

THE DEEP SOUTH 2011

SUMMER READING LIST

the best beach reads, mysteries, chick lit & new releases from down South

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Year of Alabama Music

ON JULY - 8 - 2011

For music lovers, there's no better time than now to visit "Sweet Home Alabama."

by Bobby L. Hickman

Alabama state leaders have designated 2011 the "Year of Alabama Music" to salute the many artists, events and destinations that make the state a unique draw for music lovers from all genres. Communities across Alabama are pulling out all the stops this year to draw musically inclined visitors. So this summer and fall provide the perfect time to hear live music at concert halls, parks and juke joints; visit the birthplaces of legends; explore recording studios and museums; or enjoy music-themed festivals throughout the state.



The list of Alabama musical artists covers a wide range of genres over the past century. There's Hank Williams (both Sr. and Jr.), Jimmy Buffett, Wilson Pickett, Chuck Leavell of the Allman Brothers Band, Clarence Carter, Emmylou Harris, Lionel Ritchie, "American Idol" contestants Bo Bice, Taylor Hicks and Ruben Studdard — and of course, country supergroup "Alabama."

Muscle Shoals has the Swampers ...

When many people think of Alabama music, their first thought is often Muscle Shoals. And why not? For more than 100 years, the Shoals area has played a major role in the development of American music – from the early days of blues and jazz through chart-topping pop, soul, R&B and country hits of the last 40 years. And don't forget Southern rockers like Lynyrd Skynyrd.

When the Euchee Indians dwelled in northwest Alabama, they called this portion of the Tennessee River "Nunnuhsae," which means "the Singing River." The area that includes Florence, Sheffield, Tuscumbia and Muscle Shoals remains a rich source of musicians and songwriters today. That tradition continues with such contemporary acts as the Drive-By Truckers (fronted by Patterson Hood, son of Muscle Shoals Rhythm Section bassist David Hood) and Jason Isbell, whose latest album, "Here We Rest," draws its title from Alabama's original state motto.



Snowball Contest

Posted on July 11, 2011



An American Rebel

Posted on June 29, 2011



Boudin On Display

Posted on June 27, 2011



Summer Book Giveaway: Part 2!

Posted on June 22, 2011



Anthony Bourdain in Cajun Country

Posted on June 20, 2011

HEADLINES FROM THE SOUTH

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Bourbon Street workers rally around police after fatal shooting

Bourbon Street workers rally around police after fatal shooting

Interim superintendent outlines plans before Jefferson Parish School Board

Jefferson Parish School Board defies protests, imposes a furlough day on teachers



The story of Alabama music often begins with W.C. Handy, a Florence native generally acknowledged as the "Father of the Blues." Another local legend was Sam Phillips, founder of Sun Records and a driving force in the early years of rock 'n' roll. Muscle Shoals was known in the 1960s as the "Hit Recording Capital of the World" because of **FAME Studios**. FAME turned out an incredible string of top R&B and pop hits, including "When a Man Loves a Woman" by Percy Sledge, "Mustang Sally" by Wilson Pickett and "I'll Take You There" by The Staple Singers. Duane Allman also formed what would become the Allman Brothers Band at FAME.

FAME was also the original home of the Muscle Shoals Rhythm Section – a group of studio musicians better known as the Swampers and saluted in "Sweet Home Alabama." In 1969, the group started their own studio, the Muscle Shoals Sound Studio, on the banks of the Tennessee River. Musicians who recorded there include Bob Dylan, The Rolling Stones, Paul Simon and Bob Seger.

With so much musical tradition in the area, it's no surprise that the **Alabama Music Hall of Fame** is located nearby in Tuscumbia. It's a great place to explore the last tour bus used by the group Alabama, cut your own karaoke-style demo to a favorite song with ties to the state or learn about Alabama natives like Hank Williams and Jimmy Buffet.

As for the rest of the state ...

Muscle Shoals is by no means the only place in Alabama with great musical attractions. There's Hank Williams Sr.'s **gravesite** and a **museum in Montgomery**, or his **boyhood home in Georgiana**. The **Commodores Studio** in Tuskegee features memorabilia at the facility where Lionel Ritchie and the other members recorded after meeting at Tuskegee University. **Eddie Kendrick Memorial Park** spotlights the life of the Temptations' front man. The **Flora-Bama Lounge** on the Florida-Alabama state line near Gulf Shores is a legendary Southern honky tonk that regularly has visitors like Kid Rock – and inspired the Jimmy Buffett song, "Bama Breeze." And the **Alabama Fan Club and Museum** in Fort Payne preserves the history of the state's namesake country music group.



