



48 HOURS IN

Memphis

SLOW DOWN · STAY AWHILE

WELCOME

Welcome to Memphis.

Memphis is where American music was made. Not metaphorically — physically, in specific rooms on specific blocks. The studio at 706 Union Avenue where Sam Phillips recorded Elvis, Johnny Cash, Jerry Lee Lewis, and Carl Perkins in the same eighteen-month window. The converted movie theater on McLemore Avenue where Otis Redding, Sam & Dave, and Booker T. & the M.G.'s cut their records. The clubs on Beale Street where B.B. King played for tips before he had a name. Memphis is where the blues became rock and roll, and where soul music found its sound — and both of those facts are visible, audible, and physically present in the city today.

The city also carries the weight of American history differently than most places. The Lorraine Motel, where Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. was assassinated on April 4, 1968, is now the National Civil Rights Museum — one of the most important and affecting institutions in the United States. Standing in Room 306 changes something. Memphis asks more of its visitors than most American cities, and rewards that attention accordingly. This guide gives you 48 hours built around how Memphis actually works.

How to Use This Guide

- Read through once before you arrive — understand the geography of downtown, Midtown, and South Memphis.
- Day 1 is the music and civil rights axis: the National Civil Rights Museum, Sun Studio, and Beale Street.
- Day 2 moves to Graceland, the Stax Museum, and the Cooper-Young neighborhood.
- Memphis has limited public transit. Lyft/Uber is primary; a rental car is useful for Graceland and Stax.
- Barbecue is the food culture. Central BBQ, the Rendezvous, and Cozy Corner are the three essential experiences.

ESSENTIAL QUICK FACTS

- Currency** USD. Cards everywhere. Cash useful for some BBQ spots and smaller music venues.
- Transport** Limited public transit. MATA bus and free trolley on Main Street. Lyft/Uber primary.
- Weather** Humid subtropical. Hot summers (95°F+), mild winters, spring thunderstorms frequent.
- Time Zone** CST (UTC-6) winter · CDT (UTC-5) summer.
- Emergency** 911 all emergencies. Non-emergency police: 901-545-2677.
- Tipping** 18-20% at restaurants. \$1-2 per drink at bars and music venues.
- Cost note** Coffee \$3-5. Lunch \$12-20. BBQ \$14-25. Dinner \$25-55pp.

DAY ONE

Day One

Civil Rights · Sun Studio · Beale Street

The first day follows the two histories that make Memphis essential: the civil rights movement that changed the country, and the musical revolution that changed the world. These are not separate stories in Memphis — they run through the same streets, the same communities, and the same half-century of American life. Both warrant serious time.

MORNING 9:00 AM – 1:00 PM

9:00 AM

National Civil Rights Museum

The Lorraine Motel at 450 Mulberry Street is where Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. was assassinated on April 4, 1968. The museum built around and through it — one of the most important institutions in the United States — traces the full history of the American civil rights movement from the slave trade through the present day. The preserved room 302 and the balcony where King fell are accessible on the tour. Allow three hours minimum. Book timed entry at civilrightsmuseum.org before you arrive.

INSIDER TIP

This is the most affecting museum in the American South and one of the most affecting anywhere. Book the first available morning slot — the experience deserves full attention before fatigue sets in. The Legacy Building across the street (included in admission) covers the investigation and aftermath and is equally essential. Do not rush this.

12:30 PM

Sun Studio

706 Union Avenue: the studio where Sam Phillips recorded Elvis Presley, Johnny Cash, Jerry Lee Lewis, Carl Perkins, Howlin' Wolf, and B.B. King between 1950 and 1960. The room where 'That's All Right,' 'Rocket 88' (widely considered the first rock and roll record), and 'Blue Suede Shoes' were recorded is intact and in daily use. Hourly tours run continuously; tickets at sunstudio.com. The tour guide's narration includes audio playback on the original equipment.

