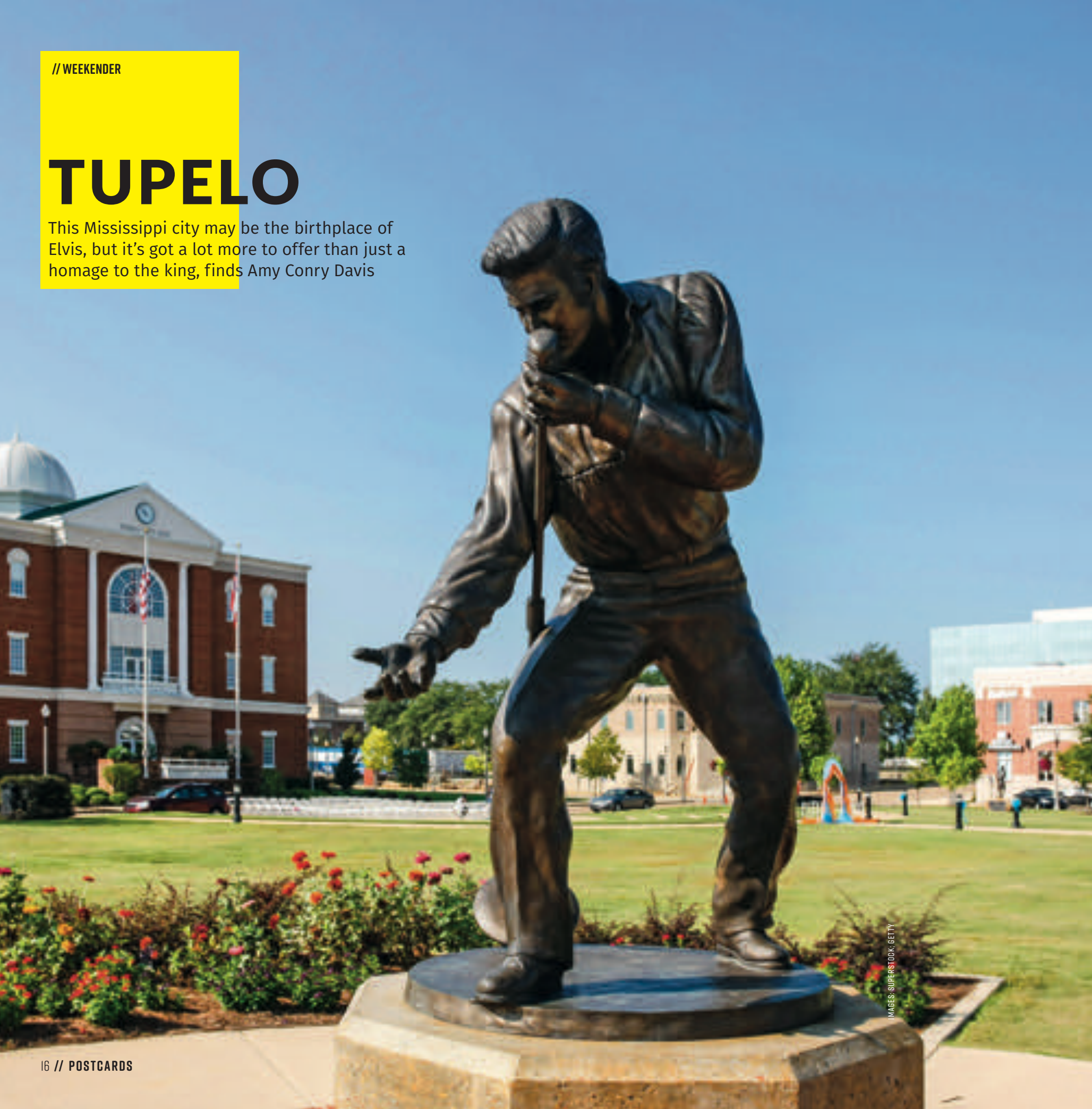


# TUPELO

This Mississippi city may be the birthplace of Elvis, but it's got a lot more to offer than just a homage to the king, finds Amy Conry Davis



