

TRAVEL Nashville

A COUNTRY MUSIC GETAWAY



by Jan Ross,
Staff Writer

If you're in the mood for some country music,

there's no better place for a little getaway than Nashville. The expansive Gaylord Opryland Resort and Convention Center is the perfect place to stay because it's right by the Grand Ole Opry and close to downtown and all the music venues. Book a room with a balcony overlooking the incredible nine acres of waterfalls, foliage, a winding river and a variety of restaurants and shops, all under a soaring glass atrium. Many of the restaurants have live music in the evenings.

You can get tickets for the Grand Ole Opry right in the hotel, and then you can drive, walk or take a shuttle over to the theater. The Grand Ole Opry has quite a history, evolving from a one-room radio station to the current billion-dollar business that draws in millions of tourists every year. But it still has a down-home charm that everyone enjoys. With singers such as Little Jimmy Dickens, who is well into his 90s, and new, young talent performing every night, the Opry manages to please every person in the audience. You can also sign up for a backstage tour.

Plan to spend an afternoon and evening in downtown Nashville at some of the honky tonks on Broadway. You will be amazed at the people playing and singing in these locations. Most of the great music stars got their start in some of these bars and restaurants, some of which have been downtown for a very long time. Just stroll into

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the bar, listen a while and stroll back out. Downtown is well-lit, crowded and seems very safe. There are big parking lots right in the area where you can park for about \$12 for the whole day.

Be sure to save one evening for a cruise on the General Jackson Showboat, another venue affiliated with the Gaylord Opryland Resort. The showboat is an original paddlewheel steamer. You can buy tickets through the hotel, which also provides a shuttle right to

the Ryman Auditorium and the Country Music Hall of Fame, both of which feature interesting tours. When you're ready for a break from music, visit the Parthenon. A full-scale replica of the original in Athens, the building was first put up for Nashville's Centennial, but it was so popular the city decided to make it a permanent fixture. It's absolutely amazing, especially the 42-foot statue of Athena.

There's plenty to see and hear in Music City – and you will enjoy every minute!

Jan Ross is a freelance travel writer who publishes in a variety of venues, both print and online. You can contact her at janross53@gmail.com or check her travel blog at www.wanderlustwonder.com.

View from our room
at the Gaylord
Opryland Resort
and Convention
Center.

