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DVD Review: *Freddy Fender—Live at the Renaissance Center*

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[Joe Battista](#)

"Don't take life so serious. Enjoy it, be happy, and be happy." – Freddy Fender

Freddy Fender, the self-proclaimed "King of Tex Mex" (and my grandmother's all-time favorite artist) releases *Freddy Fender—Live at the Renaissance Center*, a 15-song* live performance filmed in Laughlin, Nevada.

I grew up listening to Freddy's biggest hits on what was probably the only country music station in Connecticut and through various K-Tel hits-of-the-day compilations. In the 90's I became a fan of Freddy's work with the Tex Mex supergroup Texas Tornados. I even saw the Tornados once in San Marcos, Texas. And after seeing this video, I can say that Freddy has lost none of the energy and personality that he had when I saw him in the early 90s.

This video features strong performances of many of Freddy's nearly 50-year career.

Highlights from the DVD include some of Freddy's biggest commercially successful songs like "Before the Next Teardrop Falls," "Wasted Days and Wasted Nights," "You'll Lose a Good Thing," "Vaya Con Dios" and "Since I Met You Baby." And just for fun, he throws in a few covers, including the Hank Williams classic "Jambalaya (On the Bayou)" and the casino night club standards "Margaritaville" and "Wooly Bully."

Freddy also takes time to talk to the audience, mixing in jokes and an incredibly long and confusing story that introduces "Jambalaya (On the Bayou)."

The best part of this video is the interview found in the bonus material. This 15-minute talk with Freddy gives the viewer some insight into the artist. Simply put, this guy really appears to be genuinely happy to be alive and playing music—almost happy-go-lucky. Freddy talks about the early days of his career, including a little background about the origins of "Wasted Days and Wasted Nights," his stint in the Louisiana prison system, and the great Doug Sahm among other topics.

Other bonus material includes a text biography, a photo gallery, the video credits (the same ones that appear at the end of the video), and a screen that features web links.

Consider this video a great gift idea for the hardcore Freddy Fender fan. However, if I were introducing someone to his music, I would probably start with one of his greatest hits collections or even a Texas Tornados album.

*The 15th song is "Six Days on the Road," which is played in the introduction. It doesn't appear in the chapter list or the packaging.