

U.S. CIVIL RIGHTS TRAIL JOURNEY

MISSISSIPPI





Philadelphia - Jackson (1 hr. 34 mins.)

Jackson - Greenwood (1 hr. 42 mins.)

Greenwood - Sumner (58 mins.)

Sumner - Oxford (1 hr. 33 mins.)

The U.S. Civil Rights Trail spans 14 states, features more than 100 sites and highlights the country's civil rights story. Your journey along the trail begins in Philadelphia, Mississippi.



*Mississippi Civil Rights Museum
Jackson, MS*

DAY 1 – PHILADELPHIA TO JACKSON

Mount Zion United Methodist Church > Mississippi Civil Rights Museum > Medgar and Myrlie Evers Home National Monument

The infamous events of Mississippi's civil rights era opened the eyes of our nation and provided a window through which the entire world could observe the plague of racism and the power of those willing to fight for freedom and justice. Your journey begins in Philadelphia where the murders of three civil rights activists took place, providing irrefutable testimony to the resistance to racial equality and integration that lingered in Southern states.

Mount Zion United Methodist Church

Mount Zion United Methodist Church is located off Highway 16 East on County Road 747. Here, on June 16, 1964, a routine meeting of church officers was held. As the officers were leaving the church, Klansmen met them outside, ordered them out of their vehicles and then proceeded to beat J.R. "Bud" Cole, Georgia Rush and her son, John Thomas. The church was burned later that evening, leaving only the 40-year-old bell that was used to announce the beginning of church services.

On June 21, three civil rights workers – James Chaney, Andrew Goodman and Michael Schwerner – came to Philadelphia to secure affidavits about the raid, the beatings and the burning of the church. Several members of the Ku Klux Klan shot them to death at close range and buried their bodies in an earthen dam a few miles from Mount Zion Methodist Church. The church was rebuilt and rededicated in February 1966 with a plaque near the front to pay tribute to the three slain civil rights workers. In 1989, a historical marker was placed at the church to commemorate the 25th anniversary of the murders.

This concludes your time in Philadelphia. Head toward Jackson to continue your U.S. Civil Rights Trail journey.

Mississippi Civil Rights Museum

The Mississippi Civil Rights Museum opened in December 2017 and is the only museum of its kind in the state. Exhibits cover the entire Civil Rights Movement, but particular attention is given to the murders of Medgar Evers and Emmett Till and their role in bringing the movement to the forefront of American life.



*Medgar and Myrlie Evers Home National Monument
Jackson, MS*

Medgar and Myrlie Evers Home National Monument

Stop by the home of Medgar and Myrlie Evers, declared a National Historic Landmark by the National Park Service in 2016 and designated a National Monument in 2019. Medgar Evers became the NAACP's first full-time state field secretary in 1954, monitoring, collecting and publicizing data concerning civil rights violations. Despite threats to his life, he continued working toward equal rights for all. Tragically, his life was cut short when he was gunned down in the driveway of his home in June of 1963.

DAY 2 – GREENWOOD

Bryant's Grocery > Fannie Lou Hamer Memorial Statue > B.B. King Museum and Delta Interpretive Center

Drive about 100 miles to your first stop of the day – Bryant's Grocery, just north of Greenwood in the community of Money.

Bryant's Grocery

The crumbling walls of the store are all that remain to mark one of the darkest chapters in American history. Bryant's Grocery is the first setting in the story of Emmett Till's brutal murder and the subsequent trial of his killers. Today, you can visit historical markers associated with his slaying. Visiting these sites offers a unique opportunity for reflection on one of the most notorious and violent incidents of the Civil Rights Movement.

Continue your U.S. Civil Rights Trail journey in Ruleville.



*Bryant's Grocery
Money, MS*

Fannie Lou Hamer Memorial Statue

Visit the memorial of Fannie Lou Hamer, who progressed from a sharecropper on a Sunflower County plantation to civil rights activist, helping bring equality to a state that fiercely opposed change.

Continue to Indianola, the home of B.B. King.

B.B. King Museum and Delta Interpretive Center

The life of B.B. King provides the backdrop for the museum as well as the rich cultural heritage of the Mississippi Delta. Through an authentic presentation of music, art, artifacts and video, along with educational programming, the museum honors its namesake as an internationally renowned and influential musician.



*Fannie Lou Hamer Memorial
Ruleville, MS*



*B.B. King Museum and Delta Interpretive Center
Indianola, MS*



Tallahatchie County Courthouse
Sumner, MS

DAY 3 – SUMNER TO OXFORD

Emmett Till Interpretive Center > Lyceum – the Circle Historic District, University of Mississippi

Sumner was the home of one of the most pivotal cases of the Civil Rights Movement – the Emmett Till murder trial. Travel from Greenwood to Sumner to visit the Emmett Till Interpretive Center.

Emmett Till Interpretive Center

The Emmett Till Interpretive Center exists to tell the story of Emmett Till and the murder that became an emblem of the Civil Rights Movement, shedding light on the horrific treatment of African-Americans in Mississippi and the South. The center uses arts and storytelling to help visitors process past pain and to point a way toward racial healing.

Travel to Oxford and the University of Mississippi.



Lyceum
Oxford, MS

Lyceum – the Circle Historic District, University of Mississippi

On Sept. 30, 1962, riots erupted on the campus of the University of Mississippi where locals, students and committed segregationists had gathered to protest the enrollment of James Meredith, a Black Air Force veteran attempting to integrate the all-white school. Despite the presence of more than 120 federal marshals who were on hand to protect Meredith from harm, the crowd turned violent after nightfall and authorities struggled to maintain order. After spending the night of Sept. 30 under federal protection, Meredith was allowed to register for classes the following morning and became the first Black graduate of the university in August 1963.

This concludes your U.S. Civil Rights Trail journey in Mississippi.



Emmett Till Interpretive Center
Sumner, MS