

YERBA BUENA - President Alien - Press Quotes

“...the future sound of Afro-Latin Urban America”- Interview Magazine

“When Yerba Buena takes the stage, it’s hard to know what your ears – or eyes – should focus on. The band sometimes swells to a dozen players, including at least three vocalists. The music is a mix of Afro-Cuban, funk, hip-hop and salsa, featuring blaring horns, blazing bongos and dancing galore. **A Yerba Buena show seems more like a wild party than a concert. The effect can be dizzying” – Associated Press**

“Yerba Buena are a next-generation New York City salsa outfit **down with old school boogaloo, hip hop, and downtown art-funk.. the grooves are calibrated for both Johnny Pacheco fans and their break-dancing kids.” – Entertainment Weekly**

“Yerba Buena is one of the most exciting bands to hit the stagnant Latin Dance music scene in years... ‘Yerba Buena has great sonic textures,’ says [Meshell] Ndegeocello. ‘I have a lot of faith that **just like people ‘got’ Jill Scott or Bob Marley, they will be able to handle its originality. Everybody loves home cooking.’ Especially when the herbs are this potent.” - Vibe**

“...from rumba to guajira to rock to hip-hop, lyrics in English and Spanish, rappers and singers who can handle sultry ballads, pop hooks or santeria-style incantations... a set that layered party music and sly social commentary into **a joyful, ever-evolving, border-hopping groove.” – New York Times**

“a musicologist's dream ...New York Latin boogaloo and Nigerian afrobeat salsa, Afro-Cuban religious drumming, funk, hip-hop and jazz. **Its a record with tasty detail: feel the music through your feet first and then put your head to work” – New York Times**

“...great density, with 10 times the pop accessibility... **They constructed huge grooves, changing from pure Yoruban religious drumming to standard dancehall rhythm to hip-hop. **The music constantly tickled the audience... Yerba Buena is eager, as if it will have a hit or bust. If it can retain such elegant connections among the West's great dance-music cultures and have a hit, something serious will be gained for pop**”
- New York Times – concert review**

“The vanguard of Latin music from New York ... **Yerba Buena's debut is the most eagerly anticipated record to come out of New York's Latin music scene in years. Concocted by Venezuelan producer Andres Levin, it's a roiling Caribbean caldron that blends rumba, cumbia, rap, Afrobeat and Santeria chants... The result is **exciting dance music sure to turbocharge a party... their raucous live shows are a guaranteed blast.**”
- Los Angeles Times**

“Yerba Buena takes Afro-Latin fusion to new heights... In front of surprised fans, the muscular conguero and the dreadlocked singer faced off in a crouching, sweaty, shoulder-shaking rumba that evoked the virile street dancing of old Havana slave communities.. They did down and gritty Cuban moves, deeply rooted in African rituals and traditions... “President Alien,” [is] a skillful studio confection that results in **a surprising and fresh new sound. On stage, this fusion experiment becomes a real band. Yerba Buena seems to play for fun, the key ingredient. They're like a multi-ethnic gathering of friends who share one another's music with the wonder that it all somehow synchronizes, as do their lives in the big city.” - Los Angeles Times – concert review**

“A Top-10 record of the Year - A high-voltage Cuban cocktail” –Boston Herald

“Favorite group?: This amazing Cuban group Yerba Buena”- Rob Thomas in Chicago Sun-Times

“President Alien, the highly anticipated debut album of New York's innovative dance band Yerba Buena, was officially released yesterday, It did not disappoint... Yerba Buena [offers] a new sound with a unique fusion of Afro-Cuban music, African Rhythm, hip-hop and funk. **will make the stiffest listener shake his or her booty. ..listen to President Alien time and time again.” - New York Daily News**

“a gorgeous synthesis of Afro-Cuban grooves, banging hip-hop, fiery salsa and all-out funk...the group has been building a massive buzz... "President Alien" bristles with cross-cultural energy... Yerba Buena's live act has been its greatest strength” – New York Daily News

