

Honky Tonk Women

(The Rolling Stones)

[Verse 1]

I met a gin-soaked barroom queen in Memphis
She tried to take me upstairs for a ride
She had to heave me right across her shoulder
Cause I just can't seem to drink it off my mind

[Chorus]

It's the honky tonk women
Gimme, gimme, gimme the honky tonk blues

[Verse 2]

I laid a divorcee in New York City
I had to put up some kind of a fight
The lady then she covered me with roses
She blew my nose and then she blew my mind

[Chorus]

It's the honky tonk women
Gimme, gimme, gimme the honky tonk blues

[Verse 3]

Strollin' on the boulevards of Paris
Naked as the day that I will die
The sailors, they're so charming there in Paris
But I just don't seem to sail you off my mind

[Chorus]

It's the honky tonk women
Gimme, gimme, gimme the honky tonk blues

"Honky Tonk Women" is a 1969 hit song by the Rolling Stones. Released as a single only release (although a country version was included on *Let It Bleed*), on 4 July 1969 in the United Kingdom and a week later in the United States, it topped the charts in both nations

The song was written by Mick Jagger and Keith Richards while on holiday in Brazil from late December 1968 to early January 1969, inspired by Brazilian "caipiras" (inhabitants of rural, remote areas of parts of Brazil) at the ranch where Jagger and Richards were staying in Matão, São Paulo. Two versions of the song were recorded by the band: the familiar hit which appeared on the 45 single and their collection of late 1960s singles, *Through the Past, Darkly (Big Hits Vol. 2)*; and a honky-tonk version entitled "Country Honk" with slightly different lyrics, which appeared on *Let It Bleed* (1969).

Thematically, a "honky tonk woman" refers to a dancing girl in a western bar who may work as a prostitute; the setting for the narrative in the first verse of the rock-and-roll version is Memphis, Tennessee: "I met a gin soaked bar-room queen in Memphis", while "Country Honk" sets the first verse in Jackson, Mississippi: "I'm sittin' in a bar, tippin' a jar in Jackson".

"Honky Tonk Women" is distinctive as it opens not with a guitar riff, but with a beat played on a cowbell. The Rolling Stones' producer Jimmy Miller performed the cowbell for the recording.