

ABIA: The Nonstop Austin Experience

Austin's airport is a quick, easy airport to get to – and get through. Austin-Bergstrom International Airport (ABIA) now links passengers to 41 destinations in the U.S. and Canada on nonstop flights. With more than 9 million passengers coming through in 2008, ABIA has been cited as one of the five biggest “seat movers” among the 50 largest U.S. airports. In addition to the growth in airlift, the award-winning airport also scores high for passenger terminal amenities that showcase Austin's trademark live music, local restaurants and independent retail outlets.

In May 2008, Southwest Airlines rolled out new nonstop flights to Fort Lauderdale and Oakland. JetBlue added nonstop flights to Los Angeles (Long Beach) and Fort Lauderdale. US Airways now flies nonstop to Charlotte, NC and Air Canada has flights to Toronto. In August 2009, Alaska Airlines begins providing nonstop services between Austin and Seattle.

Travelers arriving to Austin experience the city's signature style and hospitality even before they leave the airport for the easy, 15-minute ride to downtown. In fact, ABIA's user-friendly layout and local amenities recently earned the facility recognition as one of the top three airports worldwide for its size, among more than 100 competing facilities at the Airports Council International Airport Service Quality Awards.

Likewise, *USA Today* lists ABIA among “10 Great Places to Hang Out during a Layover.” The article cites the airport's signature amenity: live music. Performances take place at Ray Benson's Roadhouse, Lefty's Bar & Grille on 6th Street, Earl Campbell's Sports Bar and Waterloo Records/Austin City Limits. This “Music in the Air” program greets visitors with performances by local artists while showcasing the diverse sounds of the city, from the Cuban classics of Cienfuegos to Western swing by the Bright Lights Duet, to the melodic stylings of Austin's jazz darling, Kat Edmonson.

The airport's artsy edge includes permanent and rotating exhibits by local artists. The terminal is adorned with elaborate tile work, paintings and sculptures that subtly reference the region's culture. Special exhibits present rotating shows on pertinent topics ranging from Austin history to current museum exhibits, regional wildlife and beyond.

Hungry travelers find a feast of local flavors at ABIA. Recent developments inside the terminal allow passengers to dine on local cuisine from Maudie's Tex-Mex and Mangia Pizza. Schlotzsky's Deli, founded in Austin, serves quick and easy sandwiches, while Waterloo Ice House offers old-fashioned burgers and local brews. Legendary barbecue highlights the menu at the Salt Lick, and local favorite Amy's Ice Cream satisfies passengers' sweet tooth. The Salt Lick and Amy's Ice Cream even offer cuisine to go; they'll pack a brisket or a quart of ice cream for passengers to share with friends upon arrival to their next destination. These establishments offer local prices as well, so travelers don't break the bank while eating on the fly.

Austin music, local salsas and barbecue sauces and "Keep Austin Weird" merchandise are available at ABIA's new Warehouse District shop. Shoppers can pick up official University of Texas at Austin[®] gear at the Longhorns Store, which features all things burnt orange. At the Waterloo Records/Austin City Limits store, passengers browse among CDs by Austin artists, as well as keepsakes from the popular PBS show and studio venue. Barton Springs Dry Goods offers Hill Country character with Western apparel and accessories, salsas, art, jewelry, books and more. Travelers find Texas sweatshirts, caps and tote bags, as well as sweet and spicy treats at the Stars of Austin store. The *Austin Chronicle* shop offers a great place to relax with a latte and explore a broad selection of Austin gifts. BookPeople, one of the nation's foremost independent bookstores, also has a branch at ABIA.

Travelers who need to stay connected can stop by PowerPort computer stations, which offer Internet access, laptop rentals, battery and cellular phone chargers, USB ports for file uploads, music downloads and free printing. In addition, ABIA now offers Boingo wireless

internet access, which passengers can access with existing accounts or by purchasing a 24-hour pass for \$7.95. Boingo Mobile also offers wireless access to travelers with smartphones.

For more information, visit www.abia.org or call 512-530-ABIA (2242).

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