

Living in San Marcos



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Living in San Marcos

About San Marcos

San Marcos is located in Hays County along I-35 about 30 miles southwest of Austin and 50 miles northeast of San Antonio. The city is situated along the Balcones Escarpment, which separates the Hill Country from the Blackland Prairie. The population of the city was about 35,000 at the 2000 census. The beautiful San Marcos River and the endangered species that live in the river make the city a unique place.

The weather in San Marcos during the summer is hot but the rest of the year is typically mild. The average temperature for January is a high of 58° F and a low of 38° F; for July, a high of 96° F and a low of 75° F. Although it does get hot in the summer, most buildings in San Marcos are air-conditioned. Humidity is low relative to the eastern half of the United States. Most students swim in the San Marcos River to beat the heat. The river stays a cool 72° F year-round.

Finding a place to live

San Marcos has a wide-range of housing choices. Both houses and apartments are available to students. Apartments range from townhomes to studio apartments. The larger, furnished apartments are geared towards undergraduate students, which can make them loud places to live at times. Smaller complexes are usually quieter places to live. To see what past residents have to say about a complex, visit www.apartmentratings.com.

Apartment locators can help you find an apartment or rental home, and there are several in San Marcos. You may want to start looking for an apartment earlier in the summer, because apartments fill up fast in August and locating services become very busy.

Apartment locators in San Marcos:

Great Locations

Phone: 512. 878.2233

Website: www.glsanmarcos.com

Apartment Experts

Phone: 512.805.0123

Website: www.apartmentexperts.com

A-Plus Apartment Locators

Phone: 512.392.3463

These websites may be able to help you locate an apartment, rental home, or a roommate:

www.craigslist.org

www.sanmarcosrecord.com

Furniture

Many students purchase furniture from students who have graduated and are moving. A good place to buy and sell used furniture is on Craig's List at <http://sanmarcos.craigslist.org/>; in the school's newspaper, The University Star, at <http://star.txstate.edu/>; or in the San Marcos newspaper (The Daily Record) at <http://www.sanmarcosrecord.com/>. Thrift stores are also good places to find used furniture.

San Marcos Thrift Stores:

Goodwill
1005 Hwy 80
www.austingoodwill.org

Southside Community Thrift Store
390 South LBJ Drive

Cost of living

Expenses for housing are comparable to many college communities in the United States. The cost of food, gasoline, and utilities in Texas are somewhat lower than in many parts of the United States. Most two-bedroom apartments in San Marcos rent for approximately \$700-800 a month, not including utilities and other bills.

Utilities

The City of San Marcos provides electric, water, and wastewater services to the San Marcos community. Residential customers also receive curbside garbage pickup and recycling services. Most apartments in San Marcos do not have recycling pick-up. Check with your apartment complex to see what bills are paid. Many apartment complexes bill you directly for water and wastewater.

To open a new utility account, visit one of these two locations in person:

Municipal Building (behind City Hall), 630 E. Hopkins or
San Marcos Electric Utility, 1040 Highway 123 (Seguin Highway)

- Fill out a connect request
- Pay appropriate deposit and connection fees. You may call ahead to obtain the deposit amount at 512.393.8383

The City of San Marcos does not accept telephone requests to open new accounts. They will accept connection requests by mail, UPS, or FedEx as long as the following is included with your request:

- Identification (copy of driver's license)
- Appropriate deposits and connect fees [you may call ahead to obtain the deposit amounts, (512) 393-8383
- Address where the utilities will be connected
- Requested date of connection
- Phone number
- Social Security number

Connections are completed Monday - Friday only between 8:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m., excluding holidays. You may want to schedule your connection several weeks before school starts, because Utility Services becomes extremely busy around this time of year.

Utility Phone Numbers:

Billing	512.393.8383
Connecting to City Utility Services	512.393.8383
Electric Utility	512.393.8301
Energy Conservation	512.393.8310
Garbage Pickup & Recycling	512.393.8026
Power Outages	512.393.8313
Public Works	512.393.8036
Water Conservation	512.393.8010
Water, Wastewater Systems	512.393.8010

Cable, Phone, and Internet Service

Cable, phone, and internet services vary from complex to complex as to which of these bills are paid and which company's services are available. Check with your complex.

