

Team Outing in Austin: three ready options for 12 people

Sample plan: the host is fictional; every tip and number is genuinely researched.

The Plan at a Glance

Section	What you get
Key Facts	Group size, budget, date, meeting point
Option A: On the Water	Kayaks and paddleboards on Lady Bird Lake, food hall lunch first
Option B: Eat Your Way Downtown	Food hall crawl on Congress Avenue, then the Rainey Street beer garden
Option C: Capitol, Kelly and Bats	Free Capitol tour, Blanton Museum guided group visit, bat flight finale
Our Recommendation	The pick for a 12-person agency Friday
Book by When	Lead times, deposits and links
Sources	Every official page we read, with check date

Bad weather in October is rare but real in Austin, so each option carries its own "If it rains" paragraph at the end of the option. Option B and Option C are already almost entirely indoors, which makes them the safest rain-day pivots.

Key Facts

Item	Detail
Group	12 people, one small agency team
Budget per person	About \$60, all in
Date	Friday, 10/16/2026, from 1:00 PM
Start	Downtown, Congress Avenue at 2nd Street (Fareground, 111 Congress Ave, Austin, TX 78701)
Transit fare used in plans	CapMetro local single ride \$1.25, per service day \$2.50 (as of 08/2026)
Rideshare basis	Uber and Lyft, estimated \$14 to \$22 per car downtown to Zilker Park, split across 3 cars

Group acceptance in one line: Rowing Dock takes group reservations from 10 people up to 300, the Texas Capitol takes group tour reservations by phone for parties larger than 10, the Blanton takes adult group visits with a minimum of 8 visitors, Banger's books parties of 20 or fewer instantly online, and Fareground is an open food hall that explicitly welcomes groups. All four are comfortable with 12.

Option A

On the Water: Lady Bird Lake paddle with a downtown lunch

An easy, low pressure afternoon: a quick lunch on Congress Avenue, a short ride to the west edge of Zilker Park, then an hour on the water with the skyline in front of you, plus picnic tables afterwards that come with the group booking.

Schedule

Time	What happens
1:00 PM	Meet at Fareground, 111 Congress Ave. Open daily 11:00 AM to 9:00 PM (as of 08/2026). Split across vendors, tacos, burgers, rôtisserie, shawarma, everyone eats what they want. Cash free house, cards and Apple Pay only.
1:45 PM	Order three rideshare cars to Rowing Dock, 2418 Stratford Dr, Austin, TX 78746
2:05 PM	Arrive. The host checks in with the dedicated attendant. Rowing Dock requires the host on site at least 15 minutes before the slot, and group paddle schedules are strictly kept
2:30 PM	One hour group reservation on the water, mix of double kayaks, single kayaks and paddleboards. Rowing Dock recommends mixing kayaks and canoes, or all paddleboards, if the group wants to stay together
3:35 PM	Picnic area, included with the group reservation for the duration of your outing, plus 20% off merchandise
4:30 PM	Rideshare back downtown, optional happy hour at DRINK inside Fareground, \$1 off draft beers, \$2 off house wine, \$3 off draft cocktails, Monday to Friday 3:00 PM to 7:00 PM (as of 08/2026)
5:30 PM	Official end

Cost per person

Line item	Per person	Note
Lunch at Fareground	\$22	Estimate for a main plus a drink, individual vendor prices vary, check before visiting
Rowing Dock group reservation, 1 hour	\$25	Official rate is \$25 per person per hour, minimum 10 people (as of 08/2026)
Rideshare, downtown to Rowing Dock and back	\$7 to \$11	Six car rides in total, 3 out and 3 back, at \$14 to \$22 per car, divided across 12 people, check before visiting
Snacks and tip buffer	\$5	N/A

Line item	Per person	Note
Total	\$59 to \$63	At the target on a good traffic day, slightly over it at peak surge. To hold the line at \$60, trim the buffer or take CapMetro for the return leg

Getting there from downtown

- Walk: Congress Avenue at 2nd Street to Rowing Dock is roughly 4 miles, not a walk for a Friday afternoon, but the last stretch through Zilker Park is pleasant if you get dropped at the Stratford lot.
- Rideshare: about 4 miles, roughly 12 to 18 minutes depending on Mopac traffic, estimated \$14 to \$22 per car. Rowing Dock actively encourages rideshare because its free lot is first come, first served and fills fast.
- CapMetro: local single ride \$1.25 or \$2.50 for the whole service day, with tap to pay capped at \$2.50 per day. Plan the exact bus with the CapMetro trip planner, then walk in from Barton Springs Road.
- Map: [Open in maps](#)

If it rains

Rowing Dock treats reservations as rain or shine and considers paddling acceptable above 50 degrees, with winds below 17 mph, in light rain or overcast skies. So a gray October Friday usually still floats. If Rowing Dock cancels for severe weather you can reschedule at no cost or take a refund minus a 15% administrative fee, and any voluntary reschedule needs a written request to info@rowingdock.com at least 72 hours ahead. Indoor plan B for the same afternoon: stay at Fareground for a longer lunch, then take the free self guided Texas Capitol walk, open Monday to Friday 7:00 AM to 8:00 PM, brochures at the north entry.

