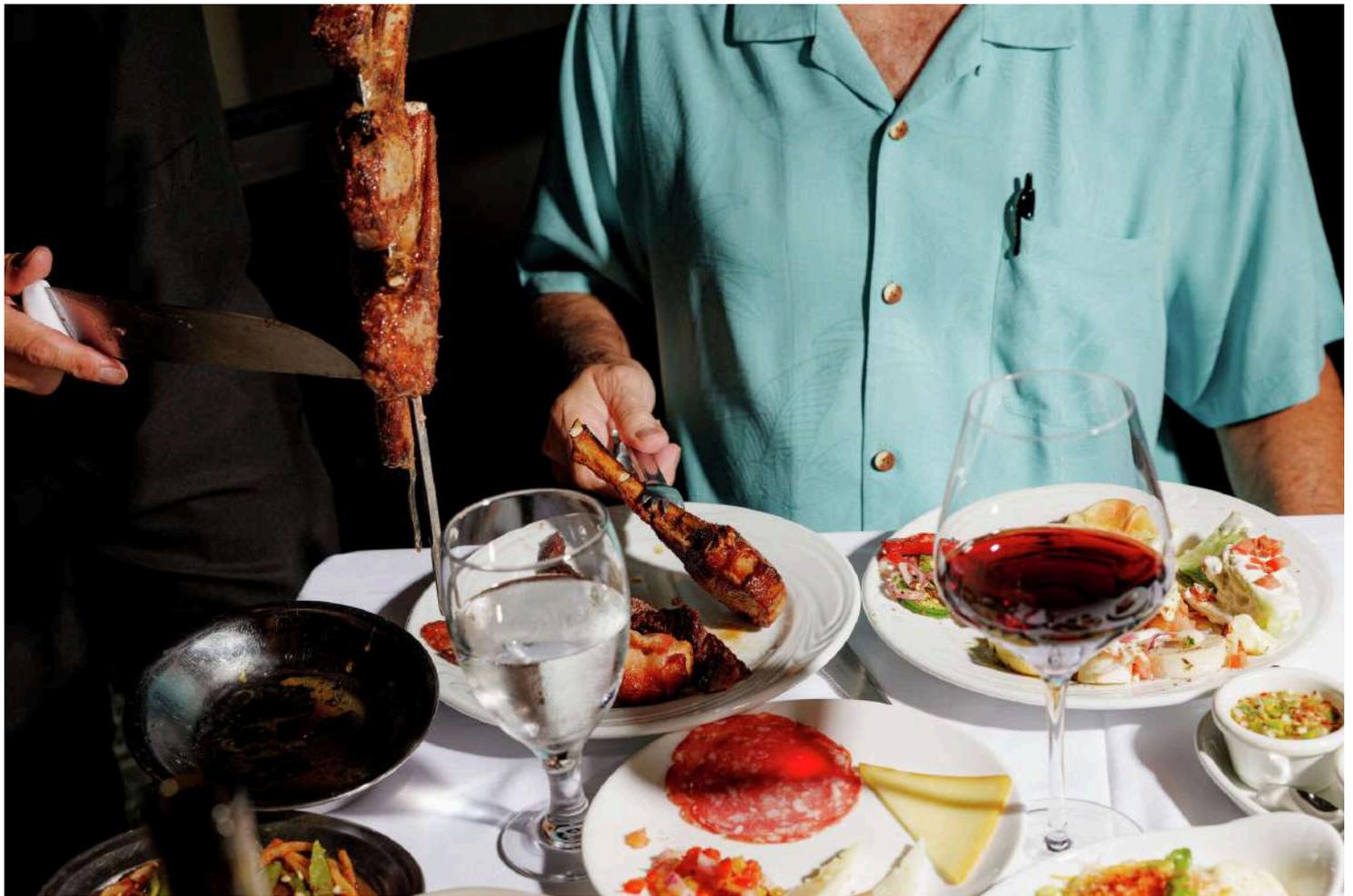


Mike Sutter's Top 10 Restaurants to Dine Alone in San Antonio

With Valentine's Day on the horizon, our critic ranks the best places to eat your feelings with a side of fries.



Sam Owens/San Antonio Express-News

By **Mike Sutter** | Feb. 4, 2026 10:00 a.m.

