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Jason Aldean, Trisha Yearwood and Other Georgia Natives Rep for Their Home State -- From Most Influential Artists to Presidential Connections

By [Billboard Staff](#) | July 23, 2015 1:09 PM EDT



These Georgia natives are all quick to credit other local acts from James Brown to Alan Jackson to Outkast with making the state's reputation as a cradle for American music of all stripes. "Just in my hometown" of Macon, says Jason Aldean, "you had the Allman Brothers, Otis Redding and Little Richard, plus bands like The Black Crowes."

These days, country artists represent as fiercely as anyone for their home state. The list of stars hailing from Georgia runs long: Beyond those pictured above, there's Zac Brown, Jennifer Nettles, Sam Hunt, Billy Currington, Brantley Gilbert, Colt Ford, Lauren Alaina and Lady Antebellum's Dave Haywood and Charles

Kelley. “It was a big melting pot,” says Trisha Yearwood, “and we’ve all got a little piece of it.”

Nashville's Biggest Songwriters Speak Out About the Lack of Women on Country Radio and the Songs They Wish They Wrote

Jason Aldean, 38

Hometown: Macon

Favorite song about Georgia: “Ray Charles’ ‘Georgia on My Mind.’ Besides the fact that he sings the crap out of it, it’s Georgia’s theme song. It’s kind of like the peanut or the peach -- it’s just part of the heritage.”

Dierks Bentley Dishes on His Bumpy Road to Stardom: 'I Didn't See It Working Out for Me'

Luke Bryan, 39

Hometown: Leesburg

Authentic roots: “I was in south Georgia in a country-guy fraternity, and my dad was a farmer. If I sing a song about hunting and fishing or the outdoors or the beach or the party, it’s because these things have come into my life in a big way.”

Luke Bryan on 'Frat-Boy Music,' the Confederate Flag and Why He Hangs 'On To the Positive' After Overcoming Loss

Trisha Yearwood, 50

Hometown: Monticello

Jimmy Carter connection: “My experience with President Carter has been with slinging a hammer next to him. My husband Garth [Brooks] and I do a lot of work with Habitat for Humanity, and we usually go on the Carter build once a year. He is 90, and I would put anybody up against him. He’s a gentleman. And he is a hard worker.”

Kip Moore, 35

Hometown: Tifton

Big Boi or Andre 3000? “Andre 3000 for sure. He’s a creative genius, a chameleon with a lot of colors.”

Nashville Power Players: The Billboard Cover Shoot

Cole Swindell, 32

Hometown: Brownwood

Favorite Georgia artist: “Alan Jackson. I remember driving my mom nuts riding around listening to A Lot About Livin’ (And a Little ’Bout Love) with ‘Chattahoochee’ on it. And at this past ACM Awards, I got to sing with him. My mother and I just had a couple of those moments where it’s all come full circle, and getting the chance to sing that song with him was hard to top for me.”