“a [New York] treasure... While *Yerba Buena* is a riotous revelation as a live band, the genius behind *President Alien* is Levin’s production, making sense out of the dizzying stew of African rhythms and pop sensibility... *the album establishes an entirely new definition of ‘flow’.*” – Newsday

“[Yerba Buena’s] mission: to bring the free-flowing, soulful swing of Havana’s clubs and cafes to New York, recombine it with influences such as R&B, jazz, hip-hop and Afrobeat and make an entirely new form of Latin music. When they took the stage, the music they played was at once familiar, and like nothing I’d ever heard before.” – Newsday – concert review

“President Alien is a rollicking fusion of rumba, cumbia, Joe Cuba-inspired boogaloo, Afrobeat and Nuyorican soul; vocalists sing and rap lyrics and about love, healing and Afro-Cuban religious symbols in Spanish, English, Portuguese and even Yoruban... *In short, it’s the most smoking Afro-Latin groove joint since the 1970s, when Johnny Pacheco and his Fania All Stars made New York City the salsa capital of the world... Many recent groups..have been stretching the boundaries of modern Latin music, with marginal success. But Yerba Buena manages to fuse myriad elements without diluting them*”
– Timeout NY (Lead Music Feature)

“Venezuelan expat Andrés Levín has produced artists all over the musical map (Tina Turner to David Byrne to Los Amigos Invisibles), last year tweaking beats on the Fela Kuti tribute *Red Hot + Riot* . . . Rolling up his sleeves to lead Yerba, NYC's *most combustible Afro-Latin dance group, Levín may well ignite the first U.S. urban Latino music revolution since the 1970s.* The addictive combination of Nigerian Afrobeat, East Coast hip-hop, Nuyorican boogaloo, and Afro-Cuban grooves on the multilingual band's debut, *President Alien, gets only more potent live.*” – Village Voice

“*Yerba Buena prescribes massive doses of Afro-Cuban beatdowns that massage the soul and blister the feet. It was these kinds of hybrid jams that had even the stiffest listener tilt a hip during the group's sweaty, fiery set at S.O.B.'s... This band's unbridled energy bent the walls and hypnotized the audience, who danced the electric slide to a techno mambo... Blending boogaloo, cumbia, samba, and bling-bling production on structures built up from Afro-Cuban foundations, this New York- Havana big band recalls the work of Little Louie Vega and Dope Gonzalez on Nuyorican Soul... Leading the dance with her hips and shoulders, Laugart inspires comparisons to Diana Ross—subtle, stylish, and sassy. When she tilted her head back and spread her arms wide to proclaim, "Guajira loves the sunshine," she was the high priestess ushering in the Age of Aquarius and Nuyorican soul.*” –The Village Voice -concert review

“*The #1 Latin Album of the Year: - The brainchild of Andres Levin, this inventive debut album by a New York Afro-Latin funk orchestra updates Latin dance music in this country... the album's dance grooves and often cheery and immigrant-centered lyrics broke new ground. Backed with a spectacular stage show and a Grammy nomination, Yerba Buena ("Good Herb/Weed") is off to a great start.*” – Newark Star-Ledger

“mixing rapid-fire Spanish vocals with brassy Latin horns, laid-back Nigerian rhythms, and cool beats and rhymes borrowed from American hip-hop and funk... *always aims to incite a dance party.*” – Boston Globe

“Cuban-funk fusion band that's *this decade's answer to Sly and the Family Stone...the most vibrant, danceable and hippest fusion album of the year... a band that's re-inventing Latin dance music into something both fresh and funkily familiar...channeling most of the good African-rooted dance music of the past 50 years into one natural sound. Imagine Parliament-Funkadelic in contemporary Havana... [Andres Levin] is becoming] the Latin Alternative scene's smart producer of choice*”- Miami Herald