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When I was younger, I could remember anything, whether it had happened or not. Mark Twain said that. There's some things you couldn't make up, whether they happened or not. I said that.

pool table at Oak Hills Tavern doing this story on Top 10 Restaurants to Dine Alone, and [“All By Myself”](#) started playing on the digital jukebox. Hand to heart, a big fat slice of '70s cheese to go with my duck confit taco and my Cheeto-cruste shrimp. Blue-collar food with sit-down sensibilities, because eating by yourself at a dive bar on Fredericksburg Road doesn't mean settling for less. Even for those times when less is all you need.



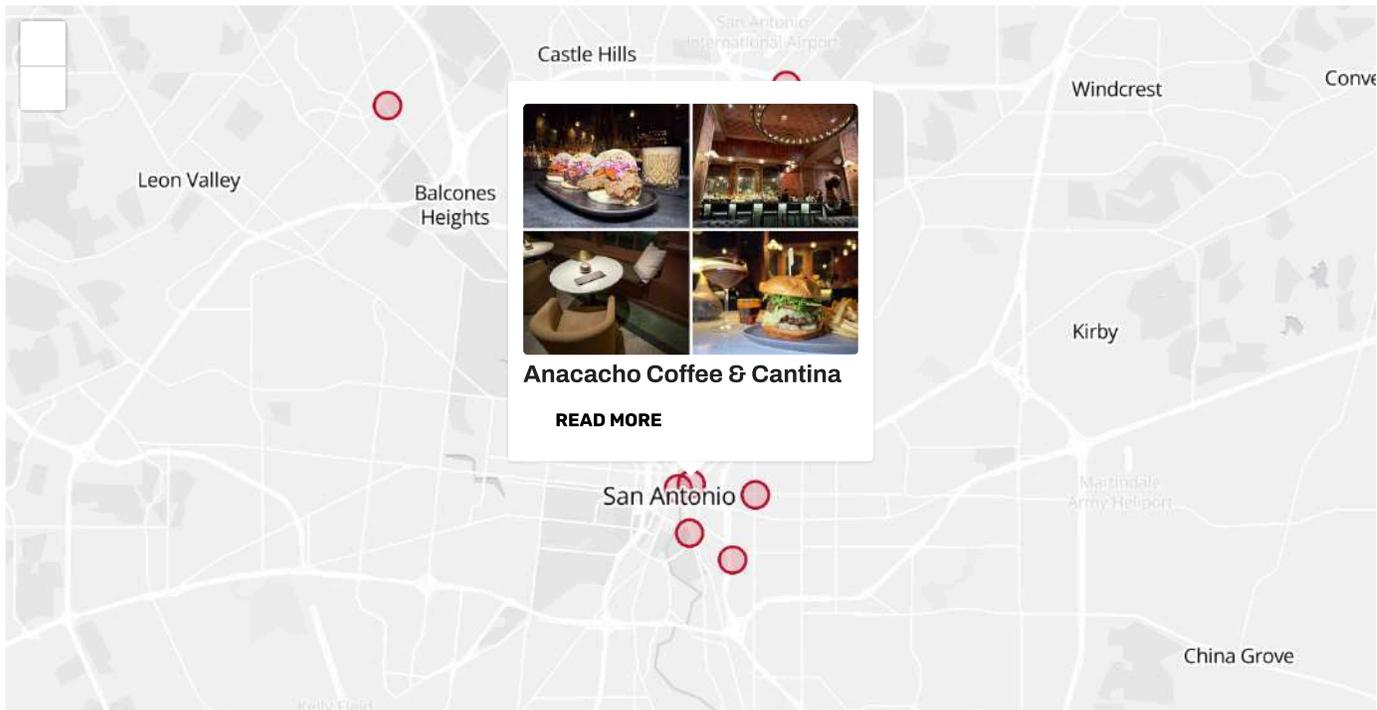
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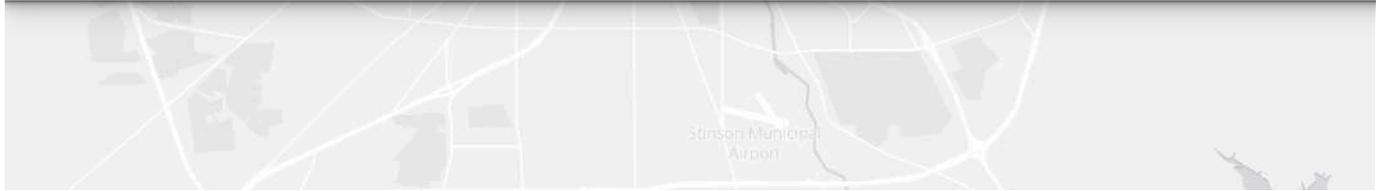
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Why go solo so close to Valentine's Day? I did [Top 10 Romantic Restaurants last Valentine's \(and best restaurants for breaking up\)](#). And I love the community of shared tables. But the fact is, I'm at restaurants by myself most of the time. It's usually a choice, often a necessity, but never a cry for help. I think I speak for most every party of one when I say I'm not secretly hoping for a party of more.

