

Celia Cruz - Cuba's Queen of Rhythm [La Reina Del Ritmo Cubano] (1991)

Written by bluelover

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01. Rock & Roll 02. Cha Cha Guere 03. Pa' La Paloma 04. Me Voy A Pinar Del Rio 05. Tuya Y Mas Que Tuya 06. Saoco 07. El Lleva Y Trae 08. Luna Sobre Matanzas 09. Y Mi Negro Esta Cansao 10. Mi Amor, Buenas Noches 11. Vamos A Guarachar 12. Oya Diosa Y Fe

Celia Cruz's early albums are among the most precious treasures in her vast discography. This outstanding collection, which draws on her 1956 recordings with bandleader Sonora Matancera, spotlights Cruz's rhythmically precise singing and charismatic delivery, while exuding old-world charm. The intricate webs of Latin percussion, circular piano motifs, big-band arrangements, and Cruz's mellifluous vocals all conjure images of the packed dance halls of mid-20th-century Havana.

Sophisticated and elegant, yet downright groovy, this is nightclub music par excellence. The vibe is persistently up-tempo, with tunes such as "Rock and Roll" and "Saolo" keeping the polyrhythms simmering. While Cruz's sultry croon gives a balladic feel to many of the tracks, only "Luna Sobre Matanzas" and the melancholic "Diosa Y Fe" offer an opportunity for slow dancing. Just as appealing decades later as it must have been in mid-'50s Cuba, this timeless, romantic music dares listeners to keep still.

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