“*The New Classics - Celebrating 2003's best efforts in Latin music: Yerba Buena, President - Dancers of the world unite! You've got nothing to lose but your shoes! Yerba Buena retraces the steps of African music back from the New World to the source, reuniting hip-hop and salsa with Afro-pop and rai, making the rhythm whole again under the savvy direction of producer/bandleader Andre Levin. But when the music is this hot, who cares where it comes from?* - Miami New Times

“Yerba Buena has emerged as a messiah among Latin fans searching for party music with an urban edge... They've shown Latin and Anglo hip-hop heads alike that bilingual rhymes can be done in a way that sounds as natural as Spanglish street talk. Yerba Buena is a band that fans of all genres have been waiting for President Alien's heavily textured party mix, with its campy sing-along choruses and aggressive Afro pride anthems, sets a new standard for music that crosses boundaries, simply because it flows without evidence of the clunky culture clash that Latin hip-hop attempts often produce... With suggestions of what 21st-century pop music can ideally be, Yerba Buena's music is categorically cosmopolitan rather than self-consciously global. As with groundbreaking bands before it, the group proffers a vision of popular music as the sound of an era and a place: the multi-everything cities in our crazy, mixed-up country. While doing so, it thankfully reminds us that there's more fun in this new world than we've recently had reason to remember” - Miami New Times

“Yerba Buena’s Andres Levin has been messing with my head for years. He planted his hybrid seeds in alt-Latin soil, producing discos locos by Los Amigos Invisibles, Aterciopelados and El Gran Silencio, as well as playing a major role in last year’s revelatory AIDS-awareness tribute to Fela Kuti, Red Hot + Riot. And Levin’s pet puzzle-piece project, Yerba Buena, has been rockin’ the Big Apple’s socks off; it’s just released a ‘muy explosivo’ debut album, President Alien.... slamming Afro-Latin grooves do the weave with hip-hop and funk - but the Nueva York outfit’s moves [also] veer more island-style and West African. Yerba Buena’s got the good shit, so get smokin’ on the dance floor” -LA Weekly

“[Yerba Buena] started their set as they do every performance, with wailing Santería incantations, bubbling conga smacks, and the seraphim horns of saxophonist Ron Blake and trumpeter Rashawn Ross heralding the twitching entrance of singers Xiomara Laugart, Cucu Diamantes and the bearded Gumby known as El Chino. And then the fun really began: Each Yerba Buena member individually could launch a thousand salsa combos, but together they formed a delicious dialectic. The instrumentalists’ let’s-tumble-across-the-Caribbean jumbles created more than enough fuel to propel Laugart’s, Diamantes’ and Chino’s jiggles - the trio must have danced the equivalent of a 5K run by night’s end. These Supremes of Afro-Cuban fusion sang as if they’d just arrived from Batista-era Cuba, sidestepped in choreographed anarchy, and concluded the clacking “Electric Boogaloo” with Laugart showing the world how fast she could fire her piston hips. Harness Yerba Buena’s energy and California would never suffer a brownout again.” - LA Weekly

“Andres Levin leads an eclectic bunch in whippin' up some lively Afro-Cuban funk, with healthy injections of salsa, hip-hop and Nuyorican boogaloo. The beats come fast and furious in this driven, Latin smorgasbord... "Good weed" indeed. Grade: A-” - The Orange County Register

“[Yerba Buena] has produced an album of such aural ingenuity, such mishmashing of dance styles, and such just-plain-ol’ funky fun it should permanently rouse [New York] from its post-Sept. 11 doldrums. Combining Caribbean cadences with hip-hop reflections and African beats that would’ve made Fela Kuti proud, President Alien is a relentless recording that evolves frenetically as each song progresses. Sardonic flutes hump brave mambo horns that ride never-stopping percussions pounding to an orgasmic conclusion on virtually every track—and then it starts again. The results are dirty and sweaty, glamorous tropical traditions gritted for New York’s urban wonderland... the album’s message: treating broken souls through a massive dose of sound. President Alien is the best relief package the city they love could have ever wished for.” - OC Weekly

