

## **San Antonio Texas ACG Meeting: October 2019**

### **Information for ACG Spouses and Families**

**By Louise Chumley, Past President ACG Auxiliary**

Dear ACG friends,

As a long- time member of the ACG Auxiliary, I am so happy that you will be coming to my hometown for the 2019 meeting. October is a beautiful month here with temps in the 80's during the day and 60's at night. San Antonio is a great walking town, but also offers public transportation for those in a hurry including free trolleys to many of the tourist sites, - also buses, bikes, Segways, scooters and our fun and original Riverwalk Go Rio cruise boats. Of course, Uber and Lyft are alive and well too. We are very casual in San Antonio, so unless you have a fancy event to go to – leave the heels and neckties at home !

The ACG Auxiliary will be sponsoring a hospitality family suite as always, so be watching for this when you sign into the Grand Hyatt Hotel. In addition, I highly suggest you go online to the ACG (Auxiliary) and sign up to be a member so you can attend our Mexican food cooking class and lunch at Los Barrios free of charge. While there - sign up for the Auxiliary tours before you arrive.

I know that Trip Advisor does a great job, but I wanted to share some of my favorite things to do in San Antonio. Del and I live north of town, but we try to go downtown at least 10 times a year to dine and attend events. So many new restaurants have opened in the last 10 years – many chef-owned. As more and more people are moving into new condos and apartments being built along the river, in the Pearl, (a high end new multiuse development just North of downtown) and in South Town, a more historical district not far from the Convention center, restaurants are flourishing. Some folks call us a ' Foody Heaven' with so many great ways to dine and enjoy food. We also have a CIA (Culinary Institute of America) located at the Pearl.

Downtown:

The Alamo: a must -see even if you don't do a full tour

The Riverwalk: Goes for 5 miles through the downtown. Walk and enjoy beautiful hotels, great restaurants and shops. Stop and watch the street artists do their craft. Get tickets online or at the riverboat cruise centers (GO Rio Cruises) to either get a narrated tour or river shuttle where you can hop on and off. The River cruises now go all the way to the San Antonio Museum of Art and the Pearl as a result of the River expansion several years ago which includes a gravity lift like in the Panama Canal. You can also reserve a dinner cruise for your group.

World Heritage San Antonio Missions Tour: This can be arranged as a private tour with a guide or done leisurely on a bike. Go online for the various options. The Missions,

built in the 1700's are true historical jewels. If you don't have time for the Missions, walk down Commerce to see the beautiful historical San Fernando Cathedral built in 1873. Relics of Alamo heroes are in a tomb located near the entrance of the Church. The statues and much of the interior were done by Mexican and Spanish artisans.

Buckhorn Museum: On East Houston St., feel like a real Texan as you view the many animal species raised and hunted in Texas (over 520 species in this taxidermy collection.)

El Mercado: On the west of the downtown area, you find a Market and cafes that make you feel like you crossed the border into Mexico. Find all kinds of Mexican curios, clothing and household items. Enjoy inexpensive Mexican Cuisine at Mi Tierra Café ( mariachi music, great food, terrific Mexican bakery) or La Margarita. Mi Tierra is open 24 hours if you like late night dining.

The Pearl: A multi -use development (short Uber ride just North of the City). It also can be reached by River Barge. Unique architecture as the old Pearl Brewery and property were transformed into condos, businesses, retail, the beautiful Hotel Emma, unique and delicious restaurants, gardens and walking spaces. Besides the Culinary Institute being housed here, there is a year-round Farmer's Market on weekends where you can buy and see all the locally grown and harvested foods.

The San Antonio Zoo: Just a stone's throw from The Pearl, on the other side of Hwy 281 N, located in Brackenridge Park. Not big – but a beautiful walking area with lots of great animal exhibits and play areas for kids.

Garcia Art Glass Studio: Located about a mile from the Convention Center in South Town, local glass artist – Gini Garcia, has a showroom there where she sells her beautiful creations. There are live glass blowing demonstrations as well. ( Check web for times of demonstrations)

Museums: The McNay and the San Antonio Museum of Art are our 2 fine Arts Museums. Both are on properties near, but outside of the downtown area. Check the web for hours and exhibits. The Witte Museum, located in Brackenridge Park is our Nature, Science and Culture Museum – It has lots of hands on demos for kids plus Dinosaurs !!! The DoSeum located next door is a great discovery and interactive museum for kids of all ages.

Sea World: Limited hours of operation after September. Located about 45 minutes northwest of the City.

The San Antonio Spurs ! Yes, I am prejudiced and our season begins October 5 !

Shopping: Everywhere downtown including River Center Mall just across from the Convention Center. If you want to get away from the more touristy shopping – check out the suburban Malls:

North Star Mall: Covered Mall about 10 miles north of downtown. – typical mall shops and stores including Macy's, Dillards and Saks 5<sup>th</sup> Ave.

The Quarry Market: About 6 miles North of downtown, this mall is outdoor and spread out. Notable stores include Whole Earth Provisions, Nordstrom Rack, Bambino's Baby and Children's Boutique, Lucchese Boots (beautiful western boots) and Chico's.

The Shops at La Cantera: This is a trip – about a 45-50 minute drive Northwest of downtown, but is our nicest, most exclusive mall. If you are a shopper, you could spend a whole day here. Anchor stores include Nordstroms, Neiman Marcus and Macy's and Dillards with all kinds of stores and boutiques in between. It is an outdoor Mall, but beautifully landscaped with attractive sitting areas and places to dine and people watch. Nearby, we have The Rim – a shopping center that has Bass Pro Shop among many other stores.

Dining, San Antonio:

Downtown favs: E -expensive; M – Moderate; I – inexpensive

Biga on the Banks E; on the River

Boudro's M – E ; on the River My personal favorite – small, so need early reservations

The Fig Tree – E; on the River

Bohanan's – E; on Houston St – great steaks and fish

The Palm – E; on Houston St

Ruth's Chris – E; on the River

Battalion – M; in South Town area – refurbished Fire Station; great pasta and bar

Ocho – M; In the Hotel Havana, on the River – great patio and Mexican cuisine

Silo Prime -E and Nonna Osteria – M located in the historic Fairmont Hotel. Silo Prime is steak and seafood and Nonna is pasta dishes.

Bliss – E: South Town chef-owned restaurant

Feast – M; Lots of interesting tapas and small dishes

Dough Pizzeria- M; Great gourmet Pizza and Italian dishes near the Convention Center

Rosarios – M; South Town , good Mexican food

Chart House- M; Tower of America's – You take an elevator up 750 feet and eat while you enjoy a panoramic view of San Antonio as the Restaurant rotates.

Near Downtown Fav's:

The Pearl has several fun restaurants and just 8 minutes by car away from downtown.

Boiler House and Texas Grill– M;; Interesting and tasty southwestern cuisine – great appetizers to make a meal or regular entrees.

Southerleigh's – M; Craft beer as well as wine and full bar: Great fun food -tasty dishes.

La Gloria – I; On the River at the Pearl – Mexican street tacos and dishes

Supper – E; Located in the Hotel Emma ( A must-see lobby) chef-owned; heavy on vegetarian dishes – uses lots of local produce.