Option B

Eat Your Way Downtown: food hall crawl plus beer garden

The zero logistics option. Everything is walkable from the meeting point, nobody drives, and the group can graze in small clusters instead of sitting through one long set menu.

Schedule

Time	What happens
1:00 PM	Fareground, 111 Congress Ave. Round one, tacos and burgers, shared at the communal tables. Open daily 11:00 AM to 9:00 PM (as of 08/2026), phone (512) 465-2107
2:00 PM	Round two, a different counter each, rôtisserie, Italian, shawarma, then swap plates. Cash free, cards and Apple Pay

Time	What happens
3:00 PM	Happy hour at DRINK inside Fareground, \$1 off draft beers, \$2 off house wine, \$3 off draft cocktails, Monday to Friday 3:00 PM to 7:00 PM (as of 08/2026)
3:45 PM	Walk about 0.8 miles east and south to Rainey Street, roughly 15 to 20 minutes at group pace
4:15 PM	Banger's Sausage House and Beer Garden, Rainey Street. Sausages, a very long draft list, big shaded yard. Reserve online for parties of 20 or fewer, phone (512) 386-1656 (as of 08/2026)
6:00 PM	Optional stroll back up Congress Avenue, official end at 6:30 PM

Cost per person

Line item	Per person	Note
Fareground, two rounds	\$26	Estimate across vendors, individual vendor prices vary, check before visiting
Happy hour drink at DRINK	\$7	Based on the posted happy hour discounts, exact drink prices not published online, check before visiting
Banger's, one sausage plate plus one draft	\$24 to \$28	Menu prices are not published as a fixed list on the official site, budget in this range and check the menu page before visiting
Walking	\$0	N/A
Total	\$57 to \$61	At or just around the \$60 target

Getting there from downtown

- Walk: Fareground is at the meeting point. Rainey Street is about 0.8 miles, 15 to 20 minutes, flat sidewalks the whole way.
- Rideshare: about 1 mile, roughly 5 to 10 minutes, estimated \$10 to \$16 per car if the group prefers not to walk.
- CapMetro: not needed for this option, everything sits inside the downtown core. If someone joins late from north Austin, a local single ride is \$1.25.
- Maps: [Open in maps](#) and [Open in maps](#)

If it rains

Fareground is fully indoors, so round one and two are untouched. For the second half, skip the walk, order two rideshare cars, and ask Banger's for covered indoor seating when you book. If the forecast is genuinely ugly, keep the whole afternoon at Fareground: book its private event space instead of moving, and finish with cocktails at Ellis inside the hall. Banger's also seats complete parties only, so send one person ahead to put the name in while everyone finishes their drinks.

Option C

Capitol, Kelly and Bats: the culture and wow route

Two Austin landmarks that cost almost nothing, one world class museum, and a genuinely memorable close: the bat flight from under the Congress Avenue Bridge, which is still active in October.

Schedule

Time	What happens
1:00 PM	Meet at the Texas Capitol south entrance, 1100 Congress Ave. Free guided tours run periodically Monday to Saturday from 9:00 AM, last tour 4:15 PM, departing every 15 to 30 minutes and lasting about 40 minutes, all from the South Foyer (as of 08/2026). Groups larger than 10 must call to reserve
1:50 PM	Walk the Capitol grounds, then head northeast
2:15 PM	Blanton Museum of Art, 200 E. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd. Open Tuesday to Friday 10:00 AM to 5:00 PM (as of 08/2026), phone (512) 471-5482
2:30 PM	Guided group visit with a museum educator, available Tuesday to Friday afternoons, minimum 8 visitors. Pick the Blanton Highlights or Modern and Contemporary theme
3:45 PM	Free time in the galleries plus <i>Austin</i> by Ellsworth Kelly, the luminous stone chapel on the grounds. No food or drink inside the galleries or in <i>Austin</i>
4:45 PM	Walk back down Congress Avenue, early dinner at Fareground, 111 Congress Ave, open until 9:00 PM
Around sunset	Congress Avenue Bridge bat flight, free, from the sidewalk or the Statesman bat observation area on the south bank. Emergence time shifts with sunset and the colony thins out later in fall, so check the day's sunset time before you go