“... bodies began rising and writhing to the band’s freeing, celebratory sounds and rhythms, an apropos soundtrack during times of tyrannical oppression, whether in the homeland of their vocalists or their Patriot Act-ruled adopted one. Yerba Buena were so infectiously fantastic that we completely forgot who the headlining band was, went fuzzy on who the opening band was.. and left right after they finished their set, figuring no one would be able to top what we’d just experienced anyway. As sex metaphors go, we declare Yerba Buena to be a handjob for the soul.” -OC Weekly- “Live Review”

“Andres Levin is Latin music's Professor Marvel... his latest and perhaps greatest creation is the Latin music supergroup Yerba Buena.... It's a veritable United Nations of all-star musicians.” - Chicago Sun-Times

“The recipe from Venezuelan immigrant Andres Levin makes for the year's most irresistible Yoruban-flavored party mix --- blend streetwise beats from salsa to Afro-beat; add a pinch of salty rap vocals; flavor with jazz horns and buoyant choruses; and take directly to the dancefloor.”

- **Chicago Tribune** (Best Albums of The Year Pick)

*“ **President Alien is a dense, thrilling exploration of the ways Yoruban culture has evolved and flourished in New York's melting pot. Neither showy nor forced in its eclecticism, the band draws its power from a blend of countless overlapping street sounds, from Nigerian Afrobeat to Afro-Cuban jams to Spanglish hip-hop... Cuban son is the music's ultimate foundation, but it's integrated with so many complementary rhythms--cumbia, drum 'n' bass, Fela-style funk, mambo, hip-hop breakbeats--that to pick out the components is to miss the point... this bacchanalia of rapping, extended soloing, infectious chants, and peripatetic grooves offers something for everyone.**”* - **Chicago Reader**

“Smoking Grooves. Yerba Buena brings Afrofunk to the masses... President Alien [is] a stellar debut... this hot band just might have the recipe for crossing over without selling out.” - **Urban Latino** - COVER Story

“When [Yerba Buena's] Xiomara Laugart performs. She boasts a voice as powerful as it is beautiful”-**Essence**

“[A] New York City collective of open-eared Afro-Cuban funkateers led by producer/multi-instrumental Andres Levin.. After a year of incendiary live gigs, Yerba Buena makes its full-length debut. [they] exert a tight grip on their amped-up dance music, offering muscular, detailed grooves that manage to be both fluid and airtight.”

Complex

“Yerba Buena's debut album will make it impossible to make your caderas (hips) behave. In President Alien, this Latin-fusion band really mixes it up with it pulsating mix of Afro-Cuban funk and hip-hop.” -**Latina**

*“Performing at 10,000-plus capacity arenas as openers for The Dave Matthews Band rubbed off on Yerba Buena in a big way. At its performance this Wednesday night, **the Andrés Levin-led Afro-Latin soul orchestra inflicted some serious structural damage to S.O.B.'s nightclub with its enormously contagious jams that had the nearly-full house burning with booty shake-a-thons... Yerba Buena was a fireball of rhythms and dance styles, blasting a blend of African-rooted Latin music (salsa, Cuban rumba, cumbia, samba, boogaloo) with modern black American strands (funk, hip-hop, soul) and Afrobeat to boot. And with lyrics that celebrated the power of sunshine, Yerba Buena was a New York heat wave all by itself.**”* - **La Banda Elastica**

“Dig this: the best new afrobeat band on the scene is Yerba Buena... The sound of Yerba Buena is brawny, ecstatic, and deeply funky in an Afroatlantic way, with energy so raw that dilettantish aficionados of Latin Music would do better to keep playing that old Joe Cuba LP at home. Producer/keyboardist Andres Levin formed the group conceiving the band as a school' for Afrolatin composers, songwriters and artists to play and experiment with what he calls 'the other side of Latin music-the black Latin music'. If you think that means African polyrhythms, if you think that means hip-hop, if you think that means cumbia and guajira and son, you're right and you're wrong. Yerba Buena is all that and so much more” - **Fader**

“The list of guest performers on Yerba Buena's stunning debut album reads like a who's who of cutting-edge contemporary music. Yet, that's not what makes this New York-based collective so enticing. Rather, it's the exuberant manner in which the group fuses funk, hip-hop and dancehall-reggae with cumbia, soca, rumba, Cuban son, Nigerian Afrobeat, Nuyorican soul and Latin boogaloo to create a dance-happy whole...

