



## WILL DRIVE FOR FOOD

### 4 DISHES WORTH TAKING A ROAD TRIP TO TRY

#### Sausage in Elgin

Lots of people claim the flame, but Southside Market, one of Texas' oldest BBQ joints, slow cooks its famous meat over Post Oak wood, Central Texas style. [southsidemarket.com](http://southsidemarket.com)

#### Pecan Pie in Marble Falls

Plunge into Texas' most famous pecan pie at Blue Bonnet Cafe. Its caramely, crunch stands up to your grandma's version—but you don't have to tell her that. [bluebonnetcafe.net](http://bluebonnetcafe.net)

#### Fried Gulf Seafood in Rockport

Pop's Tavern and Cafe serves up Neptune-pleasing, fried seafood platters emblematic of the Texas coast. Look for the little red house or act like a local and ask for "Pop's Place." [popstavernandcafe.com](http://popstavernandcafe.com)

#### Kolaches in West

Czech Stop in West sells fuel to get your vehicle from San Antonio to Dallas on I-35 but its best road trip fuel comes in the form of incomparable kolaches filled with fruit, cream cheese and more. [czechstop.net](http://czechstop.net)

# Venturing Out

Plan a road trip to one of Texas' newer hotels and satisfy your travel yearnings without having to board a plane

BY BECCA HENSLEY

### The Hill Country

You won't have to choose between wine and beer at Carter Creek Winery Resort & Spa (3), the only combination brewery-winery in the Hill Country. The resort that opened this year is owned by the McPherson family, who have been making award-winning wine in Lubbock since 2016, and offers a retreat with stand-alone villa-suites on the estate grounds situated between Johnson City and Fredericksburg. Don't want to leave your pup at home? Dogs are welcome and spoiled here thanks to sWag bags and more.

A little farther west, JL Bar Ranch Resort & Spa in Sonora is like a summer camp for grown-ups. It offers cowboy cookouts, sunset cocktails, skeet shooting, yoga, karaoke, horseback riding, biking, ATV adventures, cooking classes, archery—you'd have to stay for a month to do it all. The resort spreads across 13,000 acres of bucolic landscape and even features an FBO private airport. Large families can make reservations for the Archer's Nest Villa, or there are several Western-themed luxury cabins. [cartercreek.com](http://cartercreek.com), [jllbar.com](http://jllbar.com)

### Austin

Design buffs will want to take notes at Austin Proper Hotel & Residences (1), where interiors have been created by style icon Kelly Wearstler. A luxury boutique experience perched amid downtown's Second Street District, the intimate LEED-certified hotel that opened in January has a rooftop pool, gym and full-service Mediterranean restaurant. Book directly through Austin Proper through the close of summer to receive a 30 percent discount and have a portion of your rate donated to charities responding to COVID-19.

Across town on 10 acres in the Hancock neighborhood sits the newly opened Commodore Perry Estate, a glamorously restored historic, Mediterranean Revival mansion. An Auberge Resorts Collection property, the hotel offers 42 guest rooms and suites, an organic garden and plenty of curated culinary and wellness experiences. Its restaurant, Lutie's, is worth a visit even if you're not staying—though you'd be wise to consider it. Through August, the third night is free. [properhotel.com](http://properhotel.com), [aubergeresorts.com](http://aubergeresorts.com)

### El Paso

Make like Elizabeth Taylor, and be coddled at The Plaza Hotel Pioneer Park, a landmark urban lodge built in 1930, but reimagined and opened anew in June. Rising 19 stories, its original Pueblo Revival Art Deco facade sets an evocative tone that the elegantly contemporary interiors re-enforce. A favorite for Hollywood elites decades ago (including Elizabeth Taylor and Conrad Hilton), the hotel infuses nods to its past throughout. Taylor's favored penthouse suite has become La Perla, a rooftop lounge set to open this fall with views of Texas and neighboring Mexico. Inside, Ambar (2), the signature restaurant, continues the mood in a celebration of the borderland region's distinctive flavors. Take advantage of the "Legendary Return" package, which offers 30 percent off of stays through Dec. 30, among other perks. [plazahotelel Paso.com](http://plazahotelel Paso.com) ★