You can’t visit Jackson, Mississippi without experiencing some good down-home cooking. Bully’s Restaurant has served the African American community for close to 40 years, the doors are open to all and the food is enjoyed by everyone! You can find Mr. Bully standing behind the counter with his bouffant cap on and a smile. This James Beard Foundation award-winning restaurant serves fresh collards, turnips and mustard greens, cornbread, neckbones, meatloaf, spaghetti, oxtails, turkey wings, cornbread dressing, macaroni and cheese, fried green tomatoes, yams and homemade fruit cobblers. That’s not all, but you get the picture! The Big Apple Inn is in the heart of where the Blues began. If you want an authentic meal that can chase away the blues, stop in for a smoked sausage sandwich, homemade tamales or even a pig ear sandwich!
Jackson, Mississippi has a rich and storied Blues heritage complete with unforgettable artists, recording studios, night clubs and historic sites. Folks in the South know Jackson as an entertainment destination with some of the best music anywhere. You can catch the blues almost any night at one of several local clubs and chase them away with great Southern food and affordable hotels and inns that range from comfy to downright luxurious.

The rich culture of blues music has roots as deep as the mighty Mississippi runs long. Take a trip down the river to Jackson, Mississippi and you'll find some key nutrients that allowed this culture to grow. The city of Jackson has 12 markers on the Mississippi Blues Trail, but it's deeper than that. You have to think about where this music came from. It came from a place of darkness, pain, suppression, and heartbreak. The Blues equally soothed all of these ills with a perfect blend of the raw emotions of the gospel, in which most artists got their start, and the world, and Jackson, Mississippi, the “City with Soul” is in the very fabric of this music.

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The Farish Street Neighborhood Historic District was the prime area you would find this “Devil’s music.” This neighborhood was only second to Harlem in its “hayday” for the African American community and where both Ace and Trumpet Records were located. F. Jones Corner, Johnny T's Bistro and Big Apple Inn are still operating in this district.

**Malaco Records**, a long-time recording studio, with stop on the blues trail, is the last Soul company. The greats like Johnnie Taylor, Dorothy Moore, Bobby “Blue” Bland, Z.Z. Hill, “Mississippi” Fred McDowell, and Little Milton all recorded here, and scenes from James Brown biopic, Get on Up was filmed here. You may not be familiar with “Mississippi” Fred McDowell, but The Rolling Stones borrowed one of his tunes “You Gotta Move” in their 1971 album Sticky Fingers.

The authentic roots of the blues are found in Mississippi’s Delta, where the music was born. In the 1920s and 1930s, Delta bluesmen like Robert Johnson, Charley Patton, and Son House recorded their music in small studios, often on Delta plantations. These recordings helped spread the popularity of the blues beyond the Delta, and soon, blues musicians were playing in clubs and venues across the country.

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You can trace these roots all through our city. The authentic soul-stirring blues is still soothing the soul at local venues:

- **F. Jones Corner** is one spot where you’ll find authentic blues. “No Black, No White, just the Blues” adorns the walls and the hearts of those who enter! This isn’t for the faint of heart. The doors open at 10:00 p.m. Thursday-Saturday to give you time to grab a bite, or a nap, before the music starts at midnight!

- **Johnny T’s Bistro** and Blues is just a stone’s throw up the street and it’s still carrying the torch as well. Once known as the Crystal Palace where Sammie Davis, Jr., Redd Foxx, Lena Horne and Cab Calloway now adorn the exterior walls as they did the stage in this building so many years ago. The music is still piping and the succulent dishes with a touch of creative and special cocktails will make for a good night!

- **Underground 119** is tucked under the pavement in downtown Jackson. Once you go down those steps prepare for a finger-poppin’, toe-tappin’, hip-swayin’ good time.

- **Martin’s Downtown** has been the place to go for food, drinks and live music for decades. While they host a variety of musicians, you can count on seeing Cedric Burnside at least a few times a year!

- **Hal and Mali** has been a hub for live music for over 30 years and every Monday night you can attend “Blue Monday”. This live event is hosted by the Central Mississippi Blues Society. Get there early for the Front Porch set followed by the house band. You might see legends Bobby Rush or Dorothy Moore or even a 14-year-old guitarist, who just wants to play the Blues!

- **The Iron Horse Grill** is another great place to hear some authentic blues music and while you’re waiting on your Shrimp and Grits or Chicken Enchiladas, a wonderful quaint museum awaits upstairs. This museum captures some of the best of Mississippi artists with life-like clay replicas.

You can’t complete your journey without exploring the root of some of the darkness that motivated this music, because you cannot truly enjoy the Blues until you understand where the Blues came from.

Stop by the new Museum of Mississippi History and Mississippi Civil Rights Museum for an eye-opening look into the struggles and strife that lead to Blues as we know it and while you’re there be sure to see the breathtaking light sculpture that reflects light while the choir sings “This Little Light of Mine.” A song that Civil Rights activists sang to uplift their spirits and gave them the strength to keep fighting. Mississippi natives, Robin Roberts, Oprah Winfrey and Morgan Freeman charismatically narrate our truths in interactive exhibits throughout the museum.

There are plenty of opportunities to connect with live blues music, food and the culture of our city. You can explore our website www.visitjackson.com or find us on Facebook, Instagram, Pinterest or Twitter: VisitJacksons