

= Suavemente =

Suavemente (English : Smoothly) is the debut studio album by American merengue recording artist Elvis Crespo . Released by Sony Music Latin on April 14 , 1998 , the album popularized merengue music and established Crespo as a leading artist in the Latin music market . He collaborated with several songwriters and record producers (including Homero d 'Rodriguez , Raldy Vázquez , Luis Cruz , and Juan Perez) , and wrote three songs creating an overall tropical music @-@ flavored recording .

With romantic ballads and uptempo songs , Suavemente received favorable reviews from music critics who praised its " energetic " and " catchy fan @-@ pleasing " songs . The album was the first merengue recording to peak at number one on the United States Billboard Top Latin Albums chart , and two of its singles (" Suavemente " and " Tu Sonrisa ") peaked at number one on the US Billboard Hot Latin Songs chart ; Crespo is the first merengue artist with two number @-@ one merengue singles . Suavemente peaked at number 106 on the US Billboard 200 chart . The album was Crespo 's commercial breakthrough , introducing him to the popular music market with the Spanglish remix of its title track .

Suavemente received several accolades , including Billboard Latin Music Awards for Album of the Year and New Artist Album of the Year and a nomination for the Grammy Award for Best Tropical Latin Performance . It won five Lo Nuestro Awards , including Tropical Album of the Year . The album has been certified platinum by the Recording Industry Association of America (RIAA) , and has sold more than 1 @.@ 5 million copies worldwide . Its title song remains a staple at Latin music nightclubs and festivals , and Suavemente has been ranked among the most essential Latin albums of the past 50 years by Billboard magazine .

= = Background = =

In 1993 , brothers Héctor and Oscar Serrano formed Grupo Manía in Puerto Rico . They enlisted Alfred Cotto , Reynaldo Santiago , and Elvis Crespo (lead singer with the Serrano brothers) to tour and record two @-@ step merengue music , popularizing the genre to a younger audience . In 1996 , Crespo left Grupo Manía and signed with Sony Music Latin (the company which signed his former band) , beginning his solo career . He said in a May 1999 Billboard interview that leaving the band was " a very hard decision " , since they worked well together . While Crespo was writing " Suavemente " , he began singing the song and discovered that his son " spent all afternoon singing it " . This led him to record the track , since he thought " [it] would be a hit " . Crespo originally intended for " Suavemente " and " Tu Sonrisa " , the singles which brought him international recognition , to be recorded with Grupo Manía .

= = Release and promotion = =

The album was released in the United States on April 14 , 1998 . Suavemente and American merengue singer Manny Manuel 's album , Es Mi Tiempo , increased US tropical @-@ music sales by 27 percent over the previous year . On November 28 , the Recording Industry Association of America (RIAA) certified Suavemente gold for shipments of 500 @,@ 000 copies , the first merengue record certified gold . The album was certified gold in Chile , platinum in Venezuela , and platinum in Central America . During the 1998 Christmas season , Suavemente was among the top @-@ selling Latin albums in the United States . On February 20 , 1999 , Sony Discos president Oscar Llord expressed an interest in promoting Suavemente in Latin America and Europe since he believed that the album would sell over one million copies . In May , it sold 1 @,@ 500 @,@ 000 copies worldwide . By June 2007 Suavemente had sold 800 @,@ 000 copies in the US , and by 2012 the album had sold an additional 64 @,@ 000 copies in the US .

Crespo performed at the 23rd New York Salsa Festival at Madison Square Garden on September 5 , 1998 with El Gran Combo de Puerto Rico , and Latin jazz recording artist Eddie Palmieri . He was part of the Hot Latin Nights show at Walt Disney World 's Pleasure Island on September 19 , which

was broadcast as a two @-@ part Telemundo special on December 14 and 31 . On October 11 Crespo (performing with other Latin acts) sang " Suavemente " on the seven @-@ hour Puerto Rico Se Levanta , a benefit concert broadcast live on Telemundo which raised \$ 13 million for victims of Hurricane Georges on Hispaniola . He performed " Suavemente " at the 1999 Billboard Latin Music Awards . Crespo 's appearance was praised by Billboard 's John Lannert , who believed that it foreshadowed possible dominance at future music awards . He appeared at El Concierto Del Amor , an annual tropical @-@ music festival held at the Continental Airlines Arena in East Rutherford , New Jersey on February 14 , 1999 , with fellow salsa singers Jerry Rivera , Frankie Negrón , Tito Nieves , and Michael Stuart . To promote Suavemente Crespo toured Uruguay , Argentina , Chile , Colombia , and Peru in the first quarter of the year , and he performed at Billboard 's 10th annual Latin Music conference on April 20 , 1999 .

