

Texas Music
by
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Before I moved to Texas a year ago, I was pretty sure I knew what country music was all about. After all, I spent a lot of growing up time in Colorado. We had honky tonks and we listened to Charlie Pride and danced - oh how we danced - to "The Orange Blossom Special". I've even wondered if it wasn't Charlie who put the whole idea of moving to Texas into my head in the first place with "Is Anybody Goin' To San Antone".

Now that I've been in Texas for a year, I'm pretty sure I didn't have a clue. It's not that Texas music is totally different than country music as a whole, although you might want to say that softly 'round these parts and glance over your shoulder while you say it. Look at the number of country music artists known nationwide who are from Texas. From Willie Nelson to the Dixie Chicks, Bob Wills to Pat Green, the styles of music in Texas are as divergent as the geography of the state itself. The fact is, however, there is a different energy to much of the music that is distinctly Texan.

It's also difficult to separate the word "dance" from the word "music" when talking about Texas music. Here in Bandera we have five bars that also feature live music one or more nights a week. The majority of the bands have to be able to play "Texas dance style music" to be successful in this town. If you can't two-step or waltz or polka or swing to it, if it isn't "Cottoneyed Joe" it isn't Texas dance style and it probably won't work in Bandera.

What is it exactly that separates Texas music from the rest of the country? There's a song that says, "If you're going to play in Texas, you gotta have a fiddle in the band . . ." Not that they don't country fiddle in other places, but there's no question most of the Texas bands have at least one fiddle player. Fortunately for me, they all seem to know "The Orange Blossom Special" and they can all play the tar out of it.

Texas music. It's unique but not easily defined. Like the state itself, it's vast and broad, diverse and special. From the "Austin sound" to Ray Price there's something for everyone, a sound to suit everybody. Maybe that's the key to "Texas music". There is something for everyone.