



>> FOR THE HOLLYWOOD NOSHER

## WALTON'S FANCY & STAPLE {AUSTIN}

With new menu items like trendy avocado toast, inventive weekly burger specials and handspun house cocktails, now is the time for a spring fling at the old-timey chic “general store” on Sixth Street. About that avocado toast: It starts with toasted brioche that is layered with chèvre and topped with pickled radishes and a farm egg. If going low carb, try the gorgeous brûlée grapefruit (like grilled grapefruit) served with Greek yogurt and toasted almonds. Top lunch pick goes to the Garden Sandwich packed with tomato, cucumber, spinach, sprouts and smashed avocado on multigrain. Order that with a cup of tomato basil soup. This restaurant/bakery/flower shop/caterer/event space mashup owned by actress Sandra Bullock also serves pastel macaron ice cream sandwiches that we’re a little obsessed with. And what Texan wouldn’t be charmed by Texas cream puffs and Lonestar Whoopie pies? [waltonsfancyandstaple.com](http://waltonsfancyandstaple.com)



>> FOR THE GLOBE-TROTTER

## CANNON + BELLE {AUSTIN}

Longtime favorite steak and sushi spot Finn & Porter has been beautifully transformed into Cannon + Belle, now the flagship “Tex-Fresh” restaurant for the Austin Hilton hotel. Executive chef Peter Maffei has crafted bold menus with influences from travels around the globe. Highlights include a huevos rancheros pizza

made with spicy tomato sauce, black beans, chorizo and a farm egg; pickled shrimp tamale with smoked corn and charred tomatillo salsa; and pork osso buco cooked sous vide for 48 hours and served with cheddar grits. Think bacon-wrapped quail sausage with caramelized onion and rosemary fontina, or three beet pizza over lemon ricotta with toasted pistachios. Almost too pretty to eat! [cannonandbelle.com](http://cannonandbelle.com)

>> FOR THE SEAFOOD FANATIC

## SALT TRADERS COASTAL COOKING

{ROUND ROCK}

Venerable restaurateur Jack Allen of Jack Allen’s Kitchens in Austin dives into seafood with his newest concept. With conservation top of mind, Salt Traders’ seafood is sustainably sourced along the U.S. coastline, and the restaurant has partnered with the Coastal Conservation Association. The supper menu showcases fresh fish, chowder and non-seafood classics such as steak, a burger, a thick-cut pork chop and wood-fired chicken. Fresh Gulf oysters on the half shell, ceviche, crudo and more are dispensed from the raw bar, along with refreshing cocktails to match including the signature frozen grapefruit margarita. The casual space with an East Coast sea shack vibe was designed by Levy Architects and reflects coastal influences with thematic artwork, 100-year-old reclaimed wood finishes, unique salt block chandeliers and a colorful patio. [salttraderscc.com](http://salttraderscc.com)



>> FOR THE MEXICAN MAVEN

## XOCHI {HOUSTON}

Downtown has expanded its culinary landscape with a full lineup of new Convention Center restaurants, and the jewel in the crown comes from the team behind Hugo’s. An Oaxacan-inspired menu is the newest concept by dynamic duo chef Hugo Ortega and Tracy Vaught, founders of the H Town Restaurant Group. Mexican native Ortega dishes up specialties from the coastal region of Mexico that you might not find elsewhere in Houston, like queso del rancho with pork belly, tlayudas (a large, layered tortilla-based dish), and barbacoa de res de Zaachila (braised skirt steak rolled with peppers, carrots, potato and masa dumplings). Pastry chef Ruben Ortega crafts earthy, ethereal desserts on his special Chocolate Menu. Try the chocolate tart with mixed nuts, pralines and dark homemade chocolate “river rocks” with edible gold flakes. [xochihouston.com](http://xochihouston.com)