So where can you go to be a part of something and be apart from it at the same time? The short answer is anywhere you damn well please. This isn't "Mad Men." But here's a mix of bars and diners and nice restaurants where one is the magic number. Welcome to our first-ever ranking of the Top 10 Restaurants to Dine Alone in San Antonio.





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Kaedama Battleship

122 E. Houston St., Suite 103 [SEE ON MAP](#) | [ADD TO WISHLIST](#)



Mike Sutter/San Antonio Express-News

It's 11 o'clock on a downtown Saturday night. You've just left the Majestic or the Aztec or the Tobin. Too early to go home, too late for most restaurants. But the lights stay on till midnight at Kaedama Battleship, the Japanese noodle shop and beer bar that restaurateur Chad Carey opened in November. Let the lights cast your silhouette to the sidewalk as you recover and refuel with a cold Kirin Ichiban beer, a row of crispy beef pocket dumplings and a bowl of tonkotsu ramen with pearled pork bone broth. With a messy front-row view of the city at night, you can pretend you're anywhere. But right here's good for right now.

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9

Gimme Gimme

803 S. St. Mary's St. [SEE ON MAP](#) | [ADD TO WISHLIST](#)



Mike Sutter/San Antonio Express-News

Gimme Gimme's one of those extra-dark, super-loud places to be by yourself with lots of other people, especially on a Spurs game night, or on Wednesday nights for Steak Night with rib-eye au poivre and duck-fat fries. The bar menu's animated by the team behind Bar Loretta, which means a high-low alchemy that might include a clean gin martini, a Miller High Life pony and a shot of Fernet Branca on the same table. They just announced that the downtown hot dog wagon El Weinecero is taking over the kitchen Thursday through Sunday, bringing the outside spirit inside, just when you thought Gimme Gimme couldn't get any rowdier. And sometimes, that's exactly the way you want it.

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The 24-hour Jim's at Broadway and 410

8427 Broadway [SEE ON MAP](#) | ADD TO WISHLIST



Mike Sutter/San Antonio Express-News

The faded sign out front says, “Open 24 Hours,” the same as it’s been saying for all of the post-pandemic years since Jim’s stopped being a 24-hour operation. They brought this location back to 24-hour status this winter, just when we needed it most. And there’s something about sitting in a booth by yourself at 4 a.m. with pancakes and eggs and coffee and the sounds of your fellow night owls around you. Everything is sharper. The coffee is

to resuscitate, to recalibrate for the day to come. The tablescapes for the lone traveler at Jim's spreads far and wide, from tortilla soup to Frontier Burgers to breakfast, lunch and dinner and beyond. And that's where the magic happens, in the beyond times.

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Signature

16401 La Cantera Parkway at La Cantera Resort & Spa [**SEE ON MAP**](#)

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Mike Sutter/San Antonio Express-News

If it seems counterintuitive to put my choice for the city's [No. 1 romantic restaurant](#) on this list, I get it. But for those nights when being by yourself means treating yourself, this Michelin-recommended retreat at La Cantera means indulging in a menu that celebrates the full white-tablecloth spectrum: oysters, caviar, quail, venison, steaks and a chef's tasting menu that stands among the city's strongest values, with a French country ambiance, wine program and uniformed service to match.

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6

The Magpie

1602 E. Houston St., Suite 106 [SEE ON MAP](#) | [ADD TO WISHLIST](#)



Mike Sutter/San Antonio Express-News

This year, the James Beard Awards recognized chef Sue Kim of The Magpie with a semifinalist nomination for Best Chef: Texas. They're finally figuring out something we've known all along: That her inventive Korean cooking has knocked down barriers — and walls — to expand the restaurant's physical space and our appreciation of a menu that includes spicy chicken called dak galbi ssam, a plate of crispy pork belly and an appetizer of coffee-cured duck. Even though the dining room has doubled in size, Magpie still feels as close and comfortable as your best friend's living room, but with a better wine selection. A seat at the bar, a spot outside, a two-top with room for just you. Nevermind the crowd; you're the only one that matters at Magpie.

