

USA Today ranks San Marcos River second-best tubing spot in the nation

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Photo by: [Lara Dietrich](#) | Multimedia Editor

A crystal clear reason San Marcos River places second-best in the United States.

The San Marcos River is getting national attention with its near crystal clear waters and a year-round 72 degree temperature, providing locals and university students a way to cool off and relax in the Texas heat.

USA Today named the San Marcos River [the second-best river for tubing in America](#).

Kristi Wyatt, City of San Marcos director of communications, said *USA Today* reached out to the department saying it had created a list of places across the country for best river tubing. The city then created a poll using social media to publicize the contest in San Marcos in which residents could vote. The final list, which features the top 10 best rivers for tubing, was voted on by *USA Today* readers and people who took the poll.

The publication said the river, which is fed by hundreds of natural springs in the city's center, is one of the most popular tubing destinations in Texas.

Wyatt said it is an honor to be voted second in the nation, but it's no secret our river is one of the best around.

"We've always known that our river is a great asset and we work really hard here at the city to make sure that we take care of it and preserve it," Wyatt said. "We are very thankful that other people recognize that it is a beautiful spot and we've done a good job of protecting it."

Besides the 72 degree temperature, the cleanliness and the clear waters, there are many different ways to enjoy our river. Wyatt said this is a great spot for families to gather, vacationers to retreat to and college students to enjoy after class. Being that the river is conveniently located between Austin and San Antonio, it is also the perfect spot for vacationers to enjoy a little bit of the outdoors in San Marcos while also exploring our regional partners.

Rio Rodriguez, Texas State alumnus and owner of San Marvelous, said he wouldn't be here without the river. Rodriguez obtained a fashion merchandising and business administration degree, and has called San Marcos home for more than 10 years. With a store dedicated to honoring the city in all of its "marvelousness," Rodriguez is excited about the second place title.

"We love our river and we love tubing the river," Rodriguez said. "It's something that we didn't recognize as being one of the best places in the country for it, but it's pretty neat that we are."

Alongside floating the river when he has the chance, Rodriguez is also an active promoter for preserving the river and donating resources to organizations for that purpose.

Nancy Kinstler, geography environmental research management junior, works at the Lions Club Tube Rental and the Outdoor Center at Texas State. These jobs cater to her passion of working on the river, which she feels is the bloodline of San Marcos.

"It's a huge ecosystem," Kinstler said. "There's so much you can learn from it. We need to protect it as a whole community and keep it beautiful."

The river not only serves San Marcos as a recreational area, but it's home to many endangered species, such as the Texas wild rice, the Texas blind salamander and the San Marcos salamander.

Wyatt said it's the only place on the planet where some of these species exist.

The San Marcos River is one of a kind, and caters to an estimated one million people per year according to the Visitors Bureau in San Marcos.

"There's a lot of life," Kinstler said. "This is the best feature of the whole town."