

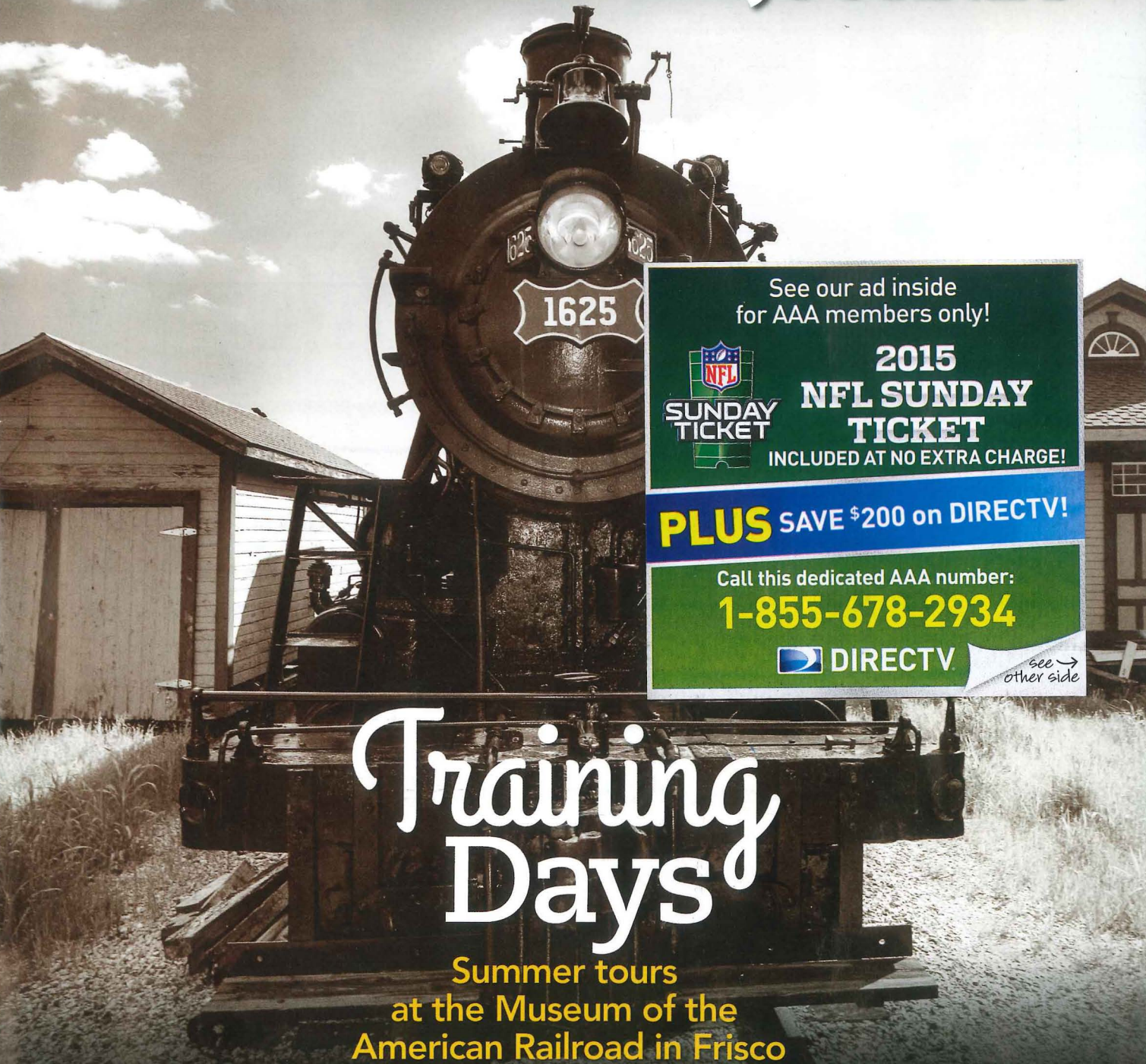


JULY/AUGUST 2015

# Texas

## JOURNEY

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# Training Days

Summer tours  
at the Museum of the  
American Railroad in Frisco

**PLUS:** A FRENCH HOLIDAY | CALIFORNIA BEACH TOWNS  
GOINGPLACES: WHERE TO PLAY IN ASPEN



[ TEXAS RESTAURANTS WORTH THE STOP ]

# Legendary ROAD FOOD



(Clockwise from top left) Large windows offer river views; steaks and onion ring towers are hot menu items; pecan pie à la mode is a sweet finish.



## Gristmill River Restaurant and Bar

1287 Gruene Road, New Braunfels  
(830) 625-0684; [gristmillrestaurant.com](http://gristmillrestaurant.com)

The Gristmill was launched in 1977 in the Gruene Historic District of shops, restaurants, and a legendary dance hall. Situated in the boiler room of a 19th-century cotton mill that had burned down more than a half-century earlier, the restaurant's menu was limited to steaks and burgers. Nearly 40 years later, it specializes in ... steaks and burgers. But little else has remained the same about either the location or its food.

After several expansions, the restaurant, shaded by oak trees on a bluff overlooking the Guadalupe River, now has 10 dining areas, indoors and outdoors, and can seat several hundred people during peak times. And the menu has been buttressed with several chicken and seafood entrées, as well as soups, salads, and more.

"We keep an eye on trends and tweak things every now and then," says proprietor Pat Molak. "In the last 10 years, we've

added ribs as an ongoing special, which go especially well with our atmosphere, and they've become one of our best-sellers."

On a crisp March afternoon, I ate by the fireplace in the River Room, all limestone and wood and floor-to-ceiling windows overlooking the Guadalupe. My T-bone steak came with a nice, dark sear that preserved the beefy flavor, and the meat came easy off the bone. For my side, I chose crunchy Gruene Beans, glistening in a light butter sauce and studded with chunks of bacon and tomato.

The plate was preceded by an ample garden salad—the Gristmill believes in big sides—and followed by a slice of Jack Daniel's pecan pie, which was fortified with chocolate chips and just a hint of everyone's favorite whiskey.

The only thing missing was the sight of tubers bobbing down the river, but I knew they'd be along in a couple more months.

—John Morthland

## Summertime FUN



The Gruene Historic District, part of New Braunfels, is **prime tubing territory**. Several seating areas in the restaurant offer views of the river, which, during the toasty summer season, is virtually covered bank-to-bank with smart Texans who know how to cool off.  
(800) 572-2626; [innewbraunfels.com](http://innewbraunfels.com).

CLOCKWISE FROM BOTTOM: THINKSTOCK/THOMAS NORTH CUT; KIMBERLY DAVIS (3)