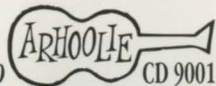


# CLIFTON CHENIER

*"Zydeco Sont Pas Sale" – King of the Real Creole French Zydeco*



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(Snap Beans Not Salty)
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(Blues About My Black Gal)
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**Clifton Chenier** – vocals and accordion;  
**Cleveland Chenier** – rubboard; with various  
members of the **Red Hot Louisiana Band**.  
**Morris Chenier** – fiddle on #2 & # 6.

The late Clifton Chenier, creator and  
King of the real Creole French  
Zydeco, is heard here singing in Loui-  
siana Creole French, his first language!

All songs by Clifton Chenier and © by Tradition  
Music Co./administered by BUG Music Co. BMI

Edited and produced by Chris Strachwitz

Cover: Clifton Chenier in 1964

Cover photo © by Chris Strachwitz

Cover & photo tinting by Beth Weill

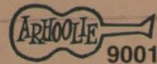
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345: (# 2 & 6); CD 347: (# 8, 9, & 12); CD 350: (#10,  
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# CLIFTON CHENIER

**Zydeco Sont Pas Sale**



**KING of the REAL CREOLE FRENCH ZYDECO**

## CLIFTON CHENIER

### *"Zydeco Sont Pas Sale" - King of the Real Creole French Zydeco*

Clifton Chenier (June 21, 1925 – December 12, 1987) invented Zydeco back in the 1950s when he began to mix the rural Creole music of his native southwest Louisiana with Blues and R&B along with some of the intricate Caribbean syncopation heard along the Gulf Coast. Born on a farm near Opelousas, La., Clifton took his accordion music from the house dances and casual parties back home to dancehalls of the Creole-speaking centers in Louisiana, southeast Texas and California on to nightclubs, concert halls and festivals around the world.

Today's Zydeco encompasses many ever-evolving contemporary African-American musical genres while still retaining some of the essential ingredients put down by Clifton Chenier and his predecessor, Amede Ardoin, who was the first Creole accordionist to make recordings (note Arhoolie CD 7007). By constantly updating its sound, Zydeco has continued to be a remarkably popular dance music not only on its home turf along the Texas-Louisiana Gulf

Coast, but literally from coast to coast and overseas as well. At the same time however, as young people are brought up speaking only English, the Creole language has faded from general use and an ever-shrinking rural population lets it disappear from the music as well. Fortunately we can never quite predict the future but since the vast majority of Zydeco's dance-happy audience is increasingly monolingual, the future for the Creole French patois is not exactly bright.

Clifton became known as the King of Zydeco in the 1970s and he will always hold that title in spite of the many challengers and claimants to the throne. Although Clifton was perhaps best known outside of rural Louisiana for his incredible accordion work, his hard driving dance music, and his bluesy vocals in English, this CD presents Clifton's unique Creole French roots both in the rhythms and the French patois vocals which no one has been able to match. Although Clifton has gone on to the big dance up

yonder, he has left us with a remarkable body of recorded performances.

I was fortunate to have had the opportunity to not only meet this genius of a musician but also to record him over a period of about twenty years. Lightning Hopkins introduced me to Clifton at a small beer joint in a section of Houston known as "French Town." Clifton played his accordion with only a drummer for a band, but his blues-drenched vocals in Creole French supported by the most emotional accordion sounds I'd ever heard, made an instant fan of me!

I wish I had been able to record Clifton more regularly back in the 1960s because he was a very prolific all-around musician with new songs constantly developing in his head. Clifton would tell me that he would try new songs on his audience and watch for their reaction, but unfortunately forget many of the songs if they didn't raise a special spark. It was a time when a new record on the juke boxes and on the radio was the all important meal ticket to bring out an audience for a musician's dances. Even the very first record we made with Clifton, "Ay, Ai, Ai," although sung in English, had that swampy feeling and sold a few hundred in Houston and southwest Louisiana. On the next session I insisted that Clifton record some of the Creole numbers I

was so captivated by the first night I heard him. "Zydeco Sont Pas Sale" was one of those gems along with "Louisiana Blues," both sung in Creole French, and both became regional hits.

The success of those records helped to raise Clifton's confidence in his ability to capitalize on and be proud of his unique cultural background. As increasing numbers attended his dances, Clifton finally became proud of being "A Frenchman," as he put it, and seemed to really enjoy his own remarkable talents not only as a superb musician in any field, but as a transmitter of a truly unique culture. As Clifton's reputation and popularity grew he quickly got his brother Cleveland back into the band since much of the incredible rhythm and syncopation was based on Cleveland's unique rubboard work.

Besides the other CDs we have by Clifton Chenier, you should also check out our fascinating video documentary: CLIFTON CHENIER: "The King Of Zydeco" (55 minutes in color) which includes some wonderful regional Louisiana TV appearances as well as live performances of Clifton at his best at the New Orleans Jazz and Heritage Festival and at the San Francisco Blues Festival plus interviews and other surprises. (Arhoolie Video ARV 401 – only \$19.98)

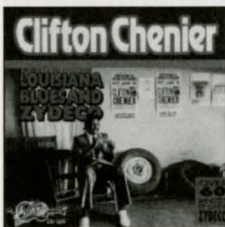
*(Chris Strachwitz – 1997)*



**"60 Minutes  
with the King  
of Zydeco"**

CD 301 or CASS 301

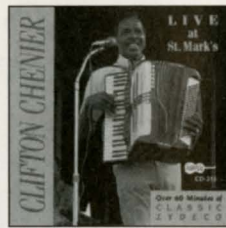
ZYDECO SONT PAS  
SALE • LOUISIANA  
BLUES • ZYDECO  
CHA-CHA • BLACK GAL • I'M A HOG FOR YOU • ALLONS  
A GRAND COTEAU • YOU'RE FUSSING TOO MUCH • TU  
LE TON SON TON • BLACK SNAKE BLUES • BIG MAMOU  
• SA M'APPELLE FOU • I'M ON THE WONDER • PARTY  
DOWN AT THE BLUE ANGEL CLUB • YOU'RE MY MULE •  
CALINDA □