IMAGES: SUPERSTOCK, GETTY



*Beignet, a classic breakfast pastry*  
**Left:** Elvis Presley Homecoming  
Statue in Fairpark

## DAY 1

The best introduction to Tupelo is by way of its historic, pedestrian-friendly downtown. Start on Main Street, which runs east and west, where shops and cafes line the wide sidewalks. Thanks to the city's Alley Refresh Project, colorful murals and street art liven up the brick facades of century-old buildings. Cafe 212 and Crave are both locally-owned businesses offering breakfast pastries, hot beverages and light bites to take on a stroll. When it comes to shopping, check out Reed's department store. This popular landmark has been in the same family for 115 years and carries shoes, clothing, jewelry and gifts. It also houses the GumTree Bookstore, which holds book signings and literary events.

Caron Gallery is Tupelo's best choice for Mississippi art and Spring Street Cigars has the largest walk-in humidor in the state. When it's time for lunch, Kermit's Soul Kitchen is a local favorite — and for good

reason. It sources high-quality meat and produce from regional farms and is known for its barbecue dishes.

Once the sun goes down, change gears with an upscale, Southern-inspired dinner at Park Heights Restaurant. Dine on filet mignon or lobster pot pie, followed by after-dinner drinks up on the rooftop bar, which overlooks downtown.

## DAY 2

Elvis' legacy is everywhere in Tupelo. Begin with the self-guided Elvis tour, an easy route around town with a dozen notable stops. The Tupelo Visitors Center is a helpful starting point for maps and information. Next, head over to Johnnie's Drive-In for breakfast biscuits. This diner was a haunt for young Elvis and friends and nearly 80 years later it's still serving delicious food. Other points along the way include his childhood home, his schools and Tupelo Hardware, the store where his mother

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Left: Downtown Tupelo Main Street

bought him his first guitar. Break for a casual lunch on the patio at either Romie's Grocery or Fairpark Grill.

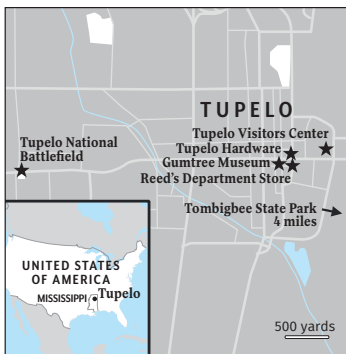
For the evening's entertainment, look to venues such as GumTree Museum and the Tupelo Community Theatre for shows and art exhibits. The North Mississippi Symphony Orchestra also puts on special concerts and performances throughout the year. For burgers and beers with a side of live music, the Blue Canoe is the venue to visit to see the area's up-and-coming singers and songwriters.

### DAY 3

Beyond its city center, Tupelo has plenty of options when it comes to outdoor spaces to explore. Plan for a day spent in nature with a Sunday drive and lunch enjoyed al fresco. On the way out of town, fill up at Strange Brew Coffeehouse or Tupelo River Coffee. The nearby Natchez Trace Parkway, which follows old paths used by indigenous peoples, makes for a spectacular day trip. The two-lane byway stretches over 400 miles but important sites like the Pharr Mounds are just a short ride away. Scenic overlooks and historical markers are perfect for picnic breaks with a view. Brice's Cross Roads, Tupelo National Battlefield and the Oren Dunn City Museum are other areas of interest to learn more about Mississippi's history. Over at the Tombigbee State Park, take a walk around the 90-acre Lake Lee to spot birds, or just sit and relax.

Round off the day with dinner at Forklift Restaurant, ordering grilled Gulf oysters or shrimp and grits to continue the Southern education. Top it all off with one of the divine craft cocktails. □

## // ESSENTIALS



**When to go:** Spring and fall are best for mild temperatures. The city hosts several large festivals so expect crowds during those times, especially the Tupelo Elvis Festival and Gumtree Festival, which are held in late spring and early summer, respectively.

**Language:** English

**Getting Around:** Tupelo Airport is closest but the Golden Triangle Airport and Memphis Airport are suitable alternatives. All three locations offer rental car services. Ride-sharing services like Uber and Lyft are available for transport around the city.

### CALL US

To book your trip to Tupelo, contact our travel agency