INSIDER TIP

The tour ends on the actual studio floor, on the exact spot where each recording was made. The microphone Elvis used for 'That's All Right' is still there. The room is small — smaller than you expect — and that smallness is part of the point: this is where American music changed, in a room the size of a living room, on a budget of nothing.

AFTERNOON 1:30 PM – 7:00 PM

1:30 PM

Lunch: Central BBQ or Charles Vergos' Rendezvous

Central BBQ on Central Avenue: the most consistent and widely beloved barbecue restaurant in Memphis — dry-rub ribs, pulled pork, and smoked nachos that have become a minor institution. Long lines at peak hours; arrive early or late. Or Charles Vergos' Rendezvous on General Washburn Alley: the Memphis barbecue legend since 1948, accessed through a downtown alley, serving dry-rub ribs in a cavernous basement that has changed nothing since the Eisenhower administration.

INSIDER TIP

Memphis barbecue is dry-rub, not sauce-forward — the spice blend is rubbed into the meat before smoking, and sauce is served on the side or not at all. The Rendezvous does not take reservations for fewer than six people; arrive at opening (11am weekdays, noon Saturdays) or expect a wait. Both are among the finest barbecue experiences in the American South.

3:00 PM

Memphis Rock 'n' Soul Museum

The Smithsonian-affiliated museum on Beale Street: the definitive account of how Memphis gave birth to rock and roll, soul, and R&B through the specific convergence of African American blues traditions and white country music in the Mississippi Delta region. Seven galleries with 30 video programs, 100 audio selections, and 300 artifacts. The provided audio tour (included) is exceptional — narrated by musicians who were there. Allow ninety minutes minimum.

INSIDER TIP

Start here before Beale Street — the museum provides the cultural context that makes the street itself legible. The gallery on the influence of Memphis radio stations on the national music industry is particularly revelatory. The Smithsonian's curatorial seriousness keeps this above the level of a fan experience.

5:00 PM

Beale Street

The four-block entertainment district between 1st and 4th Streets: the birthplace of the Memphis blues, now a tourist-oriented live music corridor where the history is real even when the presentation is not. B.B. King's Blues Club, Blues City Cafe, and the original Rum Boogie Cafe anchor the strip. The street is closed to traffic on weekend evenings, creating an outdoor music festival atmosphere. Walk the full length before the evening crowds fully arrive.

INSIDER TIP

The best Beale Street experience is 5–8pm on a weekday evening, before the bar-crawl crowd dominates. B.B. King's Blues Club has live music continuously from 11am; the house band is professional and the history of the room is genuine — King played here regularly in his later years. The W.C. Handy statue at the corner of Beale and 3rd marks where the 'Father of the Blues' composed his most influential work.

EVENING 7:30 PM – LATE

7:30 PM

Dinner & Music: Automatic Slim's or Itta Bena

Automatic Slim's on Second Street: a Midtown-meets-downtown kitchen with Caribbean-Southern fusion and the best cocktail list in the downtown core — a local institution that has remained excellent through multiple decades of neighboring restaurants opening and closing. Or Itta Bena, the upstairs restaurant at B.B. King's Blues Club: a white-tablecloth Southern kitchen above the live music floor, with direct sightlines to the stage and a menu that takes the food as seriously as the location suggests it should.

INSIDER TIP

After dinner, the Beale Street venues run live music until 3am on weekends. Blues City Cafe has the best late-night blues band rotation. For something quieter: the Peabody Hotel lobby bar (149 Union Avenue) — the grandest hotel bar in Memphis, marble and brass, a duck fountain in the center, and a sense of occasion that has not changed since 1925.

DAY TWO

Day Two

Graceland · Stax Museum · Cooper-Young

The second day moves outward from the downtown core — to Graceland in Whitehaven, the Stax Museum of American Soul Music in South Memphis, and Cooper-Young, the neighborhood that is Memphis at its most liveable and least performed. A rental car or rideshare is strongly recommended for this day.

