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Members of California jam act [La Santa Cecilia](#) | [Email](#)
may seem like a traditional Latin band, but their fusion of musical styles and influences is both surprising and daring. Their chemistry is built upon an eclectic mix of modern and traditional music, finding influence from [Lila Downs](#) to Yiddish wedding music, all the way to [Ozzy Osborne](#). Their song 'Chicle' was featured in an episode of the series [Weeds](#) and now La Santa Cecilia is ready to capitalize on this newfound exposure, hoping to broaden their fan base beyond its center on the West Coast. On the heels of the release of their self-titled EP, Spinner caught up with lead singer Marisoul in the midst of a recording session as she and the rest of the band prepare for their first appearance at [SXSW](#).

How did you come up with your band name?

We traveled to Mexico. Bands named La Santa Cecilia were everywhere: bandas, orchestras, everywhere in the world had a band with that name. We all grew up as street musicians. We'd take flowers and pray for hope, for more music. We believe in saints and in the power of people. We wanted to take La Santa Cecilia and present ourselves as that, as strong faces of music.

Describe your sound in your own words.

We're eclectic, not focused on any one style. We get distracted easily. We're a cook-up of a bunch of different ingredients brought together. Sometimes it turns out delicious and sometimes it's something we don't understand.

What are your musical influences and how does that integrate into your songs?

I grew up on Olvera Street, the market shop place, the birthplace of L.A. That's where I met [accordion player Jose Carlos] and learned about traditional music. [Guitarist Gloria Estrada] was influenced by jazz and mariachi while studying at USC. [Bassist Alex Bendana] played punk and ska but he's also a jazz musician. [Percussionist Miguel Ramirez] is a metalhead who loves jazz. I love the [Beatles](#), [Janis Joplin](#), the [Specials](#), Flaco Jimenez and South American rock. We're influenced by our parents who played traditional music, but we grew up in the States [and were influenced by] jazz, blues, rock 'n' roll. When you're young, you go through musical stages. We realized how much we love all different styles of music.

What's your musical guilty pleasure?

We get pleasure from playing cover songs during rehearsal when we're supposed to be practicing. We'll play [Black Sabbath](#), Deelite, 'Twist and Shout,' 'Sweet Child o' Mine' [as well as] cumbia and ranchera songs.

What's something unusual that's happened while you guys were performing?

We played a wedding party at a cemetery! We stayed till two in the morning playing. We also play lots of youth centers. We've had kids from seven to 13 starting mosh pits while we play. We also have lots of drunk girls get on stage and fall off while we play.

What's essential in your festival survival kit?

Our fans are so important to us; our fans are our friends. For each show, we make new friends -- they talk to us and make song requests. We take pictures of each CD to keep as a memory [The cover art for each individual CD of their EP "La Santa Cecilia," released in August of last year, is original art designed by their loyal fans].

What's your biggest vice?

Probably worrying too much. We don't have management, so Gloria does the bookkeeping and gets anxiety because communication is hard.

Just worrying? You guys don't party at all?

We all like to drink and some drink more than others. There's a time and a place for everything. With music, you can never go wrong.

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Amber King is a contributor from [Seed.com](#). Learn how you can contribute [here](#).

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