

LAKE AUSTIN SPA RESORT

A WORLD CLASS
EXPERIENCE IN TEXAS



Written By: *S. Worthington Campbell*
Photos Courtesy Of: *Lake Austin Spa Resort*

Nestled on the verdant shores of Lake Austin in Central Texas, there rests one of the most beautiful destination spas in the world. Intended for both men and women, this award-winning Lake Austin Spa Resort is open year round and combines a tranquil, natural, lakefront setting with the casual elegance and luxury one expects of a world-class resort. Whether simply seeking rest and relaxation or more focused fitness and wellness, one of the best spas in the country is not far away!

Since its multi-million dollar 25,000-square-foot expansion and renovation in 2004, the resort has received numerous accolades from well-known travel and spa magazines. According to the Conde Nast 2014 Reader's Choice Awards, the Lake Austin Spa Resort is the

"#4 Destination Spa in the World" and the "#21 Resort in the World." The facility was also honored as the first and only destination spa on the 2013 Conde Nast Traveler's Platinum Circle for "achieving five consecutive years on the Gold List." Other honors have come from such publications as *Travel + Leisure*, *Zagat Survey*, *Spa Magazine*, and *American Airlines Living Magazine*. Located just 30 minutes from downtown Austin and the Austin-Bergstrom International Airport, this resort occupies 19 acres alongside the rippling blue waters of Lake Austin. The peaceful grounds are framed by rolling hills and accented with nature and wildlife trails shaded by towering pecan, cypress, and magnolia trees amidst lush native gardens.



The resort's fragrant organic gardens famously contain more than 1,000 species of plants, herbs, spices, and wildflowers that are picked fresh daily for use in their delicious cuisine in addition to aromatic treatments at the spa. The Director of Flora and Fauna, Trisha Shirey, has been associated with the resort for 28 years and oversees the gardens. She also teaches classes each week on topics such as organic gardening, aromatherapy, cooking, and nature arts and crafts. According to Shirey, "Plantings are designed to be Texas tough, but beautiful. Despite the foraging deer, flowers are evident year round. Many of the gardens are designed to delight butterflies and hummingbirds, which are seen in abundance."

Among the most anticipated highlights of a stay at the Lake Austin Resort Spa are the three gourmet meals created each day by Executive Chef, Stéphane Beaucamp. Trained in Paris, Chef Beaucamp and his staff serve delicious meals in both the Resort Dining Room and the Aster Café at the Lakehouse Spa. The healthy and innovative cuisine always features fresh vegetables and herbs from the resort's organic gardens, combining French sensibilities with a touch of Texas attitude. Wine, from an extensive wine list, and beer are served in the dining rooms.



Although the resort itself is spacious, it contains just 40 guest rooms, affording a relaxed, casual atmosphere with plenty of personal attention from the 250 staff members. This feature particularly attracted the new general manager Chris Bird. "I have worked in the luxury hotel and spa industry for many years and I am thrilled to join the Lake Austin Spa Resort team in providing a destination spa experience that helps guests rejuvenate and create balance in their busy lives. With just 40 rooms, it allows me to take a personal interest in each person's experience, and that is something that is very important to me."



The guest rooms line a bluff overlooking the lake, and each has its own private patio area for quiet contemplation or a quiet visit with a friend. The casually elegant interior design encourages relaxation by featuring comfortable seating and luxurious, cushy beds with Egyptian cotton sheets, down comforters, artesian throws, and handmade quilts. The rooms also feature the newest technological amenities, including high-definition digital televisions, device docking stations, and high-speed Internet connections. In-room safes and refrigerators are also provided. For a more unique experience, suites are available with hot tubs and private wildflower gardens. The Lady Bird Suite honors the former First Lady and features a sitting room, fireplace, private wildflower garden, and hot tub.

