



Saluting Sausage

Lederhosen rule at this celebration of German heritage

New Braunfels, a quiet central Texas town of about 50,000, sees an influx of summer tourists who eagerly partake in a favorite pastime—tubing (or, *toobing*, in the local spelling) on the Guadalupe and Comal rivers that flow through the area. The fun can last even until November, if vestiges of summer heat refuse to surrender. But 'round here, autumn signals the approach of another seasonal favorite: **WurstFest**, a celebration of the area's rich German heritage. The city, in fact, was settled in 1845 by a German prince—Carl Solms of Braunfels, Germany—who sought a fresh start in America. And speaking of fresh, after nearly five decades, Wurstfest is adding something new to the lineup: The New Braunfels Historic Railroad and Modelers Society will host a model train event, which organizers expect to attract enthusiasts from across the nation. But tradition will still preside over the festival, which runs October 30–November 8 in Landa Park. The Cloverleaves and the Grammy-winning Jimmy Sturr Orchestra provide polka beats, New Braunfels Smokehouse serves the sausage, and good-hearted revelry ensues. Festival admission is \$8, except on opening night when it's free from 4 to 7 P.M. That's so the public can witness the Biting of the Sausage, the official opening ceremony. (800) 221-4369; wurstfest.com. —MARY O. PARKER

Big Bend Country

NOV. 4-7 International Chili Championship, Terlingua. More than 300 cooks compete in the Chili Appreciation Society International's annual cook-off championship. Concerts and other activities lead up to the chili judging on Saturday. Rancho CASI de los Chisos. (210) 887-8827; chili.org and krazyflats.com.

NOV. 7 Fall Bird Count, Fort Davis. Birders of all skill levels can participate. Chihuahuan Desert Nature Center. (432) 364-2499; cdri.org.

NOV. 20-21 ArtWalk, Alpine. A parade, a barbecue cook-off, a silent auction, and more. Artists from throughout the Big Bend region come to Alpine to display their work. Downtown. (800) 561-3712; alpinegallerynight.com.

NOV. 21-22 Tejano Lowrider Show, Odessa. Car displays, a boxing tournament, food vendors, and more. Ector County Coliseum. (432) 337-2189.

Gulf Coast

NOV. 1 World Championship Shrimp Cook-Off, Port Isabel. Attendees can purchase samples of competing dishes. Old Wal-Mart parking lot on Highway 100. (800) 527-6102; portisabel.org.

NOV. 12-15 Nutcracker Market, Houston. More than 315 vendors participate in this annual shopping extravaganza. Special events include the Macy's Fashion Show and Brunch. Reliant Center. (713) 535-3231; nutcrackermarket.com.

NOV. 14-JAN. 2, 2010 Festival of Lights, Galveston. A mile-long walking trail is decorated with lights and animated displays set to music. Other attractions include ice skating and the

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