

# Singer inspired by travel, touring

By Jae-Ha Kim  
Tribune Content Agency

Singer-songwriter Maia Sharp remembers what it was like when she was a struggling musician trying to get gigs. "It was on a Monday night at 10 p.m. at Molly Malone's Irish Pub in Los Angeles," Sharp said. "The booker told me I needed to bring 50 people to get called back. I brought 51."

These days, the artist — who has also written songs for the likes of Cher, Trisha Yearwood, Bonnie Raitt — has a loyal following. The Nashville resident's latest album, "Tomboy," took shape in her home studio.

"One song, 'Only Lucky,' was inspired by the road, but I wrote it at home," she said. "I may have made some tweaks to 'Tomboy' during one of the long drives, but generally I don't write much on the road."

This interview with Sharp has been edited for clarity and length.

**Q: What do you do to maintain your health while touring on the road?**

**A:** I bring a little cooler bag with me and hit a Trader Joe's or (someplace) similar when I roll into the first town of the tour. I stock up on as many healthy sandwiches, salads and snacks as I can hold and I always make sure I have a little fridge in the (hotel) room. If the meals provided or nearby restaurants are going to make me feel terrible after the show, I go to the cooler bag instead. It's kind of like camping, but then I get a real bed.

**Q: What is your bucket-list**



"Tomboy" singer-songwriter Maia Sharp says vacationing near mountains is perfect for her. EMMA-LEE PHOTOGRAPHY

**venue that you have yet to perform in?**

**A:** Red Rocks. I got to open for Art Garfunkel at Royal Albert Hall and Bonnie Raitt at the Ryman Auditorium, but Red Rocks is still to be checked off.

**Q: Do you have free time built into your tours to explore the cities you're in?**

**A:** I was just talking to my friend (the musician) Kim Richey about this. She does always build in days off and planned activities. I can never bring myself to do that even though I see the value in it. I get antsy on days off, but I also look back now and realize I drove by and through some really cool places that I didn't let myself get to know.

**Q: Does the music you hear in a particular city or country inspire your work?**

**A:** The music that's getting made in Nashville definitely helped draw me out of Los Angeles six years ago. You don't have to spend much time here to realize it's not just country. Everyone in my writer and artist community is making their own recipe of Americana-rock-soul-jazz and a little country, but it's mostly impossible to categorize and it's unapologetic about that, which I love.

**Q: What is your favorite vacation destination?**

**A:** Kauai, Hawaii. As of the last time I was there, it had everything I look for in an

escape — tropical climate, mountains, water and places you can still go that have no crowds or lines.

**Q: What was a trip as a child that stands out?**

**A:** Yosemite National Park, where we stayed at the Ahwahnee Hotel. It felt so rustic chic. I loved it. I was maybe 10 years old and I already knew by then that the mountains are my happy place.

**Q: Where would you like to go that you have never been to before?**

**A:** Alaska. I've been to every other state and I would love to see a glacier before they're all gone.

**Q: What is your best and/or worst vacation memory?**

**A:** They may have been on the same trip. The last vacation was with a group of friends to hike in and camp in the mountains near Sparta, Tennessee. The hike through the trees and up the mountain to the campsite was beautiful and energizing. We swam in the lake and talked about things we don't usually have the time to get to in our everyday lives and then I had what was possibly the worst night of sleep I've ever had. But then in the morning, we had campfire coffee and a swim in the creek and a beautiful hike back. So that vacation covered all the bases.

For more from the reporter, visit [www.jaehakim.com](http://www.jaehakim.com).



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