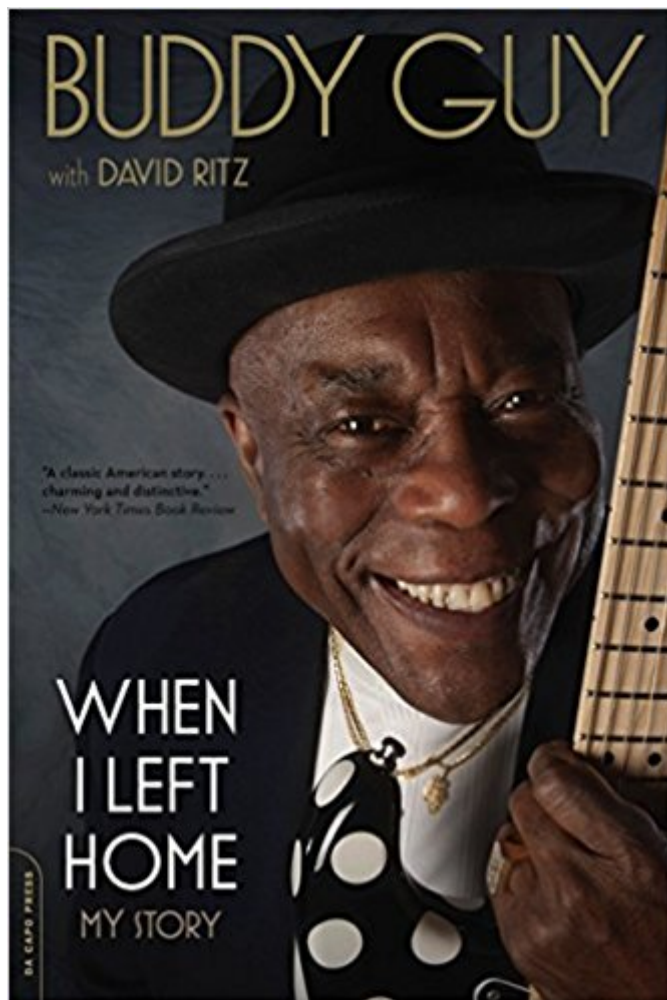


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# When I Left Home: My Story



## Synopsis

According to Eric Clapton, John Mayer, and the late Stevie Ray Vaughn, Buddy Guy is the greatest blues guitarist of all time. An enormous influence on these musicians as well as Jimi Hendrix, Jimmy Page, and Jeff Beck, he is the living embodiment of Chicago blues. Guy's epic story stands at the absolute nexus of modern blues. He came to Chicago from rural Louisiana in the fifties; the very moment when urban blues were electrifying our culture. He was a regular session player at Chess Records. Willie Dixon was his mentor. He was a sideman in the bands of Muddy Waters and Howlin' Wolf. He and Junior Wells formed a band of their own. In the sixties, he became a recording star in his own right. When I Left Home tells Guy's picaresque story in his own unique voice, that of a storyteller who remembers everything, including blues masters in their prime and the exploding, evolving culture of music that happened all around him.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Kirkus, 2/15/12 "Tasty as a Buddy Guy guitar lick."; Library Journal, 3/1/12 "Guy is a vibrant and hilarious storyteller. With a natural ease and honesty, he captures the spirit of the age, the culture of violence in the clubs, and the personalities of his colleagues... Highly recommended for any fan of Guy and those interested in the history of blues music." Publishers Weekly, 4/16/12 "As mesmerizing a storyteller as a guitarist, Guy, writing with Ritz, regales readers with tales of growing up picking cotton in rural Alabama, of seeing his first guitar and standing transfixed in front of Lightning Slim for several hours just memorizing the movements of Slim's hands, of his father's friend buying his first guitar for him, and of his endless efforts to play the

blues as he had heard and seen Slim and others play&#133;Guy?s memoir is a joyous celebration of the blues, one of our greatest musical treasures.&#148; Â Chicago Magazine, May 2012 &#147;[A] must-read autobiography&#133;What makes the breezy and revealing book special is its ability to bring history&#151;Guy?s own, as well as that of Chicago blues&#151;to life.&#148; Â Internet Review of Books, 4/6/12&#147;Buddy makes his life come alive&#133;Told in his own style and language, the book reads more like a blues song than an actual book, each verse telling a different story. And what stories they are&#133;Buddy?s book is as colourful as the blues&#133;If you?re looking for a reasonably unvarnished account of the blues life, Buddy has it here&#133;The book is funny, sad, tragic, lusty, honest, loving and insightful. Just like the blues. Just like Buddy Guy. If you love the blues and all that it means, you should love this book.&#148; Â Houston Press, 5/8/12 &#147;In this memoir, the story of [Guy?s] life is also the tale of the music itself of the past 50-plus years&#133;There?s a treasure trove of stories here.&#148; Â BluesPowR blog, 5/10/12 &#147;When I Left Home covers an amazing amount of ground in its close to 300 pages&#133;Relayed in a simple, conversational manner, the book does a terrific job of documenting the life of one of blues music?s biggest living stars, making it a must-read for any fan of the blues&#133;When I Left Home isn?t, as the title indicates, just Buddy?s story; in many respects, this is a story of the blues.&#148;Â

Buddy Guy was born in 1936 in Lettsworth, Louisiana. He is considered among the best blues guitarists alive today. He lives in Chicago. David Ritz is the coauthor of many bestselling autobiographies of musicians, including Ray Charles, Etta James, Scott Weiland, Grandmaster Flash, and more. He is the author of *Divided Soul*, the definitive biography of Marvin Gaye, and lives in Los Angeles.

