

# FESTIVALS & CELEBRATIONS

90-102



# Fall Arts Festivals



San Antonio is widely recognized as a city that avidly celebrates its unique sights, sounds, flavors and traditions. Fall Art Festivals, a collection of events held through November, offers many wonderful opportunities to sample the rich cultural life that drives the heartbeat of this colorful city. Most of these festivals began as grassroots efforts and expressions by individual artists and organizations. They now define the creative, artistic and cultural character of San Antonio. During Fall Art Festivals, photographs, jazz, accordions, calaveras, mariachis, wine and food energize and celebrate the vibrant San Antonio experience.

Fall Art Festivals is coordinated by the City of San Antonio Office of Cultural Affairs, which assisted in organizing this article.

## 15th Annual FotoSeptiembre USA

Aug. 20 – Oct. 8, various locations

This annual international photography festival is a unique, eclectic, month-long celebration of the photographic arts. Dozens of exhibits showing traditional photographs,

digital images, photography-based works, photographic installations, funky camera and alternative processes are presented in galleries, museums, art centers and other exhibition spaces in San Antonio, the Texas Hill Country and in the festival's SAFOTO Web galleries. All exhibits are free and open to the public.

Some of the 2009 festival highlights include:

**Instituto Cultural de Mexico** | [www.saculturamexico.org](http://www.saculturamexico.org)

• *The Mini Series II* – Curated by Michael Mehl  
(Fernanda Chemale - Brazil: *ElefanteCidadeSerpente*;  
Tom Drahos - France: *Jaina*; Alastair Magnaldo - France:  
*Hautes Coutures*; Philip Scholz Ritterman - California:  
*Light Drawings*; Erwin Staeheli - Switzerland: *Passages*;  
Berthold Steinhilber - Germany: *Ghost Towns*)

**San Antonio Museum of Art** | [www.samuseum.org](http://www.samuseum.org)

• *Culinary Delights*: Photographs by David Halliday

**Southwest School of Art & Craft** | [www.swschool.org](http://www.swschool.org)

• Abelardo Morrell – *The Universe Next Door*  
Land Heritage Institute | [www.landheritageinstitute.org](http://www.landheritageinstitute.org)  
• Ansen Seale – *The Corn Crib*

For a complete listing of exhibits, visit:  
[www.fotoseptiembreusa.com](http://www.fotoseptiembreusa.com) or [www.safotofestival.com](http://www.safotofestival.com)

## **Jazz'SAlive**

Sept. 19-20, Travis Park

Whether you're a seasoned jazz aficionado, or someone who just wants to witness a solid jazz performance, Jazz'SAlive is the place to be in September.

The San Antonio Parks Foundation and the city of San Antonio present Jazz'SAlive from noon to 11 p.m. Saturday, Sept. 19, and noon to 10 p.m. Sunday, Sept. 20, at Travis Park downtown.

The best in local, regional, national and international talent is showcased at this free, two-day outdoor event. Local and regional groups perform in the afternoons, with national and international acts appearing on the nighttime stage.

Jazz'SAlive also hosts The Starlight Salute to Jazz'SAlive Gala and the Jazz'SAlive Sunday Champagne Brunch, both held at the historic St. Anthony Hotel across from the park.

For more information, including a complete schedule of performances, visit [www.jazzsa.org](http://www.jazzsa.org).

## **9th Annual International Accordion Festival**

Oct. 9-11, La Villita

Held every year at La Villita in downtown San Antonio, the International Accordion Festival features an extraordinary combination of artists from around the world. Visitors can expect performances, workshops, open mic sessions, accordion jams and invitations to dance to the music.

Friday night, Oct. 9, at the Arneson River Theatre, patrons are invited to enjoy a special tribute to Tejano accordion heroes hosted by Joel Guzman. Admission is \$10 and doors open at 7 p.m.

On Saturday and Sunday, Oct. 10 and 11, admission is free. More than 15 different ensembles will perform on multiple stages throughout the historic grounds of beautiful La Villita. This year experience the spectacular artistry of microtonal Arabic accordion performed by Elias Lammam and the Georges Lammam Ensemble, as well as the virtuosity of the Ivan Milev Band, masters of Bulgarian folk music. Also appearing are master



accordionist/composer Guy Klucevsek, the Zydepunks, Argentine bandoneon player Daniel Diaz, Hugh Morrison and Lone Star Stout, and Jo Miller's Burly Roughnecks, to name a few.

For a complete list of performances, go to [www.internationalaccordionfestival.org](http://www.internationalaccordionfestival.org).

## **Dia De Los Muertos**

Nov. 2, Centro Cultural Aztlan

Since 1977, Centro Cultural Aztlan has opened its doors to residents and visitors of San Antonio with an invitation to take part in the biggest and oldest Dia de los Muertos celebration.

On Nov. 2, Centro Cultural Aztlan will observe this day with lead artist Luis Valderas, along with 30 of San Antonio's most talented and credentialed artists. Together they will create a Dia de los Muertos experience unlike any before, exploring the complex yet brief life of the Zempasúchil (marigold) that symbolizes the short nature of our own lives. The scent of the Zempasúchil will guide visitors into Galeria Expresión, where altares y ofrendas, created by local artists and young people from the community, welcome the past once again. This event illustrates the artistic, cultural and religious facets of this popular pre-Columbian/Mexican tradition.

A reception for the artists will start at 6 p.m. with a Native American blessing of the altares y ofrendas. The event will also feature a procession by Urban-15 Carnaval de San Anto and the traditional pan de muerto y ponche de frutas that are essential to this celebration.

The event is free and open to the public. For more information, go to [www.sacalveras.com](http://www.sacalveras.com)

## **New World Wine and Food Festival**

Nov. 10-15, various locations

The New World Wine and Food Festival features something for everyone, regardless of age or culinary taste. From a black-tie event, a grand tasting, winemaker dinners and a day of family fun, the variety of festival events guarantee that you will find something to please your palate.

The NWWFF is a nonprofit organization promoting San Antonio as a premier wine and food destination and supporting local students in culinary arts and food-related aid organizations. In addition to festivities in November,

other events also are planned throughout the year. For a schedule of events, go to [www.nwwff.org](http://www.nwwff.org).

## **15th Annual Mariachi Vargas Extravaganza**

Nov. 15-21, Municipal Auditorium / Mission San Jose

Texas' largest and longest-running mariachi music event of its kind is preparing for its 2009 festival in San Antonio Nov. 15-21. The 15th Annual Mariachi Vargas Extravaganza is a seven-day mariachi music festival that brings together more than 15,000 mariachi aficionados and 1,000 of the greatest mariachi musicians and vocalists from the United States and Mexico who perform throughout the week in celebration of the beautiful cultural traditions of Mexico. The event includes a mariachi Mass at the San Jose Mission, mariachi group and vocal competitions at Municipal Auditorium and a mariachi-themed art exhibit. The highlight of the Mariachi Extravaganza is a concert featuring the world-renowned Mexico City-based Mariachi Vargas de Tecalitlán which celebrates 112 years of existence this year.

For more information, visit [www.mariachimusic.com](http://www.mariachimusic.com).

Note: Laura Cardenas, Malena Gonzalez-Cid, Pat Jasper, Ginger McAnear, Michael Mehl and Robb Wasielewski contributed to this article.

### **Photo Credits**

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*Ghost Towns*

Photo by Berthold Steinhilber

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Hugh Texas Skye

Photo courtesy International Accordion Festival

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Wine Tasting

Photo courtesy NWW&FF

