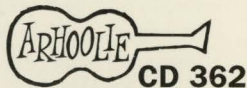


# TONY DE LA ROSA

## "Atotonilco"



1. LA PALOMILLA (Tony De La Rosa) (*Polka*) (ID 939 - 7/17/1953).
2. LOS TILICHES (Tony De La Rosa) (*Huapango*) (ID 939 - 7/1953).
3. EL SUBE Y BAJA (Mario Montes) (*Polka*) (ID 922A - 6/5/1953).
4. ADIOS AMOR (DAR) (*Bolero*) (ID 973 - 10/16/1953).  
*Vocal duet by Carmen & Laura*
5. SYLVIA (Tony De La Rosa) (*Polka*) (ID 1003 - 11/1954).
6. EL GUARACHA (Tony De La Rosa) (*Huapango*) (ID 931 - 6/5/1953).
7. LA GRULLA (Tony De La Rosa) (*Polka*) (ID 1210 - 7/17/1955).
8. PALOMA SIN NIDO (Ignacio Jaime) (*Ranchera*) (ID 1511 - 10/1957)  
*Vocal duet by Tony De La Rosa & Abel Mendoza.*
9. EL CELO ME TORTURA (DAR) (*Bolero*) (ID 1126 - 11/1954)  
*Vocal by Isidro Lopez.*
10. SUFRIENDO Y PENANDO (DAR) (*Ranchera*) (ID 1126 - 11/1954)  
*Vocal by Isidro Lopez.*
11. LOS FRIJOLES BAILAN (Tony De La Rosa) (*Polka*) (ID 1163 - 2/1955).
12. COPAS DE PLACER (Edubiges C. Gonzalez) (*Ranchera*) (ID 1570 - 3/1958)  
*Vocal duet by Tony & Chavez (Abel Mendoza).*
13. EL CIRCO (Tony De La Rosa) (*Polka*) (ID 1455 - 4/1957).
14. AMORES QUE VAN Y VIENEN (Cuco Sanchez) (*Ranchera*) (ID 1719 - 9/1959)  
*Vocal duet by Tony & Adan De La Rosa.*
15. ATOTONILCO (PD) (*Polka*) (ID 1570 - 3/1958).
16. TODO LO CONCIENTO (Adan Perez) (*Ranchera*) (ID 1725A - 9/1959)  
*Vocal duet by Tony De La Rosa & Adan Perez.*
17. ANITA (Tony De La Rosa) (*Polka*) (ID 1634 - 12/1958).
18. DOS LINDAS PALOMITAS (Frank Cantu) (*Ranchera*) (ID 1766 - 6/1960)  
*Vocal duet by Vidal & Amadeo Flores.*
19. MIS BRAZOS TE ESPERAN (José Morante) (*Ranchera*) (ID 1818 - 8/1960)  
*Vocal duet probably by Tony & Adan Perez.*

(Continued inside booklet on page 2)



TEJANO ROOTS  
OVER 60 MINUTES OF HISTORIC TEJANO MUSIC

# TONY DE LA ROSA

"ATOTONILCO"

24  
ORIGINAL  
HITS  
1950-1960



(continued from booklet back)

20. PALOMA NEGRA (Tomás Mendez) (*Ranchera*) (ID 1830A - 10/1960) *Vocal solo by Adan De La Rosa & duet with Tony.*
21. ANA ROSA (Tony De La Rosa) (*Polka*) (ID 1852 - 12/1960).
22. TANTAS MENTIRAS (Gilberto Parra) (*Ranchera*) (ID 2178A - 5/1964) *Vocal duet by Adan & Tony De La Rosa.*
23. UNA CUALQUIERA (Ernesto Guerrero) (*Ranchera*) (ID 2178 - 5/1964) *Vocal duet by Adan & Tony De La Rosa with conjunto & horns.*
24. PERDI EL ALBUR (Roberto M. Queseda) (*Ranchera*) (ID 2197 - 5/1964) *Vocal duet by Adan & Tony De La Rosa with conjunto & horns.*

Tony De La Rosa - accordion & vocals, and his *conjunto* including:  
Adan De La Rosa - vocals, *bajo sexto* and drums; Abel Mendoza - vocals & bajo sexto; Amadeo Flores - vocals and *bajo sexto*; Adan Perez - vocals and bass, and others.

Cover Photo: Los Hermanos De La Rosa (the De La Rosa Brothers): Tony and Adan (accordion & *bajo sexto*).