MORNING 9:00 AM – 1:00 PM

9:00 AM

Graceland

Elvis Presley's home from 1957 until his death in 1977, in Whitehaven, nine miles south of downtown. The house is preserved as it was in the 1970s: the Jungle Room with its shag carpet and waterfall, the TV Room with its mirrored ceiling, the racquetball building where Elvis collapsed on the morning of August 16. The Meditation Garden where he is buried alongside his parents and grandmother. The Elvis Experience package adds the airplane, car collection, and archives. Allow three hours minimum. Book at graceland.com — it sells out.

INSIDER TIP

The house tour is self-guided with an audio narration that includes home movies, recordings from inside the rooms, and first-person accounts from family and staff. The kitchen and the upstairs (Elvis's private quarters) are not open to the public — the tour covers the ground floor and the outbuildings. The Meditation Garden, where Elvis is buried, is one of the genuinely quiet places on a busy site.

12:30 PM

Stax Museum of American Soul Music

926 E. McLemore Avenue in South Memphis: built on the original site of Stax Records, where Otis Redding, Sam & Dave, Booker T. & the M.G.'s, Isaac Hayes, and the Staple Singers recorded between 1957 and 1975. The museum rebuilt the original studio interior — the sloped floor, the movie screen-turned-acoustic-panel — and houses Isaac Hayes's gold-plated Cadillac alongside the records, costumes, and equipment that produced some of the most enduring American music of the 20th century. Allow ninety minutes.

INSIDER TIP

Stax is the counterpoint to Sun Studio: where Sun was white musicians absorbing Black music, Stax was an integrated operation in the deepest sense — Black and white musicians writing and recording together in South Memphis at the height of the civil rights era. The story of the label's rise and fall (it went bankrupt in 1975 partly due to being defrauded by CBS Records) is told without sentimentality.

AFTERNOON 1:30 PM – 7:00 PM

1:30 PM

Lunch: Cozy Corner BBQ

745 N. Parkway: the Memphis barbecue institution that regulars consider superior even to the Rendezvous. Family-operated since 1977 by the Turner family. The signature dish is the smoked Cornish hen — an unusual cut that benefits particularly from the Cozy Corner dry-rub method — alongside ribs and pulled pork. The room is small and genuinely local; the line forms before opening. Cash strongly preferred.

INSIDER TIP

Cozy Corner is not downtown-adjacent — it is a destination in itself, in a neighborhood that sees very few tourists. The smoked Cornish hen is unlike any other barbecue dish in Memphis: small enough for a solo diner, dense enough to constitute a serious meal. The sauce is served separately and is sweet-tangy rather than spiced — use it sparingly on the hen, more aggressively on the ribs.

3:00 PM

Cooper-Young Neighborhood

The intersection of Cooper Street and Young Avenue in Midtown: Memphis's most complete independent commercial neighborhood — bookshops, vintage clothing, independent record stores, coffee shops, and restaurants that have nothing to do with the tourist infrastructure. Young Avenue Deli has the best selection of local and regional craft beer in the city. Burke's Book Store on Cooper has operated since 1875 and carries the best selection of Memphis and Southern literature. The neighborhood hosts a street festival on the third Friday of each month.

INSIDER TIP

Burke's Book Store is one of the oldest independent bookshops in the American South and carries a serious Memphis section — local history, music writing, Southern fiction. Spend thirty minutes here. Young Avenue Deli is the best bar in Memphis for a solo traveler: long bar, serious beer list, good jukebox, no performance.

5:00 PM

Memphis Brooks Museum of Art & Overton Park

The Memphis Brooks Museum of Art in Overton Park: the largest art museum in Tennessee, with a collection ranging from antiquity through contemporary American art, with particular strength in Italian Renaissance and Baroque paintings. The surrounding Overton Park is 342 acres of old-growth forest in the heart of Midtown — the site of a landmark Supreme Court case (*Citizens to Preserve Overton Park v. Volpe*, 1971) that established the legal precedent for protecting public parkland from highway development.

