

rockabilly, country and swing.

Emo's 603 Red River Street www.emosaustin.com.

Indoor and outdoor stages and a getaway beer garden is an alternative haven for indie rock, punk, hardcore, metal and alt-country. It's heavy on tatts and face furniture with moshes breaking out frequently.

Lucky Lounge 209 W. 5th Street www.theluckylounge.com.

A classic warehouse district dive, the blue bar glows with '60s design and furnishings where you can sit at the bar, in lounge chairs or seats right at the lip of the stage. Music is deep local and never a band you wouldn't like.

The weekly street press is massive 30-year-old Austin Chronicle www.austinchronicle.com, which not only serves up all the live action but also has an excellent guide to the lively restaurant scene and an annual poll of both critics and the public as to their faves.

It would be hard to peg down my must chew spots, but for Mexican, there is none better than the upmarket **Fonda San Miguel** (2330 North Loop, www.fondasanmiguel.com) for interior Mex that has an unbeatable Sunday brunch buffet. On the run, you can't get better than **Torchy's Tacos** in seven locations www.torchystacos.com) for imaginative takes on Tex Mex. Mexican breakfast is best at **Juan In A Million** (2300 E. Cesar Chavez, www.juaninamillion.com) which serves heart attack specials like fried gorditas stuffed with eggs and chorizo sausage slathered with cheese sauce.

Also hardening arteries in Southern/Down Home cooking for over 78 years, **Threadgills** (301 W Riverside www.threadgills.com) features the Chicken Fried Steak, which is topped with a cream gravy in addition to its deep fat fry. But they pave a way to heaven with a Gospel Brunch every Sunday.

Barbecue is ubiquitous with the major powers being **Salt Lick**, **County Line**, **Iron Works**, **Green Mesquite** and **Rubys** but there is a BBQ Belt of great small town venues in a forty-mile ring around Austin that are home to the best in ribs, sausage, brisket, pork and even smoked snake.

Photo by Denise Chambers



CLOCKWISE, TOP LEFT: SOUTH BY SOUTHWEST; TACOS; NEON SIGN; AUSTIN DINER

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