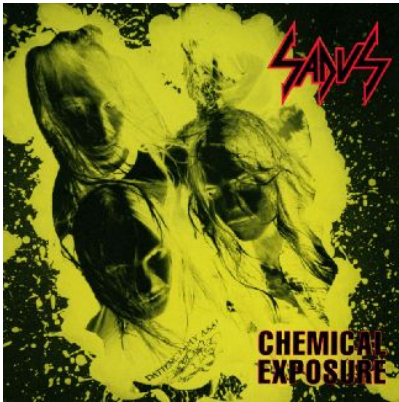


## SADUS

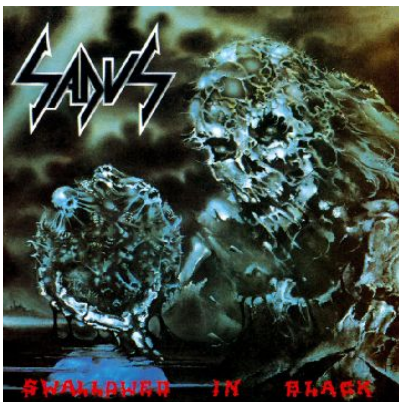
*Chemical Exposure, Swallowed In Black, and A Vision Of Misery* (reissues)

[Metal Mind](#)



The first three Sadus albums are awesome; *Chemical Exposure* and *Swallowed In Black* (the first two) are indispensable classics. If you consider yourself a thrash fan, you either have these or need to buy them now that they're back in print.

The debut album *Chemical Exposure* (originally titled *Illusions* when it was released on vinyl) turned more than a few heads back in 1988 when the band released it themselves, selling 7000 or so copies through several pressings. It sold well for good reason: this is some of the craziest, most intense thrash ever recorded, and totally over-the-top in every respect: speed, accomplished musicianship (especially bassist Steve DiGiorgio, who is pretty much legendary at this point), blazing riffs...the works!! The already violent listening experience is further complimented by guitarist/vocalist Darren Travis' unbelievably manic vocal style, which employs an abundance of insane, blood-curdling shrieks. The only lackluster content on this whole album is the :25 opening to "Sadus Attack," which is pretty generic...but once the tune kicks into high gear it rips for the remaining 1:19! A little on the short side clocking in under 30 minutes--excluding bonus content--it is 100% lean and mean (3 tracks get the point across in under 2 minutes!). The 2 bonus tracks are from the D.T.P. Demo, which you may already have on original cassette as a rabid fan or, more likely, as an owner of the D.T.P. Demo CD issued by Hammerheart a couple of years ago.



*Swallowed In Black* is the album where Sadus perfects their thrash craft. The songs employ more variations in tempo, which really increases the musical breathing room for experimentation and facilitates maximum impact when they kick into what remains an abundance of violently fast rhythms, so don't worry; they've just expanded the musical palette enough to keep things fresh and interesting. At 1:00, "In Your Face" remains one of their fastest and shortest numbers. SIB also enjoys much better engineering and mix than its predecessor; it is easy to revel in each song's synergy, or zero your ears in on one

instrument to realize just how sick each guy performs his part. I consider Swallowed In Black a legitimate thrash masterpiece, and the tour that ensued upon its release (alongside Obituary and Sepultura) must still stand as one of the best metal package tours ever. The 2 bonus tracks here are also from the D.T.P. Demo.



*A Vision Of Misery* sees Sadus branch out even further. The musicianship has reached even higher skill levels, and some of the aggression is lost. Not ALL, just some of it. There is still plenty of mayhem, but all around there is a more progressive air about the material, with some production decisions (Sadus co-produced with the famous Bill Metoyer) resulting occasionally in weird effects on vocals and instruments. Effects aside, Darren's vocal performances are also more varied this time around, although we don't hear the crazy shrieks of bygone days. It's more musically complex and way more diverse than the first two, and it did take me some some time to get into it. In fact, I didn't really care for it back when it came out; I only came to enjoy it about 10 years later after my musical tastes expanded a bit, and now I eat it up!! It really is that significant a progression from Swallowed In Black, and I don't think I was the only one not quite ready for it in 1992. Given enough spins, though, it becomes a very rewarding album. The two bonus tracks are from the 1987 Certain Death demo; these were also previously packaged with the D.T.P. Demo on the aforementioned Hammerheart release.

Given the demand for these vintage Roadrunner titles, Metal Mind could easily have cheated out and slapped together a second-rate, bare bones campaign for a quick buck and gotten away with it. Instead, no effort was spared to give the fans the definitive presentation of all of the licensed titles: liner notes for each by Steve DiGiorgio, band bio, full-color expanded booklets, individually numbered digipak cases (full color inside and out) with a handsome flood coat of dull varnish, and bonus tracks. My one minor complaint is that I do wonder why these Sadus reissues include only bonus tracks from the more widely available D.T.P. and Certain Death demos--which would have fit nicely, length-wise and timeline-wise, on the *Chemical Exposure* disc--and nothing from the more obscure Wake Of Severity and Red demos, which would have been perfect supplemental material for the second and third albums, respectively. I'll probably never find out, though. All 3 titles were also remastered, but the remastering job didn't change much of the sonic traits of the originals; it simply boosted the volume level of each a db or two. All in all, for the limited production run (2000 of each title) and fair price, Metal Mind earns top marks for going to such lengths to deliver a worthwhile product.

A (*Chemical Exposure*)  
A+ (*Swallowed In Black*)  
A- (*A Vision Of Misery*)      -Mark Fields