

"dancing with flavor"
the origin of salsa
dancing essay



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Dancing has become a part of several cultures around the globe and it has evolved into numerous kinds that are made to entertain people. Examples of these are modern dances like hip-hop, interpretative dances like ballet and ballroom dances such as Tango, Waltz, Plena, Cumbia, Mambo and Salsa. In ballroom dancing, Salsa is considered as one of the most complicated type to dance. Salsa is not easily defined. According to some musicians and historians who professionalized in music, the term " salsa" was first heard on a radio when Ignacio Pineiro played his composition dedicated to an old man living in Africa.

The major refrain and chorus goes " Salsaaaaa! echale salsita, echale salsita". Salsa is a refinement and a fusion of many Latin and Afro-Caribbean dances. Each of these dances played a large part in Salsa's evolution. However, before Salsa was formed, several nations seemed to already use a dance that is similar to Salsa but has never called it that way. In England, there was this country dance called " Danzon" which was brought by French people who fled from Haiti. This dance was then incorporated with Rhumbas of Gunangco, Colombia and Yambu.

Later, it the specific dance made its way to the lands of Cuba where it was developed more and was mixed with another culture. The dance added a mixture of Spanish troubadours, African beats and flavor. Other countries also contributed to the development of Salsa. The Dominican Republic, Columbia and Puerto Rico are few of those countries. Mexico and New York also promoted such form of entertainment in the line of Music. It became quite a hit during that time and became a good means of investment.

During the 1940s and 1970s, people in New York appreciated this kind of music and it was later given a specific name. They called this music " Salsa" but they did not create the dance. The term became quite popular and influenced a variety of music made by individuals in Hispanic countries. Salsa was incorporated to Rhumba, Cubop, Cumbia, Guaracha, Cha cha cha, Guajira, Bomba and Merengue. As a dance routine, Salsa is not very different from Mambo for a reason that both have a pattern of six steps danced over eight counts of music.

Several movements of the said dances are very similar and compatible. In dancing Salsa, turns have become a significant characteristic, so the overall look and feel is quite different from dancing Mambo. In Mambo, one usually performs a certain step in a forward and backward motion, whereas, Salsa has more of a side to side feel. Regarding Salsa patterns, the most usual one involves the use of three steps during each four beats, one beat being skipped. However, this skipped beat is frequently symbolized by a certain tap, a kick, a flick or the like.

Naturally, the music involves intricate percussion rhythms and is swift with around 180 beats per minute. Salsa, as observed, is a slot or spot dance. It is not very similar to the dances called Foxtrot or Samba because in Salsa a couple does not travel over the dance floor much, but to a certain extent occupies a fixed area on the dance floor. This dance is usually performed with a partner, but there are some cases that this is danced in solo. Several movies had also used Salsa as one of their themes.

Such movies include a 1998 Hollywood show starring Vanessa L. Williams, Kris Kristofferson, Joan Plowright, a Puerto Rican singer named Chayanne and Jane Krakowski. The movie was entitled "Dance with me". It was a drama film about love and dance directed by Randa Haines. Chayanne played the role of Rafael Infante who fell in love with Ruby Sinclair, who was played by Vanessa Williams, a dancer and an instructor in a studio that he managed to work. In a certain scene in the film, Rafael invited Ruby to a dance party at a club in the Houston, Texas.

Along with other dancers, they performed a sexy Latin Salsa Dancing to a song by Albita Rodriguez which was entitled "Fiesta Pa' Los Rumberos". They also performed several dances during while interpreting their feelings and emotions such as jealousy, adoration, rejection, humor and the like. The technicalities of Salsa dancing were evident during this movie. The movie finished at the studio with the several dancers dancing to the theme song entitled "You Are My Home" by Chayanne and Williams themselves. In this generation, there are already slight changes and progression on how Salsa is danced or musically played.

From the many influences from other countries, it has been a mystery regarding the exact origins of it. Until now, people are debating whether Salsa originated in Cuba or Puerto Rico or if these places both made the dance. Now, it has become the main dances in Puerto Rico and has inspired many individuals to engage themselves into dancing. Salsa is very popular worldwide and other nations have been using this as a means of entertainment. It will never stop improving considering the way people see and appreciate Salsa and other kinds of dances.

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