= = Reception = =

In Billboard , Latin music contributor John Lannert called the album a " merengue @-@ bomba disc " and Crespo a " midtempo pop / merengue " artist . In his 2003 book , The Latin Beat , Ed Morales described the title song as a " salsa classic or pop hit . " True crime novelist M. William Phelps called " Suavemente " a " romantic Latin ballad " in his 2008 book , I 'll Be Watching You . In her 2005 book , Pop Culture Latin America , Lisa Shaw called " Suavemente " " an example of some of the best merengue with a rock @-@ pop sound . " According to Batanga magazine , Suavemente is " intoxicating , feverish , pure sabroso merengue . Sizzle in the summer streets to the fast @-@ paced beats , ear busting horns and percussive stamina " ; Latina magazine noted the album 's " feverish beat " . Spanish @-@ language magazine Vistazo called Crespo the new sensation of merengue music , and his album a favorite of listeners who enjoy pachanga .

Sony Music International Latin America president Frank Welzer called Crespo a " genius " who wrote " catchy fan @-@ pleasing " songs . Terry Jenkins of AllMusic praised the album 's " seductive Latin ballads " and found the focal mode of the recording to be sentimental , strong , lively , and swinging . Business Wire noted its popularity in the American and Latino markets . The Los Angeles Times called Suavemente and Crespo 's repertoire " energy @-@ packed " . Billboard 's Lannert wrote that other Latin acts tried to emulate Crespo 's style .

= = Chart history = =

Suavemente debuted at number six on the US Billboard Top Latin Albums chart for the week ending May 2 , 1998 . In its second week the album rose to number five , selling 3 @,@ 000 copies . Suavemente was number three on the chart for the week ending May 16 , selling 5 @,@ 000 copies (a 60 @-@ percent increase) . The following week the album rose to number two , behind Selena 's Anthology box set , and sold 7 @,@ 000 copies . The sales increase placed Suavemente at number 188 on the US Billboard 200 chart , only the second merengue album to make that chart . In its fifth week , album sales fell 50 percent and it dropped to number eight . The following week (which included the Memorial Day weekend) , Suavemente moved up to number six . For the week ending June 13 , the album re @-@ entered the Billboard 200 chart at number 170 and peaked at number one on the Top Latin Albums chart . The next week it dropped to number three and 197 on the Top Latin Albums and Billboard 200 charts , respectively . Suavemente sold 6 @,@ 000 copies for the week ending June 13 , rising to number two on the Top Latin Albums chart behind Ricky Martin 's Vuelve . The album dropped to third the following week . Suavemente sold 6 @,@ 000 copies the next week , rising to number two behind Vuelve . After five weeks behind Vuelve , Suavemente passed it on the Top Latin Albums chart when its sales increased 16 percent to 8 @,@ 600 copies . For the week of August 8 , 1998 , it fell back to number two behind Vuelve . After three weeks of declining sales , Suavemente was number three when it sold 5 @,@ 000 copies as " Tu Sonrisa " (its second single) topped the Hot Latin Songs chart . It ended 1998 as the year 's eighth @-@ bestselling Latin album . Suavemente spent 98 consecutive weeks in the top 10 of the Top Latin Albums chart , the second @-@ longest run in history .

The album remained atop the US Tropical Albums chart for seven consecutive weeks after its release . It began sliding down the chart , but remained near the top . Suavemente returned to the top of the Tropical Albums chart after twelve weeks behind the Dance with Me soundtrack . The following week it sold 4 @,@ 000 copies , remaining at number one . In the album 's fourth consecutive week atop the chart , it sold 6 @,@ 500 copies . During its fifth straight week atop the Tropical Albums chart , it sold 6 @,@ 000 copies , down 16 percent . Suavemente ended 1998 as the fourth @-@ bestselling tropical @-@ music album . In its ninth consecutive week atop the Tropical Albums chart the album sold 7 @,@ 000 copies , down 17 percent from the previous week . The following week , its tenth consecutive at number one , it sold 7 @,@ 500 copies (up seven percent) . For the week ending February 6 , 1999 , although sales of Suavemente dipped 13 percent to 6 @,@ 500 copies the album remained atop the chart . On the February 27 , 1999 chart , album sales increased by 67 percent . The following week sales decreased 30 percent to 7 @,@ 000 copies , but Suavemente remained atop the Tropical Albums chart for its fourteenth straight week .

The album debuted at number 43 on the US Billboard Heatseekers Albums chart for the week ending May 2 , 1998 ; the following week , it rose to number 39 . For the week ending May 16 , the album jumped to number 13 ; the following week , it rose to number nine . In subsequent weeks , the album continued to rise up the chart ; for the week ending June 13 , it was number five .

