



# OUTTRAVELERG.P.S.\*

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September 11, 2008

## AUSTIN-TACIOUS! DENNIS VISITS THE TEXAS CAPITOL (PART 2)



Story and photos by Dennis Hensley

After four days of sating my gay cinephile at the [Austin Gay and Lesbian International Film Festival](#) -- How much affirming can

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Out Traveler G.P.S offers dispatches from the ever-expanding field of gay and lesbian travel -- as soon as we know, you know. Check back frequently for updates, insider information, advice, and offers brought to you by our ever-roving band of gay travel experts.

OutTraveler.com Editor in Chief Ed Salvato and his team travel the world for you, dear blog readers. Occasionally we miss something. If you don't see your favorite destination, tip or deal featured here, [tell us about it!](#)

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one man take? -- I stuck around for a day to explore more of the city that bills itself as the "live music capitol of the world."

My big day started with an 'Urban Retreat' massage at the [milk + honey spa](#), an oasis of tranquility located in the upscale [2nd Street District](#). In addition to giving me an amazing rubdown, my masseur Scot Maitland also served up some fun facts about [Texas](#), like that it can fly its flag at the same height as the U.S. flag and it's okay. No other state is allowed to do that. And we wonder why W's so cocky.



Later, I met up with the delightful Cindy, a member of the [Austin Gay and Lesbian Chamber of Commerce](#). We headed to the [Austin Visitors Center](#) to take a GPS walking tour of downtown Austin. Once I figured out how our video Ipod-like gadgets actually worked, it was a techno-cool kick. As we arrived at different landmarks, like the Capitol

Building and [Paramount Theatre](#), the GPS tracker would know that and play video clips with related fun facts and trivia. I learned that the stately [Driskill Hotel](#) is supposedly haunted by a little girl who, back in the day, fell down the stairs to her death while chasing a ball. Singer diva Annie Lennox claims that when she stayed there a dress of hers mysteriously moved from the bed to the closet. Is she sure it wasn't just the maid? Or Elton John, maybe? He's mischievous like that.

After our tour, Cindy drove me one of Austin's best kept secrets; [Laguna Gloria](#), a lush Euro-style garden that is affiliated with the [Austin Museum of Art](#) and is often rented out for weddings and parties.



The main dwelling is a gorgeous Mediterranean-style villa on the water that was built in 1916 for Clara Driscoll, who is known as the savior of the Alamo. It's like hanging out at George Clooney's villa in Lake Cuomo, Italy without the naked frat boy hazing rituals. Lovely.



'Keep Austin Weird' is Austin's reigning mantra and it's well deserved. The city

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hosts a [Spamarama](#), for crying out loud, a cooking festival where people share their favorite Spam-based dishes. San

Francisco wishes they were that quirky. Austin may be smack dab in the middle of a red state, but it's blue in the way that it celebrates diversity and takes folks for who they are. I hope return soon. I just need to fine-tune my recipe for Gay Wedding Spam Surprise. I think I've been using too many chocolate sprinkles.

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Photos courtesy of RSVP Vacations Story by: Olga Bas RSVP Vacations (1-800-328-RSVP, [www.rsvpvacations.com](http://www.rsvpvacations.com), [info@rsvpvacations.com](mailto:info@rsvpvacations.com)) About: RSVP was the first company to offer "gay environment" travel and for the last 20 years RSVP has organized cruises for thousands of travelers. Every...

### **Editor Ed Salvato talks holiday travel on Sirius Radio:**

Photo: Jason Frank Rothenberg Last night our editor in chief, Ed Salvato, talked with hosts Derek Hartley and Romaine Patterson on Sirius OutQ's Derek & Romaine Show. On the agenda was holiday travel tips but their discussion ranged far and...

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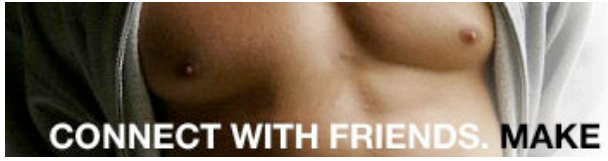
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