



Memphis is a city in the southwestern corner of the U.S. state of Tennessee. Memphis is the largest city in the state of Tennessee, the largest city on the Mississippi River, the third largest in the greater Southeastern United States, and the 23rd largest in the United States.



Beale Street is a street in Downtown Memphis, Tennessee, which runs from the Mississippi River to East Street, a distance of approximately 2.9 km. It is a significant location in the city's history, as well as in the history of the blues. Today, the blues clubs and restaurants that line Beale Street are major tourist attractions in Memphis.

Beale Street was created in 1841 by entrepreneur and developer Robertson Topp (1807–1876), who named it for a forgotten military hero. The original name was Beale Avenue.

Its western end primarily housed shops of trade merchants, who traded goods with ships along the Mississippi River, while the eastern part developed as an affluent suburb. In the 1860s, many black traveling musicians began performing on Beale. In 1909, W. C. Handy wrote "Mr. Crump" as a campaign song for political machine leader E. H. Crump. The song was later renamed "The Memphis Blues". Handy also wrote a song called "Beale Street Blues" in 1916 which influenced the change of the street's name from Beale Avenue to Beale Street. From the 1920s to the 1940s, Louis Armstrong, Muddy Waters, Memphis Minnie, B. B. King and other blues and jazz legends played on Beale Street and helped develop the style known as Memphis Blues.



[Sun studio](#) is a recording studio opened by rock pioneer Sam Phillips at 706 Union Avenue in *Memphis*, Tennessee, on January 3, 1950. It was originally called called Memphis Recording Service.

Blues and R&B artists like Howlin' Wolf, Junior Parker, Little Milton, B.B. King and James Cotton recorded there in the early 1950s.

Rock and roll, country music, and rockabilly artists, including Johnny Cash, Elvis Presley, Roy Orbison, Jerry Lee Lewis recorded there throughout the mid-to-late 1950s until the studio outgrew its Union Avenue location.

In 1987, ten years after Presley died, Sun Studio at 706 Union Avenue was converted back into a recording studio, and soon became a tourist attraction for Presley fans and music lovers in general. The studio was also used by several well known acts to record, including U2, Def Leppard, John Mellencamp, the Bogus Bros. and Chris Isaak & Silvertone to name a few. In 2003 it was officially recognized as a [National Historic Landmark](#) tourist attraction.



[Graceland](#)



Graceland is a mansion on a 13.8-acre (5.6 ha) estate in Memphis, Tennessee that was home to Elvis Presley. It is located at 3764 Elvis Presley Boulevard. It currently serves as a museum. It was opened to the public on June 7, 1982. Graceland has become one of the most-visited private homes in America with over 600,000 visitors a year, behind the White House.

In early 1957, Presley gave his parents, Vernon and Gladys Presley, a \$100,000 budget, and asked them to find a "farmhouse" type property to purchase. At the time, Graceland was located several miles beyond Memphis's main urban area. In later years Memphis would expand with housing, resulting in Graceland being surrounded by other properties. Presley purchased Graceland on March 19, 1957 for the amount of \$102,500.

Elvis Presley died at the estate on August 16, 1977. Presley, his parents Gladys and Vernon Presley, and his grandmother, are buried there in what is called the Meditation Garden. A memorial gravestone for Presley's stillborn twin brother, Jesse Garon, is also at the site.

After Elvis Presley's death in 1977, Vernon Presley served as executor of his estate. Upon his death in 1979, he chose Priscilla to serve as the estate executor for Elvis' only child, Lisa Marie who was only 11. Graceland itself cost \$500,000 a year in upkeep, and expenses had dwindled Elvis' and Priscilla's daughter Lisa Marie's inheritance to only \$1 million. Taxes were due on the property, those and other expenses due came to over \$500,000. Faced with having to sell Graceland, Priscilla examined other famous houses/museums, and hired a CEO, Jack Soden, to turn Graceland into a moneymaker. Graceland was opened to the public on June 7, 1982. Priscilla's gamble paid off, after only a month of opening Graceland's doors the estate made back all the money it had invested. The enterprise's fortunes soared and eventually the trust grew to be worth over \$100 million.



Lorraine Motel /The National Civil Rights Museum is a complex of museums and historic buildings in Memphis, Tennessee; its exhibits trace the history of the Civil Rights Movement in the United States from the 17th century to the present. The museum is built around the former Lorraine Motel, where Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr. was assassinated on April 4, 1968. Two other buildings and their adjacent property, also connected with the King assassination, have been acquired as part of the museum complex.

The museum re-opened in 2014 after renovations that increased the number of multi-media and interactive exhibits, including numerous short movies to enhance features.