

# ANDY COHEN

ANDY COHEN IS A VIRTUOSO FINGER-STYLE GUITARIST WHO HAS been described as “a walking, talking folk-blues-roots music encyclopedia.” He grew up in a home with a piano and lots of Dixieland Jazz records. During the Sixties Folk Revival, he got hooked on the music of Big Bill Broonzy and the Jim Kweskin Jug Band. When Andy was 16, he heard South Carolina’s Rev. Gary Davis perform and the effect on him was profound. He has devoted his life to studying, performing, and promoting traditional blues and folk music of the pre World War II era.

Andy toured with Martin, Bogan and Armstrong, John Jackson, Rev. Gary Davis, Brother Daniel Womack, Rev. Dan Smith, Jim Brewer, and Honeyboy Edwards. He also worked extensively with Walt and Ethel Phelps, Big Joe Duskin, Pigmeat Jarrett, Etta Baker, Big Boy Henry, and Son Thomas.

Andy has helped to support a number of his mentors and younger players, by organizing festivals and other venues for them to play in. He has written about several of the old masters and studied their work in a systematic way. Many of his students are now professional touring musicians. *The Country Blues* says “One thing is for sure, the boy can play. There are few people around today who had a chance to pick it all up from the old generations, get this good at it and continue to cherish and preserve the old traditions.” He has been assiduous in

sharing his expertise in classes, camps, and anywhere people are making music.

Andy Cohen has more than a dozen recordings to his credit, including *Oh Glory, How Happy I Am: The Sacred Songs of Rev. Gary Davis* and

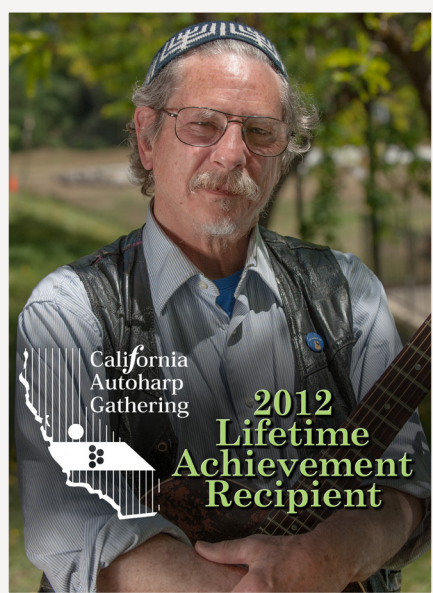
*Andrew M. Cohen: Dolceola Favorites*. An enthusiastic proponent of the dolceola, Andy says he “never leaves home without it.” Described by some as a “miniature piano,” the dolceola has a keyboard, but the strings are struck with wooden mallets.

Along the way, Andy earned a Master’s Degree in anthropology. His passions come together in his essay on “The Hands of Blues Guitarists,” published in *Ramblin’ On My Mind: New Perspectives On the Blues*, edited by David Evans (2008).

At an Andy Cohen concert, expect to hear blues rooted in Mississippi, the Piedmont, Memphis, and Chicago, as well as some ragtime, gospel, and original tunes.

In 2011 Andy received the Eisteddfod Award from The Eisteddfod Traditional Music Festival. Festival Director Dr. Jerome Epstein said, “We decided to give the award to Andy, one of this year’s performers, because of his outstanding contributions to the field of traditional music, as performer, collector, and advocate.”

In 2012 Andy received a Lifetime Achievement Award from the California Autoharp Gathering.



*“A few paragraphs can’t do justice to the variety of delights discovered within guitar virtuoso Andy Cohen’s Built Right On The Ground (EARWIG CD4959)... The well-known, the obscure and the weirdly wonderful are all here and it’s soon more than evident that traditional folk-blues, ragtime, country and good-time piano are all safe in these accomplished hands.” – JOHN BOTTOMLEY • BluesInTheNorthwest.com*

## MAJOR FESTIVAL PERFORMANCES

- California Autoharp Gathering
- Chicago Blues Festival
- Clearwater Festival
- Eisteddfod Traditional Music Festival
- Fox Valley Folk Festival
- Kansas City Blues & Jazz Festival
- Kent State Folk Festival
- King Biscuit Blues Festival
- Mariposa Folk Festival
- Memphis Dulcimer Festival
- Mississippi Valley Blues Festival
- Old Songs Festival
- Ottawa Folk Festival
- Owen Sound Folk Festival
- Philadelphia Folk Festival

- Smithsonian Folklife Festival
- Sunflower River Blues Festival
- University of Chicago Folk Festival
- Vancouver Folk Festival
- Wheatland Festival
- Winnipeg Folk Festival

PLUS numerous clubs, coffeehouses, folk festivals, workshops and house concerts across the USA and Canada in a career spanning 50 years.

## GUITAR, PIANO, AUTOHARP, DOLCEOLA INSTRUCTOR

- Augusta Heritage Festival
- Old Town School of Folk Music
- Pinewoods traditional dance and music camp
- Port Townsend Blues Week

- Current Folk Alliance Director of Traditional Studies/ Resident Folklorist
- Past Staff Member of Common Ground

## NATIONAL RADIO SHOW PERFORMANCES

Prairie Home Companion  
Woodsongs Radio Hour

## AWARDS

- 2012 Lifetime Achievement Award from the California Autoharp Gathering
- 2011 Eisteddfod Award from The Eisteddfod Traditional Music Festival — given for dedication, inspiration, and service to the practice and dissemination of traditional folk song, music, and dance.

[www.andycohenmusic.com](http://www.andycohenmusic.com)

## BOOKING CONTACT

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