

John Lee Hooker – Chill Out (1995)

Written by bluesever

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1. *Chill Out (Things Gonna Change)* 2. *Deep Blue Sea* 3. *Kiddio* 4. *Medley: Serves Me Right to Suffer/Syndicator [Medley]* 5. *One Bourbon, One Scotch, One Beer* 6. *Tupelo* 7. *Woman on My Mind* 8. *Annie Mae* 9. *Too Young* 10. *Talkin' the Blues* 11. *If You've Never Been in Love* 12. *We'll Meet Again* John Lee Hooker (vocals, guitar, National guitar); John Lee Hooker; Van Morrison (vocals, guitar); Roy Rogers (guitar, slide guitar); Mike Osborn, Billy Friday Johnson, Rich Kirch, Bruce Kaphan (guitar); John Sanders (piano); Booker T. Jones, Deacon Jones (organ); Benny Rietveld, Ruth Davies (bass instrument); Gaylord Birch (drums, drum); Kevin Hayes, Scott Mathews, Bowen Brown (drums); Danny Caron, Carlos Santana (guitar); Charles Brown (piano); Chester Thompson (keyboards); Raul Rekow (congas); Karl Perazzo (timbales).

One of his finest 1990s recordings, *Chill Out* balances the guitar-glitzy of Carlos Santana's guest shot on the karmic title cut with a handful of profoundly deep Hooker solo performances. Among those are new versions of his standards "Tupelo" and "Annie Mae", and the soulful "If You've Never Been in Love", where expert slide-man Roy Rogers provides subtle accompaniment to Hooker's spontaneous storytelling. The band numbers that bookend the album are weak, relying on Hooker's strong vocal presence to overcome sketchy writing. Van Morrison, pianist Charles Brown, and MG's leader Booker T Jones also lend a hand. But Hooker doesn't need anybody's help to get to the passionate heart of his blues. One last note: Anton Corbijn's CD-booklet photographs of ol' Johnny Lee are terrific. --Ted Drozdowski, Editorial Reviews

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