

Lila Downs on

~ LA CANTINA “entre copa y copa ...”

1. La Cumbia del Mole A festive tribute to one of Mexico's most popular and traditional dishes. The lyrics talk about a chocolate-based sauce used to make Mole as a centerpiece meal shared with the community.

2. El Corrido de Tacha "La Teibolera"
A '*corrido*' is an old Mexican story-telling song. This is the true story of a young woman who was married by her mother at a young age, so she decided to escape and become a tabledancer and singer.

3. Agua de Rosas This song is dedicated to the shaman women of Juchitan, Oaxaca. It's about a rosewater remedy which takes away sadness.

4. Tu Recuerdo y Yo A classic '*ranchera*' by Mexico's most revered composer of this genre, José Alfredo Jiménez. It's a song about love, betrayal and pain. What more can you ask for?

5. La Cama de Piedra Some of the best titles in '*canciones rancheras*' are also some of the best songs. This one translates as "The Bed of Stone" and the lyrics couldn't be more direct: "I went up to the hall of crime, and I asked the president: if it's a crime to love you, then let them sentence me to death."

6. El Relampago This is a celebration of the fertility of life in the countryside, represented by the lightning bolt. The style of music is known as '*son calentano*,' as it comes from the '*tierra caliente*' or hot lands of the state of Michoacan in Western Mexico.

7. Penas del Alma A deeply passionate song about heartache and betrayal. The lyrics tell the story of someone who abandoned everything for love: "I have pain in my soul, which liquor cannot kill. Instead, the pain is killing me, the more drunk I get."

8. La Tequilera An old and classic '*ranchera*,' but given the "norteño treatment" by Flaco Jimenez on accordion, Max Baca on bajo sexto/drums and Michael

Ramos on the arrangement. It's a cartoonish story and a commentary on the stereotype of the long-suffering Mexican woman who endures all kinds of pain, but is happy as long as she has tequila to help her cope with it.

9. Pa' todo el año This is one of the most soulful and enduring songs by José Alfredo Jiménez, very popular on radio stations in Mexico, especially at the end of the year. "From now on, I don't care about love I will sing around the world my pain and my sadness Because I know that from this fall I will never get up and even though I don't want it I will die from love."

10. El Centenario A '*corrido*' popularized by Los Tucanes de Tijuana. It's the story of a working class man who got tired of being poor, decided to join the drug mafia, is now loaded with money and lives in Mexico and the USA.

11. La Noche de mi Mal A classic '*ranchera*' about breaking up with the one you love, with a universal message: "I don't want to even hear your name again I don't even want to know where you are going this is what you said to me, that black night that black night of my demise."

12. Arboles de la Barranca This song is well-known in the rural communities of Mexico. "Trees in the Ravine" is the English translation of the title, hence the metaphor of the song: "the trees are in need of water, just as I have the need to love."

13. Yo Ya Me Voy A traditional song from Northern Mexico, performed by peasants at the end of a working day, while sipping local firewater. The musical style is known as '*cancion cardenche*' and is usually performed by several men in multiple voices *a cappella*.

14. Amarga Navidad It's a song usually heard around the Christmas season in Mexico. It's a '*ranchera*' about asking the one you love to leave you once and for all: "I don't want to start the New Year with this same love which has done me so much wrong."