Century Tel

Phone: 512.754.5699

Website: www.centurytel.com

Time Warner

Phone: 512.805.2555

Website: timewarneraustin.com

Grande

Phone: (512) 878-4600

Website: grandecom.com

Recycling

Since most apartment complexes do not receive recycling pick-up services, many residents chose to take their recycling to Green Guy Recycling. Green Guy is located at 937 Highway 80 in San Marcos behind Hobby Lobby and Tractor Supply. The drop-off center for household recyclables is open 24 hours, 7 days a week. Visit www.greenguyrecycling.net or call 512-353-3266 for buy-back hours and for more information about which recyclables are accepted.

Pets

Most apartment complexes that allow pets require a pet license. The City of San Marcos' Animal Services issues pet licenses. You must show proof of a rabies shots when you purchase the license. Call Animal Services at 512.393.8340 for more information.

San Marcos' dog park is located on Bobcat Drive behind Strahan Coliseum.

Voter Registration

If you are going to become a resident of Hays County and would like to register to vote, visit <http://elections.co.hays.tx.us/> to download voter registration forms.

Driver's Licenses

New residents moving into Texas, who have a valid driver license from their home state, have 30 days after entry into the state to secure a Texas driver license. To apply for a Texas driver license, the Texas Department of Transportation requires:

- Provide proof of identity.
- Provide proof of Social Security Number.
- Provide proof of Texas vehicle registration and liability insurance, for all vehicles that you own.
- Complete required forms available at any Texas Driver License office. The San Marcos office is located at 1400 IH 35 North.
- Pay the required fee.
- Pass a vision exam.
- If you have a VALID out-of-state license in your possession, it must be surrendered at the driver license office.

NOTE: If you have never been licensed or have an EXPIRED out-of-state license, you will be required to pass both the written and driving exams, in addition to a vision test.

Many bars and stores in San Marcos will not accept out of state identification when purchasing alcohol.

Public Transit

The San Marcos CAT (Carts Around Town) is a wheelchair-accessible fixed-route service provided for the citizens of San Marcos and its visitors. Hours of operation are Monday thru Friday 7a.m. to 6p.m. Major destinations include the Factory Outlet Malls, H.E.B., Wal-mart, Springtown Mall, The Playscape Park and many school campuses in the area. The fare is 50¢ to ride, exact change only. Students, faculty, and staff who wish to ride to campus instead of drive may show a valid Texas State I.D. to the CARTS driver and ride for free. Visit ridecarts.com for more information, schedules, and routes.

Texas State University also operates the Bobcat Tram for students. The free tram has routes on-campus and off-campus. Visit www.aux-srvcs.txstate.edu/tram.htm for more information, schedules, and routes.

Bikes

Many students cycle around campus and around town to avoid traffic and parking hassles. There are two bike repair shops in San Marcos.

Pedal Power (2617 South IH 35)
 Phone: 512.396.7433
 Website: www.mypedalpower.com

Al's Freewheelin' Cycles (230 North LBJ)
 Phone: 512.392.9514

The Texas State-San Marcos Bicycle Co-op is located in the garage of the Thorton House at Vista and North. The co-op provides free minor repairs, free access to tools and advice, affordable bikes, and free repair and maintenance classes. Visit www.aux-srvcs.txstate.edu/tram/TheBikeCave.htm for more information and hours.

University Police recommends that you register your bike with them if you are parking it on campus. University Police also conducts bike round-ups and removes bikes that are left over night. Registering your bike will prevent it from being removed. Bikes can be registered on Monday-Fridays from 8am-4pm. Call 512.245.2805 to make sure someone is available to register the bike.

Farmer's Market

The farmer's market is located off of CM Allen just past San Antonio Street. Fresh produce, eggs, meats, cheeses, and baked goods are all available at the market. It is open every Tuesday from 3-6p.m.

Grocery Stores

"Little" HEB
200 West Hopkins Street

"Big" HEB (open 24 hours)
641 East Hopkins Street

Cornucopia
1104 Thorpe Lane #J

Wal-Mart (open 24 hours)
1015 Highway 80

What to do in San Marcos

The Blanco and San Marcos Rivers

Both rivers provide opportunities for swimming, fishing, kayaking, and tubing opportunities. In San Marcos, you can rent tubes from Texas State University's Outdoor Center located in Sewell Park or at the Lions Club, which is located in the city park behind the Jowers Center.

