

James Montgomery Band - From Detroit to the Delta (2013)

Written by bluesever

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1. *Intoxicated* 2. *Same Thing* 3. *Little Johnny* 4. *Motor City is Burning* 5. *I Don't Want to Have A Heart* 6. *Delta Storm* 7. *Who Do You Love?* 8. *Put Your Money Where Your Mouth Is* 9. *Hit The Road Jack* 10. *Rivers Edge* 11. *Changing Of The Guard* 12. *Black Cadillac*
Crispin Cioe Sax (Alto), Sax (Baritone), Sax (Tenor) Marc Copely Guitar, Producer James Cotton Harp DMC Vocals Larry Etkin Trumpet David Hull Bass, Guitar (Rhythm), Keyboards, Vocals (Background) Joey Kramer Drums Sandy MacDonald Keyboards George McCann Guitar, Guitar (Rhythm), Slide Guitar, Vocals (Background) James Montgomery Harp, Vocals, Vocals (Background) Seth Pappas Drums, Percussion, Vocals (Background) Marty Richards Drums Tom West Keyboards Charise White Vocals (Background) Brad Whitford Guitar

James Montgomery's new album is all over the place, and that is intentional. The kingpin of New England blues uses "From Detroit to the Delta" to celebrate the many blues traditions he has explored in a career that stretches back to the late 1960s.

The razor-sharp performance skills Montgomery and his band routinely display on stage tie together this revue of blues as filtered through R&B, funk, rock, country, and Chicago styles. Montgomery's pliable vocals and harmonica playing smoothly move from the slick, horn-driven numbers such as "Intoxicated" to the grittier fare represented by the rumble of John Lee Hooker's "Motor City Is Burning" and ethereal cry of the instrumental "River's Edge."

Guests along for the trip include slide-guitar ace Johnny Winter, Aerosmith's drummer Joey Kramer and guitarist Brad Whitford, rapper Darryl "DMC" McDaniels, the Uptown Horns, and blues-harp legend James Cotton.

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The added star power makes the stylistic leaps more palatable. But Montgomery's band — guitarist George McCann, bassist Dave Hull (who also produced the record), and drummer Seth Pappas — provides the confidence and balance necessary to pull off a record like this. The crew is right in the pocket with the boss, adding soulful character to the project whether handling the country lope of McCann's "Put Your Money Where Your Mouth Is" or turning Willie Dixon's "Same Thing" into fuzzed-out psychedelia. --- jamesmontgomery.com

Veteran blues rocker James Montgomery has put together a varied, solid collection of songs on *From Detroit to the Delta*. As the album title implies, the collection ranges in styles from uptown to urban to a Delta crossroads.

Originally from Detroit but based in Boston, harmonica player and singer Montgomery has been a presence on the blues scene since the late 1960s, with the release of his band's first album — *First Time Out* — coming in 1973. Montgomery has been around. Once affiliated with Commander Cody and His Lost Planet Airmen and backup to Delbert McClinton, he also played for four years with Johnny Winter and toured with or backed a laundry list of rockers and bluesmen.

With several legendary guest artists, including Winter and James Cotton, there are some memorable tunes on the album being released this month. The opening song, "Intoxicated," has an R&B flavor, as does the Willie Dixon tune that follows, "Same Thing." "Little Johnny" features Winter playing some sizzling slide guitar, and "Who Do You Love" features rapper DMC (Darryl Matthews McDaniels) in a new twist to the classic Bo Diddley (and Doors) song. "The Motor City is Burning" starts out with a slower blues tempo but builds to a blues-rock crescendo with horns. Although the album is styled *Detroit to the Delta*, most of the tunes favor the uptempo sounds of Detroit, except for the instrumental "Rivers Edge" and the closing number, Lightnin' Hopkins' "Black Cadillac," with Cotton joining in on harmonica. ---Bill Wilcox, twangville.com

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