INSIDER TIP

The Brooks Museum is free on the first Wednesday of each month. The Overton Park Shell — an outdoor amphitheater in the park — is where Elvis gave one of his first public performances in 1954. The park's old-growth forest section is remarkable for a city this size; the walking trails through the trees are the best outdoor space in Memphis.

EVENING 7:30 PM – LATE

7:30 PM

Dinner: The Gray Canary or Flight Restaurant

The Gray Canary on South Main: the finest restaurant in Memphis, in a converted cotton warehouse in the South Main Arts District. The menu moves between Southern tradition and contemporary technique — whole hog preparations alongside French classical influences, a wine list that takes the South seriously. Reserve weeks ahead at thegraycanary.com. Or Flight Restaurant & Wine Bar in the South Main Arts District: the most solo-friendly fine dining option in Memphis, with a 'flight' tasting format that functions as a natural single-diner experience.

INSIDER TIP

The South Main Arts District on South Main Street is the most interesting after-dark neighborhood in Memphis: galleries, independent restaurants, and the Orpheum Theatre (a 1928 movie palace hosting touring Broadway productions and concerts). Walk the district after dinner. The Levitt Shell in Overton Park has free outdoor concerts from May through October — check levittshell.org for the calendar.

Where to Eat

The No-Tourist-Trap Food Guide

BREAKFAST & COFFEE

Otherlands Coffee Bar

\$4-10

641 S. Cooper St, Midtown

The Cooper-Young institution: eclectic, intentionally worn room, strong coffee, global breakfast menu. The most reliable solo-diner breakfast in Memphis.

Sunrise Memphis

\$10-16

670 Jefferson Ave

The best breakfast restaurant in the downtown core — eggs Benedict variations, shrimp and grits, biscuits. Weekend lines; arrive early or after 10am.

City & State

\$4-9

Multiple locations

The best specialty coffee operation in Memphis. The Crosstown Concourse location is also the most architecturally interesting coffee shop in the city.

BARBECUE — THE ESSENTIAL THREE

Charles Vergos' Rendezvous

\$18-32

52 S. 2nd St (via General Washburn Alley)

The Memphis barbecue legend since 1948. Dry-rub ribs in a cavernous basement downtown alley. No reservations under 6; arrive at opening. The benchmark experience.

Central BBQ

\$14-24

Multiple locations; 2249 Central Ave is the original

The most consistent and widely beloved Memphis BBQ restaurant. Dry-rub ribs, pulled pork, smoked nachos. The benchmark for daily-use Memphis barbecue.

Cozy Corner

\$12-20

745 N. Parkway

Family-operated since 1977. The smoked Cornish hen is the dish — unique to this restaurant and exceptional. Cash preferred. A genuine local institution.

LUNCH & DINNER

Automatic Slim's Tonga Club

\$22-38

83 S. 2nd St

Caribbean-Southern fusion, best downtown cocktail list, consistent quality across multiple decades. The most reliable dinner in the downtown core.

The Gray Canary

\$45-75

301 S. Front St, South Main

The finest restaurant in Memphis. Converted cotton warehouse, whole hog preparations, serious wine list. Reserve weeks ahead at thegraycanary.com.

Flight Restaurant & Wine Bar

\$35-55

39 S. Main St

Tasting-flight format ideal for solo diners. Southern-influenced small plates, serious wine program, South Main Arts District location.

Itta Bena

\$28–45

143 Beale St (above B.B. King's)
Upstairs from B.B. King's Blues Club: white-tablecloth Southern kitchen with direct sightlines to the stage below. Better food than the location suggests.

Porcellino's Craft Butcher

\$14–22

711 W. Brookhaven Circle
The finest charcuterie and sandwich operation in Memphis. Italian-inspired butcher shop with outstanding daily sandwiches. Midtown; worth the rideshare.

Andrew Michael Italian Kitchen

\$35–60

712 W. Brookhaven Circle
The best Italian restaurant in Memphis — brothers Andrew and Michael Ticer, farm-to-table sourcing, pasta made daily. Reserve ahead at andrewmichael.com.