Re-issue produced by Chris Strachwitz by agreement with Tony De La Rosa.

Cover design: Jil Weil.

Original recordings produced by Armando Marroquin (up to 1960) and John Phillips, Paco Betancourt, or Freddie Fender (after 1960) for IDEAL Records (Rio Grande Music Co.) of San Benito, Texas.

ID number following title refers to the original IDEAL release number on 78 or 45 rpm single records, followed by actual or approximate date of recording. Many of the selections were later re-issued on EPs and LPs. All selections were remastered and transferred to digital DATs by Chris Strachwitz from the original tapes.

For more information on Tony De La Rosa and Conjunto Music's history and development note: **The Texas-Mexican Conjunto** by Manuel Peña (University of Texas Press).

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## Tony De La Rosa "Atotonilco"

Born in 1931 in Sarita, Texas, a tiny village in the middle of the vast King Ranch, **Tony De La Rosa** went on to become one of the legends of Texas Conjunto Music, contributing major changes to the music and establishing himself as one of the true giants of the genre. After actively playing dances for over 30 years and making hundreds of records, Tony De La Rosa was inducted into the Conjunto Music Hall of Fame in 1982. The recordings in this collection include Tony De La Rosa's first and best remembered hits. Here are his best loved polkas *El Circo*, *La Grulla*, *Los Frijoles Baillan*, *Sylvia*, and *Atotonilco*, *huapangos* and lots of *rancheras* which during the 1950s became an ever increasingly important part of any *conjunto's* repertoire. You hear young Tony De La Rosa beautifully accompanying rising stars of Tejano music, Isidro Lopez and the sisters Carmen & Laura. Here is Tony De La Rosa's music from its rural Tejano dance music beginnings with the accordion accompanied only by *bajo sexto* and string bass, to the full tilt big sound of the modern *conjunto* with a

loud, powerful, rock-steady rhythm section, utilizing drums, amplified *bajo sexto*, and electric bass underpinning the accordion and voices.

By the 1960s the De La Rosa *conjunto* was also obtaining an orchestra-like effect by the use of horns. You hear the evolution of *conjunto* music from its accordion instrumental beginnings to the singer-oriented dance music of today. Over the period of ten years during which these recordings were made, you hear the changes and innovations Tony De La Rosa contributed to this dynamic dance music of south Texas. Tony not only made the drums a permanent part of the *conjunto* but he also ushered in the era of electrified strings, first plugging the *bajo sexto* into an amplifier and then replacing the string bass with an electric one. These instrumental changes combined with the increasing popularity of soulful duet vocals entertaining the dancers with the latest popular poetry, contributed to slowing the music down from the frantic pace at which polkas used to be played at rural dances.

When he was very young, Tony De La



Rosa was given a two-row accordion by his father, a field hand who also worked as a part-time barber. Planting, harvesting, and chopping in the fields of south Texas was the family's main means of survival. Tony's prime influence as he learned to play the accordion, was Narciso Martinez. But Tony also loved Western Swing and his first professional music job was with an Anglo Country band even though he had trouble finding the right chords on the sonically limited two-row diatonic accordion. By the late 1940s Tony tried unsuccessfully to record for the newly established **Ideal** label which had hired his well-known and experienced idol, Narciso Martinez as their house musician. In 1949 Tony De La Rosa did make his first recordings for **Arco** Records, a small, short-lived enterprise operated by Rey Trevino who played in Beto Villa's band and also led his own orchestra which he recorded for his label. Amadeo Flores, who later became a well-known accordionist and in 1956 leader of Conjunto Ideal, started his career as a *bajo sexto* player in 1949 with Tony De La Rosa. The Conjunto De La Rosa became popular in the Kingsville – Alice – Corpus Christi area and by December of 1951

Armando Marroquin must have heard enough good things about the young accordionist to let Tony make his first record for the well-distributed **Ideal** label.

The early 1950s were relatively prosperous times for *conjunto* music and its popularity opened the doors of many respectable dance halls to the sound of the accordion. This sudden popularity of what was once considered low class entertainment and the fact that four musicians could now play a dance which used to be served by a ten or fifteen piece orchestra, dismayed many orchestra musicians who had always assumed that accordion music would stay in the *cantinas*.

