MISSISSIPPI FACTS AND FIGURES

Mississippi is full of beauty, history, and tradition, letting visitors relive the grandeur of the Old South. It also boasts of a highway more than 8,000 years old – the Natchez Trace Parkway. Mississippi's long literary tradition begins in the town of Oxford which was home to writer William Faulkner and suspense novelist John Grisham. Award-winning authors Richard Wright and Eudora Welty also used their home state of Mississippi as the basis for their work, and playwright Tennessee Williams and puppet master Jim Henson honed their creativity in the state.

ORIGIN OF NAME

The state of Mississippi was named after the river that flows along its western boundary, coming from several different Indian words that translate (depending upon the tribe) as “Ancient Father of Waters,” “Beyond Age,” “Great River,” or “Chief River.” The most common translation is “Father of Waters.”

HISTORY

Originally inhabited by Indians from several tribal nations (including Choctaw), Mississippi was not colonized until 1699 when Pierre Le Moyne Sieur d'Iberville landed in what is now Ocean Springs on the Gulf Coast. Claimed by the French, then the Spanish and English, Mississippi was eventually bought by the United States, becoming its 20th state in 1817. By the 1830s, cotton was king, and the state was on its way to becoming one of the nation’s wealthiest. On January 9, 1861, Mississippi seceded from the Union and, with the outbreak of the Civil War, battles were waged in every corner of the state. Re-admitted to the Union in 1870, the state began to rebuild. Long recognized as an agricultural state, today’s Mississippi is also the largest manufacturer of upholstered furniture, supplies 75% of the U.S. supply of pond-raised catfish, and is home to NASA's John C. Stennis Space Center, where all engines for the space shuttle are tested. Mississippi is home to the nation’s largest Army Corps of Engineers Waterway Experiment Station, and the Grand Gulf Nuclear Power Station. The state is recognized internationally for its outstanding contributions in the medical research areas of hypertension and organ transplant.

HOW TO GET THERE

There are no non-stop international flights into Mississippi. The closest international airport is at Memphis, Tennessee. Domestic airports include: Jackson, Meridian and Gulfport/Biloxi.
DISTANCES AND TIMES

• Mississippi is in the country’s Central Time Zone
• The South observes Daylight Savings Time from late April through October
• Greyhound and Trailways bus lines and AMTRAK rail lines offer stops throughout Mississippi
• Jackson is:
  • 399 miles (646 kilometers and 7 hours by car) from Atlanta, Georgia
  • 245 miles (397 kilometers and 4 hours by car) from Birmingham, Alabama
  • 180 miles (292 kilometers and 3 hours by car) from New Orleans, Louisiana
  • 212 miles (343 kilometers and 3 1/2 hours by car) from Memphis, Tennessee
  • 185 miles (300 kilometers and 3 hours by car) from Mobile, Alabama

For additional travel information, call 1-866-SEE MISS (733-6477) or 601-359-3297. Internet site: www.VisitMississippi.org

MOTTO

Virtute et Armis (by valor and arms)

POPULATION

2.57 million

CAPITAL

Jackson
MAJOR CITIES POPULATION

Metro Jackson 425,000
Gulfport 64,829
Biloxi 53,403
Hattiesburg 47,803
Southaven 45,395
Greenville 42,933
Meridian 40,835
Tupelo 35,194
Vicksburg 27,056
Pascagoula 27,026
Columbus 22,724

SQUARE MILEAGE

47,233 (including 420 miles of inland water surface)

HIGHEST ELEVATION

806 ft. (Mt. Woodall at Iuka, MS)

MILES OF COASTLINE

359 (including 62 miles of beaches)

STATE SYMBOLS

Bird Mockingbird
Fish Largemouth Bass
Flower Magnolia
Song “Go Mississippi”
Tree Magnolia

WEATHER

Mississippi’s moderate climate encourages outdoor activities year round. The state experiences four distinct seasons, but temperatures are mild all year. Year round averages around 65 degrees.
TRANSPORTATION

Mississippi cities are serviced by either a major or a commuter airline. Most towns are linked by bus. Amtrak Train Network serves several cities and towns.

Major interstates include I-20 (east/west), I-55 (north/south), I-59 (southwest/northwest), and I-10 (along the Gulf Coast).


The Natchez Trace Parkway is a historical national highway that runs from Nashville, Tennessee, through northwest Alabama, into Mississippi to Natchez. This scenic route allows no commercial vehicles, has no billboards, and maintains a speed limit of 50 mph. Running parallel to the Mississippi River is Highway 61, known as the ‘Blues Highway’ because of its location through the Mississippi Delta where blues music was born.
MAJOR ATTRACTIONS

