

Traveling the Mississippi Blues Trail

The Mississippi Delta is the home of the Blues and the heart of the Trail

Mississippi Delta Tourism Association

For die-hard Blues fans, it’s nirvana. For music lovers it’s eye-opening. For travelers in the Mississippi Delta it’s an unforgettable journey. The Mississippi Blues Trail is a favorite way for music lovers to explore the Delta. Trail markers tell the stories of the Blues and the Delta is at the center of that story. From the Gateway to the Blues in Tunica to the famed crossroads (where Highway 61 and Highway 49 intersect) in Clarksdale, all the way down to Vicksburg, that “lively river port” that fostered so many Blues performers, the stories are riveting.

Following the trail is the ideal way to hear those stories and to learn of the people and places that played pivotal roles in the roots of modern music. The sites range from downtown streets to farmlands, riverbanks to cemeteries and churches to juke joints. Here’s our suggestion for



Dockery Plantation is said to be the birthplace of the Blues. The Mississippi Blues Trail Marker there tells the story. (Photo Credit: Cleveland Mississippi Tourism)

some essential stops on the Delta Blues tour, just to get your started.

A great first stop is the Gateway to the Blues Museum (13625 US Highway 61 North, Tunica Resorts, Mississippi 38664) in Tunica. Take in interactive exhibits, stories of native Bluesmen and amazing art and guitar collections.

Head to Clarksdale to visit the Delta Blues Museum (#1 Blues Alley, Clarksdale, Mississippi 38614), which showcases the history of the Blues in the region and features an extensive Muddy Waters exhibit. You can find music in Clarksdale every night of the week and favorite spots include Red’s Lounge (398 Sunflower Avenue, Clarksdale, Mississippi 38614) and Ground Zero Blues Club (387 Delta Avenue, Clarksdale, Missis-

issippi 38614).

Take Highway 49 and head to Greenwood to visit the graves—and learn the lore—of Robert Johnson.

Continue on Highway 49 to Yazoo County and check out the legendary Blue Front Café (107 East Railroad Avenue, Bentonia, Mississippi 39040). Considered the oldest active juke joint in Mississippi, this is where the Bentonia Blues was born and can still be heard.

Head to Indianola to pay homage to the King of the Delta Blues at the B.B. King Museum and Delta Interpretive Center (400 Second Street, Indianola, Mississippi 38751). This state-of-the-art showcase is the highlight, but there are classic venues and other trail stops in town, as well.

No trip is complete without a visit to the GRAMMY Museum® Mississippi (800 West Sunflower Road, Cleveland, Mississippi 38732) in Cleveland. Documenting more than Blues music, this amazing facility houses more than two dozen exhibits exploring music history and the stories of GRAMMY® award-win-

ning songs and musicians.

Of course, purists will want to visit to the birthplace of it all, Dockery Farms (229 Highway 8, Cleveland, Mississippi 38732), just outside of Cleveland. It’s said that Charley Patton started it all at this very spot along the river.

Next, travel to Leland to visit the Highway 61 Blues Museum (307 North Broad Street, Leland, Mississippi 38756) which honors local favorites who have left their mark on the world’s music. Nearby, you’ll find live Blues music in Greenville’s entertainment district along Walnut Street.

Heading down Highway 61 to Vicksburg you can visit the Muddy Waters Cabin in Rolling Fork. Vicksburg offers several spots for live music, as well as the stories of famed venues, like the Blue Room, from days gone by.

This music, which is at the heart of the Delta culture, provides so much more than a soundtrack for a trip through the Delta. It is a window to the past and a foundation for the amazing artists of all genres throughout the

region—and the world—today.

On your next trip to visit the Delta, why not travel the Trail and celebrate the Blues?

If you go

Many come for music and fall in love with the food! A trip through the Delta is a feast for the taste buds. Local catfish, whether fried up like the old days or finessed by award-winning chefs, is a specialty here. Then there are the tamales, in all their variations. Of course, there is the barbecue. And don’t forget to save room for dessert! The folks at Visit the Delta have curated a culinary tour for those who want to enjoy it all. Take their recommendation and Eat Your Way through the Delta!

Unique lodging options add to the character of the Mississippi Delta and make the trip more memorable. Boutique hotels, casino hotels with on-site entertainment, stately historic homes and one-of-a-kind downtown lofts can all be found here. Check out this list of unique properties and plan your Mississippi Delta Blues road trip.



Natalie Winstead showed the Reserve Champion Duroc in the 2020 Holmes County 4-H Livestock Show held Saturday, January 25 at the Holmes County Livestock Barn in Lexington. (Photo by Julie Ellison)



Lilly Word showed the Champion Spot in the 2020 Holmes County 4-H Livestock Show held Saturday, January 25 at the Holmes County Livestock Barn in Lexington. (Photo by Julie Ellison)



John Franklin Johnson showed the Champion Market Barrow in the 2020 Holmes County 4-H Livestock Show held Saturday, January 25 at the Holmes County Livestock Barn in Lexington. (Photo by Julie Ellison)



Falynee Self showed the Reserve Champion Hampshire in the 2020 Holmes County 4-H Livestock Show held Saturday, January 25 at the Holmes County Livestock Barn in Lexington. (Photo by Julie Ellison)