Even though Tony De La Rosa had no instant hit records, his *conjunto* was working constantly and drawing good crowds. Tony's first recordings were mainly polkas and many were his own compositions. His cover of Mario Montes' (the accordionist for Los Donneños) lovely polka, *El Sube y Baja*, apparently sold quite well. By this time there were many labels competing for the booming juke box market in south Texas and as soon as a new song or tune appeared, often from Mexico, each regional record company would have one of their

artists record it. In the Spanish language field then and now, the song or the tune is generally more important than the artist who sings it and most performers would do well with a cover version of the latest hits. During the early 1950s Tony had no big selling records himself and a lot of his work at the Ideal studios in Alice, Texas, was to back up various singers as an accordionist. Since the *conjunto* or *norteño* sound was becoming very popular, most singers, even those who had not particularly considered themselves “*conjunto* artists,” would make records with accordion backing, hoping for a juke box hit in the *cantinas*.

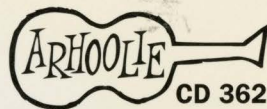
In 1953 Tony recorded the bolero *Adios Amor* with the singers Carmen and Laura, showing his talents as a versatile accompanist. The next year De La Rosa’s *conjunto*, with Amadeo Flores on *bajo sexto*, backed singer/saxophonist and orchestra musician Isidro Lopez, who was just starting his career. I have included two of these selections, another bolero, *El Celo Me Tortura* and a wonderful *conjunto* version of *Sufriendo Y Penando* which was to become one of the biggest hits for Isidro Lopez in a later orchestra version (note **Isidro Lopez: El Indio** Arhoolie CD/C 363).

By 1955 several of Tony De La Rosa’s own polkas became good sellers on **Ideal**, including *Los Frijoles Bailan* and *La Grulla*. On February 9, 1956, Tony De La Rosa was drafted into the army and shortly thereafter Amadeo Flores went on his own and started *Conjunto Ideal*. After six months Tony was given a hardship discharge in order to take care of his family. Brother Adan, who had been playing drums, now became the *bajo sexto* player from time to time. Tony finally had his first hit records with *El Circo* in 1957 and *Atotonilco* in 1958. Adan’s fragile solo vocal on *Paloma Negra* made that *ranchera* into a hit record late in 1960. Although the personnel of the *conjunto* varied over the years, the sound is amazingly consistent and the rock-steady beat that Tony obviously enjoyed has remained an essential element of the *conjunto* sound up to the present. This ability to remain contemporary and lay down a sound popular with the public, not only instrumentally but also with their singing, has kept Tony De La Rosa’s *conjunto* working over these many years and leading the pack as an innovative exponent of *conjunto* music.

*Chris Strachwitz - 1993*

# TONY DE LA ROSA

## “Atotonilco”



Over 60 Minutes of Classic TEXAS-MEXICAN MUSIC

1. LA PALOMILLA (*Polka*) (2:44)
2. LOS TILICHES (*Huapango*) (2:34)
3. EL SUBE Y BAJA (*Polka*) (2:42)
4. ADIOS AMOR (*Bolero*) (2:25)
5. SYLVIA (*Polka*) (2:45)
6. EL GUARACHA (*Huapango*) (2:54)
7. LA GRULLA (*Polka*) (2:20)
8. PALOMA SIN NIDO (*Ranchera*) (2:53)
9. EL CELO ME TORTURA (*Bolero*) (2:25)
10. SUFRIENDO Y PENANDO (*Ranchera*) (2:43)
11. LOS FRIJOLES BAILAN (*Polka*) (2:42)
12. COPAS DE PLACER (*Ranchera*) (2:43)
13. EL CIRCO (*Polka*) (2:23)
14. AMORES QUE VAN Y VIENEN (*Ranchera*) (2:55)
15. ATOTONILCO (*Polka*) (2:35)
16. TODO LO CONCIENTO (*Ranchera*) (2:29)
17. ANITA (*Polka*) (2:43)
18. DOS LINDAS PALOMITAS (*Ranchera*) (2:51)
19. MIS BRAZOS TE ESPERAN (*Ranchera*) (2:45)
20. PALOMA NEGRA (*Ranchera*) (2:50)
21. ANA ROSA (*Polka*) (2:15)
22. TANTAS MENTIRAS (*Ranchera*) (2:27)

23. UNA CUALQUIERA (*Ranchera*) (2:34)
24. PERDI EL ALBUR (*Ranchera*) (2:27)

Tony De La Rosa - accordion & vocals, and his *conjunto*.

*Cover Photo:* Los Hermanos De La Rosa (the De La Rosa Brothers): Tony and Adan (accordion & *bajo sexto*).

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