Texas State Outdoor Center
www.campusrecreation.txstate.edu
Phone: 512.245.2004

Lions Club
www.tubesanmarcos.com
Phone: 512.396.5466

Movie Theaters

Starplex
1250 Wonder World Dr
(Behind Lowe's off of IH-35)
512.805.8000

Showplace 3
321 North LBJ Drive
(Near the square)
512.353.3555

Corral Theater
Outdoor theater in Wimberley that shows films on weekends from Memorial Day to Labor Day
www.corraltheatre.com

Live Music

Triple Crown
www.triplecrownlive.com

San Marcos River Pub
www.riverpubandgrill.com

Cheatham Street Warehouse
www.cheathamstreet.com

Gordo's Bar and Grill

Tantra Coffeehouse

Lucy's
www.lucyissanmarcos.com

Weekly Music Events

Monday: Open Mic Night at Lucy's

Tuesday: Two Ton Tuesday at Gruene Hall (June-July)

Wednesday: Electric Mayhem at Lucy's

Thursday: Open Mic Night at Tantra Coffeehouse
Concert in the Park Series (June-July)

Friday: Friday Afternoon Club at Gruene Hall (May-August)

Sunday: Open Mic Night at Triple Crown
Open Mic Night at Riley's Tavern in Hunter

Parks

San Marcos Parks and Recreation Department has over 20 parks, including greenbelt parks, which provide a wide range of recreation opportunities. The City also has an Activity Center that has basketball courts, aerobic rooms, an indoor swimming pool, racquetball courts, and classrooms. Visit <http://ci.san-marcos.tx.us> for more information about city parks and recreation center.

Camping

San Marcos is located within a few hours' drive of many state parks. Visit the Texas Department of Parks and Wildlife at <http://www.tpwd.state.tx.us/> for a list of parks near San Marcos.

Texas State University's Outdoor Center has camping sites available at University Camp along the Blanco River near Wimberley. The Center also rents equipment. Contact the Outdoor Center at 512.245.2004 for more information and reservations.

Shopping

San Marcos has many small and unique shops around the town square. There are also two large outlet malls located just south of town off of IH-35. The malls are very busy the week before Easter, around and on September 16 (Mexican Independence Day), mid-August (Tax Free Weekend), the Friday after Thanksgiving, and during the holidays.

Local Restaurants

Here are a few local restaurants that students enjoy going to:

