

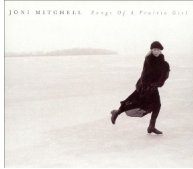
## Joni Mitchell – Songs of A Prairie Girl (2005)

Written by bluelover

Sunday, 16 October 2011 18:16 - Last Updated Thursday, 23 February 2017 18:15

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### Joni Mitchell – Songs of A Prairie Girl (2005)



1. "Urge for Going" – 5:08
2. "The Tea Leaf Prophecy (Lay Down Your Arms)" – 4:54 [play](#)
3. "Cherokee Louise" [Orchestral Version] – 6:01
4. "Ray's Dad's Cadillac" – 4:33
5. "Let the Wind Carry Me" – 3:56
6. "Don Juan's Reckless Daughter" – 6:38
7. "Raised on Robbery" – 3:07
8. "Paprika Plains" [Mix] – 16:19
9. "Song for Sharon" – 8:37
10. "River" – 4:05
11. "Chinese Cafe/Unchained Melody" – 5:18
12. "Harlem in Havana" – 4:27 [play](#)
13. "Come In from the Cold" [Edit] – 3:38

Personnel: Joni Mitchell (vocals, guitar, acoustic guitar, piano, keyboards); Larry Klein (guitar, keyboards, bass instrument, bass guitar, percussion); Steve Lukather (electric guitar); Tom Scott (woodwinds, horns); Wayne Shorter (soprano saxophone); Kenny Wheeler (trumpet, flugelhorn); Herbie Hancock (piano); Billy Preston (Hammond b-3 organ); Jaco Pastorius (bass instrument); John Guerin, Manu Katché (drums, percussion); Brian Blade, Vinnie Colaiuta (drums); Don Alias (shaker); Paulinho Da Costa (percussion); Alex Acuña (bells); Lisa Coleman, Wendy Melvoin, Brenda Russell (background vocals).

SONGS OF A PRAIRIE GIRL could not even remotely be described as a "hits" collection, nor is it a career summary, or even an examination of a particular period in Joni Mitchell's discography. Rather, it's an esoterically compiled anthology whose ostensible theme is a wintry feel evocative of Mitchell's Canadian homeland. Ultimately, the effect is simply one of putting some of Mitchell's most interesting songs in one place regardless of era, style, or relative popularity. How else to describe a disc that encompasses the murky noir of the late-1990s track "Harlem in Havana;" the quirky, fusion-tinged '70s tune "Don Juan's Restless Daughter;" and the poignant, folkie song poetry of "Urge for Going," a '60s single never before included on an album? There are a couple of more well known songs here ("Raised on Robbery," "River"), but they're surrounded by just as many fascinating obscurities. Assembled by Mitchell herself, this collection is an intriguing snapshot into the complex world of a mercurial talent. ---cduniverse

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The third in Joni Mitchell's ongoing series of thematic compilations drawn from her stellar back catalog, *Songs of a Prairie Girl* is described by Mitchell in her liner notes as "my contribution to Saskatchewan's Centennial celebrations," an appropriate gesture since she spent most of her childhood in Saskatoon, a city in that Canadian province. Most of the songs on *Songs of a Prairie Girl* deal in one way or another with childhood or adolescence, often with a bittersweet edge; there's little in the way of unbridled nostalgia, with "Let the Wind Carry Me" and "Urge for Going" expressing the desire to escape the boundaries of small-town life, and "Ray's Dad's Cadillac" and "Song for Sharon" recalling equal measures of joy and remorse in the misadventures of her teen years. Mitchell's music also splendidly conjures up the wintry space of the Canadian plains, especially on the epic "Paprika Plains" from *Don Juan's Reckless Daughter* (appearing here in a new mix that reduces the emphasis on the orchestra in favor of Joni's piano) and the symphonic version of "Cherokee Louise." And while there are moments of remembered joy (particularly on "Harlem in Havana"), for the most part *Songs of a Prairie Girl* is, by design, a meditation on the broad and snowy spaces of Saskatchewan, and Mitchell herself advises with tongue in cheek that the listeners should "get yourself a hot beverage and stand by the heater as you listen." As a collection of lesser-known material ("Raised on Robbery" is the only "hit" here), *Songs of a Prairie Girl* once again casts a well-considered glance on a less-explored aspect of Mitchell's work, and these songs convey the mingled pleasure and sadness of growing up with the careful eye of a true artist, as well as the crisp if faded memories of the home she left so many years ago. Beautiful stuff, and richly rewarding.

---Mark Deming, allmusic.com

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