

Biography

Fans of roots music have asked Patty Loveless for years to reprise the Appalachian sound of her 2001 **Mountain Soul** CD, and now she has at last. Like its predecessor, **Mountain Soul II** features Patty's crystalline country vocals amid bluegrass-tinged instrumentation.

"It's Appalachian, bluegrass and country combined," says Patty of her new collection's sound. "You should never try to duplicate something like **Mountain Soul**. What you should do is enhance. So this is like a continuation."

The first **Mountain Soul** CD was issued in June 2001. As a result of its enthusiastic reception, Patty Loveless was invited to perform on the critically acclaimed "Down From the Mountain" tour. She says that experience introduced her to a whole new audience.

"I was blessed to be able to expose my music to people who normally don't listen to country music. They loved the more organic, roots-y thing, but they don't listen to mainstream country. I met quite a few people who told me that. They kept wanting me to try and recapture that sound. They'd say, 'When are you going to do another record like this? We love this album.' I guess they kind of talked me into it."

As before, Patty surrounded herself in the studio with a stellar supporting cast. Her husband and producer Emory Gordy Jr. recruited fiddlers Stuart Duncan and Deanie Richardson, Dobro player Rob Ickes, singer Jon Randall and harmony vocalists Rebecca Lynn Howard, Tim Hensley and Carmella Ramsey, all of whom had backed Patty on the original **Mountain Soul** CD.

But **Mountain Soul II** has some new textures as well. Bluegrass greats Del, Robbie and Ronnie McCoury participate, as do Vince Gill, Carl Jackson, Bryan Sutton, Mike Auldridge, Emmylou Harris, steel guitarist Al Perkins, Patty's 16-year-old vocal discovery Sydny Perry and several other visitors to her Music Row recording sessions.

“We just had such a great time,” says Patty. “It was like we were singing and playing for each other. We wanted to try and make it live, as much as possible. There were no drums, so everybody gravitated towards each other’s inner rhythms. We started the sessions on a Monday, and we finished that Thursday evening. I had so much fun making this record that I didn’t want it to end.”

The repertoire on **Mountain Soul II** ranges from the traditional gospel tunes “Working on a Building” and “Friends in Gloryland” to contemporary compositions such as Jon Randall’s gorgeous ballad “You Burned the Bridge” and Barbara Keith’s soaring folk ode “Bramble and the Rose.” The daughter of a Kentucky coal miner, Patty restores the original mining lyrics to Harlan Howard’s 1962 classic “Busted.” On the Emmylou Harris song “Diamond in My Crown,” Patty’s vocal is accompanied by a harmony part from its originator.

Emory’s co-written “When the Last Curtain Falls” is a honky-tonk masterpiece on **Mountain Soul II**. The lovely melody of “Fools Thin Air,” penned by Susanna Clark and Rodney Crowell, is drenched in bluegrass harmony. The throbbing, emotional “Prisoner’s Tears” is backed by sighing steel guitar.

Patty Loveless reemerges as a songwriter on **Mountain Soul II** with “(We Are All) Children of Abraham” and “Big Chance” with Emory as her collaborator. That latter song is one of the new collection’s sprightliest bluegrass romps. “Blue Memories” and “Feelings of Love” are other acoustic-music standouts. Tony Arata’s inspirational “A Handful of Dust” is one of the most thrilling performances on the new CD. Patty’s vocal on Karen Staley’s heartache ballad “Half Over You” is stunningly rich and lustrous.

Mountain Soul II is the follow-up to **Sleepless Nights**, Patty’s Grammy Award nominated debut album for Saguaro Road Records. To date, the singer has issued eight Gold Record albums, four of which have gone on to Platinum status.

Patty is noted for such chart-topping hits as “Timber I’m Falling in Love,” “Chains,” “Blame it on Your Heart,” “You Can Feel Bad” and “Lonely Too Long,” as well as such enduring fan favorites as “I Try to Think About Elvis,” “How Can I Help You Say Goodbye,” “I’m That Kind of Girl” and “You Don’t Even Know Who I Am.”

Patty Loveless was named the Country Music Association’s Female Vocalist of the Year in 1996. Her **When Fallen Angels Fly** was the CMA Album of the Year for 1995, and she has been a member of the cast of the legendary Grand Ole Opry since 1988.

After the first **Mountain Soul** collection in 2001, the performer pursued her back-to-basics artistry with 2002’s **Blue Grass & White Snow**, a widely applauded acoustic holiday collection. Cited by many in her industry as the finest female country singer of her generation, Patty picked up more praise for 2003’s **On Your Way Home** and 2005’s **Dreamin’ My Dreams**. In 2008, **Sleepless Nights** found her revisiting traditional country classics she has loved all her life.

“I was surprised, and flattered, that the label wanted another record from me so quickly” says Patty. “I thought, ‘Wait a minute. It seems like we just finished **Sleepless Nights**.’ I didn’t think I was ready to go back into the studio yet. Then when we told the label about doing something like this, they were very intrigued. Like a lot of people, they loved the **Mountain Soul** record. So they really trusted Emory and mine’s artistic decisions. And once we started to work, this project became a complete joy.”

“It all just came together,” says Patty of the **Mountain Soul II** recording sessions.

“It was like we were in my living room performing. I loved being around those folks. Having all of those people in there, you felt like you were at a really special get-together.”