

## Luther Allison – Cherry Red Wine

Written by bluesever

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*"One of the hottest live acts in the blues. Allison is an over-the-top guitarist with a raw, dirty sound utterly unlike the smooth speed of many of his contemporaries....His playing has primitive passion and strong musical imagination." ---BOSTON GLOBE*

## Luther Allison – Cherry Red Wine

Born in Widener (Arkansas) on August 17, 1939, **Luther Allison** was the fourteenth of fifteen children, all of whom were musically inclined, born to parents who were cotton farmers. He was exposed to gospel music as a young child, although he quickly became enthralled with the flourishing blues scene in Chicago upon his family's arrival there in 1951.



## Luther Allison

Luther began soaking in the sounds of Muddy Waters, Sonny Boy Williamson, and Robert Nighthawk. He was classmates with Muddy Waters' son and occasionally stopped in the

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Waters' house to watch the master rehearse. It wasn't until he was 18 already in Chicago for seven years that Luther began playing blues on a real guitar and jamming with his brother Ollie's band.

By 1957, Allison had dropped out of school and formed a band called The Rolling Stones. Unhappy with the name, they became The Four Jivers, gigging all over the West Side of Chicago. Before long, Luther was jamming with the West Side's best, including Magic Sam, Otis Rush, and Freddie King, who encouraged Allison to sing. *"That,"* said Allison, *"was my school."*



### Luther Allison

For five years, Allison honed his craft. He moved to California for a year and cut sides with fellow Chicagoans Shakey Jake Harris and Sunnyland Slim. He cut his first two songs as a leader on the now-classic Delmark anthology, *Sweet Home Chicago*, before releasing his first solo album (also on Delmark),

*Love Me Mama,*

a record of hard-hitting blues that spoke to the growing rock audience. But even before his debut album came out, Luther landed a headlining spot at the influential Ann Arbor Blues Festival in 1969, and went from relative unknown to major blues-rock attraction.

*"His guitar riffs seemed to defy the possible,"*

raved John Fishel, the program director of the festival, who brought Allison back to perform at the following two festivals.

