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## Malone And The Experts Find Avalon

When you name your band the Experts, you need the chops to back it up. Philly-based J. D. Malone and the Experts do. Look to Avalon for evidence, their first full-length release.

Self-described as "gritty Americana and classic rock," there isn't a better description. They also fit within what's best described as alternative country. Or, maybe your favorite local bar band times 100, with influences that include John Mellencamp, Steve Earle, Tom Petty, and Creedence Clearwater Revival.

**Avalon doesn't reinvent the wheel nor does it retread old ground.**

Avalon can stand on its own as a solid album with strong songwriting, pounding rhythm section, and fantastic guitar work.

No surprise, given Malone produced it with the help of Dean Sciarra (president of indie label ItsAboutMusic.com) and Grammy winner Phil Nicolo (Bob Dylan, Aerosmith, Santana).

Avalon is a well-produced organic album. The full band is made up some seasoned players. Along with Malone, the Experts include multi-instrumentalist Tom Hampton (guitar, mandolin, dobro, lap and pedal steel guitars), veteran Philly drummer Tom Geddes, bassist Jim Miades, and guitarist Avery Coffee. What that means is Malone might be a solid frontman, but this kind of team only comes around a few times every lifetime.

That's the beauty of Avalon too. It captures the warmth and grit of their live performances, even those that only include Malone, an acoustic guitar, and a little help from Hampton.



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The result is an album that fools you into believing they've played together for years, even if their time together is limited to one album and a largely overlooked EP. Almost every song proves they achieved a shared goal set down by Malone.

**"We wanted to take the energy and excitement the band had developed and try to grab that energy on this album," said Malone.**

Look first for the twangy Still Love You, the Allman Brothers-esqe She Likes, and solid covers of Petty's I Should Have Known It along with John Fogerty's Fortunate Son. But as mentioned earlier, its Malone's songwriting that shines.

His introspective lyrics on the title track Avalon and Ballad of Mr. Barbo hit home. The latter is about a dog accidentally shot by a hunter in Malone's home state of Vermont. Malone's songwriting is solid enough that he doesn't need to be covering anybody else's work. In a few years, expect some younger bands to be covering his work.

**Avalon by J.D. Malone and The Experts Rocks At With A 6.8 On The Liquid Hip Richter Scale.**

With the release of Avalon on the indie label ItsAboutMusic, Malone and company will likely find themselves in demand well beyond Philly. No tour information is currently posted, but they should be hitting the road in support of the release soon.

Avalon's 13 tracks are available on iTunes or pick **Avalon** up on Amazon. If you like the tracks, Barnes & Noble carries the **CD+DVD package**. It includes the 13 tracks along with five bonus tracks that aren't available for download.

The five bonus tracks are enough to justify the purchase: Just Like New and live versions of Silver From, I Think It Was Monday, She Likes, and I Should Have Known It. It also comes with a DVD documentary of the band recording Avalon. While most band documentaries are hit and miss, this one brings out their good-natured personalities.

Posted by Kim at 6:00 AM 

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