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Cullum's Attaboy

111 Kings Court [SEE ON MAP](#) | [ADD TO WISHLIST](#)



Jo E. Norris/San Antonio Express-News

The restaurant's a Michelin Bib Gourmand honoree. The chef's been a James Beard finalist. The Express-News gave it a rare five-star rating. But Cullum's Attaboy is still a neighborhood joint where you walk up to the counter for champagne, caviar, truffled eggs, duck bigarade and the city's best brisket-and-egg sandwich. There's jazz in the air, self-serve hot coffee by the door and a seat waiting at the bar by the kitchen. S.A meets L.A. without losing itself along the way.

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7920 Fredericksburg Road [SEE ON MAP](#) | [ADD TO WISHLIST](#)

Mike Sutter/San Antonio Express-News

I'd guess that "All By Myself" isn't too far off the mark for David Gates, who opened Oak Hills Tavern in 1995 as a place to hang out, cook and philosophize according to his own rules. "I cook for my own pleasure," Gates told me a few years back. "Everything on this menu is something I like to eat. Period." That "something" includes shredded duck confit that behaves like carnitas in a taco dressed with grilled peppers and onions. Yes, duck confit, in a bar with a coin-operated pool table and drinks with names like Jolly Rancher and Hurricane Chelsea and a shuffleboard table with a storied tilt that gives the regulars an edge. Gates makes his own pizza dough, which means he also bakes his own bread using that same pizza dough, a bread that toasts firm and crunchy outside with a marshmallow heart, a bread

fried shrimp fortified by Flamin' Hot Cheetos.

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3

Chama Gaucha Brazilian Steakhouse

18318 Sonterra Place [SEE ON MAP](#) | [ADD TO WISHLIST](#)



Sam Owens/San Antonio Express-News

Buffets are a natural fit for the solo table. Get up and get what you want when you want it. But most buffets remind us that if less is more, sometimes more is way too much. I'll make an exception for Chama Gaucha, the very model of a Brazilian steakhouse, with grilled rib-eye, picanha, lamb chops, filet mignon and most anything that fits on a steel spit sliced to order at your table by roving gauchos. Add a salad bar with fat stalks of asparagus, a meat-and-cheese board, wedge salads, gleaming red peppers and marinated mushrooms, and you've rediscovered why Chama Gaucha is my [No. 1 restaurant in Stone Oak](#). It's also a great value, with the full steak-and-salad buffet experience for less than you'd pay for a steak all by itself at a national chain.

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2

Reese Bros Barbecue

906 Hoefgen Ave. [SEE ON MAP](#) | [ADD TO WISHLIST](#)



Mike Sutter/San Antonio Express-News

The story of Reese Bros is the story of Texas barbecue itself, a low and slow rise from pop-up project to last year's Michelin Guide recommendation. And sure, Texas barbecue is a group project, the kind of thing you create a text string for, because everybody needs to be there at 11:30 so you can save a table. But when you get to the ordering window, it's just you and BBQ. You and fatty brisket. You and pork ribs and queso fundido sausage. You and poblano mac and okra beans. In other words, you and the Reese brothers. Alone together. Because nobody needs to see the faces you make when you eat brisket like this.

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Cantina

300 E. Travis St. at the St. Anthony hotel [SEE ON MAP](#) | ADD TO WISHLIST

Mike Sutter/San Antonio Express-News

Anacacho is a coffee shop by day and a bar by night. And vice versa. And a restaurant in-between. And because it's all of those things inside the posh St. Anthony hotel downtown, it's not unusual for travelers and guests to wander in by themselves. There's a row of seats along the bar and a bank of two-top tables by the windows waiting for them, and a menu that doesn't just fill in the gaps between caffeine and alcohol buzzes, it earned Anacacho and chef Leo Davila a James Beard nomination for Best New Restaurant. Bao buns with pork belly and kimchi. Tacos with barbacoa and Big Red. A burger with wagyu beef and tomato jam. Something to let out-of-towners

right alongside Davila's flagship restaurant Esencia, opening across the hall from Anacacho on Wednesday.

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