The Lakehouse Spa is the newest addition to the resort, offering over 100 massage, body, and skincare treatments and therapies. Constructed of native Austin limestone blocks and cedar, the elegant two-story spa is tucked away in two acres of native Texas plantings and aquatic gardens. The facilities include men's and women's locker rooms, an outdoor swimming pool, a hot tub, cabanas, and a lap pool, 30 treatment areas including a group treatment porch, garden cabana tents, and the luxurious Iris Salon, which offers hair, makeup, and nail services.

Lake Austin Spa Resort is not rigidly structured, but rather encourages guests to enjoy their surroundings, partaking in as many or as few activities as they choose. For those who want to be active, there is nearly an unlimited amount of fitness classes, activities, and discovery programs. Offerings include 20 fitness classes for all levels, ranging from cardio, weight training, and BodyFlow®, to Trek & Spin. Gentler disciplines of yoga, Tai Chi, Nia, Pilates, meditation, and dance classes are also available. When the weather is right, some yoga classes are offered on a special deck, suspended over the lake. The resort and spa have three swimming pools, used for a variety of aquatic aerobics and swimming classes. Hiking and water sports, such as stand-up paddle boarding, hydro biking, and kayaking are also available. A special boat cruise is available each evening, and one-on-one instruction is also offered for many activities.

The body, mind, and soul are nourished through special programs taught each day by staff members and well-known guest speakers. Discovery classes are offered on a variety of such topics including



cooking, organic gardening, relationships and sexuality, journaling, arts and crafts, essential oils, and aromatherapy. Special weeks and seasonal topics include Mother/Daughter Week, For the Love of Books Club, and the especially popular Culinary Experience, where for one week each month, the Lake Austin Spa Resort's Chef Beauchamp and his culinary team are joined by well-known chefs, cookbook authors, and restaurateurs to share their passions for preparing healthy, fresh, and delicious food. 2015 guests included this year for this program are Joanne Weir (television personality and James Beard Award-winning cookbook author), Eric Asimov (*The New York Times* Chief Wine Critic), Food Network personality Sara Moulton (one of the most trusted names in the food business), and award-winning Hugh Acheson (chef and owner of four restaurants in Georgia and recurring judge on Bravo's television show *Top Chef*). In addition to cooking demonstrations, the Culinary Experience week's activities include a variety of classes such as Adventures in Cocktail Gardening, The World of Wine, All About Olive Oil, and Knife Skills.



The City of Austin is often called the “Live Music Capital of the World,” so it is not surprising that the Lake Austin Spa Resort is launching a new program this year called Rhythm: The Magic of Live Music and Movement. This focus will happen one week per month and will integrate live music into many of the resort’s regular activities including yoga, cardio, and meditation classes. New unique classes will be added, such as interactive drumming and a DJ dance class. Sounds from the Shore will feature special live performances at the resort’s many outdoor venues in the evenings. “Music is an integral part to the mindful part of exercise – whether to motivate or to soothe and relax. We remember experiences all our lives when a song comes on the radio or plays on our iPod – our connection to this therapeutic medium are deep and hearing songs played in a live format makes for a more enriching and meaningful experience,” says Robbie Hudson,

Director of Programming. 2015 featured artists will include 19-year old fiddle prodigy Ruby Jane, classical guitar player Tony Morris, drummer K. Solomon Marsala, singer and songwriter Kimmie Rhodes, and singer and songwriter Sara Hickman (*the 2010 Official State Musician of Texas*).

Lake Austin Spa Resort offers packages starting at three-night stays for individuals or groups, and also features special promotions throughout the year. The packages include a stay in one of the 40 lakeside guest rooms, three healthy, gourmet meals each day, unlimited indoor and outdoor fitness activities and classes, gratuities, and an allotment for spa treatments based on the length of stay and packages selected. The facility is located at 1705 S. Quinlan Park Road, Austin, Texas 78732. For more information, call 800-847-5637 or 512-372-7300 or visit the website at www.lakeaustin.com

