

## Lori Carsillo – Sugar And Smoke (2014)

Written by bluesever (Bogdan Marszałkowski)

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1 Cinnamon & Clove 04:56 2 Grass Is Greener 04:31 3 Moon & Sand 05:36 4 The Thrill Is Gone 05:44 5 In The Wee Small Hours Of The Morning 04:43 6 Nice Girls Don't Stay For Breakfast 03:42 7 Live For Life 05:43 8 Comin Home Baby 03:49 9 Old Devil Moon 05:24 10 The Look Of Love 05:14 11 In The Still Of The Night 03:22 12 Comin Home Baby (Reprise) 03:16 Backing Vocals – Dave Baker (22) (tracks: 1, 12) Bass – Mike Bordelon Drums – James Gallagher Guitar – Jay Stapleton (tracks: 1 to 4, 6 to 10, 12) Piano – Adam Shulman Saxophone – Riley Bandy (tracks: 1, 6, 8 to 10, 12) Vibraphone – Smith Dobson (tracks: 7, 10, 11) Vocals – Lori Carsillo

San Francisco Bay Area songbird Lori Carsillo provides us with her third solo vocal album *Sugar and Smoke*, presenting modern versions of familiar jazz standards from the '60s, featuring a host of first-rate musicians from the Bay Area's vibrant jazz scene. Carsillo offers a light soft-toned session of vocal jazz enhanced by her sultry hushed-styled vocal approach that draws the listener in and keeps one engaged. No real swinging pieces or loud outbursts here, this material is delivered with a measure of warmth backed up by excellent instrumentals including sharp solos that make this musical endeavor, a complete jazz package.

The Bergman composition "Cinnamon & Clove," made famous by Sergio Mendes and his bossa arrangement, kicks off the music in style featuring Riley Bandy's superb saxophone solo and Dave Baker's backup vocals spicing up the music. Pianist Adam Shulman accompanies the singer on the Maxwell/Smith standard "Grass Is Greener" as the light bossa nova-styled "Moon and Sand" highlights Carsillo's hushed vocal approach as well as offering Shulman more instrumental solo space in a delightful interpretation of the standard.

One of the highlights of the recording, is this version of Bobby Troup's humorous "Nice Girls Don't Stay for Breakfast" enhanced by splendid instrumental support from guitarist Jay

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Stapleton and Bandy's saxophone voice. Just as good but on the romantic side of the music, Carsillo' sultry delivery is perfect for the love song, "Live for Life" with soft vibes provided by Smith Dobson capping off the classic. Staying in romantic mode, the vocalist sensuous approach of the Burt Bacharach staple, "The Look of Love," is more proof that this singer can tenderize a tune with the best of them.

There's practically no swing on this album except her interpretation of "Comin' Home Baby," one of the more upbeat perky tunes of the set. The familiar "Old Devil Moon" gets an all-new treatment from the singer as does the Cole Porter classic "In the Still of the Night" with a little help from cymbal accents from drummer James Gallagher, crisp key work from Shulman and Dobson's stellar vibraphone. The program ends on another rendition of Tucker's "Comin' Home Baby" except this time, Carsillo is joined by vocalist Baker who answers each of the leader's vocal statements with a lyrical salvo of his own.

Lori Carsillo's sampling of delicious light vocal jazz, provides a musical dish of far more sweets than fiery smoking material. Nevertheless, Carsillo's unique soft vocal style and approach, serves to shine new light on a selection of time-honored jazz standards revived once again, this time, with a little Sugar and Smoke. ---Edward Blanco, allaboutjazz.com

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