= = Singles = =

After " Suavemente " debuted at number 15 on the US Billboard Hot Latin Songs chart for the week ending April 25 , 1998 , the magazine 's John Lannert predicted that Crespo could " easily win a new artist award " in 1999 . Billboard music analyst Karl Ross called the album 's title song " a sultry [track] about the power of a kiss " . For the week ending May 16 " Suavemente " peaked at number one , displacing " Una Fan Enamorada " by Servando y Florentino . Crespo became the first merengue recording artist with a number @-@ one single on the Hot Latin Songs chart since Dominican singer Juan Luis Guerra 's " El Costo De la Vida " six years earlier . " Suavemente " remained at number one with 13 million audience impressions , a four @-@ percent increase over the previous week . The song broke the record for most weeks at number one for a tropical @-@ music recording on the Hot Latin Songs chart (six) since Billboard began monitoring Latin airplay in 1986 , and it was number one on the Tropical Songs chart for nine consecutive weeks . " Suavemente " ended 1998 as the year 's most @-@ successful tropical single . Sony Discos president Oscar Llord told Billboard about the " carefulness " of crossing over into the English @-@ language market , calling the lead single a process done " naturally " as a result of two US radio stations (in Miami and New) York requesting a Spanglish version . On musicianguide.com , Timothy Borden wrote that the song 's Spanglish version had " unexpected crossover appeal " . The bilingual version was released in Germany in the second quarter of 1999 . " Suavemente " became Crespo 's most @-@ popular song and a " teenage anthem " in the Latino community . It was the first Sony Music Latin release to debut on the U.S. Billboard Hot 100 chart , peaking at number 84 .

The album 's second single , " Tu Sonrisa " , was distributed to US radio stations in the second week of July 1998 . It debuted at number 21 on the U.S. Hot Latin Tracks chart , as " Suavemente " remained in the top five . The song peaked at number one on the Tropical Songs chart , Crespo 's second number one . " Tu Sonrisa " topped the Hot Latin Tracks chart in its sixth week , the singer 's second number one on that chart . It displaced " Te Quiero Tanto Tanto " by Mexican Latin pop group Onda Vaselina , and Crespo became the first merengue artist with two number @-@ one Hot Latin Tracks singles . After a week at number one , " Tu Sonrisa " was displaced by Gloria Estefan 's " Oye ! " . A week later it again topped the chart for one week before being displaced by " Perdido Sin Ti " , Martin 's fourth single from Vuelve . After the success of " Suavemente " ' s bilingual version , Sony Music distributed a club mix of " Tu Sonrisa " to radio stations in February 1999 . Billboard Latin music contributor Leila Cobo called the song " catchy " and (with " Suavemente ") " irresistible " . " Tu Sonrisa " is the fifteenth @-@ most @-@ successful Sony Discos single on the Hot Latin Tracks chart since the chart was established in 1999 .

" Luna Llena " , Suavemente 's third single , debuted and peaked at number 29 on the Hot Latin Tracks chart for the week ending December 12 , 1998 . It dropped off the chart after a week before charting on Hot Latin Tracks and Tropical Songs at 33 and 13 , respectively , for the week ending January 16 , 1999 . The song peaked at 26 and 11 on the Hot Latin Songs and Tropical Songs charts , respectively . The fourth and final single from the album , " Nuestra Cancion " , was less successful ; it peaked at number 17 on the Tropical Songs chart in 1999 .

= = Impact = =

Suavemente is considered to have revolutionized merengue music , making it a popular subgenre of Latin music , and the album brought Crespo international recognition in the merengue market . The singer is the first merengue artist with an album atop the US Top Latin Albums chart , and two number @-@ one songs on the US Hot Latin Songs chart . Billboard cited Crespo and American singer @-@ actor Carlos Ponce as jump @-@ starting the US market with their albums . According to Billboard 's Karl Ross , Crespo transcended the US Latino market and his success may have been felt in Europe and the Pacific Rim . Sony Discos president Oscar Llord called Suavemente the " most successful debut album of a Tropical artist in history . " Suavemente was listed as the third best @-@ charting and -selling Sony Discos album during the Top Latin Albums twenty @-@ fifth year in 1999 . Crespo was ranked fifth on the Hot Latin Songwriters in 1998 , eleventh on the Top Latin Albums Artists , seventh on the Hot Latin Tracks Artists , fourth on the Top Tropical Album Artists , and second on the Tropical Tracks Artists lists . Suavemente has been named one of the most essential Latin albums of the past 50 years by Billboard , and its title song became a staple in Latin @-@ music nightclubs . The lead single also became a popular tune in Mexico , where it was used in festivals around the country .

At the 1999 Billboard Latin Music Awards Crespo received four nominations (including Album of the Year and Hot Latin Track of the Year) , tying him with Selena for the most nominations in a single year ; the record was later broken by Tito El Bambino , with 18 nominations in 2010 . He won New Artist Album of the Year and Latin Dance Maxi @-@ Single of the Year . Crespo was the Latin 50 Artist of the Year at the 2000 Billboard Latin Music Awards (the top @-@ selling Latin artist from January 1999 to January 2000) . He was nominated for the Grammy Award for Best Tropical Latin Performance in 1999 , losing to Marc Anthony 's Contra la Corriente . At the 11th Premio Lo Nuestrros , Crespo received six nominations and won five awards : Tropical Album of the Year , Tropical Song of the Year , Tropical Male Artist of the Year , Tropical @-@ Salsa Duo or Group of the Year (shared with Milly Quezada) , and Tropical New Artist of the Year .

= = Track listing = =

= = Personnel = =

Credits are taken from the album 's liner notes .

= = Charts = =

= = Certifications = =