BARS & MUSIC VENUES

B.B. King's Blues Club

No cover / \$10+

143 Beale St
Live blues continuously from 11am. House band is professional and the room's history is genuine — King played here in his later years. \$8–12 drinks.

Blues City Cafe

No cover

138 Beale St
The best late-night live music on Beale Street. Blues and soul bands rotate through; excellent ribs at the attached restaurant. Open until 3am weekends.

Young Avenue Deli

No cover

2119 Young Ave, Cooper-Young
The best bar in Memphis for a solo traveler. Long bar, serious craft beer list, good jukebox, consistently local crowd. No performance.

Peabody Hotel Lobby Bar

\$12–18

149 Union Ave
The grandest hotel bar in Memphis — marble, brass, and a duck fountain. The Ducks March at 11am and 5pm daily. Worth one drink on any visit.

A note on Memphis barbecue: the defining distinction is dry-rub versus wet. Memphis style is almost always dry-rub first — spices rubbed in before smoking — with sauce served on the side. The three essential experiences (Rendezvous, Central BBQ, Cozy Corner) each have a distinct philosophy on the rub, the wood, and the smoke time. They are not interchangeable. If you only have time for one: Cozy Corner for the Cornish hen, Rendezvous for the ribs, Central for the overall menu.

Navigating Memphis

Memphis has limited public transit. The Main Street Trolley (free on the downtown loop) is useful for moving along the riverfront and South Main corridor, but most cross-city movement requires Lyft/Uber or a rental car. Graceland and the Stax Museum are both in South Memphis — a rental car or dedicated rideshare is strongly recommended for Day 2. The downtown core, Beale Street, and the South Main Arts District are all walkable from each other.

Getting Around

- Lyft / Uber**Primary mode for visitors. Reliable and relatively inexpensive. Budget \$12–20 for cross-city rides to Graceland, Stax, and Cozy Corner. Always confirm vehicle before entering.
- Main Street Trolley**Free on the downtown loop along Main Street — useful for South Main Arts District to Beale Street movement. Runs 10am–10pm daily approximately.
- Rental Car**Recommended for Day 2. Graceland, Stax, and Cozy Corner are in South Memphis and not convenient by rideshare for a multi-stop day. Enterprise and Hertz at Memphis Airport (MEM).
- Walking (downtown)**Beale Street to the National Civil Rights Museum: 10-minute walk. Beale to Sun Studio: 1.5 miles — walkable in good weather, rideshare in summer heat.
- Memphis International Airport (MEM)**15 minutes from downtown by rideshare (\$18–25). No direct rail link. MATA bus Route 34 connects to downtown in 35 minutes — \$1.75 fare.

Practical Tips

- Memphis International Airport (MEM): 15 minutes from downtown. Rideshare \$18–25 or MATA bus Route 34 (\$1.75, 35 minutes).
- Heat advisory: Memphis summers regularly exceed 95°F with very high humidity. Schedule outdoor activity for morning and early evening. Carry water.
- Parking downtown is widely available and relatively inexpensive compared to other cities — \$8–15/day in garages near Beale Street.
- The Main Street Trolley stops are marked at regular intervals along South Main and the riverfront — a useful reference even if you're not riding.
- Beale Street closes to vehicle traffic Friday and Saturday evenings from around 6pm, creating the pedestrian festival atmosphere.
- The Mississippi River Greenline along the riverfront offers excellent morning walks with views of the Hernando de Soto Bridge and the Arkansas bluffs.

Contingency

Backup Plans

Memphis's best indoor options concentrate in the museum corridor and the Midtown and Cooper-Young areas. Summer heat above 95°F is the more common challenge than rain — plan indoor activity for the midday hours. The Crosstown Concourse (a converted Sears distribution center turned mixed-use arts complex) is the best general-purpose indoor destination in Memphis for a weather day.

