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People



Dierks Bentley

Long Trip Alone

Notone jumps off Dierks Bentley's third disc the way that "What Was I Thinkin'" did on his self-titled 2003 debut. But you don't reel off a song that memorable every day.

COUNTRY

The videogenic guitar slinger has turned out a solid if not extraordinary follow-up to last year's platinum *Modern Day Drifter*. Keeping his sense of fun and largely avoiding the self-pitying that afflicts some young singers, Bentley delivers with such lively country tunes as "That Don't Make It

Easy Loving Me," "Band of Brothers" and "Free and Easy Down the Road I Go." He displays an appealing humility on "Hope for Me Yet," while benefiting from the exemplary musicianship of bluegrass stars the Grascals on the gospel-inflected "Prodigal Son's Prayer." Bentley is clearly on a roll—he won last year's CMA Horizon Award and is up for Male Vocalist of the Year at next month's CMA Awards—and this disc shouldn't stop him. ★ ★ ★ ★

► **DOWNLOAD THIS:** "That Don't Make It Easy Loving Me"