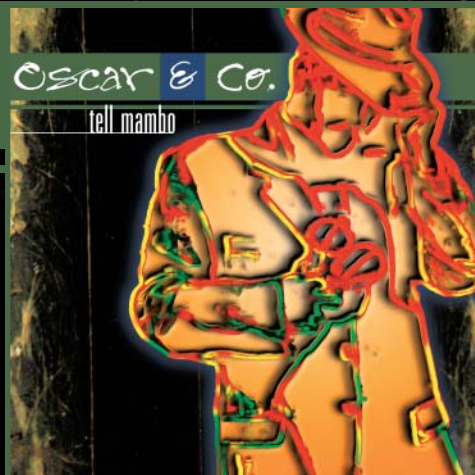


Oscar & Co.

tell mambo



artist: Oscar & Co. | title: Tell Mambo
item #: 42859592 | format: CD | label: Tinder Records



File Under: France / Salsa

The French salsa wizards from Montpellier return with a stunning follow up to their critically acclaimed "Fatal Mambo" and "Rumbagitation" albums. In "Tell Mambo" Jean Francois "Oscar" Hammel, creator of the style known as Salsaioli (salsa-yolee) delivers a kaleidoscope of intoxicating mixtures of Afro-Cuban rhythms, North African rai, gypsy soul, salsa-ragga and a French 'joie de vivre.' Sizzling horn grooves and percussion madness rival in all the tracks. And you don't have to speak French to fall in love all over again with Oscar's spicy salsa-yolee. It is tellement délicieux!

1) Souris Blanche (Ed. Ariana) 3:58

2) Latino du Midi (Ed. Ariana) 3:48

3) Amédée (Ed. Ariana) 3:57

4) Alberto (Ed. Ariana) 4:51

5) Comptine des combines (Ed. Ariana) 5:59

6) De chèvre (Ed. Peer Music) 2:59

7) Vago (Ed. Ariana) 3:48

8) Emmenez-moi (Ed. Ariana) 3:36

9) Indiana (Ed. Ariana) 4:49

10) Enamouré (Ed. Ariana) 3:55

11) La castagne (Ed. Ariana) 3:55

12) Fatalement beau (Ed. Ariana) 3:46

Tinder
Records

Tinder Records | World without Boundaries | 80 Mark Drive | San Rafael, CA 94903.
Tel: (415) 491-0733 | Fax: (415) 491-0716 | www.tinderrecords.com | email: info@tinderrecords.com

Montpellier is a town in the south of France on the Mediterranean coast. It is a town where the cultural web of the region is taken for granted. It is as much connected to Spanish culture as it is to the French. Spanish is a common language in this area and there are many cultural connections between French and Spanish not the least of which is music. It was natural that when hometown boy Jean Francois "Oscar" Hammel first saw latin legend Tito Puente perform in Paris, he fell in love with salsa rhythms. He recruited a few good friends and formed a band he named Fatal Mambo. They developed an entirely new style of latin music, Oscar coined it "Salsaioli". This term is a play on words, it is derived from a fusion of salsa, essentially Spanish for sauce and aioli, a spicy French garlic mayonnaise from the south of France. But that isn't the only ingredients in this recipe for success. They also borrowed from the gypsy culture, North African influences and French folk music. Though the different cultures often stand aloof from one another, they sometimes find common ground and interact in Oscar's compositions. He was an active participant in the local music scene, and was hip to all the local musicians. He said everyone knew each other and everyone jammed together. The band first burst on the French music scene in 1993 with their smash album "Malediccion". The band's two subsequent albums 'Fatal Mambo' and 'Rumbagitation' confirmed their seriousness about their brand of salsa.

In 1997 the band traveled to the United States for the first time introducing to North America salsa with a French twist. French salsa was not heard of until Fatal Mambo gave to U.S. salseros a taste of their concoction. Every place the band performed it earned enthusiastic praises. Oscar the bands lead singer, composer and timbales player is a slick arranger who incorporates humor into music using typical French expressions. His playful lyrics are all in French and the orchestration has no less of the great Cuban and New York salsa bands. Oscar has a very distinct and wonderful style of singing a la sonero style covering Cuban son, Colombias cumbia, and the salsa of Puerto Rico.

The band's new name is Oscar & Co. The changed is due to the fact that two former band members have decided to pursue their career in different genres of music. The style is still the same said Oscar during a telephone conversation from Montpellier. "I want to be able to enlarge the band with guest musicians and expand our orchestration if and when necessary. So I find the name Oscar & Co. appropriate for that kind of project." His trademark of mixing Afro-Cuban music with gypsy flamenco, and North African rai is ever present. The new recording effort expands on all of today's musical influences along with the usual good humor the group has been known for. Their current release "Tell Mambo" has been 3 years in the making. It is one which has salsa grooves burning up with dazzling acoustics, sizzling horn grooves, and rhythmic vibrations. The album title is a play on a French word used for emphasis 'Tellement', meaning (so much). It mirrors Oscar's commitment to the style and genre. He said, "In 1981, when we founded the group, there were no other salsa groups around, now there are many groups playing salsa in the area."

The current popularity of salsa music in the United States is something to boast about he claims, "People are now discovering that this music is infectious and good for one's health. It is a joyful music, I discovered that several years ago and I have been in good health ever since." Oscar admires many latin artists among his favorites are Ruben Blades and Cheo Feliciano. These two he listened to in his early days. When asked about his goals, without hesitation he talked of wanting to be able to play for a longtime, infact well into his nineties like Compay Segundo. Oscar has stayed true to the form, yet he has taking chance to make it his own. For the aspiring musician who played drums and hung out with salsa musicians when he was seventeen, his obsession for latin music has paid off.

