

Beach Boys - 20 Golden Greats (1987)

Written by bluelover

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1. *Surfin' USA*
2. *Fun Fun Fun*
3. *I Get Around*
4. *Don't Worry Baby*
5. *Little Deuce Coupe*
6. *When I Grow Up (To Be A Man)*
7. *Help Me Rhonda*
8. *California Girls*
9. *Barbara Ann*
10. *Sloop John B*
11. *You're So Good To Me*
12. *God Only Knows*
13. *Wouldn't It Be Nice*
14. *Good Vibrations*
15. *Then I Kissed Her*
16. *Heroes And Villains*
17. *Darlin'*
18. *Do It Again*
19. *I Can Hear Music*
20. *Break Away*

UK/Euro 1987 compilation, pressed in Italy. Unusually clever track sequence, providing a nice vibe for your...uh, surf party.

E.g., note tracks 12-17. Haven't you always wanted to hear those 6 songs without "Sloop John B" annoying you in the middle? Very rare. Actually, most of the 2nd half (tracks 11-20) can be

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played through without hokey annoyance.

The glitch is that 15 of the 20 tracks are original mono. The only stereo mixes are tracks 2, 4, 5, 11, and 19. (See the "customer image" of the back cover -- these are the songs with asterisks.) Aside from "Don't Worry Baby," these aren't among my favorite Beach Boys songs.

And sure, Beach Boys purists love mono. But for the rest of us, the stereo remixes sound noticeably more multidimensional. So this does serve mostly as a good party CD. If it's background music, the mix won't matter. --- Reader Rabbit, amazon.com

The Beach Boys' vocal harmonies are among the most unmistakable and enduring of the rock and roll era. Among rock and roll groups of the Sixties, the California quintet place second only to the Beatles in terms of their overall impact on the Top 40. They were the Fab Four's most serious competitors on a creative level, too. Paul McCartney has allowed that the Beatles' masterpiece, Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band, was their attempt to address the challenge posed by the Beach Boys' magnum opus, Pet Sounds - which itself was inspired by the British foursome's Rubber Soul.

This creative dialogue between two of rock's greatest bands pushed popular music to an artistic peak. Paul McCartney noted that "both [Pet Sounds and Sgt. Pepper] have more than held up. To me it's like, 'What have people been doing in the meantime? Where's the progress?' I can't see anything as modern as that around at the moment."

The Beach Boys were a family affair that came together in the Los Angeles suburb of Hawthorne, California, in 1961. Three brothers – Brian, Carl and Dennis Wilson – were joined by their cousin, Mike Love, and a schoolmate, Alan Jardine (who was replaced by David Marks, before rejoining). Brian Wilson, who demonstrated an aptitude for music at an early age, was the group's leader, orchestrating their harmonies, writing the music, producing the recording sessions.

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One of the undisputed geniuses in popular music, Brian demonstrated an uncanny gift for harmonic invention and complex vocal and instrumental arrangements. Initially, the magnitude of that genius was overlooked owing to the subject matter of the band's early hits: i.e., surfing, hot rods and teen romance. But today, even the lyrics to those songs – generally written by Mike Love or such outside collaborators as deejay Roger Christian and producer Gary Usher – are celebrated for their deft use of technical lingo and youthful joie de vivre. “A lot of love went into our singing, our harmonies, the making of those records,” Brian Wilson said in 2003. ---rockhall.com

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