*[Yerba Buena] creates a polyrhythmic celebration that appeals to body and mind... An urban groove-fest, Yerba Buena's joyous debut album is free of affectation. For music-conscious fans with an equal passion for Afro-Cuban music and hip-hop, the slyly titled "**President Alien**" is a strong contender for dance-party album of the year honors.”* - **San Diego Union Tribune**

“Brash, inventive, and frantically contemporary, New York's Yerba Buena makes some of the most progressively funky - and genuinely worldly - world music being played today. [President Alien] is dense and surging, sounding at once like a salsa-fied Fela Kuti, a hip-hop savvy update of Cuban son, and, to American ears, a nervous, all-stops-out boogaloo. Founded by esteemed guitarist and producer Andres Levin (Macy Gray,

D'Angelo), and fronted by expat Cuban diva Xiomara Laugart, Yerba Buena can conjure refined urban complexity or a visceral rhythmic stew..." - Philadelphia Inquirer

One minute Yerba Buena treated a bedrock dance rhythm by the book, the next minute it ripped it apart with anarchistic zeal, altering the familiar structures with all manner of non-idiomatic spices. The **insanely precise 10-piece band** did it with Columbian cumbia, and with the rural Cuban guajira pulse. It did it with a sparkling Afrobeat that updated Nigeria's Fela Kuti, and with mambos that slid between English and Spanish, the most compelling being the amazing "Wassamatter Baby?"... **Yerba Buena's genius lies not just in its global curiosity, which is uncommon for a Latin dance band, but in its spirit of improvisation.** [Andres]Levin - who has produced a laundry list of Latin pop stars - understands the high-concept mix-and-match associated with artists such as David Byrne as well as the importance of keeping the dance floor moving. **And in this hard-working outfit, he's achieved a landmark balance** of those usually competing interests.

- Philadelphia Inquirer

"When it comes to Latin music, Yerba Buena's Andres Levin is about as pedigreed as they get... The boisterous debut album *President Alien* is a beguiling mix of hip-hop, salsa, R&B and everything in between with seemingly one ethos tying it all together: It must be danceable...**there could be no better group for a dance party. No matter what kind of music you like, you'll get a taste of it from Yerba Buena.**"

- Philadelphia Weekly

"**A Cuban sonorous, salsa-riffic, Latin rockist, Afrobeat club bunch, Yerba Buena is a multicultural paella --** each individual flavor is easily detectable whilst hidden within the whole... Andres Levin makes dance music a primary objective for his all-nations orchestra of percussions, rap mongrels and girl singers... Other acts are capable of density within Brazil-Cubano-Afrique dance musics.. But like August Darnell's Kid Creole Yerba Buena can make pop with polish and not just campiness" - Philly City Paper

"Deeply steeped in Afrobeat and New York club culture, producer Andres Levin hit upon a winning formula when he collected the players in Yerba Buena to **create a new kind of Latin fusion -- one that swings deeply from the hips of Cuban rhythms and shakes from the tremors of post-Fela funk.** "*President Alien*" is a **drivingly upbeat sojourn into a new Latin groove, with a dozen cuts that are relentlessly celebratory in tone.** Thoroughly defined by its island vibe, it's the small touches the seven-member, multi-ethnic ensemble adds to the mix that make it interesting (for instance the African drum pattern that drives "Bote Bote Va" or the psychedelic electronica of "Solar"). Far removed from the Latin-ized house of Nuyorican Soul, Yerba Buena is raw and energetic, with a personality that's nothing if not unique." -Orlando Weekly

