



# Alex Cuba

Singer-songwriter Alex\**Cuba* hails from Artemisa, Cuba (60KM from Havana) and resides in Smithers, B.C. (14 hours north of Vancouver). Musically, he lives everywhere in between. His trademark sugarcane-sweet melodies, pop-soul hooks and rock chords subtly subvert commonly held notions of what Cuban music is. Alex is on the vanguard, crafting a cross-cultural sound that mirrors his geographical journey. Not tied to tradition, this Cuban-Canadian prefers his vintage Gibson over el sencerro (cowbell) anytime.

From his earliest years in Artemisa, he was immersed in music. Alex's first stage appearance on national TV was at the tender age of four, playing claves (a percussion instrument) in a group directed by his music instructor father. Alex went on to study guitar, tres, percussion and bass, practicing eight hours a day during his teens.

Alex\**Cuba* won a National Song Writing Competition in Cuba when he was only 18, but only recognized his singer/songwriter path upon moving to Canada, after years playing bass in traditional Cuban groups as well as jazz and pop alongside Roberto Fonseca and Javier Zalba (now with the Buena Vista Social Club), recording three albums and touring Europe.

In Canada, he teamed up with his twin brother Adonis to record *Morumba Cubana*, as The Puentes Brothers, including seven original compositions of Alex and two co-written with Adonis. In 2001, the album received a nomination for a Juno award - as well as winning a West Coast Music Award and a Canadian Independent Music Award.

But for Alex something didn't quite fit, and departing from Cuban music norms to follow his own path appears to be paying off - with his debut CD with the Alex Cuba Band, *Humo De Tabaco*, earning him a Juno award for World Music Album in 2006, with the single "Lo Mismo Que Yo", featuring Ron Sexsmith charting in the Top 20 at BBC Radio2.

Alex\*Cuba has performed in the UK, Japan, the US and Canada, sharing the stage with artists like Jose Gonzalez and Seu Jorge (Central Park Summerstage), Feist and Cesaria Evora.

After a musical and spiritual evolution, Cuba returned to the studio, this time with producer Joby Baker of Victoria, to record his second album, "Agua Del Pozo" which was released in Canada in February 2007 under his own Caracol Records imprint. Acclaimed for its blend of tempo, instrumentation and songwriting, the album is a clear evolution from the debut, punctuated by the introduction of Alexis' electric guitar, a vintage Gibson.

2008 is shaping up to be a big year as Alex Cuba had the iTunes Single of the Week early January in Canada with "Amor Infinito", delivered a rousing showcase at SXSW, and has garnered strong media coverage and sell-out tours in the U.S.

Alex won an "indie" Award for Favourite World Music Artist at Canadian Music Week in March and recently picked up his second Juno Award for Best World Music album.

In June 2008, Caracol Records (Cuba's own label, now distributed by EMI Music Canada), re-released "Agua del Pozo" in Canada with brand new artwork.

In the digital space, "Agua del Pozo" reached #1 on the iTunes Latin Tropical Album chart (#7 on the overall Latin Album Chart) when the title track was the iTunes U.S. Latino and World Single of the Week. He was also featured on the iTunes U.S. "Indie Spotlight". In early July, "Amor Infinito" was yet again selected as a Single of the Week, this time by iTunes Japan and he is recording an exclusive iTunes "Live at Soho" session.

This fall, Alex has been invited to showcase at the prestigious WOMEX conference in Seville, Spain.

Having achieved these milestones independently (Cuba does not have a U.S. or Japanese license deal yet) makes them even sweeter.

With a heart as big as his retro 'fro, Cuba takes it all in stride and focuses on what he does best: crafting songs that cut through linguistic barriers like a machete through sugarcane.

...Viva Alex\*Cuba