>> FOR THE UPSCALE 'CUE FAN

## SMOKY ROSE {DALLAS}

There's a new chef-driven smokehouse in town from co-owner David Cash, partners and exec-chef David Gauthier, who moved from Tennessee to open the hot spot located in East Dallas near the Arboretum. The menu is designed to appeal to a broad audience with rustic smoked meats and a wide array of lighter dishes that take inspiration from the garden. Beet salad, kale salad, airline chicken breast with cauliflower puree, and sweet and smoky salmon with leek risotto are a few standouts on the lunch and dinner menus, which also feature sandwiches and smoked meats by the pound. Anticipate a large patio, open smokehouse and beautifully landscaped garden in addition to thoughtfully selected local beers and wines. [smokyrose.com](http://smokyrose.com)



## SIDE SIPS

### EVENTS YOU CAN'T MISS

#### AUSTIN FOOD + WINE FESTIVAL

Save the date, April 28-30, for the annual Food + Wine Festival in Austin, sponsored by Food & Wine Magazine. Learn, meet celebrity chefs, or just indulge for three days with over 40 demos and tasting sessions, hands-on grilling classes and wine, beer, and spirits from hundreds of purveyors. Celebrity guest chefs include Tim Love, Andrew Zimmern and Amanda Freitag from the Food Network, Tyson Cole and more, plus wine luminaries Ray Isle and Mark Oldman to mention a few. For ticket information and the full schedule of events: [austinfoodandwinefestival.com](http://austinfoodandwinefestival.com).



#### CALIFORNIA ARTISAN CHEESE FESTIVAL

Celebrating California cheese country, the 11th annual California Artisan Cheese Festival takes place March 24-26 at the Sheraton Plaza in Petaluma, California. Cheese lovers, don't miss the cheese country farm and creamery tours for an up-close and personal look at delicious cheese sources, the Ultimate Best Bite Competition, new cheesemaker dinners, Bubbles Brunch, seminars and the Artisan Cheese Tasting & Marketplace. That's a lot of fromage! [artisancheesefestival.com](http://artisancheesefestival.com)

#### TEXAS WINE REVOLUTION

Yes, Texas grows more than yellow roses. Sunday, April 2, is the annual Texas Wine Revolution, which showcases the beauty of 100 percent Texas grown rosé. The all-day rosé tasting in Stonewall, founded by William Chris Vineyards, features over 25 Texas wineries and highlights various rosé winemaking styles. Admission includes a six-bottle tote bag, a souvenir wineglass, a passport booklet, live entertainment and samples from local food vendors. Tickets can be purchased in advance at [texaswinerevolution.com](http://texaswinerevolution.com).



>> FOR THE TEXAS EPICUREAN

## ELOISE NICHOLS GRILL & LIQUORS

{HOUSTON}

Siblings Katie Adair Barnhart and Nicholas Adair, of Adair Kitchen and several other eateries, have been cooking up cool new concepts, including this bustling River Oaks area brasserie-style bistro. Named after the siblings' 92-year-old grandmother, Eloise Nichols Grill & Liquors showcases modern spins on Southern classics and Gulf seafood in delightful ways. Grilled sweet potatoes get Texas feta and harissa aioli; crab and avocado salad is crowned with Texas caviar; and chicken and dumplings star gnocchi, carrots and mushrooms instead of traditional dumplings. Hearty cured pastrami-style pork ribs and delicate snapper sashimi with fried olives are a few other highlights on the ever-changing menu. Nearby, find Bebidas, the group's new juice bar café. [eloisenichols.com](http://eloisenichols.com)

>> FOR THE SWEET TOOTH

## TINYS MILK & COOKIES

{HOUSTON}

Tinys No. 5 in West University now has a sidekick, and it's pretty sweet. Naturally, Tiny Boxwoods signature chocolate chip cookie perfected by chef Baron Duke is the star of the show. But this petite walk-up bakery is so much more. On the menu find coffees by Southside Espresso, scratch-made pastries including doughnuts and lemon scones, and homespun ice cream in exotic flavors like coconut milk chocolate and honey lavender. The new outpost also is whipping up housemade granola, chia seed pudding, sausage and cheese croissants, pressed juices and breakfast tacos on Fridays. [tinyboxwoods.com](http://tinyboxwoods.com)



#### ROBIN BARR SUSSMAN BIO

Robin Barr Sussman is a Houston-based freelance writer who specializes in food, wine and travel. Her work has appeared in *Texas Monthly*, *My Table*, and *Private Clubs* magazine.