"*/highly recommended' .. a refined fusion with fine musicianship evidenced in various solos and in the well-thought-out layering of instrumental voicing... This makes for a mix that is essentially **loads of fun** and well-crafted...It's contagious" -Billboard

"The rhythm of the island meets the beat of the street. New York's Afro-Cuban/funk collective delivers... **a totally thick and hearty slice of dance music for the adventurous...** it's all a feast for the ears and feet. Crank this up at a block party." - Dallas Morning News

"[Yerba Buena] group founder **Andres Levin is a standard bearer not only for Afro-Cuban music but for hip-hop and both genres' African roots as well.** Against all odds, Levin and Yerba Buena have produced a credible union of the three without novelty and with full of respect for the individual components." - Columbus Dispatch

"Lined up on stage, the musicians of multiculti outfit **Yerba Buena really impress...** the band has an image as powerful as the sound they unleash on *President Alien*. Xiomara Laugart's voice [has] a power that leaves no option to dance." - Loft Magazine

"Yerba Buena's debut disc '*President Alien*' is **so polyrhythmic, you'll be hard pressed to decide which way to move your body...** Imagine a jazz course at a hip-hop summer barbeque, then throw in a conga line and you'll be getting close... **the pulsing heart of Yerba Buena will push the blood straight to your limbs...** a hot ticket for groove junkies and hipsters everywhere." -America Online's Digital City

*“Yerba Buena is a group that defies labels; they mix everything up from reggae to son to rock to funk. **Think Sly and the Family Stone for the 21st Century, only bilingual**”- [Lamusica.com](#)*

*“Yerba Buena draws upon salsa, Cuban son, jazz, Latin rock, hip-hop, Afro-beat, and club culture to skillfully weave its hip, sexy and infectious dance floor grooves. Led by Venezuelan immigrant Andres Levin (the principal producer of the Red Hot + Riot Fela tribute) with other members from Cuba, New York City and St. Thomas, **this multi-cultural combo’s debut covers all the bases: fantastic production, skilled rappers, diva-like vocals and an endless multi-ethnic groove that erases all rhythmic boundaries.** Tailor-made for hot summer nights of dancing, the poppy "Guajira (I Love U 2 Much)" opens the album with a catchy sing-along chorus sung in English. The band then follows with the manic Nuyorican boogaloo of "Tu Casa, Mi Casa." Yerba Buena is no less compelling when the band cranks up the Afro-beat-style choruses on songs like "Rompe El Cuero," which hit with the visceral impact of a Mack truck. **A fully formed and promising debut, President Alien is as imaginative as it is addictive**” - [Amazon.com](#)*

*“Satisfying the hunger for Latin dance music that's neither mired in the past nor emasculated by slick pop fashion, **New York's Yerba Buena are nothing less than the blueprint for post-salsa. The collective, helmed by producer Andres Levin has enough secret weapons to worry the U.N. Security Council.** Start with lead vocalist Xiomara Laugart, who combines the fire of a house diva with fierce Afro-Cuban authenticity; factor in brawny saxophonist Ron Blake; Levin's production smarts; and a raft of guests, including guitarist Marc Ribot drummer Horacio "El Negro" Hernandez, percussionist Carlinhos Brown, Meshell Ndegeocello, and many others. Punching up the Afro-Cuban root of hard-charging salsa (lots of chants to the orishas and ferocious rumba percussion) adding rapid-fire rap plus the occasional dancehall reggae riddim, Levin's band is a New York answer to the explosive sound of Cuba's contemporary dance music, timba, Yerba Buena don't waste time with drippy salsa monga intros -- bilingual tracks like "La Gringa," "Wassamatter Baby?," and "Definition of a Warrior" cut to the chase. The beyond-credible soloing and singing will captivate fans of salsa's glory days, especially those open-minded enough to appreciate Yerba Buena's mix of Colombian rhythms, Afro-beat, and reggae. **That challenge -- to push the music forward without watering it down -- is forcefully answered on President Alien. When the best thing going in salsa dura in years has been music that hearkens to the past, the arrival of a new musical vision couldn't be more welcome.**”- [BN.com](#) (Barnes & Noble)*

