



# Music to your ears

Replay the sounds of the 1950s, 1960s and 1970s on a music holiday, says Katie McGonagle

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Smell is said to be the most powerful sense in evoking strong memories, but music surely has to come a close second. There's no surer way to spark reminiscences of teenage years watching *Top of the Pops* or Saturday nights spent boogying around handbags than by hearing the familiar strains of tunes you sang to, danced to and maybe even fell in love to in younger years.

It's not just about taking a walk down memory lane – there are hundreds of music holidays catering to clients who are keener to *Rock Around the Clock* or *Twist and Shout* than to sing along with today's chart toppers.

Score a hit with your older client base by booking them a

holiday that takes them right back to the dance floors of the 50s, 60s and 70s – and you might find yourself humming along to a few hit tunes too.

► HITS AND BRITS

If there's one export Brits have all sewn up, it's our music – from The Beatles and Rolling Stones through to Ed Sheeran and Adele, we've been dominating the global charts for more than half a century – so there's no need to leave home shores to hear those sounds all over again.

For fans of the Fab Four – and that's pretty much everyone who was alive in the 1960s – Liverpool is a must. The Beatles Story is the standout attraction, with its very own Abbey Road,

Yellow Submarine and Cavern Club replicas. Attraction World sells entry from £15 for adults.

If visitors want an even more in-depth experience, Newmarket Holidays' three-day coach tour Strawberry Fields, Penny Lane & the Cavern Club immerses them in the Merseybeat music scene, with a Beatles coach tour around the city, entry to the Cavern Club, where the Beatles played their earliest gigs, and a ferry ride across the Mersey.

Product manager Sonja Okpu says: "This trip not only offers a nostalgic tour of the places where the history of popular music was changed for ever, on the included Beatles coach tour and entrance to the Cavern Club, but also gives customers

time at leisure should they wish to explore the British Music Experience, where they can see the costumes, memorabilia and instruments from artists such as Freddy Mercury, the Sex Pistols and Dusty Springfield." Departures run May to September and cost from £189.

If all this talk of music makes you feel like dancing, why not listen to the master of that lyric, Leo Sayer? The 1970s icon will be performing live this year at Bodelwyddan Castle in north Wales, one of Warner Leisure Hotels' properties aimed at retirees. The singer and his band are set to re-enact hits such as *You Make Me Feel Like Dancing*, *When I Need You* and *Moonlighting* on the hotel's →



**FAST FACT**  
The River Cruise Line has added three music cruises for spring 2019, featuring songs from Elvis, Queen and the 1960s




PICTURES: SHUTTERSTOCK, JIM ROSS

→ new Star Break, starting from £313 for a three-night weekend break arriving August 25, including the Simply Dine package.

The brand also runs Big Night Live shows including Elvis Legacy, Motown and tribute act Lola Lamour and her Blue Light Band, recreating classics from Peggy Lee and Ella Fitzgerald.

If it's all about hearing those familiar hits, the wave of West End musicals based on best-selling artists should tick the box, and the success of shows such as *Beautiful*, featuring the songs of Carole King, *We Will Rock You*, based on Queen hits, and the well-received *Girl from the North Country*, using Bob Dylan's songbook, prove just how popular these can be.

Gary Gillespie, national sales manager at Super Break, says: "Musicals that focus on a music legend's career and songs can be a real draw when it comes to purchasing a theatre break. Many customers who

**ABOVE LEFT:**  
Leo Sayer

**ABOVE RIGHT:**  
*Bat Out of Hell*

**BELOW:**  
Norwegian  
Cruise Line's  
Cavern Club



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grew up to the sounds and songs of a certain era want to hear their favourite songs and join in with the rest of the audience for a feel-good singalong night out."

Hit show *Bat Out Of Hell* - which played in Manchester and London last year before moving to Toronto - is back at London's Dominion Theatre from April, bringing Meat Loaf's 1977 album to the stage with tracks such as *Bat Out Of Hell* and *You Took the Words Right Out of my Mouth*,

alongside later hits such as *Dead Ringer for Love* and *I'd Do Anything for Love*. Super Break offers a package including two nights' B&B at the three-star President Hotel and a ticket to the show from £228.

#### ▶ WORLD MUSIC

While British acts frequently top the charts Stateside, the reverse is also true, and some of the most popular music holidays involve hopping across the pond to see where the pioneers of rock and roll made the magic happen.

