



BUENA VISTA SOCIAL CLUB



Timeline

1932	1953-1959	1962	1962	1962-1996	1996	1999	2015
A members-only club called the Buena Vista Social Club is created in Havana, Cuba	The Cuban Revolution led by Fidel Castro takes over the Cuban government	Many clubs are shut down including the Buena Vista Social Club	The Cuban Missile Crisis lasts 13 days in October	Salsa, jazz, and funk music become more popular	Ry Cooder travels to Havana and records with Cuban musicians	A documentary about them earns an Academy Award	The Buena Vista Social Club perform for Barak Obama in the White House

Key Compositions

Chan Chan	Written by Compay Segundo and their most well-known song.
El Cuarto de Tula	This features a laúd (lute) solo at the end. A laúd is a 12-stringed Spanish guitar.
Dos gardenias	A bolero (slow tempo Latin music) sung by Ibrahim Ferrer which was very popular when another singer originally sang it in 1945.
El carretero	A country song about losing someone you love. Company Segundo and Ibrahim Ferrer both sing on this song.
Veinte años	Another bolero song, this time sung by Omara Portuondo.
Pueblo Nuevo	A song dedicated to different locations in Havana.
Buena Vista Social Club	A song dedicated to the Cuban venue where many musicians played before the Cuban Revolution.



DID YOU KNOW?



The original 'Buena Vista Social Club' building (located in Havana, Cuba) acted as a social place for playing games, listening to music and watching dance performers.

About the Band

The Buena Vista Social Club Album

An American musician named Ry Cooder was invited to record music with two African musicians from Mali and some Cuban musicians in Havana. The African musicians were unable to travel so they changed plans and recorded 'son' music with local musicians instead. The album was recorded in just 6 days and ended up selling over 12 million copies.

Members of the Group

- *Ibrahim Ferrer* (1927-2005) He was shining shoes for extra money in his retirement until he sang on the Buena Vista Social Club album. He then won a Grammy award and toured Europe.
- *Omara Portuondo* (1930 - present) She sang with Nat King Cole and had a successful career during the 1970s and 1980s. She then sang with Ferrer on the Buena Vista Social Club album.
- *Compay Segundo* (1907-2003) A guitarist and clarinetist who even invented his own instrument, the armónico, a seven-string mixture between a guitar and a tres.

Performing at the White House

The Buena Vista Social Club were the first Cuban-based musicians to play in the White House for over 50 years. Since the Cuban Missile Crisis, relations between the U.S.A. and Cuba had not been good and this event became an important event showing better relations between the two countries.

Key Information

The Cuban Revolution

About 900,000 Africans were brought to Cuba as slaves. Slavery in Cuba ended 1886 and, although Cuba was never formally segregated, the Cuban Revolution of 1962 tried to bring around fairness for all. This never really happened and there are still large amounts of poverty within Afro-Cuban communities today.

The Cuban Missile Crisis

A United States spy plane spotted missiles being built in Cuba in October 1962 which could have been fired onto US soil. Trucks nearby were identified as Soviet trucks. In 13 days, the Soviets (now Russia) and the U.S.A. came very close to war, but they solved their differences in the end.

Son Cubano Music

This style of music originated in Cuba around the 1910s. It mixed Spanish and African music. African rhythms were brought over by slaves on their painful journey from Africa and subsequent freedom from the French in Central America. The guitar, trumpet, double bass and bongo drums all became the standard instruments and it led to many other forms of music such as salsa, rumba and timba.