Crosstown Concourse

A converted 1927 Sears distribution building turned mixed-use arts and retail complex — an extraordinary adaptive reuse project with galleries, restaurants, a theatre, a medical clinic, and the best food hall in Memphis. The building itself is worth seeing. City & State Coffee is the anchor; the gallery program changes monthly.

Pink Palace Museum

Memphis's natural history and cultural history museum in a pink Georgia marble mansion. Strong Civil War and Mississippi Delta collections, IMAX theater, and a replica of the original Piggly Wiggly grocery store (Piggly Wiggly was founded in Memphis in 1916 — the first self-service grocery in America).

Mississippi River Museum & Mud Island River Park

A 5-mile scale model of the lower Mississippi River built into a riverfront park, accessible by monorail from the downtown riverfront. The museum covers the full history of the river and the city's relationship to it. The outdoor scale model alone is one of the most unusual public installations in the South.

Shelby Farms Park

4,500 acres of parkland east of the city — one of the largest urban parks in the United States. Trails, lake kayaking, cycling. Car or rideshare required. The best option for an outdoor morning if the temperature is below 85°F.

Memphis Botanic Garden

96 acres in Audubon Park, adjacent to the Brooks Museum. The Japanese garden and the daylily collection are the highlights. Relatively uncrowded on weekdays. Combines well with a Brooks Museum visit.

Elmwood Cemetery

One of the most historically significant cemeteries in the American South — the burial site of civil rights leaders, blues musicians, Confederate generals, and freed slaves. Self-guided walking maps available at the entrance. Surprisingly moving as a solo experience.

Elvis's Birth Home, Tupelo (day trip)

90 minutes south in Tupelo, Mississippi: the two-room shotgun house where Elvis was born in 1935, preserved and operated by the City of Tupelo. Small, genuine, and entirely different in character from Graceland. Requires a rental car.

Know Your City

Know Your Neighborhoods

The districts that matter for your 48 hours in Memphis.

Downtown /Beale Street DOWNTOWN · ENTERTAINMENT CORE Safe (daytime) Beale Street, the Civil Rights Museum, riverfront. Well-policed tourist zone. Heightened awareness Friday/Saturday nights.	South Main Arts District DOWNTOWN SOUTH · CREATIVE Safe Galleries, restaurants, the Orpheum. Excellent evening destination. Improving rapidly.
Midtown MIDTOWN · RESIDENTIAL Safe Cooper-Young, Overton Park, Brooks Museum. The most liveable area; local restaurants and culture.	Cooper-Young MIDTOWN SOUTH · INDEPENDENT Very safe The intersection of Cooper and Young. Bookshops, bars, music venues. Solo-traveler friendly.
Whitehaven (Graceland) SOUTH MEMPHIS Safe (tourist zone) The Graceland campus is well-secured. Stick to the Graceland complex; the surrounding area is residential/commercial.	South Memphis (Stax area) SOUTH MEMPHIS Use awareness The Stax Museum campus is safe. The surrounding neighborhood warrants standard urban caution. Go directly to the museum.
Overton Park / Vollintine-Evergreen MIDTOWN NORTH Safe Old-growth park, Brooks Museum. Very safe in the park and museum areas.	Memphis Medical District / Crosstown MIDTOWN CENTRAL Safe Crosstown Concourse, Methodist hospital complex. Active, well-monitored.

Essential Tips

What Nobody Tells You About Memphis

The museums require time

The National Civil Rights Museum and Graceland each need three hours minimum. Sun Studio and Stax each need ninety minutes. Do not try to do all four in one day — that is two full days of serious visiting.

Memphis BBQ is dry-rub

The spice rub goes on before smoking; sauce is served on the side. The three essential experiences (Rendezvous, Central, Cozy Corner) each have a distinct philosophy. They are not interchangeable — try at least two.

Beale Street: timing matters

5–8pm on a weekday is the optimal Beale Street experience. The history is genuine; the atmosphere is manageable. After 10pm on a weekend, it becomes a different, louder, more crowded thing.