Cost per person

Line item	Per person	Note
Texas Capitol guided tour	\$0	Capitol tours are free (as of 08/2026)
Blanton guided group visit, adult rate	\$20	Official group visit price, museum admission and <i>Austin</i> by Ellsworth Kelly included (as of 08/2026). Self guided groups pay regular admission of \$15 for adults
Early dinner at Fareground	\$25	Estimate for a main plus a drink, vendor prices vary, check before visiting
CapMetro service day fare, optional	\$2.50	Only if the group buses one leg instead of walking

Line item	Per person	Note
Bat flight	\$0	Public sidewalk viewing
Coffee stop buffer	\$8	N/A
Total	\$55.50	Within the \$60 target

Getting there from downtown

- Walk: Congress Avenue at 2nd Street to the Capitol is about 0.7 miles, 12 to 15 minutes uphill. Capitol to the Blanton is about 0.6 miles, 12 minutes. Blanton back to Congress Avenue at 2nd Street is about 1.2 miles, 25 minutes, or one short bus ride.
- Rideshare: Capitol to Blanton is about 1 mile, 5 to 8 minutes, estimated \$10 to \$16 per car.
- CapMetro: local buses run the Congress Avenue and Guadalupe corridors, single ride \$1.25, service day \$2.50, and tap to pay caps at \$2.50 per day. Note that the Blanton's Brazos Garage occasionally closes for campus events, so transit or rideshare beats driving.
- Maps: [Open in maps](#) and [Open in maps](#)

If it rains

This is the rain proof option. The Capitol tour and the Blanton are entirely indoors, and the Capitol is also open for free self guided touring Monday to Friday 7:00 AM to 8:00 PM if the guided slots are full. Drop only the bat flight, which needs dry weather, and replace it with a longer, seated dinner at Fareground plus cocktails at Ellis. If the group wants a second indoor stop, the Blanton's free public tours are included with admission and need no reservation, so you can simply stay longer in the galleries.

Our Recommendation

Take Option C. It is the only plan that survives any October weather, it needs the least coordination for a 12-person group, it lands well under budget at about \$55.50 per person, and the Ellsworth Kelly chapel plus the bat flight give the afternoon two moments people will actually talk about on Monday. If your team skews outdoorsy and the forecast is clear, swap in Option A, but book the Rowing Dock slot early because group times sell out and the rate is fixed per person per hour.

Book by When

What	By when	Where / link
Blanton adult group visit request form (guided or self guided, 8 or more people)	At least two weeks ahead, so by Friday 10/02/2026. Book earlier, afternoon slots fill	blantonmuseum.org/... and education@blantonmuseum.org

What	By when	Where / link
Texas Capitol guided tour for a group larger than 10	As soon as your date is fixed, tour times fill quickly. Aim for 4 weeks ahead, by 09/18/2026	tspb.texas.gov/... , reservation by phone
Rowing Dock group reservation (Option A)	At least 3 days ahead per official policy, realistically 2 to 3 weeks for a Friday afternoon slot. 20% deposit at booking, balance charged 72 hours before	rowingdock.com/...
Rowing Dock final headcount or reschedule	At least 72 hours before, in writing	info@rowingdock.com
Banger's table for 12 (Option B)	Parties of 20 or fewer book instantly online, 1 to 2 weeks ahead is comfortable for a Friday	bangersaustin.com/... , phone (512) 386-1656
Fareground group visit	No reservation needed, arrive by 1:00 PM to claim tables. For a private space, inquire 3 to 4 weeks ahead	faregroundaustin.com/...
CapMetro fares loaded on phones	The morning of, or buy bulk passes via CapMetro for Business	capmetro.org/...
Weather check and final go or no go call	48 hours before, then again the morning of	N/A

Sources

All pages opened and read on 08/22/2026. Prices, hours and phone numbers in this document are taken from these official pages and are noted "as of 08/2026".

Activity and paddling

- rowingdock.com
- rowingdock.com/...

Museum and landmarks

- blantonmuseum.org/...
- blantonmuseum.org/...
- tspb.texas.gov/...

Food and drink

- faregroundaustin.com/...
- bangersaustin.com/...
- bangersaustin.com/...
- bangersaustin.com/...

Transit

- capmetro.org/...
- capmetro.org/...

Where a figure could not be confirmed on an official page, notably individual menu prices at Fareground vendors and at Banger's, and rideshare pricing, this document gives a range and asks you to check before visiting rather than quoting a third-party number.

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