

# Good to be King

RUTH KING

singer, songwriter and musician



Local blues singer Ruth King is ready to take the world by storm. She describes her sound as James Taylor meets James Brown, but there is something Tina Turner-esque about her. It could be King's energy, her vocal range, or her youthful appearance, which belies her 50 years of age.

Born in Alexandria, Virginia, before the Civil Rights Movement to a white woman and an African-American man, King says, "I did a lot of searching and researching of the blues firsthand." Her parents were both singers, and King learned to play guitar at an early age. In the fourth grade she took up the violin, but never learned how to formally read music.

"I was all about playing by feel," says King. She auditioned for the music department at Florida State University, but was steered to the vocal auditions when it was discovered that she couldn't read music. She literally "crashed" the vocal auditions, going up completely unprepared against peers that had been studying voice their whole lives. "I was singing James Taylor's *Fire and Rain* and they loved me — from beginning to end." King received a scholarship, majored in mass communications and minored in Voice. For two years she took every music class she could before leaving school to go out on her own.

Today, with 30-some years of experience under her belt, King's soulful sound radiates whether she's performing covers of some of her favorite musicians, such as Bonnie Raitt, Joe Cocker and Joni Mitchell, or singing original songs. A recovering alcoholic and drug addict who's been sober for 15 years, King says, "I don't mind talking about the dark days. I like to sing songs that I perceive people are feeling. They can feel that there is hope, there is a silver lining — I like to bring that to people."

King regularly plays the front patio of House of Blues and venues in her hometown of Mount Dora. Her fourth CD, *Stare at the Ceiling*, comes out this fall. For more information and a concert schedule, visit [www.ruthkingblues.com](http://www.ruthkingblues.com).

— Jessica Chapman