



MEDIA RELEASE

STATE OF TENNESSEE
DEPARTMENT OF TOURIST DEVELOPMENT

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

In Tennessee, the Stage is Set for You!

From the Mississippi River to the Great Smoky Mountains, Tennessee is waiting for you to discover the best of America's riveting history, exciting outdoors, great musical styles, friendly people and mouthwatering foods! Take a back road or stroll city sidewalks; it's all here, so come to Tennessee where you'll be center stage on your next vacation!

Tennessee has endless blockbuster entertainment from Beale Street blues and Elvis's rock 'n' roll in Memphis to Nashville's Music Row's gospel, pop, and country music to the bluegrass of Appalachia. There's also eclectic attractions and events, including fainting goats, Moon Pie and Doodle Soup festivals, fine and folk art galleries, and the one-of-a-kind, places like Chattanooga's Rock City.

Hike through the deep forests of Big South Fork, raft down roaring Olympic gorges of the Ocoee River, follow pioneer footsteps through the Cumberland Gap and the Great Smoky Mountains, and catch a glimpse of the nesting American bald eagles in the cypress trees of Reelfoot Lake. Can't decide? You don't have to. In Tennessee, you're welcome to try a little bit of everything.

History is everywhere, from the homes of U.S. presidents such as Andrew Jackson to the Civil War battlefields of Shiloh and Stones River. Tour the self-guided Antebellum Trail through Davidson, Williamson and Maury counties, and ride along the ancient Natchez Trace Parkway in Middle Tennessee. Travel by paddlewheel in Clarksville and Savannah. Explore English ancestry in Elizabethton and Rugby, and follow the origins of country music in Bristol, Knoxville and Nashville.

And there are museums to showcase it all. The Sequoyah Birthplace Museum in Vonore details Cherokee Heritage, and the American Museum of Science & Energy in Oak Ridge chronicles our transition from the 18th century to the Atomic Age. The Stax Rock 'n' Soul Museum and Sun Studio in Memphis reveal our influential impact on American music in the last 50 years, and the Country Music Hall of Fame and Museum

in Nashville showcases all of country music's roots. The Casey Jones Village in Jackson illustrates one man's deeds in legend and song, and the International Towing Museum in Chattanooga reveals how everything has a history worth telling.

Hear our best music for yourself in small town festivals and attractions. There's the Smithville Fiddler's Jamboree where famous musicians are actually discovered, and the Brownsville Blues Festival rooted in talent that started in the cotton fields and played all the way to Memphis. Dollywood theme park in Pigeon Forge is jam packed with musical shows, and the Cumberland Playhouse in Crossville offers the best in Broadway musicals every year.

Tennessee is a four season state. In deep winter, there's cross country skiing at Roan Mountain State Park. In spring, massive clouds of white dogwood blooms fill the forests of East Tennessee in and around Knoxville. In summer, cool off in Sweetwater's underground Lost Sea, or take a pontoon ride at Birdsong Resort in Camden to see divers harvest freshwater pearls. In the fall, pause under a tree of brilliant fall leaves along one of our state park trails and overlooks. So, what are you waiting for? Come to Tennessee, where you'll be center stage!

West Tennessee

The land between the Tennessee and Mississippi Rivers is a stage rich with natural, historical and cultural drama. The biggest earthquake in American history, an 1811-12 show-stopper gave us Reelfoot Lake near Dyersburg. In West Tennessee, David Crockett lost a Congressional election and left for the Alamo in Texas and a Confederate cavalry attacked a naval vessel and won.

The blues may not have been born here, but the minute they learned to walk, they found their way to Beale Street in Memphis. West Tennessee was the stage for black and white musicians who turned the world on its ear. The Memphis Rock 'n' Soul Museum chronicles this amazing story. Graceland offers an insiders look at the life of Elvis, and Soulsville reveals Stax Records' greats like Sam & Dave, Isaac Hayes and Otis Redding.

