

## Debbie Davies Biography

She wields an electric guitar as if it were a wand. — LOS ANGELES TIMES

Debbie Davies is an award-winning singer, songwriter, guitar player of extraordinary talent. A professional musician since the early 1980s, Debbie ranks among the top blues artists in the country. She has received ten nominations for Blues Music Awards, and in 1997 and 2010 won the award for Best Contemporary Female Blues Artist.

Davies' rise to the upper echelon of blues music started at an early age as she absorbed the music heard constantly in her home. Her (professional) musician parents were either sitting at the piano or spinning discs on their turntable, filling the air with the sounds of big band jazz, harmony vocal groups, or the pop icons of the day. But the young Davies was particularly attracted to the bluesier sounds of her father's Ray Charles records, and by the age of 12 realized that her affinity for an instrument was not for the piano, but for the guitar.

Growing up in Los Angeles in the 1960's, she found that being a female guitar player meant only one thing: acoustic guitar. Electric guitars were still toys meant only for boys. But when Debbie heard the sounds of the British blues-rock bands, particularly the electric guitar of Eric Clapton with John Mayall's Bluesbreakers, she became completely captivated. Going against the grains of society's accepted roles of the time, Debbie pursued her dream with the passion of an artist and the soul of a rebel.

Davies cut her teeth playing in blues and rock 'n roll bands in the San Francisco Bay area before returning to Los Angeles in 1984, where she landed the lead guitar spot in Maggie Mayall and the Cadillacs, an all-female band led by wife of British blues pioneer, John Mayall. In 1988 she was recruited by Albert Collins to join the Icebreakers, and for the next three years she was a featured guitarist performing behind one of the most innovative bluesmen of all time. "I stepped through a door into the real blues world when I joined Albert's band," Davies says. "It's one thing to listen to the records and pull off the licks, or sit in the audience watching these artists play. But actually going out and touring with one, turned the blues into something completely three-dimensional for me. I knew then what a special opportunity this was, but I know it even more now." During her tenure with Albert, Debbie was invited to perform on John Mayall's 1990 album, *A Sense of Place*, and in 1991 she recorded with Albert Collins and the Icebreakers on the Grammy nominated self-titled release for Point Blank/Virgin Records.

In the summer of 1991 Debbie became lead guitarist for Fingers Taylor and the Ladyfingers Revue, which served as the opening act for Jimmy Buffett's "Outpost" tour. In September 1993 she came out with her debut solo release, *Picture This*, on Blind Pig Records, which featured a cameo by Collins on "I Wonder Why." People like to ask Debbie if she learned her technique from Collins, to which she gently points out that she had to play well from the start to hold her own with Albert at every performance. However, the experience taught her lessons in being a better musician, both onstage and off. Says Davies, "It was the most powerful band I had ever played with, so I learned to dig even deeper into myself to pull out the music. Albert was a man of so much grace and kindness, so I can only hope that I was able to absorb some of his humanity too."

Since 1993, Debbie has produced eleven solo recordings and two collaborative CD's, one with guitarists Tab Benoit and Kenny Neal, and another with guitarists Anson Funderburgh and Otis Grand. The roster of other artists who have joined Debbie in the studio on her recordings reads like a who's who of the blues: Albert Collins, Ike Turner, James Cotton, Mick Taylor, Peter Green, Coco Montoya, Duke Robillard, Tommy Shannon, Chris "Whipper" Layton, Sugar Ray Norcia, Mudcat Ward, Charlie Musselwhite, Bruce Katz, Per Hanson, Noel Neal, and Rod Carey.

Her 2007 Telarc Records release Blues Blast is highly-acclaimed and is a pressure cooker recording that showcases her seasoned guitar and vocal capabilities. It includes guest appearances by three high-profile bluesmen: guitarists Tab Benoit and Coco Montoya, and harpist Charlie Musselwhite.

In 2009, Debbie Davies released the ground-breaking and acclaimed all instrumental CD, HOLDIN' COURT on Vizz Tone Records. That year also found Davies teaming up with blues singer and harp player, the late Robin Rogers to tour the country with performances at many festivals.

Davies also joined Tommy Castro's Legendary Rythm and Blues Cruise Revue that same year, performing both on the land and at sea. Debbie Davies is featured on the 2011 release of the review performing the tune ALL I FOUND, on Alligator Records.

At the close of 2010, Debbie was deeply affected by the passing of Robin Rogers. Later that year Debbie suffered a broken arm...a "no-no" for a musician! As she began to heal, she started writing and putting many of her experiences and feelings into songs. The result is 2012's, AFTER THE FALL on MC Records. The all-original CD also features songs written by Debbie's long time drummer Don Castagno and a guest appearance by pianist Bruce Katz.

In 2013 Davies felt it was time to treat her fans to a RETROSPECTIVE and she self released a CD of tunes recorded through the years both live and in the studio.

Davies brand new 2015 release, LOVE SPIN, is at once funky, rocking', and bluesy. It's collection of all original tunes showcases an artist at her peak, and will no doubt put smiles on the faces of long time fans and bring many new ones into the fold. Released by the VizzTone Label Group.

A thirty-year veteran of the road, this latest recording leaves no doubt that Debbie Davies is truly one of the leading lights on the contemporary blues music scene today.

- "Davies playing is extraordinary – full of propulsion and energy and melodic invention."- PEOPLE MAGAZINE
- "Davies exhibits guitar playing virtuosity with the likes of Eric Clapton and Stevie Ray Vaughan". – MUSIC CONNECTION
- "She pulls out all the stops. She can play it all: seductive, soulful material, down-home delta blues, or humorous tales of life on the road". – BLUES REVIEW MAGAZINE

- “Debbie is one of the direct links to the originators of this music. She knows what the blues is all about and you can hear it in the passion of her playing.” – COCO MONTOYA
- “Debbie is an incredible guitarist who plays with great taste and can cook like mad. Debbie plays from the heart and her heart has a lot to say. She inspires me. Besides being a fine musician she’s also an outstanding person that I am very glad to call a friend of mine.” – CHARLIE MUSSELWHITE
- I don’t often give endorsements or references, but once in a rare while I hear a musician of such talent that I want people to know. I believe my reputation backs up my ability to recognize exceptional blues guitarists. Such a one is Debbie Davies. Hear her now. – JOHN MAYALL