

Putumayo Presents: Latin Beat (2011)

Written by bluelover
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1. Goza - Moneda Dura 2. Locuraleza - Jontre 3. Jarocha - Locarno 4. Tequila (Gardener of Delight Mix Radio Edit) - Tape Five 5. Guajira - Grupo Lokito 6. En Movimiento (Una Mas Trio Remix) - Mr. Confuse 7. Así Sin Querer - Digitano 8. La Cumbia Lounge - Charanga Cakewalk 9. Del Ray - Sola Rosa 10. Echele Guarapo (feat. Adriano Rodriguez) - Edesio 11. Pelo Shao (feat. Andrea Ruilova) - Sarazino 12. Bonita Mente - Bonita Suerte Dan Storper - Executive Producer, Song Selection

Putumayo does its usual thang in compiling a series of global tracks that all represent the inroads made into Latin music by other forms rather than the other way around. Predictably, the results are mixed. These tracks, which come from Cuba, the U.S., New Zealand, Colombia, Spain, Ecuador, and even an amalgam from the U.K., Colombia, and Africa's Congo, all begin as Latin grooves, from cumbias to sons, to merengues and rumbas, and are added to by modern -- sometimes synthetic -- percussion, multi-layered vocals, keyboards, and guitars, while retaining their root Afro-Latin sounds. The best moments here are from Spain's Digitano on "Así Sin Querer," with its trip-hop and DJ beats meeting fado head-on in a seductive, sultry meld; Colombia's Profetas with "Chocolate," which uses rumba, jazz, and hip-hop with a gorgeous collaboration between singers and rappers and numerous instrumentalists; and Cuba's Calle 66 with "Quédate Donde Estás," with its big rhythms above a near traditional son. In a sense, given the name recognition of most of the artists here (all of whom have had hit singles and appear on other comps regularly), this is more for fans of Putumayo than those of "Latin beat." ---Thom Jurek, Rovi

A nice, multi-textured mix of traditional Latin dance styles -- son, cumbia, reggae, flamenco -- mixed with traces of dancetronica, funk, pop, hip-hop and rock. I like that most of the songs

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seem to come from a more traditional, Latin-American base, rather than adding "Latin spice" to modern pop songs: the groove is both heavier and more subtle, and several tracks have a pleasantly narcotic, hypnotic groove. Some artists, like Grupo Lokito, play straight-up old-school son while others, such as New Zealand's Sola Rosa tweak things around and bend your ears a bit. Not surprisingly, Columbia and Cuba are the best represented countries, although Spain, the US and UK also get their licks in... I would have enjoyed a bit of Mexico's "Nortec" scene in the mix (some amazing stuff happening there!) but like many Putumayo sets, this can point you in some interesting directions. If you like old-school, but have new ears, you could give this a spin and see what happens. ---DJ Joe Sixpack, Slipcue Guide To World Music

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