

Zilker Park in Austin Texas

Austin is home to one of the best metropolitan parks in the state. With sand volleyball courts, a nine-hole disc golf course, soccer and rugby fields, and two enormous multi-use fields for the sports enthusiasts, Zilker Park is also home to Barton Springs pool, the Zilker Zephyr train, botanical gardens, a huge play ground, miles of hike and bike trails, and with many other permanent amenities within its 350-plus acres. A regular destination for Austinites, the park is also home to some of the city's most popular events, including the Trail of Lights, the Austin Kite Festival, and the Austin City Limits music festival.

Over three acres large, Barton Springs is Austin's favorite swimming hole. Fed from underground springs, the pool maintains an average water temperature of 68 degrees year round – most find it bracing, and a welcome respite from the summer heat. With a separate area that welcomes dogs in addition to human swimmers, Barton Springs has drawn a diverse crowd of swimmers for more than a century. Zilker Park is located close to downtown in the historic Barton Hills Neighborhood. Barton hills homes were built in the 1940s and the neighborhood offer a quaint charm of tree lined streets surrounding the park.

Zilker Park's playground is enormous, with plenty of action for toddler and bigger kids as well. Slides, swings, climbing structures and even an old-fashioned fire truck entice the kiddos, while benches and picnic tables are available for the less active. Adjacent to the playground is a snack bar, featuring cold drinks and a limited menu. Just across from the snack bar is the train depot for the Zilker Zephyr, a miniature train that takes visitors on about a 20 minute tour around the park. Alongside the creek, under a bridge, and past people waving hello, the train delights kids of all ages.

With eighteen acres of grounds to explore, the Zilker Botanical Garden is a beautiful and serene destination. Among its many horticultural attractions are a Japanese garden, xeriscape demonstration garden, rose garden, cactus garden, bedding displays, floral display garden, butterfly trail and garden, and an herb & fragrance garden. The dinosaur statue located in the Hartman Prehistoric Garden is always a hit with kids, and the interpretive center holds a wealth of information.

The Zilker Hillside Theatre is perfectly situated to allow the audience to bring a blanket or lawn chairs and picnic while enjoying the different performances. Home to the annual Blues on the Green series, the theater also puts on concerts in many different genres of music in addition to hosting Austin's Shakespeare in the Park.

The Umlauf Sculpture Garden and Museum is another tranquil cultural offering in Zilker Park, focused primarily on the work of American sculptor Charles Umlauf. With over 130 sculptures, drawings & paintings located throughout its lush green grounds, they offer educational programs and tours in addition to their regular hours for public visits.

The Austin Nature and Science Center can also be found in Zilker Park, and is a fascinating and educational destination. With an interpretive center, education programs and summer camps, kids of all ages will delight in viewing their rescued animal exhibit, and can practice being junior archeologists in the dinosaur pit.

About the Author

Ki lives and works in Austin Texas. His site provides information on [Austin real estate](#) with descriptions of [Austin neighborhoods](#)

Source: <http://www.spivo.com/articles>