Cafés

Blue Goat Gourmet
310 Mary St.
Phone: 512.392.4628

Café on the Square*
126 N. LBJ Dr.
Phone: 512.396-9999

Cool Mint
415 Burleson
Phone: 512.396.2665

Hill Country Grill
100 W. Hopkins
Phone: (512) 396-6100

Root Cellar*
215 LBJ Drive
Phone: 512.392.5158

Tantra Coffehouse
217 Hopkins St.
Phone: 512.558.2233

Barbecue

Fuschak's Pit Barbecue
1701 South IH 35
Phone: 512.353.2712

Southwest Market
2601 Hunter Rd
San Marcos, TX 78666-5112
Phone: 512.353.0837

Mexican

El Primo Tacos
1310 Alamo St.
Phone: 512.353.2323

Garcia's
403 S. LBJ
Phone: 512.353-0099

Herbert's Taco Hut
419 Riverside Dr.
Phone: 512.353.7440

Mana's
807 Alabama St
Phone: 512.392.4068

Rogelio's Restaurant
625 South LBJ
Phone: (512) 392-4141

Taqueria El Charro
119 E Hutchison St.
Phone: 512.392.2888

Taqueria Mazatlan
1210 South IH 35
Phone: 512.754.2155

Burgers/Sandwiches

Alvin Ord's Sandwich Shop
204 University Dr
Phone: 512.353.8042

Gil's Broiler*
328 N. LBJ Dr.
Phone: 512.392.4595

Asian

Imperial Garden
1104-L Thorpe Lane
Phone: 512.353.3355

Rose Garden
700 N. L B J Dr # 114
Phone: 512.805.0880

Thai Thai
829 N. L B J Dr # 101
Phone: 512.395.8424

Mediterranean/Pizza

Cedar's
220 N Edward Gary St.
Phone: 512.754.9861

Italian Garden
415 North LBJ
Phone: 512.392.8730

D'Blazios Pizza
1904 Ranch Road 12 # 111
Phone: 512.392.5234

Valentino's Pizza*
110 N L B J Dr.
Phone: 512.396.8888

Zen's Pizza Bistro
700 N. LBJ #107
Phone: 512.396.7445

New American/Country

Grin's Restaurant
802 N. LBJ Dr.
Phone: 512.392.4746

Palmer's Restaurant and Bar
218 Moore
Phone: 512.353.3500

San Marcos River Pub and Grill
701 Cheatham St.
Phone: 512.353.3747

***On the square*

Coffee Shops

Coffee Pot (On the square)
129 E Hopkins St # 100

Jo on the Go
312 University Dr # B

Mochas and Java's
700 North LBJ, Suite 103A

Mochas and Java's at Village South
102 Wonder World Dr # 406

Tantra Coffeehouse
217 Hopkins St.

Seattle's Best
105 North IH-35 (next to Red Robin)

Starbucks
690 Centerpoint Rd (across the highway from the Outlet Mall)

What to do around San Marcos

Austin- Austin is famous for being the live music capital of the world. Any night of the week you can hear a wide variety of genres in one of Austin's many venues. The city also has a very active nightlife located along Sixth Street downtown and in The Warehouse District, which is centered around Fourth Street. South-by-Southwest Film and Music Festival and Austin City Limits Music Festival are both held in Austin. The city also has a wide array of cultural arts and museums. Austin is also famous for its Mexican Free-tailed Bat colony under Congress Street Bridge. For more information about what to see and do in Austin, visit www.austintexas.org/visitors.

San Antonio- San Antonio, located south of San Marcos, was once a mission city founded by Spanish settlers. So, the city has many historical places and buildings, such as the Alamo, San Fernando Cathedral, five missions, and more. San Antonio is famous for its River Walk, where restaurants and bars are located right along the San Antonio River. The city also has a market (El Mercado) downtown. There are also many cultural events and museums in San Antonio, such as The San Antonio Museum of Art, The McNay Art Museum, and The Blue Star Contemporary

Arts Center. The Blue Star Art Complex hosts First Friday once a month. First Friday is San Antonio's own monthly art walk, filling Southtown-area galleries with fresh art and the streets with patrons. Most openings fall within the 6pm-10pm range, and most galleries are located within walking distance of South Alamo, between Durango and Probandt streets. Art lovers are invited to wander from art space to art space along the trail, rubbing elbows with local bands and artisans selling jewelry on the curb. The best part? It's FREE.

Fiesta during April is also a favorite with the locals. Fiesta is made up of many events all across the city, but Night in Old San Antonio (NIOA) is probably the locals' favorite.

San Antonio even has a drive-in movie theater, Mission 4, which re-opened in fall 2007 for a trial period.

For more information about what to do in San Antonio, visit www.sanantoniocvb.com.

New Braunfels- This German town is probably most famous for Wurstfest (in November), which is the city's ode to beer and sausage and its very large water park, Schlitterbahn. New Braunfels provides opportunities for rafting and tubing on the Guadalupe and Comal Rivers. Canyon Lake is also nearby.

Gruene- Gruene, located just down the road from New Braunfels, was once a corporate town, but it is now a tourist spot in the summer. You can float the Guadalupe River, shop, or enjoy a cold beer and music at Texas' oldest dancehall, Gruene Hall. During the fall and winter, the tourists leave Gruene, and the locals come out to dance at the Hall or dine at one of the restaurants. Gruene has Market Days, where you can buy arts and crafts from local artisans, on the third weekend of the month from January-November.

Wimberley- Wimberley is a small village about 20 minutes from San Marcos. Wimberley has many small shops owned by local artisans. Wimberley holds their Market Days on the first Saturday of each month. The village also has the Corral Theater, which is an outdoor theater that is open during the summer.

Fredericksburg- This small German town is located in the Hill Country. The town has many small shops on its Hauptstraße (Main Street). Fredericksburg also has several excellent wineries and beer gardens.