

Stephane Grappelli, Baden Powell – La Grande Reunion (1985)

Written by bluesever

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1. *Eu Vim Da Bahia* 2. *Meditacao* 3. *Berimbau* 4. *Desafinado* 5. *Samba de Uma Nota Sao*
6. *Isaura* 7. *Amor e Paz* 8. *Brasil* Baden Powell - Guitar Stéphane Grappelli - Violin Guy Pedersen - Bass Pierre-Alain Dahan - Drums

This CD by Stephane Grappelli combines a complete 1974 studio session with bossa nova guitarist Baden Powell along with excerpts from a 1977 session with a large orchestra conducted and arranged by Christian Chevalier. As long as a good melody is present, the veteran violinist can be counted upon to swing it, as on the collection of eight bossa nova songs, including the often-recorded "Desafinado" and "Samba de Uma Notta" (also known as "One Note Samba"). Powell is a talented guitarist but not exactly at the level of the artists who Grappelli recorded with during his long career (for example, Django Reinhardt, Joe Pass, and Martin Taylor, to name a few). But the music is at least enjoyable even if it isn't overly memorable. Unfortunately, the orchestral session is closer to easy listening than jazz, with Chevalier's sleepy arrangements proving to be more of a distraction than a helpful background for Grappelli's solos, especially on the overblown "You Are the Sunshine of My Life," a piece that has been successfully adapted by jazz musicians on many other occasions. Even when the jazz group, anchored by keyboardist Maurice Vander, is added, it is of little help. Overall, this now out of print CD will likely be sought only by those who must own Grappelli's complete discographical output; anyone else can safely bypass this uneven release. ---Ken Dryden, Rovi

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