

Ray LaMontagne – Bio

Raycharles “Ray” LaMontagne was born during 1974 in Nashua, New Hampshire. His parents parted soon after Ray was born and his mother moved north to Maine with her six children. His father, a musician, was on tour at the time. Because of stories he was told about his father, Ray took no interest in music for many years. With his mother constantly on the move in order to find work, during his childhood LaMontagne was regularly ‘the new kid in town.’ Ray attended high school in Morgan, Utah and following graduation moved, on his own, to Lewiston, Maine. He found employment in a shoe factory, and his interest in music was finally sparked, early one morning a few years later, when he heard Stephen Stills’ “Treetop Flyer” on his radio alarm clock. LaMontagne quickly located a copy of **“Stills Alone,”** and finding inspiration in the music he heard, decided to become a singer/songwriter. In due course, making up for the missed decades, Ray absorbed recordings by Dylan, Crosby, Stills & Nash, Joni Mitchell, Neil Young, Ray Charles, Otis Redding and more.

Ray taught himself to sing from his gut, rather than his nose, which probably explains his somewhat raspy vocal sound. In due course Ray made a tape of the songs he had begun writing, passed a copy to a local promoter, and was soon playing openers at local venues for artists such as Jonathan Edwards and John Gorka. Between 1999 and 2003, LaMontagne produced a number of demo recordings, the first was titled **“Green Demo,”** **“Acre Of Land”** featured live recordings made at Oddfellows Theatre in Buckfield, Maine and studio cuts destined to reappear on **“One Lonesome Saddle.”** Produced by Carl Franklin, in terms of LaMontagne songs featured, there were two versions of **“One Lonesome Saddle,”** while **“Introducing Ray LaMontagne”** contained many of the songs that resurfaced on **“Trouble.”** Through a fan of his music, LaMontagne was put in touch with Jamie Ceretta of Chrysalis Music Publishing, who promptly signed him to a songwriting deal. Ceretta and Chrysalis CEO Kenny MacPherson then decided to fund the recording of an album by LaMontagne, and they eventually leased it to a major label.

Over two-week period, with Ethan Johns [Ryan Adams, Kings of Leon, The Jayhawks] in charge of production, LaMontagne recorded his major label debut **“Trouble”** at Sunset Sound in Los Angeles, California. The resulting album, released in mid-September 2004, featured contributions from violinist Sara Watkins [Nickel Creek] and Jennifer Stills [Stephen’s daughter]. Released in the States by RCA Victor Records and initially by Echo Records in the U.K. [it was later picked up by 14th Floor Recordings], worldwide the album has sold almost half a million copies. In 2005 LaMontagne appeared on the prestigious music show Austin City Limits, while his appearance at the annual Bonnaroo Music Festival was captured on the six song EP CD **“Live From Bonnaroo 2005.”** In 2006 the song “Trouble” became a Top 30 single in the U.K., while the album peaked at # 5.

A more sophisticated collection in terms of instrumentation employed – including a horn section and strings - **“Till The Sun Turns Black”** produced by Johns and recorded in upstate New York at Allaire Studios, was released in late August 2006. The album went on to reach # 28 on the Billboard Album Chart. LaMontagne vigorously guards his privacy and rarely gives interviews, and these days makes his home in Wilton, Maine.

Discography : **“Green Demo”** [1999] ; **“Acre Of Land”** [2001] ; **“One Lonesome Saddle”** [2002] ; **“Introducing Ray LaMontagne”** [2003] ; **“Trouble”** [2004] ; **“Live From Bonnaroo 2005”** [2005] ; **“Till The Sun Turns Black”** [2006] :

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