

Musical Heritage Tour



DAY 1

MEMPHIS TO TUPELO 104 Miles

On your way from Memphis to Tupelo, travel through picturesque Holly Springs, known for its many antebellum homes and churches. You'll find Graceland Too, home of the self-proclaimed "Number One Elvis Fan," to be a memorable stop. Here, Paul McLeod and his son Elvis Aaron Presley McLeod have transformed their home into a shrine to The King. In Tupelo, tour the humble, two-room house where Elvis was born, the Elvis Presley Museum, and memorial chapel. Explore a number of sites important to Elvis' early life—the school where he performed "Old Shep" in a talent show, the hardware store where he purchased his first guitar and the fairgrounds where he performed early in his career. Tupelo honors its famous native son every June during the Elvis Presley Festival.

DAY 2

TUPELO TO OXFORD 47 Miles
OXFORD TO CLARKSDALE 62 Miles

Total – 109 Miles

Oxford is a charming college town immortalized in the writings of William Faulkner and the part-time home of blockbuster novelist John Grisham. Begin with a tour of Rowan Oak, Faulkner's tranquil country home, where the outline of his novel, *A Fable*, is scribbled on the study wall. Next stop is the campus of the University of Mississippi, affectionately known as "Ole Miss." Tour the Center for the Study of Southern Culture, a research center for Southern music, literature and folklore housed in an antebellum observatory. Visit the University of Mississippi Blues Archive, the only research facility in the country dedicated to the study of the blues, which houses artifacts, photographs and recordings, as well as the personal collection of blues legend and Mississippi native B. B. King. From Oxford continue into the fabled Mississippi Delta where the blues was born. Clarksdale is the home of blues greats W. C. Handy, Charlie Patton, Muddy Waters, John Lee Hooker, Robert Johnson and Howlin' Wolf, and a mecca for modern day blues fans. Head for the Clarksdale Station, Blues Alley and the Delta Blues Museum—the place to bone up on the blues, take a look at Muddy Waters' modest cabin and purchase CDs and souvenirs. Tonight, have a gourmet meal at a white tablecloth restaurant owned by actor Morgan Freeman or a down-home catfish dinner served in a plantation commissary-turned-social club. Wrap up with a visit to a new blues club or authentic juke joint for some live music.

DAY 3

CLARKSDALE TO CLEVELAND 36 Miles
CLEVELAND TO GREENVILLE 36 Miles

GREENVILLE TO LELAND 8 Miles
LELAND TO GREENWOOD 45 Miles
GREENWOOD TO YAZOO CITY 53 Miles
YAZOO CITY TO JACKSON 47 Miles

Total – 225 Miles

Travel south through fertile land to Cleveland's Dockery Farms, a historic plantation listed as the possible birthplace of the blues. A barn bearing the plantation name and dates of operation is a popular photo opportunity. On to Greenville, where you can try your luck at the casinos along the Mississippi River levee or immerse yourself in Native American culture at Winterville Mounds, one of the largest Indian mound groups in the Mississippi Valley. If you're visiting on the third Saturday in September, plan to attend the Delta Blues & Heritage Festival, an all-day, outdoor blowout featuring the best in blues entertainment. From Greenville, stop in Leland, home of Muppets® creator Jim Henson. Tour the Highway 61 Blues Museum to learn even more about the Mississippi Delta Blues. Next, follow Highway 82 to Greenwood, where you can take a walking tour of historic Cotton Row, the second-largest cotton exchange in the United States, then shop for souvenirs in the charming downtown area. Tour Greenwood's Blues Heritage Gallery, dedicated to Robert Johnson, the renowned "King of the Delta Blues." Continue through the Delta to Yazoo City, take the Yazoo City Blues Tour and learn about Bentonia Blues and the Skip James connection. Press on to Jackson and enjoy blues, rock and country music at one of the local clubs.

DAY 4 JACKSON TO MERIDIAN 93 Miles Your next stop is Meridian's Highland Park and the Jimmie Rodgers Museum. Born in Meridian in 1897, Rodgers recorded his first song, "Sleep, Baby, Sleep," in 1927. The record sold more than one million copies and earned Rodgers national fame, but his career was cut short when he died of tuberculosis in 1933. In 1961, Rodgers became the first inductee into the newly-formed Country Music Hall of Fame. Meridian's memorial to the "Father of Country Music" features Rodgers' original guitar, personal belongings and other memorabilia from his short but noteworthy career. Much of today's music is produced on equipment manufactured in Meridian by Peavey Electronics Corporation. The Peavey Visitors Center features artifacts from the company's early history and includes a hands-on display of current Peavey products, including guitars, amplifiers and keyboards.