

- [Hypnotic](#)
 - [Aggressive](#)
 - [Sexy](#)
- [see all moods »](#)

○ **popular themes**

- [Late Night](#)
 - [Introspection](#)
 - [Partying](#)
 - [Rainy Day](#)
 - [Summer](#)
 - [Cool & Cocky](#)
 - [Drinking](#)
- [see all themes »](#)

- new releases
 - [Notable New Releases](#)
 - [Editors' Choice](#)
 - [All New Releases](#)
- [recommendations](#)
- [blog](#)

Live in Chicago (May 4, 2004) 4 Stephen Thomas Erlewine Like all great live bands, Ween has a diverse repertoire and changes set lists nearly every night, and also doesn't stick to the sound of the original recordings, choosing to rearrange, expand, and improvise. They're also reliable, turning in consistently strong live performances (and when they're bad, they're still a lot of fun), so they lend themselves well to live albums, and ever since 1999's live compilation *Paintin' the Town Brown: Ween Live 1990-1998*, there has been a steady stream of them, most released on their own indie label, Chocodog. Each of those has captured a special concert -- Live in Toronto captured them on their legendary country tour, Live at Stubb's was a rowdy, career-spanning marathon show, Live By Request had a self-explanatory title -- but for Live in Chicago, their second mass-market live CD and first live DVD (packaged as a two-fer, containing both discs), they simply presented a typical show from the supporting tour for 2003's *Quebec*. Recorded over two nights at the Vic Theatre in November 2003, the CD's track listing is heavy on fan favorites from *Chocolate & Cheese* and *The Mollusk* -- including the singles "Voodoo Lady" and "Ocean Man," but also such staples as "Roses Are Free," "Buckingham Green," "Spinal Meningitis Got Me Down," and "I'll Be Your Jonny on th' Spot" -- with only "Pork Roll Egg and Cheese" from the two early albums. There are also a fair number of White Pepper tunes and a healthy dose of *Quebec*. It's a very strong performance, edited together to make for a tight, fluid live album. As the DVD reveals, certain songs have been shifted around on the CD -- the openers "Buckingham Green" and "Spinal Meningitis" have been moved toward the end of the CD -- which makes for a better-paced album, yet the DVD has the momentum of a true concert, with the band warming up with some slower tunes before tearing into "Take Me Away" and kicking the concert into full gear. The extended length of the DVD -- 26 songs instead of 17 -- showcases the scope and skills of Ween better than the CD, since it has the space for more styles and sounds, including a stronger presence for *GodWeenSatan* and *The Pod*, plus an appropriately majestic cover of Led Zeppelin's "All of My Love" and a tremendous finale in "The Blarney Stone." While the extras are minimal -- the alternate angles on three songs aren't particularly interesting, but the animated video for "Transdermal Celebration" is -- the video is sharp and the sound, particularly the powerful 5.1 Surround Sound mix, is terrific. But the thing that counts is that this is a grandly entertaining performance -- perhaps not as transcendent as Live at Stubb's or Live in Toronto, but convincing evidence of Ween's live prowess.

- Share Page
-
-
-