



# WILD, WEIRD, AND WESTERN IN AUSTIN, TX

Exploring Themed Events  
Outside the Expected  
Locations



When Danone of Americas came to us with a “Frontier” theme for their Evian water team’s corporate sustainability event, we took the pioneering spirit literally by combining the Wild West with modern-day spirit. That means going to Austin, Texas where the Lone Star State’s hospitality has a signature twist. The locals there like to say, “Keep Austin Weird,” which means it is artistic and creative, as well as thoroughly Western. Our team went and scouted the city for the perfect mix of venues and activities.

## THE ASK

The three-day event in February 2019 would be hosting about 100 guests from New York, many of whom had never visited the Texas state capital before. There would need to be a kick-off event, several meetings, lunch and dinners, learning sessions, entertainment, and a closing event.

## THE ANSWER

The VIBE team established “home base” at The LINE Hotel Austin, a facility less than a year old at the time and with 428 total guest rooms and 20,000 square feet of event space. The semi-boutique location is a historic building with tons of character. It had formerly been a jazz club in the 1960s, and its creative legacy continues on with avant-garde culinary experiences such as Arlo Grey, the flagship restaurant of Chef Kristen Kish, winner of Top Chef season 10. This became the spot for the kick-off event, complete with views of Lady Bird Lake and the sunset.

For the meetings VIBE’s team booked The Sunset Room, a gallery-style space with exposed brick walls, wood rafters, and pine floors – all of which served as a perfect backdrop for talks about sustainability, corporate development, and “moving into a new frontier.” This was followed up by lunch at Max’s Wine Dive for authentic fried chicken and deviled eggs. That same evening, the group had buffet dinner at Speakeasy, a triple-level lounge space with music from a live band. Some attendees even learned how to Texas Two-Step.

The learning and teambuilding event was a city-wide scavenger hunt to discover true Austin culture. For instance, one team had to locate the spot for brisket barbecue. Others had to find other pieces of Austin together and bring back their experiences to share with the group.

The closing dinner and gala was held at Star Hill Ranch – a picturesque setting that’s far more upscale than a typical dude ranch. Nestled into the Texas Hill Country just 30 minutes outside the city, the spot is frequently used for location shooting for film and TV. The location features a Main Street with mini lights crisscrossing the street and the venue buildings surround the street like a miniature Old West Town. Dinner was accompanied by a live band, DJ, and actors dressed like characters from Western movies, and more.

## THE VIBE



By giving attendees a true escape from their everyday environments, it primed people to be open and receptive to new ideas and concepts. “When we get the chance to create a total custom experience where all the elements blend together seamlessly, it always shows in the reaction of the attendees,” says Valerie Bihet, VIBE’s founder. “In a city like Austin, going beyond the norm offers plenty of unique and memorable interactions that can inspire and motivate teams in powerful ways.”

## CLIENT TESTIMONIAL:

*VIBE Agency provided an outstanding service from the lodging facilities to the restaurants and activities crafted just for us. Once again our event was a success and I thank you and your team for all that you've done.*