

TIME

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5 ALBUMS FROM COUNTRY'S CLASSIEST ACTS

Put a spring in your step this fall with new releases from some twangy greats

▼ IT JUST COMES NATURAL GEORGE STRAIT



STRAIT HAS 53 No. 1 country hits, a number so high that it loses meaning.

Luckily, there's a track on the old Texan's new album that illuminates his commercial genius. *Why Can't I Leave Her Alone* starts out as your basic



country stalking song, but with the melody of a rock power ballad. Strait's vocals swing from flash-free, honky-tonk lows to top-of-his-range, quavering highs. Then the song gets funny—"I've wrote her letters signed I was a fool/ She wrote me back saying go find a stool/ And driiiiiiiiiink one"—and Strait laughs and cries in his beer. It's a sure bet No. 1 for No. 54.

—By Josh Tyrangiel