

Created by: Debra C. Argen

## Paco Renteria - Interview

To write that [Paco Renteria](#) is a talented musician would be an understatement; he is a major force to be reckoned with, he is a composer, arranger, and most importantly, he is a master guitarist.



I was in Ixtapa-Zihuatanejo in December 2007 and had the opportunity to meet with Paco Renteria for an interview a few hours before his concert where he would play with fellow band members Lidya Madrigal (Percussion), Roberto Quintero (Percussion), Luis Quintero (Guitar), Benjamin Santikanes (Trumpet), and Emmanuel Macias (Violin and Keyboard). Although he plays Flamenco guitar, he combines genres to fit his unique style, which he calls freeplay, and defies being pigeonholed.

**LEM:**

Growing up in Guadalajara, Mexico, the state of the mariachi bands, at what age did you become interested in music?

**PR:**

When I was 7 years old, I told my father that I wanted a guitar. He thought that I meant the small guitar for children painted with the Mexican colors, green, red and white. No, I said, I want a professional large guitar. My father laughed and said that the guitar would be bigger than I was, but when I was 8 years old, my father bought me the guitar and I started classical guitar lessons. After that, I studied Flamenco, played with Segovia, and then I started composing, and played jazz, and rock.

**LEM:**

Who inspired you musically?

**PR:**

I listened to Vivaldi, Mozart, Pink Floyd, Arturo Sandoval, Def Leppard, Andrés Segovia, John Williams, Journey, the Eagles, Led Zeppelin, and the Beatles; all types of music.

**LEM:**

How would you describe your music philosophy?

**PR:**

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I wanted to play with no lines between countries, mix the sitar from India with the accordion from France, and developed my style called freeplay. I did not want to say "new Flamenco" or fusion, its freeplay. I want to play the note and improvise, no more rules, mix Flamenco with Classical and Oriental.

The philosophy of my music is the fire, which is the reason, put your soul, spirit to give the music, because music is more to me than a profession; it is my life. It is like a woman, the way the guitar is shaped, and you need to play her, touch her.

**LEM:**

What type of guitars do you play?

**PR:**

I play many guitars made from different types of woods because they produce unique sounds. I have an electrified acoustic guitar from Spain with electronics from Japan, which is a special edition Flamenco guitar.

**LEM:**

What is your concert schedule like?

**PR:**

We played 140 concerts worldwide in 2007, as it is important for me as a musician, composer, and producer to have a connection with the people.

**LEM:**

What inspires you as a musician?

**PR:**

The most important thing is the human emotion. Woman is a muse. I play like it is my last concert; play with all of my soul, all of my emotion. I invite the audience to travel with me on my "bus" (this concert).

**LEM:**

How would you describe this time of your life?

**PR:**

This is a good time for me, the best moment of my life, but not the defining moment of my life.

**LEM:**

How do you spend what free time you have between your concert schedules?

**PR:**

Although I travel a lot, I like to have massages, play tennis and golf, drive cars, and see movies.

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Meeting Paco Renteria and seeing his passion did little to prepare me for his concert on the beach at the Presidente Intercontinental, where fans attired in white waited anxiously for the performance to begin. Sitting at a round table dressed with white linens, under a white tulle canopy with a plethora of sparkling stars in the sky, I too, caught the electric atmosphere of the evening as the band dressed all in the black, took to the stage and began playing and setting the musical table. Paco, barefoot and dressed in white, entered, took his seat center stage and played solo fingering the guitar strings faster than I could blink my eyes. The band joined him and the emotion and the passion struck hard, quick, and deep to the core; a connection was made. The audience showed its appreciation, as Paco took us along on a journey playing Mariachi and Spanish Flamenco, before being joined by Luis Quintero playing energetic tandem guitars.

It was an enchanting evening with Paco demonstrating his freeplay style where he got into the groove, and the band managed to not only follow along on the improvisation, but to ride the tide as graceful as professional surfers. He is a generous musician and leader and gave free reign to his talented band, with outstanding solo performances from trumpet player Benjamin Santikanes, and Emmanuel Macias who played his violin like an inspired angel.



With each song, the audience appreciation increased with guests waving their napkins in the air and dancing in their seats. Paco had clearly enchanted the audience weaving a magic spell through his music, and the fact that he has dimples, eyes as dark as a Mexican night, and long dark curly hair, certainly does not hurt. Good looks aside though, he clearly had taken the audience on the musical journey that he promised and then fully delivered.

Read more about Paco Renteria in the **Music Scene** where Edward F. Nesta reviews Paco Renteria's CDs **Gitanus** and **Oceano**.

For additional information on **Paco Renteria** and his tour schedule, visit the website:

[www.PacoRenteriaGuitar.com](http://www.PacoRenteriaGuitar.com).

Please read other articles on **Ixtapa-Zihuatanejo** in the **Destinations**, **Hotels and Resorts**, **Restaurants**, **Chefs' Recipes**, and **Adventures** sections.

Read other articles on **Mexico** in [Destinations: Cancun](#), [Hotels and Resorts](#), [Restaurants](#), [Chefs' Recipes](#), [Spas](#), [Liquor Cabinet: Xtabentun](#), [Adventures: Scuba Diving in Cancun](#), and [Travel News: Luxury Avenue](#).

For information on **Ixtapa-Zihuatanejo, Mexico**, please visit the website:

[www.Visit-Ixtapa-Zihuatanejo.org](http://www.Visit-Ixtapa-Zihuatanejo.org).

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