

Tracks of the Deep South; A DIY roadtrip- Part 5, Memphis

Walking in Memphis...

Our drive to Memphis was just over 3 hours long, and we were pleased to arrive at our hotel, on the outskirts of Memphis early, yet be able to check into our room. We had a quick change and got a cab into town. We only had one day afternoon/evening in Memphis and we wanted to get the best out of it.

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We started with a drink on the famous Beale street, at Rum and Boogie, a Traditional bluesy bar with cocktails, beer and food. We had all three whilst listening to some live mu-

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sic -our first of the day. There were lots of signed guitars here to admire, including our hero- Billy Joel's.

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We then carried on walking down Beale street, enjoying another couple of pit stops - beers and music in the garden of the Brewery and then more beer and music on the park just off Beale street where we watched a great soul band.

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We made our way to Sun Studio- we took a cab as we left it too long to walk as we were enjoying the music!

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Sun studio is the iconic studio which is still in use now, but back in the day 'founded' Elvis. Since then anyone who is anyone has recorded there, and the studio tour was absolutely brilliant. We saw the studio in which Elvis did his first recording, heard early recordings ,made in there. It was such a good tour.

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But the best bit – we were the last of the day and Keith asked the guide if he could play the piano in there. (He explained he was a pianist). The guide said yes! So Keith played the piano IN Sun Studio, one that's had many many many terrific artists play on too- but most notably Jerry Lee Lewis, who stubbed his cigarette out on the low E. Keefy's life literally was made that night.

Our night was spent walking in Memphis, listening to street music and eating amazing barbecue at Rendezvous- delicious and well worth the hour wait to get in!

I was a little disappointed that some of the music choices especially on the Main Street were not quite so traditional as I'd hoped. But

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I think with more time to explore the nooks and crannies, and maybe get some recommendations, we'd have had more variety on offer.



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Sunday morning arrived and it was an early start. We had timed tickets to Graceland, Elvis' home, which conveniently was practically next door to our hotel. We checked out and moved into the parking lot for Graceland.

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Our tour began with a short video and then a bus journey across the road to the mansion.

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The tour then moved back across the road to the exhibition centre. We saw Elvis' cars, bikes, clothing – even his jet planes (s). We spent over 4 hours there in total and it honestly was so great- an absolute must visit if you're in the area. And if you're not- well you should be!

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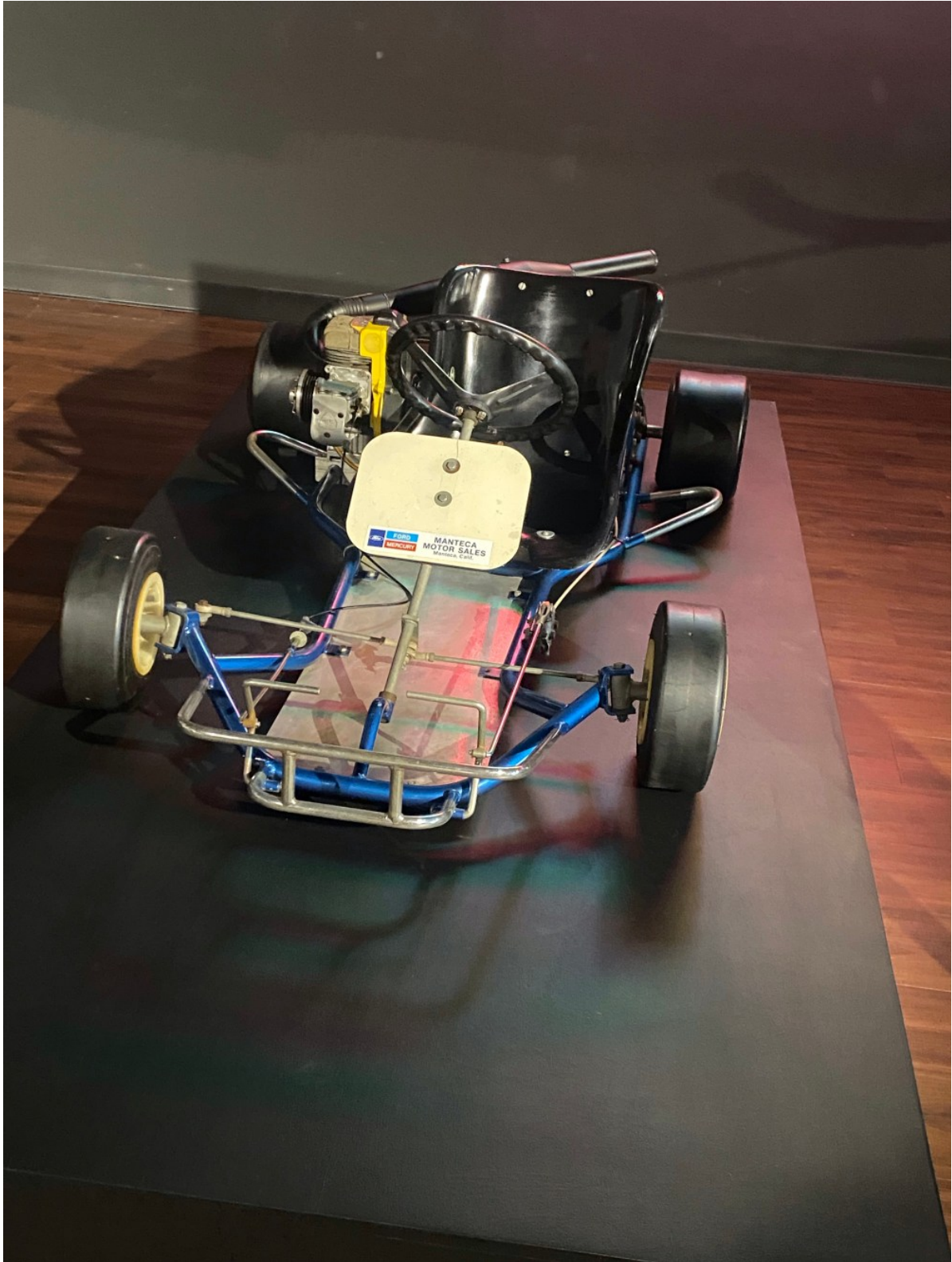
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We were both surprised how modest the mansion appeared to be. We were blown away with whole experience of being at Graceland, finding it overwhelming, emotional and yet just darn right awesome. Before we left Memphis, we drove down to the river front, the mighty Mississippi River, where we enjoyed a picnic lunch on the banks of the river.

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