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FEATURED KICKSTARTER

With the "Year of Alabama Music" in full swing, there are also a number of festivals, exhibits and other events that spotlight the state's lyrical traditions and contemporary artists. Longtime events like Florence's **W.C. Handy Festival** July 22-31 and several annual fiddlers' conventions are featured alongside special 2011 celebrations throughout the year. (See the list of festivals at the bottom of this story.)



With so much information to keep track of, the Alabama Tourism Department has created a central depository of calendars, events, musical destinations and more at a special website, <http://www.yearofalabamamusic.com/>. The site has a list of the top 50 music festivals for 2011, 100 places to hear music, cool music attractions, music-oriented trails, a list of Alabama artists, and even an Alabama playlist honoring major song tracks from the state.

Alabama music is eternal and can be enjoyed any day of any year. However, 2011 provides a special opportunity to visit the venues and hear the lyrics and tunes that are sure to get your toes tapping and your feet moving.

Bobby L. Hickman is an Atlanta-based freelance writer who specializes in travel, music and business journalism. He regularly contributes to several regional magazines and various online publications. To learn more, visit <http://www.thehonkytonkbook.com/>.

YEAR OF ALABAMA MUSIC FESTIVALS

Communities across Alabama are celebrating the "Year of Alabama Music" with more than 200 musical festivals and other events throughout 2011. Here is a select sampling of some of the top festivals for the remainder of the year. Click [here](#) to see the complete list.



JULY

Rogersville Bluegrass Festival, Rogersville, July 15-16, 256-247-9788

Old Time Fiddler's Convention, Atmore, July 16, 251-368-2106

W.C. Handy Music Festival, Florence, July 22-31, 256-766-7642

Aquapalooza, Alexander City, July 23, 256-212-1479

AUGUST

Gulf Coast Ethnic & Heritage Jazz Festival, Mobile, August 4-7, 251-473-5020

DeKalb County Fiddlers Convention, Fort Payne, August 6, 256-845-2224

BAAM!-Birmingham Music Festival, Birmingham, August 12-14, 205-540-7385

Stokin' the Fire Music Festival, Birmingham, August 20, 205-324-1911

Johnny Shines Blues Festival, Tuscaloosa, August 27, 205-887-6859

Black Belt Folk Roots Festival, Eutaw, August 27-28, 205-372-0525

SEPTEMBER

Pap Baxter Heritage Gospel Singing, Fort Payne, September 12-17, 256-845-2224

Ole Timey Craft & Bluegrass Festival, Estillfork, September 16-17, 256-776-9411

Hank Williams 88th Birthday Celebration, Montgomery, September 17, 334-262-3600

Foggy Hollow Bluegrass Gatherin', Webster's Chapel, September 23-24, 256-492-3700



Snow Shack

by Melissa Turner

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St Simons, GA

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Project ended on 07/06/2011

MOST COMMENTED

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MoonPie Giveaway (47)

Summer Book Giveaway: Part 2! (40)

SweetTea T-Shirt Contest (35)

Southern My Way Contest (21)

FEATURED VIDEO

Southern Skillet Squash with Bacon from Bryan Long on Vimeo.

ATTRACTIONS

Houston Culinary Tours

Monroe County Heritage

Museum

Southern Foodways

Alliance Trails

Texas Hill Country Wineries

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Anthony Bourdain in Cajun

Country

BLOGS

Deep South Dish

Seersucker And Sazeracs

Sweet Tea

The Brooklyn Dodger

Grits & Soul

Art & Rockets

Travel Tuesday

Alabama's Storyteller

Father's Day Contest

Titus Bluegrass Festival, Titus, September 24, 334-567-9059

OCTOBER

Tennessee Valley Old Time Fiddlers Convention, Athens, October 7-8, 256-233-8215

BayFest Music Festival, Mobile, October 7-9, 251-478-5679

Sullivan Family Homecoming, St. Stephens, October 13-15, 251-246-4553

National Shrimp Festival, Gulf Shores, October 13-16, 251-968-4237

Horse Pens 40 Fall Bluegrass Festival, Steele, October 14-15, 256-538-7439

White's Mountain Bluegrass Festival, Springville, October 14-15, 205-467-6927

Kenan's Mill Bluegrass Festival, Selma, October 29, 334-875-7241

NOVEMBER

Frank Brown Songwriters Festival, Orange Beach, November 10-20, 850-492-7664

W.C. Handy Birthday Celebration, Florence, November 16, 256-760-6434

Popularity: 1% [?]

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Tennessee Williams/New

Orleans Literary Festival

Texas Hill Country Wine &

Food Festival

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Southern Literary Trail

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Deep South Magazine » Year of Alabama Music

Deep South is an online Southern magazine offering a dose of Southern hospitality - anytime, anywhere. From the characters, places and distinct Southern food to the art, music, recipes and literature of the region, Deep South bring readers stories that celebrate life in the "New South."



Design : Crowd people

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