

Austin Nextablisthments- Austin Food Blogger City Guide



When Austin's Springtime monthish-long festival rolls around, the true colors of locals and visitors alike come out. It's almost like people are coming to Austin to get schooled in film, art, music, and interactive marketing and technology. People on bikes with backpacks wearing flip flops and familiar and valuable badges around their necks circulate the city on haphazard, yet intentional missions. And everyone has their own public and online presence to promote, introduce, and expose to other SXSWers who have a completely different set of goals, interests, and event schedules in tow. What's one thing that is common among these festivalites? We're not only hungry for knowledge, music, and film. **We need tasty sustenance** to keep us going through long days of learning, screening, viewing, listening, and playing.



Last year I contributed to the SXSW 2010 Food Lover's Guide to Austin with a post about local favorites. This year, I am contributing again to this foodie resource for SXSWers, but with a **twist on local favorites**. I'm taking some liberties and making some predictions on **up-and-coming or recent eatery/drinkery additions** to Austin that I think are **here to stay** and have become or are **becoming** Austin favorites and "nextablisthments" that are **helping to characterize Austin**.

Note: The dining ?nextablisthments? listed below were selected because of their perceived "staying power", they may not be on everyone's beaten path, but they should be, they are representative of the city's funky/artistic culture, and are predicted to maintain their charm for years throughout the city's ever-changing landscape. The locations are spread around the city center to give you a leg up on a local's perspective designed to give you a break from the overwhelming SXSW happenings downtown and they are listed in no particular order.

Click for my list of Austin "Nextablisthments">

Food Heads- Food Heads remains in my **top 5 lunch spots** and it's been serving up fresh and unique sandwiches (a sandwich with sweet potatoes in it? You betcha!) for almost 20 years. Lasting impression? I think so. If you want to step slightly outside of the SXSW downtown hub, here's an **adorable house** where you can get a **serious (yet Austin-friendly) sandwich** on freshly made breads- it's always a treat. The sandwich pictured above is my favorite Salmon Salad sandwich, complete on multigrain bread and made with apples! I substitute the mayo for Dijon Vinaigrette for a tangy twist.

The Peached Tortilla- My friend Eric's brainchild, **Southern and Asian fusion gourmet food truck(s)**, that's right is opening up it's 2nd location on UT-Austin's drag (formally known as Guadalupe) next to Hole in the Wall (don't let the name deter you, it's a tasty good find). And, it has a permanent stake (making it "nextablistment"-worthy) adjacent to the porch at Star Bar on W. 6th on Friday and Saturday nights to make **late night eats** a little more classy and flavorful. The Peached Tortilla makes us all wish there were two of us so we could be everywhere at once.

Uchiko- If you've racked up a little savings to splurge during SXSW week in Austin (or even if you haven't), this is a treat. Pictured above bottom right is just one sample of a **memorable sushi roll** so perfectly flavored that you can bypass the common soy sauce/wasabi mask. But make sure to dip it in the Skyr yogurt (did you know Skyr is Icelandic??) A **"contemporary Japanese dining and sushi" experience**, Uchiko is the place to be to **give your taste buds a dream**. And, make sure to order the Sweet Corn Sorbet. Thank me later. Make a reservation or sit at the bar to get a taste.

Haddington's- This **British Pub** (see photo above, bottom left, of their lamb sandwich (I know, not typical for me) with mint aioli enjoyed by candle light) made the list because it's brand new, so I can't yet confidently predict its staying power. But, when you walk in, you can tell lots of thought, design, and style was put into this concept. For example, I like how you can retreat in one of the almost hidden intimate small rooms in the back of the **classy, yet rustic house-like pub** with dim lighting if you need a **change from the urban hustle-bustle** that's hard to escape during SXSW. I also think the pub provides a unique combination of a **casual rest-stop mixed with an inviting bar and an inventive and authentically-British menu that borders gourmet**. I don't think this well-thought-out West 6th gastropub is going anywhere any time soon and would be another memorable spot to take a load off after a long day of SXSWing. This could also be a good spot for out of towners who aren't into the Keep Austin Weirdness (I don't know why anyone wouldn't be) and are seeking a familiar vibe.

Second Bar + Kitchen- Although this contemporAmerican (yes, contemporary + American) cafe-like "nextablistment" is one of three hot spots making up Congress Austin, this is the one you'll find me at the most. I think their **Truffle Pomme Frites (fries)** are enough proof that it's here to stay for quite awhile. I can't wait to use their outdoor patios to sip their delicious **Gin & Jam cocktails or wine on tap** (it's actually good!) while munching on their **carefully planned out dishes characterized by the perfect balance of flavors**. It's location on 2nd and Congress makes it quite accessible for SXSWers traveling by foot day after day, and the **pricing is just right**, especially for the appetizers and small plates. It's **casual, yet hip**, serves delicious munchies alongside well-crafted entrees and is simply a **happy medium that's top of the line**.

Are there any Austin "nextablistments" that you'd add to this list? What's new or an up-and-coming establishment that has lasting power? What about off-the-beaten pathers that have been around for awhile but should be on people's radars because they're not going anywhere fast and we need to keep it that way!?