Now it's your turn to take the stage in West Tennessee. Walk to the National Civil Rights Museum. See the microphone Elvis sang into at Sun Studio. Take a road trip to Alex Haley's home in Henning, where *Roots* began. Reel in a monster catfish at Birdsong Resort in Camden or Pickwick Landing State Park. Make a whistle-stop at Casey Jones Village in Jackson before going to La Grange, home to the best antebellum homes in the state. West Tennessee invites you to be swept away by the land between the rivers.

Middle Tennessee

You really want to get at the heart of Middle Tennessee? Then hop in the car, grab a map and just listen for the music. You'll hear country, blues, rock... you'd expect *that*. But there's so much more to hear if you know what to listen for.

Like the creak of floorboards in pre-Civil War mansions along the Antebellum Trail. Or an anvil ringing at 1700s Mansker's Station in Goodlettsville. Amid the murmurs of excited antique shoppers in downtown Franklin, the faint echo of Civil War battlefields still haunt the breeze, and in quaint small towns like Pulaski and Murfreesboro, the wind carries whispers of history through museums, courthouses and recreated pioneer villages. Clopping hooves and braying mules punctuate the song of Columbia's Mule Day festival, while impromptu proclamations of love for a little chocolate and marshmallow cake are the beat of Bell Buckle's Moon Pie Festival. Head down the road to Lynchburg, where the trickle of a natural spring yields up some of Mr. Jack Daniel's world-famous sour mash whiskey.

Have a hankering for more natural music? Tennessee's got you covered with the sound of world record bass, jumping in the placid waters of Dale Hollow Lake or doze to the ripples of Old Hickory Lake slapping against the hull of your boat.

When the sun goes down, the notes flow from Nashville's honky tonks and clubs, as the Ryman Auditorium welcomes the Grand Ole Opry back downtown every winter. Fall brings county and state fairs, whirling lights and the screams of delight from children and adults alike. Throughout Middle Tennessee, quiet little places like The Bluebird Café and Green's Grocery play host to songwriters eager to play their songs just for you. The heart of Tennessee is singing to you just down the road, too. Can you hear it?

East Tennessee

There's no doubt about it, East Tennessee is singing your song down from the 6,000-foot ridges in the Great Smoky Mountains National Park, the most visited destination in the country's national park system, to the shaded gorges of the Tennessee, Nolichucky and Holston rivers. Here, settlers living in rustic log cabins, worked hard and created ballads from the heart. Visitors today are welcome to tour some of their restored homesteads as they listen for the echoes of fiddles and dulcimers still ringing through the hills.

There's music in wood craft, too, in towns, like Pigeon Forge, home of Dollywood amusement park, and Gatlinburg, the official "Honeymoon Capital of the

South,” where quality mountain crafts abound. Hear the songs of laughter at outlandish miniature golf courses, zany museums, fabulous outlet shopping malls and dozens of music theaters. Dolly Parton’s home town of Sevierville, even showcases 100 years of high-flying history at The Tennessee Museum of Aviation or you can make your own history in helicopter rides above the clouds.

Our urban areas are diverse – from Knoxville’s vibrant Volunteer waterfront district on the banks of the Tennessee River, and the energy-oriented city of Oak Ridge to the down-home charm of Chattanooga, home of the Tennessee Aquarium and the bustling Tri-Cities area (Bristol, Johnson City and Kingsport) known as “America’s First Frontier.” Park your car at a quaint B&B in Jonesborough and listen to tall tales from our colonial past or celebrate NASCAR at the Bristol Motor Speedway & Dragway where fans can even take a cruising tour down Thunder Valley, the “World’s Fastest Half-Mile” track.

Outdoor enthusiasts can hear the wind sing as they hang-glide at Raccoon Mountain and thrill to the churn of white water as they raft or kayak the Olympic-quality Ocoee River. For the novice, outdoor adventures include hiking a portion of the Appalachian Trail, canoeing the Hiwassee or drifting over the landscape in a colorful hot-air balloon.

Just remember, the stage is set for your next vacation in Tennessee. Order your free travel guide now at www.tnvacation.com or dial 1-800-GO2-TENN.