

Sophie Milman – Take Love Easy (2009)

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1. *Beautiful Love* 2. *Take Love Easy* 3. *I Concentrate on You* 4. *Day in, Day Out* 5. *Be Cool* 6. *My One and Only Love* 7. *I Can't Make You Love Me* 8. *That Is Love* [play](#)
9. *Love for Sale* 10. *I'm on Fire* 11. *Triste*

[play](#)

12. *50 Ways to Leave Your Lover* 13. *Where Do You Start?*

Personnel: Sophie Milman: vocals; Paul Shrofel: piano (1, 3-5, 11, 13), Fender Rhodes (6, 12); Rob Pilich: guitar; Kieran Overs: bass; Mark McLean: drums; Wessell "Warmdaddy" Anderson: alto saxophone (3, 4, 9, 13); Guido Basso: trumpet (4, 5), flugelhorn (7, 11); Robi Botos: piano (12); Michael Davidson: vibraphone (1, 5, 10); Rosendo (Chendy) Leon: percussion (6, 9-12); P.J. Perry: soprano saxophone (2); Tom Szczesniak: accordion (6); Les Alt: alto flute, flute (11); Richard Cohen: French horn (7), Vern Dorge: bass clarinet (11), Dave Dunlop: trumpet (4), flugelhorn (7); Al Kay, Gord Meyers: trombone (4, 7); Jason Logue: trumpet (4).

On "Take Love Easy" Sophie Milman takes another huge leap forward in a career that has been celebrated from Day One as one of the brightest stories in the vocal universe. This album reveals more nuances to Sophie's growing skills. In addition to a group of hand-picked standards delivered in her sassy and sultry style, Sophie stretches the boundaries of her repertoire by including more contemporary pop songs by the likes of Joni Mitchell (*Be Cool*), Paul Simon (*50 Ways To Leave Your Lover*), even Bruce Springsteen (*I'm On Fire*). But these tunes are hardly about "going pop". Sophie is all about moving the jazz vocal tradition forward in the most musically agreeable way possible. – editorial reviews

It's just a darn shame so many budget-conscious Hollywood movies save a few bucks by using

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snippets of a classic rock oldie instead of actually using vocalists to sing theme songs. If they did, the cool groove of Sophie Milman's vocals would be the perfect accompaniment for a montage of lovers walking in the rain, looking soulfully in each other's eyes over a table in a restaurant and "long, slow, deep, soft, wet kisses that last three days."

A vocalist in the tradition of Ella Fitzgerald and Nat King Cole, Milman has one of those voices that has both range and power, but she knows how to caress a lyric and tap into the emotional depths of the song. Like many artists who can make singing the telephone book sound good, Milman is dependent upon both good material and complimentary production to get the most bang for the buck. She's blessed with both on Take Love Easy.

An example can be found in "Be Cool" as Milman creamy voice purrs and gently strokes fellow Canadian import Joni Mitchell's lyrics. Songs written and/or performed by Paul Simon, Bonnie Raitt, and Bruce Springsteen all come in for the Sophie Milman Treatment which means she croons, the band cooks, and the listener reaps the benefits.

Simon's light-hearted, but sardonic "50 Ways to Leave Your Lover" was practically made for a jazzy interpretation that doesn't take itself too seriously, but it's Springsteen's "I'm On Fire" and Bonnie Raitt's hit, "I Can't Make You Love Me," that benefit most from Milman's take. They become soulful serenades as Steven MacKinnon's impeccable production exacts the best out of Milman's capabilities.

Milman also knows her way around expected songwriters such as Duke Ellington ("Take Love Easy"), Cole Porter ("Love For Sale" and "I Concentrate On You"), and Antonio Carlos Jobim ("Triste") are among the old standards that are lovingly rendered on Take Love Easy.

If Milman strutted around in her underwear and sang sugary pop music she'd be a superstar (though she'd probably have to change her name for being too ethnic). She won't have to do any of those things to get recognition if her designated audience supports Take Love Easy as enthusiastically as the fans of Britney, Fergie, or other one-name pop tarts. ---Jeff Winbusch, allaboutjazz.com

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