

Albert Castiglia - These Are The Days (2008)

Written by bluesever

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1. *Bad Year Blues*
2. *He's Got All the Whiskey*
3. *Loan Me a Dime*
4. *Godfather of the Blues*
5. *Celebration*
6. *Night Time Is the Right Time*
7. *Catfish*
8. *Another Bloody Day*
9. *Need Your Love So Bad*
10. *Twister*
11. *Blues for Evan*

Personnel: Albert Castiglia (vocals, guitar); Kenny Sorensen (harmonica); Susan Lusher (piano, Hammond b-3 organ); Rio Clemente (organ); Susan Lushner (keyboards); Steve Gaskell (bass instrument, bass guitar); Bob Amsell (drums); Nicole Hart, Sweet Suzi Smith, Nicolette Hart (background vocals).

This is a joltingly strong album from a virtuoso bluesman whose career is gaining velocity. *These Are the Days* is Albert Castiglia's newest disc, and it's eclectic, electric and flat-out excellent. There's nothing typical about these cuts. High-gain, rockin' music mixes with some moody acoustic picking that can be downright eerie, particularly on an eccentric baseball-flavored number called *Catfish* written by an eccentric guy named Robert Dylan. The disc also features some deeply personal (but seriously rhythmic) songs written by Castiglia, notably including *Godfather of the Blues*, which is a hot-shuffle tribute to Albert's former boss in Chicago, the late Junior Wells. Also powerful is *Another Bloody Day*, which blends some smoking Stratocaster tones with a sharp anti-war message aimed at the current D.C. military-industrial brain-trust. Another of my favorites is the wry *Bad Year Blues*. All the covers here are worthwhile, but I think the most sizzling one is *Night Time Is the Right Time*, which is packed with sounds to love. Albert's gritty vocal is outstanding, the guitar work is excellent, and the sexy-ladies background singing is very, very nice. The album's title derives from the lyrics of

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Celebration , a great song on the disc written by Castiglia's friend and musical collaborator Graham Wood Drout, leader of the Florida-famous swamp-boogie band Iko Iko. This song is one of the elements that make the album rise above the 12-bar blues routine. It has a mystic feel and sounds like it's already been a hit before, emerging as a folk-rock anthem from an alternate universe. If all this sounds as though I'm a Castiglia aficionado, hey I'm guilty. But there's a reason: The man's music is better than good. By Richard Wallace--Florida based bluesman Albert Castiglia opens his latest release These Are the Days with the rollicking original composition "Bad Year Blues". This track is perhaps the pick of the original tunes with strong vocals and scorching, masterful slide work. Among the eleven tracks that make up this record are five Castiglia originals mixed in with blues classics featuring exceptionally soulful vocals and strong guitar work. One of the highlights is found in a cover of "Loan Me a Dime" – best known as a Boz Scoggs classic - with vocals that put the listener right in Castiglia's shoes and guitar work that tells the rest of the story. Other listener favorites will be "Need Your Love So Bad" – reminiscent of Fleetwood Mac with Peter Green and "Night Time is the Right Time" with a strong groove and a good mix of supporting elements. ---Illinois Phil, livebluesworld.com

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