house delivers, with grilled T-bones, plump burgers, crispy fried shrimp, and steamed trout. *josephinestcafe.com*

The Lodge Restaurant of Castle Hills

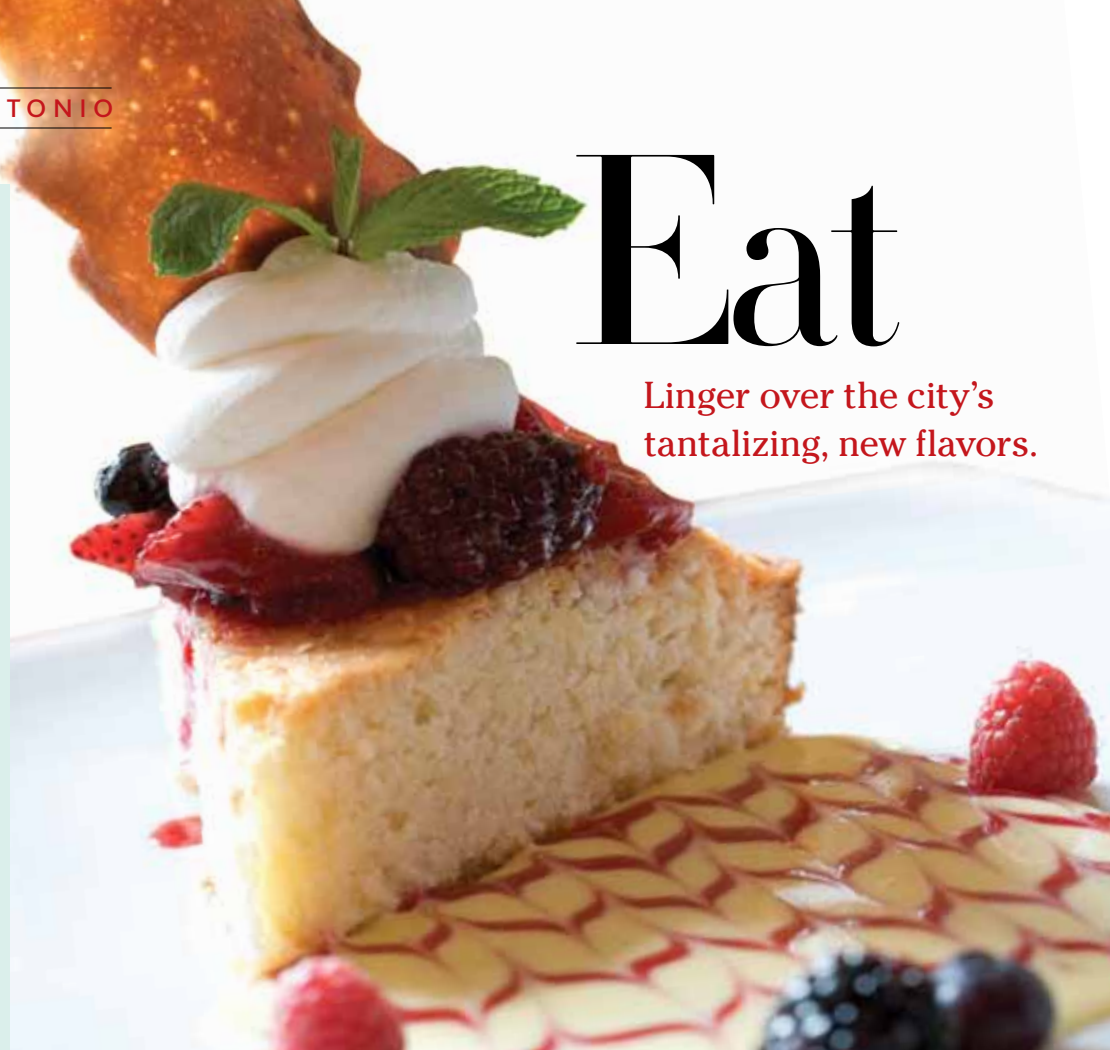
In 2001, chef Jason Dady turned this jewel of a private home into an upscale retreat. Signature dishes: grilled Texas bobwhite quail, cast iron-seared beef tenderloin, and dark chocolate cake. *thelodgerestaurant.com*

Texas Pride Barbecue

Located far on the city's east side, this barbecue joint is designed to look like an old gas station. Inside, you'll find smoked brisket and sausage, as well as a homey peach cobbler. For Texas 'cue and a little two-stepping, this is *the* place. *texaspridebbq.net*

Eat

Linger over the city's tantalizing, new flavors.



SAN ANTONIO HAS BUILT its culinary fame on Tex-Mex cuisine, from melt-in-your-mouth enchiladas to tart margaritas. But the dining scene extends beyond *taquerías* to a growing number of high-end restaurants.

Old World elegance meets Texas beauty at Fig Tree Restaurant (*figtreerestaurant.com*), situated in the La Villita historic district on a picturesque corner of the River Walk. Dine on Australian lobster tail or Beef Wellington, and enjoy Baked Alaska flambéed tableside while taking in the lush scenery.

At Biga on the Banks (*biga.com*), also on the River Walk, Bruce Auden, a five-time nominee for the James Beard Award for "Best Chef: Southwest," offers a lively take on Southwestern cuisine. Expect Asian and Southwestern influences in dishes such as the Hunan barbecue red grouper. And don't miss the homemade desserts like the lemon pound cake in berry compote (shown).

In the last few years, a new food center has arisen at the former Pearl Brewery (*pearlbrewery.com*). The third campus of the prestigious Culinary Institute of America

opened there in 2006 with the goals of showcasing Latin American cuisine and training the chefs of tomorrow in the basics. The renovation of the ornate 19th-century buildings is scheduled for completion by late summer or early fall.

Meanwhile, restaurants have begun to sprout up around the campus. Chef Andrew Weissman, also a multiple James Beard nominee, has opened two eateries there. The Sandbar Fish House and Market features fresh oysters flown in daily from the Atlantic and Pacific, as well as numerous seafood specials presented with a contemporary French accent. Il Sogno Osteria is an Italian food lover's dream, with its homemade pasta and pizzas from the wood-burning oven.

The Pearl complex backs up to the newly finished Museum Reach extension of the River Walk. Those staying downtown can take a barge ride to the complex, tour the site, and have a meal before sailing back. That's the way San Antonio likes to approach dining: Relax and enjoy the cornucopia of cuisine the city has to offer.

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