

Fats Domino - Walkin' To New Orleans (1962)

Written by bluesever

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A1 How Can I Be Happy 2:17 A2 One Of These Days 2:11 A3 So Glad 2:12 A4 Oh Wee 2:04 A5 Sailor Boy 2:06 A6 Lazy Woman 1:49 B1 Walking To New Orleans 1:54 B2 My Love For Her 2:40 B3 What's Wrong 2:15 B4 Little Mama 2:40 B5 I Guess I'll Be On My Way 2:17 B6 Goin' Back Home 1:55

Antoine "Fats" Domino is among the most understated and underrated great musicians and performers who emerged during the era of vintage R&B and rock 'n' roll. Domino had a pleasing, if limited, voice, and his piano technique relied heavily on triplets, two-handed fills, and elements of boogie-woogie. His delivery occasionally also revealed in his enunciation the influence of a Creole patois, even though Domino's primary language is English, not French. Yet he recorded a host of unforgettable, exuberantly delivered, epic singles that remain among the most delightful and memorable songs issued from the Crescent City.

Domino's music wasn't rowdy or rebellious, nor was he an experimental or probing lyricist offering mournful laments or challenging expositions on social injustice. Instead, Domino earned 23 gold records by largely confining his material to celebratory party tunes, suggestive or anticipatory stanzas, and dance/novelty cuts. Domino was greatly assisted by remarkably creative producer/trumpeter Dave Bartholomew and a dynamic band that included saxophonists Herbert Hardesty, Clarence Hall and Red Tyler, guitarist Ernest McLean, pianist Salvador Doucette, bassist Frank Fields, and drummer Earl Palmer.

Domino dabbled in numerous idioms including country, blues, pop, Cajun, jazz and gospel, though his forte was always rollicking, stomping R&B. There's been a critical tendency to overemphasize that white artists such as Ricky Nelson and the Fontaine Sisters covered Domino selections, the implication being that Domino was another tragically exploited African-American performer languishing while faux rockers were thriving. But as this set

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repeatedly shows, Domino himself covered Hank Williams, Guy Lombardo, Bobby Mitchell, Bobby Charles, Louis Jordan and Smiley Lewis, and his great tunes weren't always trumped by inferior pop versions. For example, both Domino's and Nelson's renditions of "I'm Walkin" peaked at #4 on the pop chart.

Still, most of the compositions on Walking To New Orleans have a vocal freshness and musical vitality equaled only by a handful of American music pioneers. Elvis Presley was the lone artist to sell more records during the '50s than Fats Domino, and this invaluable reissue sonically reaffirms why Domino rose to that level. --- nodepression.com

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