

Not Your Grandpa's Mariachi

There's a new band in town. They're playing a traditional style of Mexican music called *mariachi* . . . but with a twist. Before meeting this new band, let's step back in time.

Mariachi music started hundreds of years ago, but the traditional style we see today began in the 19th century. Groups of farmers played together. Their instruments included traditional violins and different kinds of classical guitars. The smaller guitars played the higher notes, and a traditional bass guitar played the low ones. They had trumpets, too. The music was often loud, happy, and exciting, but it could also be quiet and romantic. The musicians wore traditional suits with silver buttons and a sombrero, a wide Mexican hat.

The mariachi played and danced at celebrations such as birthdays and weddings.