Mr. Guy?s life story is amazing. There were some incredible signs when he was young that the Other Side was making sure to help him on his way to become the great musician/artist he became. The way he got his first real guitar, (not the 2-string, the next one). The dream he had the night before he went to Chicago. The stranger who saw him with his guitar the night he was going to leave Chicago and go back home and who took him to a club to play, When Buddy performed, he literally felt possessed by the spirit of another player he loved, and he blew everyone away. The colloquial speech used in the narration was so natural, it felt like he was sitting here talking. I learned a lot of things I didn?t know, like how the Black community sort of moved on at what point as to what they wanted to hear (Motown and so on), which fortuitously happened at the same time as the

British Invasion groups coming to find their Blues idols, eventually bringing them on tour and introducing them to massive White audiences. Living in Chicago, it was fun to hear where all the clubs were and the way it was back then. I could just picture it all. This is a great memoir and one cool book. Highly recommended.

I've read several books about the blues, and the great men who have played them. The other volumes have their virtues, but this is hands-down my favorite. This memoir has a dramatic storyline that gives it great forward momentum, and it has clearly benefitted from plenty of editing. Everything that's been left is first-rate storytelling.

I also read the first book on Buddy Guy so I was a little hesitant to read this book. After reading it, I am really glad I made that decision. Finally a book on the Chicago Blues scene from the early years from a person who was there and knew the characters. I don't know if the filmmakers from Cadillac Records talked with Buddy Guy, but I believe they should have. I really enjoyed hearing about all of the artist that he encountered over the years, and just hearing about what type personalities they had (John Lee Hooker, Lightning' Hopkins, Albert King, etc.) That information was priceless for me. I also liked his openness about his different relationships with other musicians over the years. I also liked the mixture of personal life info that he added into the book. Unlike some other bio's that I read, this book did not get into the technical playing of the actual guitar - which suited me fine. If I wanted to learn his style I would buy one of his instructional videos. This book was extremely easy to read and it kept me anxious to keep reading. I actually felt bad as I got close to the end. Buddy's book would make for an excellent Blues movie! Buddy is one of the last remaining Blues icons and this book is a great contribution to keep the music history live and documented.

Though I haven't had the privilege of hearing Buddy in person yet, my heart felt the sorrow and happiness of the blues as I read his story. Blues will always endure as younger generations of bluesman explore their past. Buddy and all the rest of the greats warm my heart when I read stories like his, BB, Eric, and many others. Feel the blues with Buddy's story. Now for some picking of my own :)

I love this book! Buddy tells us his moving story, straight from his heart. This legendary Blues musician, like his voice and guitar, melts bitterness away and soothes the soul. Steeped in musical history, featuring many fellow Blues Legends throughout his life from Louisiana to Chicago and the

world, this story is a wonderful and important read. Buddy is a Blues ambassador, teacher extraordinaire, reliable and driven, working with his colleagues to get - us - dancing! His hardworking dedication and passion for sharing great music is matched only by his elegant humility. Buddy, your disarming generosity and good kind heart are evident through your story, like your guidance and inspiration shine through in so many of the greatest rock and roll legends of our time. True to your name, you get us to forget the troubles of the world and smile for a spell - what a great grin, boasting that glint in your eye. Bravo, Man! LizaPoetry/Pix0/

I first saw Buddy Guy perform with Junior Wells at the last ChicagoFest at Soldier Field in 1983. The sounds pouring out of his guitar and his showmanship made a lasting impression on me, and I've been a fan ever since. I was always disappointed that I couldn't find a recording that captured that raw live sound until his more recent recordings, and now I know why. This book is a must read for blues fans who want to gain an insight to the Chicago sound and the players who created it. This book is a great historical narrative, told by a great blues guitarist in a very modest fashion. I was impressed how Buddy gave his due to all those who came before him. He didn't put himself on a pedestal, although he certainly could have done so. The story of how he grew up, moved to Chicago, and struggled to make a life for himself and his family in the early years is sobering history. The tall tales he tells are entertaining and complement the story. It was fun to hear how he developed his stage act early on, elements of which he still incorporates to this day. Understanding the background of how Buddy was produced helped me understand not only why I couldn't find the album I was looking for, but also uncovered a couple of gems to add to my collection. All in all, if you love blues music, culture and history, you will love this book.

Been a Buddy Guy fan for decades. Love this book in his own voice. He is real and honest, and funny. Lots of stories about jamming with all my favorite blues players.

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