

# Travel San Antonio: Highlight Your Calendar for this Photography Festival 56

By [blue dog](#)

Each year, **San Antonio** plays host to a number of famous festivals. The city's visual arts spotlight, however, shines brightest on **FOTOSEPTIEMBRE USA®** International Photography Festival, held annually in San Antonio and the nearby Texas hill country. This year's festival dates are August 20 - October 8. Pencil it in on your photography calendars.

## A Center of International Photography

FOTOSEPTIEMBRE USA began in 1996 as a small group of conferences and exhibits. As they say, the rest is history. By 2000, the San Antonio community had embraced the festival. Due in part to photography's popularity, a fine-tuned organizational approach, and an exhibition oriented festival atmosphere, FOTOSEPTIEMBRE USA has grown each year, both in significance and size. As stated on its website, the festival provides "a nexus and a context in which photographic artists exhibit and profit from their work." It's all about the art. This festival features regional, national, and international photographers; exhibits are now held in San Antonio as well as the neighboring towns of Boerne, Kerrville, New Braunfels, and [Fredericksburg](#).

Venues in these cities and towns range from museums to coffeehouses and are transformed into sought-after photography galleries during the festival. On display you will find a selection of fine photographic works ranging from famous photography to student photography, established to emerging, all sharing a common thread: a group of international photographers who see differently, who challenge themselves, and who are committed to their craft. It's about having more than talent and a good eye, as it should be. Subject matter is as varied as one would imagine it could be at a center of international photography. Michael Mehl, Festival Director, states, "It is a unique animal in the world of festivals."



[Frida Kahlo and Leo Matiz](#)

**Amazon Price:**



[Frida Kahlo: Portraits Of An Icon](#)

**Amazon Price:** \$42.54  
**List Price:** \$65.00



[Camera Obscura](#)

**Amazon Price:** \$39.89  
**List Price:** \$60.00



[Abelardo Morell \(Monographs\)](#)

**Amazon Price:** \$19.93  
**List Price:** \$49.95



In San Antonio, PHOTOSEPTIEMBRE USA® is one of the premier international

## Community Involvement

Several factors play important parts in the festival's ongoing success. The festival itself continues to foster its belief in photography as an art form and as a means of cultural expression. It also takes pride in the fact that the opportunities created benefit the artist through advancement, the communities through economic development, and the the public through outreach.

It is a community festival, one in which everyone contributes. Each event carries equal weight, an aggregate of the whole. Partnering with city organizations as well as an individual involvement has fostered a win-win situation, which in turn has helped ensure the community's embrace. By seeking out exhibition space, artists can - in conjunction with the festival - organize their own exhibit. Although the festival may include well known artists, festival quality is not diminished through over-promotion of headliner acts, as is the case in many parts of the creative community.

It's also an open event. There are no gatekeepers - those infamous individuals who can make or break an artist's career - or personal agendas here. The success of the artist is determined by the success of the festival, and vice versa. It's a simple concept that works well in the international arena of beautiful photography.

This celebration is open to everyone, from the working pro to the student of [photography](#) to the friends of photography. For convenience, many of the exhibit openings are scheduled by geographic location, on the same date. This benefits the artists and venues from increased attendance and allows the public to see more exhibits, with easier access, on a given evening.

## Promoting Online

So successful and respected the festival has become that Mehl and Ann Kinser, Festival Coordinator, now find themselves working 2-3 years in advance. In addition to the festival, online exhibitions are an integral part of this promotion of international photography. For the individual committed to the craft of photography and who is interested in advancing his/her career, guidelines for the festival and web galleries are available on the FOTOSEPTIEMBRE USA website.

For the perfect end to summer, and a great start to the autumn events schedule, this annual photography celebration is a "door-opener" festival, one where seeing is believing.