No trip to Memphis, Tennessee, would be complete without stepping inside Graceland - the second-most-visited home in the US, after the White House - the mansion in which Elvis lived at the height of his career. There's plenty of memorabilia and insight into the singer's early life, plus the meditation garden where his grave lies, and car museum Presley Motors, where his famous pink Cadillac takes prime position. →





ABOVE: Friend of Elvis, George Klein, offers private tours of Graceland

➔ **Luxury Gold** offers unrivalled access with a private after-hours visit hosted by George Klein, one of Elvis's oldest friends – they met in eighth grade and the King was best man at his wedding – and a tour around Elvis's car collection. The operator's nine-day Southern Grace tour starts at £3,895, including flights and luxury accommodation.

Most tours pair Graceland with the sounds of the Deep South: namely Sun Studio in Memphis, where Elvis, Johnny Cash and BB King recorded their biggest hits, then Nashville's Studio B, Country Music Hall of Fame and Grand Ole Opry. Cosmos has a departure marking the 41st anniversary of the King's death, departing August 11, from £2,246 including flights.

Some tours also tag on Detroit's Motown Museum – aka Hitsville, USA – plus Cleveland's Rock and Roll Hall of Fame and Chicago's famous blues bars.

Europop doesn't have quite the same profile as its American equivalent, with one notable exception. "If one band sums up the music of the 1970s, it has to be Swedish 'super troupers'



### A tour of Graceland is hosted by one of Elvis's oldest friends – the King was best man at his wedding

Abba," says Lauren Ross, Europe product and commercial manager for Simply Luxury by Travel 2. "A visit to the Abba museum in Stockholm is a must for dancing queens and casual fans alike. The permanent exhibition gives visitors the opportunity to find out how Björn, Benny, Frida and Agnetha got together, and see the band's costumes, gold records and memorabilia. There's even a telephone that only members of the band have the number for; if it rings, you could be talking with a pop legend."

Four nights' B&B at the Nordic C Stockholm Hotel starts at £699 in a double standard room, including Gatwick flights, lounge passes, and private transfers.

### SONGS AT SEA

Given the more mature age profile of the average cruise customer, it's no surprise lines have cottoned on to the idea of enticing guests with the aid of their favourite tunes. Over-55s specialist Saga Cruises has just released a sounds of the 1960s cruise visiting Scandinavian cities onboard *Saga Sapphire*.

Expect Gerry and the Pacemakers getting the crowds to sing along with anthems *I Like It* and *You'll Never Walk Alone*, the Merseybeats singing signature tune *Wishin' and Hopin'*, and The Fortunes crooning away with *You've Got Your Troubles*. The 10-night cruise departs Dover on May 10, priced from £1,707.

If clients missed out on the nine-year run of *Jersey Boys* – the story of Frankie Valli and the Four

Seasons – in the West End, fear not; *Norwegian Bliss* is bringing Broadway on board with *Jersey Boys* headlining the main stage, which can be booked onboard or prior to departure, at no extra cost. The ship also boasts its own Cavern Club, featuring only artists who performed in the original Liverpool venue.

Also taking to the stage on 10 Carnival Cruise Line ships is *Motor City*, featuring the best R&B and Motown sounds with hits from the Commodores, Lionel Richie, Marvin Gaye, the Supremes and Stevie Wonder. And if that show doesn't feature on your clients' cruise, chances are *88 Keys: The Rock 'n' Roll Piano Show* will, with singalong hits from Little Richard, Jerry Lee Lewis and Billy Joel. All are included in the cruise price. **TW**

## Best of the rest

▶ **We'll meet again:** Sing Second World War ditties such as *White Cliffs of Dover* on Grand UK Holidays' wartime nostalgia trip to Torquay, which features quizzes and entertainment. Priced from £299 in October 1.

▶ **Simply the best:** Watch new show *Tina: The Tina Turner Musical*, featuring *Proud Mary* and *What's Love Got to Do With It*. Omega Holidays offers a night in a London hotel, theatre tickets and local pick-up, from £149.

▶ **Choir capers:** Be the star of the show on HF Holidays' three-night Bach to Bacharach at Abingworth break, which allows guests to harmonise to Burt Bacharach, The Beatles and Abba songs. Prices start at £359, departing September 14.

▶ **In harmony:** Shearings now offers short breaks to see Il Divo at Edinburgh Castle and Ragley Hall in Warwickshire in July. A two-night break starts at £164, including B&B accommodation in Edinburgh and coach pick-up.