Agricultural and Forestry Museum (Jackson)
Antebellum Homes/Structures
Beaches
Casinos
Delta Blues Museum (Clarksdale)
Golf
B.B. King Museum & Delta Interpretive Center (Indianola)
Elvis Presley’s Birthplace (Tupelo)
George Ohr Museum (Biloxi)
Great River Road (Highway 61)
Gulf Islands National Seashore
Historic Bed and Breakfast Inns
Infinity Science Center at NASA Stennis Space Center (2011)
Jackson Zoological Park
John C. Stennis Space Center
Mississippi Children’s Museum (late 2010) (Jackson)
Mississippi Craft Center (Ridgeland)
Mississippi Sports Hall of Fame (Jackson)
Natchez Pilgrimage
Natchez Trace Parkway
National Forests
National Parks
Old Capitol Museum
Resorts and hotels along the Mississippi Gulf Coast
Rowan Oak, home of William Faulkner (Oxford)
Russell C. Davis Planetarium (Jackson)
23 State Parks
Tennessee-Tombigbee Waterway
Tunica RiverPark on the Mississippi River (Tunica)
Vicksburg National Military Park and U.S.S. Cairo Museum
Vicksburg Pilgrimage
Viking Cooking School (Greenwood and Ridgeland)
Walter Anderson Museum (Biloxi)
MAJOR EVENTS

Blessing of the Fleet
Civil War Re-enactments
Christmas Events
Craft Shows
Crawfish Festivals
Delta Blues Festival
Dixie National Livestock Show, Rodeo and Western Festival
Faulkner Literary Conference
Fishing Tournaments
Hot Air Balloon Races
International Ballet Competition
Jimmie Rodgers Festival
Mardi Gras
Mississippi State Fair
Music Festivals
Seafood Festivals
Spring/Fall Pilgrimage-Tours of Antebellum and Victorian Homes and Gardens
State Games
World Catfish Festival
World-Class Golf Tournaments
OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES
Baseball
Bird watching
Bicycling
Boating
Hunting
Fishing
Football
Hiking
Equestrian activities
Swimming
RVing
Camping
Golf - PGA TOUR Viking Classic; PGA CHAMPIONS TOUR Mississippi Gulf Resort Classic
Tennis
Water Skiing
Canoeing
Kayaking
Sailing
Shooting Sports
Rock climbing

FAMOUS MISSISSIPPians

SOCIAL REFORMERS

Medgar Evers       Civil Rights
Charles Evers      Civil Rights
Ida B. Wells       Civil Rights
### SPORTS PERSONALITIES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Sport</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Red Barber</td>
<td>Sportscaster</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cool Papa Bell</td>
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<td>Dizzy Dean</td>
<td>Baseball</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jeff Brantley</td>
<td>Baseball</td>
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<tr>
<td>“Boo” Ferris</td>
<td>Baseball</td>
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<tr>
<td>Archie Moore</td>
<td>Boxing</td>
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<td>Bailey Howell</td>
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<td>Brett Favre</td>
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<td>Jake Gibbs</td>
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<td>Charlie Connerly</td>
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<td>Archie Manning</td>
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<td>Deuce McAllister</td>
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<td>Walter Payton</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jerry Rice</td>
<td>Football</td>
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<td>Steve McNair</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lake Speed</td>
<td>NASCAR</td>
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<td>Ralph Boston</td>
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### ENTERTAINERS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dana Andrews</td>
<td>Actor</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jerry Clower</td>
<td>Comedian</td>
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<tr>
<td>Morgan Freeman</td>
<td>Actor</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jim Henson</td>
<td>Muppets® Creator</td>
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<tr>
<td>James Earl Jones</td>
<td>Actor</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dianne Ladd</td>
<td>Actor</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gerald McRaney</td>
<td>Actor</td>
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<tr>
<td>Eric Roberts</td>
<td>Actor</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ray Walston</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sela Ward</td>
<td>Actor</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cynthia Geary</td>
<td>Actor</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mary Ann Mobley</td>
<td>Actor</td>
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<tr>
<td>Oprah Winfrey</td>
<td>Talk show host</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bob Pittman</td>
<td>Founder of MTV</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
MUSICIANS AND SINGERS

Steve Azar
Moe Bandy
Lance Bass
Jimmy Buffett
Bo Diddley
Pete Fountain
Mickey Gilley
W.C. Handy
Faith Hill
Guy Hovis
Robert Johnson
B.B. King
Dorothy Moore
Brandy Norwood
Elvis Presley
Leontyne Price
Charley Pride
LeAnn Rimes
Jimmie Rodgers
Britney Spears
Marty Stuart
3 Doors Down
Ike Turner
Conway Twitty
Muddy Waters
Cassandra Wilson
Howlin’ Wolf
Tammy Wynette
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Margaret W. Alexander</td>
<td>Writer</td>
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<tr>
<td>Walter Anderson</td>
<td>Artist</td>
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<tr>
<td>John Butler</td>
<td>Choreographer</td>
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<td>Hodding Carter, III</td>
<td>Journalist</td>
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<td>Ellen Douglas</td>
<td>Writer</td>
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<tr>
<td>William Faulkner</td>
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<tr>
<td>Shelby Foote</td>
<td>Novelist/Historian</td>
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<td>Ellen Gilchrist</td>
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<td>John Grisham</td>
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<td>Beth Henley</td>
<td>Playwright</td>
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<tr>
<td>Willie Morris</td>
<td>Journalist/Novelist</td>
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<td>Walker Percy</td>
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<td>William Raspberry</td>
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<td>James Street</td>
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<td>Eudora Welty</td>
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<td>Tennessee Williams</td>
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<td>Richard Wright</td>
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<tr>
<td>Zig Ziglar</td>
<td>Speaker</td>
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