



## CRAFT LATINO ANNOUNCES BRAND NEW COLLECTION *THE QUEEN OF SALSA*

*Part of ongoing year-long tribute to the legendary Cuban singer Celia Cruz  
in celebration of 100 years of "The Queen of Salsa"*

*Arriving October 24<sup>th</sup> on LP, CD and digitally, the compilation features twelve indelible hits  
from the salsa icon's crowning years (1966–1993) including "Quimbara," "Usted abusó" and "Guantanamera"*

*Plus new liner notes by Ana Cristina Reymundo, co-author of Celia's authorized autobiography*



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[Click here](#) to listen to the Celia Cruz Centennial playlist

Los Angeles, CA (August 27, 2025)—**Craft Latino** proudly announces *The Queen of Salsa*, a brand-new collection featuring **12 timeless tracks** from **Celia Cruz's** crowning years (1966–1993). Curated from her unforgettable recordings with **Tico, Vaya, Seeco** and **Fania Records**, this commemorative release not only honors Celia's enduring legacy but also highlights her collaborations with Latin music legends such as **Tito Puente, Johnny Pacheco, Willie Colón** and the **Fania All Stars**. Featuring iconic hits like "**Quimbara**," "**Usted abusó**," "**Guantanamera**" and more, *The Queen of Salsa* will be released on **October 24th** and is available for [pre-order today](#) on **LP, CD** and **digital formats**. The collection also includes **new artwork and liner notes** by **Ana Cristina Reymundo**, co-author of Celia's authorized autobiography. Additionally, a **limited-edition "Azúcar Naranja" (Orange Sugar) color vinyl variant** (only 300 copies) is available as a stand-alone, or a bundle option that includes a collectible Fania Logo T-shirt, exclusively online at [Fania.com](http://Fania.com).

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Celia Cruz is beloved around the world and across multiple generations of fans. Her music is as likely to be heard in a corner of Helsinki as it is in Washington Heights, New York, or Miami, Florida. A large swath of her fan base consists of families where the children, parents and even grandparents are devoted fans. Her career spanned five decades and multiple genres and styles. Celia Cruz (1925–2003) shines as one of the brightest stars in the constellation of world-renowned artists. Her incandescent presence lit up every stage she stepped onto. Born in Havana, Cuba, where music is as essential to life as water, her soul resonated with the melodies that floated on the tropical breezes of her beloved island. Celia was singing from her earliest years. As she grew, her powerful and melodious voice would attract the neighbors who would often make requests for her to sing their favorite tunes. This prompted her cousin Serafín to persuade her to enter a talent contest on the radio program “La hora del té” (“Tea Time”) sponsored by Radio García Serra. The year was 1947 and she took home the first prize—a beautiful cake made by the most prestigious bakery of Havana. Thus began an odyssey of talent contests that would eventually not only garner her national fame but lead to international recognition as well as her first performance with the hugely famous band **La Sonora Matancera**. She was happiest when she was on stage and would often say that she wanted to die while performing.

Celia’s extraordinary range and magnetic artistry allowed her to move effortlessly between genres—from the rhythms of Afro-Cuban music to the irresistible pulse of salsa, from the elegance of boleros to the vibrancy of pop and beyond. This collection celebrates that versatility with career-defining highlights: the explosive Afro-Cuban anthem “**Químbara**” from the groundbreaking 1974 *Celia & Johnny* album; the smooth salsa classic “**Usted abusó**” from her 1977 collaboration album with Willie Colón titled *Only They Could Have Made This Album*; her soul-stirring rendition of the bolero standard “**Quizás, quizás, quizás**,” from 1993’s *Boleros*; and her iconic interpretation of “**Guantanamera**,” the timeless ode to Cuba drawn from José Martí’s *Versos sencillos (Simple Verses)*, first recorded on her 1967 album *Bravo*.

Other highlights in the collection include Celia’s stirring performance of Armando Manzanero’s “**Cuando estoy contigo**” from her 1978 Tico Records album *A todos mis amigos*, a poetic ballad rich with vivid imagery and metaphors that express a feeling of deep connection, happiness and pride. Next is “**Dile que por mí no tema**,” (“Tell them not to concern themselves with me”), recorded with the incomparable La Sonora Matancera in 1958. Written by Tony Smith in the mid-1950s, the song finds Celia voicing the resilience of a heart healed—celebrating a newfound love that eclipses the past.

The collection also revisits the Afro-Peruvian standard “**Toro mata**,” reimagined as a salsa anthem on the landmark *Celia & Johnny* album. Rooted in resistance and resilience, the song was originally created by enslaved Africans in Peru. The song and dance developed as a reaction to the conquest of Peru by Spain, and in the 1970s gained worldwide recognition through Celia’s powerful interpretation. From there, the set jumps to the infectious “**Bamboleo**,” the title track from the Fania All Stars’ 1988 release. With its playful lyrics (the Spanish word *bamboleo* translates to “wobble or dangle”) about life’s unpredictability and the joy of unexpected love, the song embodies Celia’s spirited delivery and timeless charisma. Only a year before, in 1987, the Gipsy Kings recorded their unforgettable cover of the song, which was a worldwide hit for the band.

Celia, who passed away in 2003 at the age of 77, left behind a mighty legacy—one that extended far beyond her five-decade-long career. Today, she is remembered as one of the most influential Latin artists of all time and, having sold over 10 million records, remains one of the most popular Latin singers of the 20th century. Throughout the years, the seven-time GRAMMY® winner has been honored with numerous awards, exhibits, commemorative stamps, samples by major artists and tributes, including a posthumous GRAMMY® Lifetime Achievement Award, a National Medal of the Arts, a Smithsonian Lifetime Achievement Award, a star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame (1987) and inductions into the *Billboard* Latin Music Hall of Fame (1994) and the International Latin Music Hall of Fame (1999), among others. Last year, Cruz became the first Afro-Latina to appear on U.S. currency through the American Women’s Quarter Program.

[Click here](#) to pre-order *The Queen of Salsa*.

[Click here](#) to find the exclusive bundle including the “Azúcar Naranja” color vinyl with the collectible Fania Records logo t-shirt.

### **Tracklist (Vinyl):**

Side A

