

Buena Vista Social Club (1997)

Written by bluelover

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01. *Chan Chan* - 4:18
02. *De Camino a La Vereda* - 5:04
03. *El Cuarto de Tula* - 7:25
04. *Pueblo Nuevo* - 6:06
05. *Dos Gardenias* - 3:04
06. *Tú Qué Has Hecho* - 3:15
07. *Veinte Anos* - 3:31
08. *El Carretero* - 3:30
09. *Candela* - 5:29
10. *Amor de Loca Juventud* - 3:23
11. *Orgullecida* - 3:19
12. *Murmullo* - 3:51
13. *Buena Vista Social Club* - 4:52
14. *La Bayamesa* - 2:54

Not actually a band proper but a confluence of veteran Cuban musicians brought together for a recording session by American guitarist Ry Cooder after a 1996 trip to Havana. The project became the surprise hit of 1997 when its resulting album, *Buena Vista Social Club*, wound up selling over five million copies, largely by word of mouth, and won a Grammy for Best Tropical Latin Performance. The *Buena Vista Social Club* did more internationally for Cuban music than decades of cultural exchanges ever could and simultaneously helped popularize the world music genre in the late-1990s.

Cooder was invited to Havana by the British world music producer Nick Gold to a record African High-life musicians with a group of Cuban players. When the African musicians failed to get their visas, Cooder and Gold instead recorded an album of son — a polyrhythmic musical style

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long popular in Cuba — with veteran local musicians. After assembling the core group — musical director Juan de Marcos González, bassist Orlando "Cachaito" López, guitarist Eliades Ochoa, pianist Rubén González and singers Manuel "Puntillita" Licea and Compay Segundo — the recording session began at the Havana studio Egrem, an old RCA Records Studio with 1950s vintage equipment.

The album's fourteen tracks were recorded in six days. One of the songs, "Buena Vista Social Club," was written by Cachaito's father about an old Havana gathering place. Cooder decided to name the group and album after the club. When Cooder returned to Havana two years later with his percussionist son, Joaquim, to record Ferrer for a solo album, director Wim Wenders followed them. His film, Buena Vista Social Club, is mix of footages from that trip and Buena Vista's live performances in New York City and Amsterdam. The film was nominated for an Academy Award in 2000. Though several solo albums came out of the project, the renewed attention for the veteran Cuban musicians was short-lived. In 2003, Compay Segundo and Ruben González died at ages 95 and 84, respectively; Ferrer died at 78 in 2005. Despite their losses, the group continues to tour with a revolving line-up of musicians. ---rollingstone.com

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