Rent a car for Day 2

Graceland, the Stax Museum, and Cozy Corner are each in South Memphis. A rental car makes the day coherent. Rideshare works but adds significant cost and wait time between stops.

The heat is serious

Memphis in summer regularly exceeds 95°F with very high humidity. Schedule outdoor movement for before 10am and after 5pm. The midday hours are for museums and restaurants.

Sun Studio runs hourly

Tours depart every hour on the hour. The 9am and 10am tours are the least crowded. The tour lasts 60 minutes and ends on the actual studio floor — worth every minute.

The Civil Rights Museum first

Book the first morning slot. The museum requires emotional and intellectual attention that is harder to give later in the day. Do not try to rush it after other activities.

Cooper-Young for balance

After two days of heavy history, Cooper-Young is where Memphis breathes. Burke's Book Store, Young Avenue Deli, Otherlands — the city as its residents actually use it, with no agenda.

Connections

Onward Connections

Memphis International Airport (MEM) is a mid-size regional hub with direct flights to major U.S. cities. For road travel, Memphis sits on I-40 (east–west) and I-55 (north–south), making it the natural hub for the Mississippi Delta road trip — south to the Delta blues country and north toward St. Louis. Amtrak's City of New Orleans train stops at Memphis Central Station, connecting Chicago and New Orleans via Memphis once daily in each direction.

By Air from Memphis (MEM)

ROUTE	TIME	FREQUENCY	CARRIERS
Memphis Atlanta (ATL)	1h 20min	Direct daily	Delta hub — onward connections worldwide
Memphis Chicago (ORD/MDW)	1h 45min	Direct daily	American, Southwest, United
Memphis Dallas (DFW)	1h 45min	Direct daily	American, Southwest
Memphis Nashville (BNA)	50min	Direct daily	American — or 3 hours by road
Memphis New York (LGA/JFK)	2h 30min	Direct daily	American, Delta
Memphis Los Angeles (LAX)	4h 00min	Direct daily	Southwest, American
Memphis New Orleans (MSY)	1h 15min	Direct / connection	American, Delta — or 4h by Amtrak
Memphis Denver (DEN)	3h 00min	Direct daily	Southwest, United

Road Trips & The Delta Route

Nashville 3h east on I-40
Country Music Hall of Fame, Ryman, Germantown restaurants

New Orleans 5h south on I-55
The most logical Memphis–New Orleans road trip in American culture

Oxford, MS 1h 20min south on I-55
William Faulkner's home (Rowan Oak), Ole Miss, Square Books

Clarksdale, MS (Blues Trail) 1h 20min south on I-55/US-61
The crossroads, the Delta blues museums, Hopson Plantation

Little Rock, AR 2h west on I-40
Central High School National Historic Site — essential civil rights stop

Tupelo, MS 1h 30min south
Elvis's birthplace — two-room shotgun house, completely different from Graceland

Shiloh National Military Park 2h east on US-72
One of the best-preserved Civil War battlefields in the U.S.

Memphis awaits.

*You have the plan. You know which block of Beale Street,
where the real barbecue is, and why Sun Studio is
the most important small room in American music.
The river is at the end of every westward street.
The rest is just showing up.*

BEFORE YOU LEAVE: FINAL CHECKLIST

Screenshot Day 1 and Day 2 itineraries for offline use
Book Graceland tour at graceland.com — Elvis Experience sells out ahead
Book Sun Studio tour at sunstudio.com — hourly, worth the early slot
Book National Civil Rights Museum timed entry at civilrightsmuseum.org
Reserve Central BBQ or Rendezvous — no reservations; arrive early or wait
Download Google Maps Memphis offline before you land
Note: limited public transit — Lyft/Uber or rental car recommended

Your interactive map is one scan away.

All locations from this guide, colour-coded by day, open on your phone.



goingsolo.life/maps/memphis

GoingSolo.Life

TRAVEL ALONE. LIVE FULLY.