*“...**a breathtaking record** capable of hooking fans from some wide-ranging styles: hip-hop, trance, R&B, and of course, Latin music. Comprised mostly of Cubans or natives of the U.S. Virgin Islands, **Yerba Buena has a command over Latin forms that erases national boundaries and pulverizes time constraints** — moving deftly from guajira to salsa to son, they're also perfectly adept at incorporating the music of the American street circa 2003 into forms more familiar to farmers in Cuban fields circa 1939. The open-ended character of the jam "Guajira" permits vocals from a traditional Latin chorus as well as nods to urban radio. Lead diva Xiomara Laugart melds house music and salsa with all the power and energy of la India, while rapper El Chino fills in with some solid rhymes and a few party-vocal asides. The band is perfectly fluent and **a powerhouse unit**... In essence, Yerba Buena is... updating Latin music with touches to intrigue listeners who wouldn't normally be listening to it. In that, they're tremendously successful.” – [All Music Guide](#)*

“Kids who think mixing rock and hip-hop makes for a unique hybrid should try bands like Yerba Buena on for size: The mini-orchestra throws the most exciting elements of hip-hop, Latin, Afrobeat and rock together – with lyrics in English, Yoruba, and Spanish – to create something truly new. Credit goes to mastermind Andres Levin. His New York-based group has quickly become a sensation in its hometown” – [The Onion](#)

*“**Yerba Buena is a choice pick from the first crop of new Latin underground bands to actually deliver -rather than just promise -- truly innovative Latin fusion music that's played and sung brilliantly...** Afro-Cuban rhythms, soul, hip-hop, jazz and funk. And my, **oh my, the kids can play**” - [Toronto Globe and Mail](#)*

*“**Yerba Buena is a seething combo that at first sounds steeped in tradition but then suddenly immerses itself in contemporary ideas incorporating the newest of the new.** That means pumping rhythms propelled by electric bass and dizzying, layered percussion and brass sections.”- [Toronto Sun](#)*

*"As word gets out about the group's **sensuous, high-volume, crowd-igniting shows**, Yerba Buena will likely be on every festival's hit list. The group combines **a killer Latin groove** with bedrock bass, in-your-face horns, searing guitar, and the soaring voice of Xiomara Laugart... **irresistible party music, earthy, punchy and seductive all at once.**" - Ottawa Citizen*

"Blending elements of Afro-pop, salsa, jazz, hip-hop and Cuban son, Yerba Buena's debut is a mosaic as ethnically varied as any mingling on your typical New York City subway car... The result is tasty fare like the chanting and Fela-flavored saxophone runs of "Rompe el Cuero"; infectious grooves of "Tu Casa, Mi Casa"; and snappy confluence of harmonies, horns and percussion of "Electric Boogaloo." Knowledge of Spanish is not a requirement for enjoying this debut, as the relentless rhythms and infectious beats will draw in anyone with the remotest sense of a pulse." - Long Island Press

"President Alien is the ultimate diasporic cocktail for the plugged-in urban guajiro. New York bassist Andres Levin took his azucar straight out of Cuba for the front lineup, featuring the bewitching Xiomara Laugart. Add Latin hip hop, Santer'a singers, and a Caribbean jazz horn section, and you've got a party that just won't stop. Plays with the all the cliches of tropical music (cumbia, cha cha cha, rumba, guajira, mambo, reggaeton) updated to make this definitely the freshest thing on the shelf." - Independent Weekly

"Yerba Buena were the reason for all the excitement, and the eight-piece band fired on every cylinder, whipping up a funky, hip-hop infected stew that had the crowd in full dance mode most of the night... The band was simply on fire, a tight, percussive unit that mixed Latin rhythms with touches of Afro-pop and hip-hop.. The crowd had matched the energy of the band, and from that point on, the two danced hand in hand into the night." - Herald-Tribune