

Bon Jovi – Crush (2000)

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1. *It's My Life*
2. *Say It Ain't So*
3. *Thank You For Loving Me*
4. *Two Story Town*
5. *Next 100 Years*
6. *Just Older*
7. *Mystery Train*
8. *Save The World*
9. *Captain Crash And The Beauty Queen From Mars*
10. *I Got The Girl*
11. *One Wild Night*

Personnel Jon Bon Jovi - lead vocals, guitar Richie Sambora - guitar, backing vocals, talkbox on "It's My Life" Hugh McDonald - bass, backing vocals Tico Torres - drums, percussion David Bryan - keyboards, backing vocals + David Campbell - arranger (strings)

Even if it was classified as pop-metal, Bon Jovi never really was much of a metal band, relying on big, catchy melodies and not guitar riffs to make their songs memorable. That's why, in 2000, they're able to make an album like *Crush*, which strays far enough into pop/rock to actually stand a chance of getting airplay (which it did, with the hit lead single "It's My Life"). The guitar crunch on the uptempo numbers keeps Bon Jovi from becoming a full-fledged pop/rock band, but in addition to the typical hard rockers, there are nods to heartland rock, Bryan Adams-style adult contemporary balladry ("Thank You for Loving Me"), the Beatles (the surprisingly effective "Say It Isn't So"), and even British glam à la T. Rex or David Bowie ("Captain Crash and the Beauty Queen From Mars"). Occasionally, it sounds like the band is attempting to cover as many bases as possible for multi-format appeal, but for the most part, the variety -- coupled with the consistently polished songcraft -- makes for a surprisingly listenable album. The production is a little more electronic-tinged, but not obtrusively high-tech, so the band doesn't come off as desperate to sound contemporary. Aside from a couple of missteps (the soppy, aforementioned

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"Thank You for Loving Me" and the mawkish posturing of "Save the World"), Crush is a solidly crafted mainstream rock record that's much better than most might expect. Even if Crush is more measured than Bon Jovi's early work, "Just Older" sums up the band's acceptance of their status nicely: "The skin I'm in is all right with me/It's not old, just older." --- Steve Huey, allmusic.com

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