**"Louisiana  
Blues And  
Zydeco"**

CD 329 or CASS 329

ZYDECO SONT PAS SALE  
• LAFAYETTE WALTZ •  
LOUISIANA TWO-STEP •  
CLIFTON'S WALTZ • LOUISIANA BLUES • WHY DID YOU GO  
LAST NIGHT? • EH, 'TITE FILLE • BANANA MAN • HOT ROD  
IT'S HARD • I CAN LOOK DOWN AT YOUR WOMAN • I CAN'T  
STAND • MONIFIQUE • JOHNNY CAN'T DANCE • I LOST MY  
BABY • PEPPER IN MY SHOE • CAN'T GO HOME NO MORE •  
WRAP IT UP ZYDECO □



**"Live at St.  
Mark's"**

CD 313 OR CASS 313

ZYDECO CHA CHA •  
BAD LUCK AND  
TROUBLE • CHER  
CATIN (Zydeco) •  
NEW MA NEGRESS •  
J'AI CONET, C'EST PAS MA FEMME • ROCK HOUSE • I'M  
A HOG FOR YOU • MAMA TOLD PAPA • TU LE TON SON  
TON (Every Now and Then) • YOU'RE MY MULE •  
TIGHTEN UP ZYDECO • GOING HOME BLUES & MESS  
AROUND □



**"King of the  
Bayous"**

CD 339 or CASS 339

TU LE TON SON TON  
• HARD TO LOVE  
SOMEONE • WHO  
CAN YOUR GOOD MAN  
BE • ZODICO TWO-STEP • GOING LA MAISON • I BELIEVE  
I'LL GO BACK HOME • RELEASE ME • GRAND MAMOU •  
TON NA NA • I'M COMING HOME • JOSEPHINE PAR SE MA  
FEMME • IT'S CHRISTMAS TIME • COMING HOME  
TOMORROW • ME AND MY CHAUFFEUR • MO VEUX  
CONNAITRE • TIRED OF CRYING OVER YOU • CLIFTON'S  
BLUES • LET'S ROCK A WHILE □



**"Bon Ton Roulet!  
& More"**

CD 345 or CASS 345

BON TON ROULET •  
FROG LEGS • IF I EVER  
GET LUCKY • BLACK  
GAL • LONG TOES •  
BABY, PLEASE DON'T  
GO • HOUSTON BOOGIE • BLUES DE MA NEGRESSE • SWEET  
LITTLE DOLL • JOLE BLONDE • AY, AI, AI • FRENCH TOWN  
WALTZ • KEEP ON SCRATCHING • BLACK SNAKE BLUES • LET'S  
TALK IT OVER • WALKING TO LOUISIANA • KEY TO THE  
HIGHWAY • THINGS AIN'T LIKE THEY USED TO BE • I GOT A  
LITTLE GIRL • I'M ON THE WONDER • JUMP THE BOOGIE □



**"Out West"**

CD 350 or CASS 350

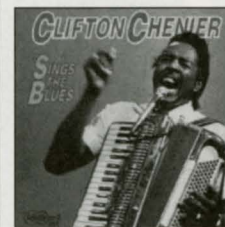
I'M ON THE WONDER  
• THE HUCKLEBUCK  
• JE MARCHE LE  
PLANCHER •  
CALINDA • YOU'RE  
THE ONE FOR ME • YOU'RE FUSSIN' TOO MUCH • JUST  
LIKE A WOMAN • ALL YOUR LOVE • C. C. SPECIAL (Take 2)  
• I'M A HOG FOR YOU • C. C. SPECIAL (Take 1) • TI NA NA  
• ZYDECO CHA CHA • CRAWFISH JAMBALAYA (\*) • MA  
NEGRESSE EST GONE • BREAU'S BRIDGE WALTZ •  
LOUISIANA TWO-STEP □



**"Bogalusa  
Boogie"**

CD 347 or CASS 347

ONE STEP AT A TIME  
• M'APPEL FOU •  
QUELQUE CHOSE  
SUR MON IDEE •  
RIDE 'EM COWBOY •  
MA MAMA MA DIT • JE ME REVEILLER LE MATIN • I MAY  
BE WRONG • TAKE OFF YOUR DRESS • ALLONS A GRAND  
COTEAU • JE SUIS EN RECOLTEUR • TI NA NA • COME  
GO ALONG WITH ME • BOGALUSA BOOGIE □



**"Clifton Sings  
the Blues"**

CD 351

AIN'T NO NEED OF  
CRYIN' (EVERY DAY IS  
THE SAME) •  
ROSEMARY • BROWN  
SKINNED WOMAN • DONE GOT OVER • GONE A LA MAISON  
• BE MY CHAUFFEUR • MY LITTLE ANGEL • PAPER IN MY  
SHOE • BLUES AFTER HOURS • TROUBLE IN MIND • IN  
THE MOOD • WORRIED LIFE BLUES • GRAND PRIX •  
HUNGRY MAN BLUES • FALKSY GIRL • EASY, EASY BABY •  
TANTE NA NA • DO RIGHT SOMETIME • HIGHWAY BLUES □



*Clifton Chenier, left; Cleveland Chenier, right.*



**"The King Of  
Zydeco Live  
At Montreux"**

CD 355 or CASS 355

INTRO and JAMBALAYA  
• YOU'RE FUSSIN'  
TOO MUCH •

CLIFTON'S BOOGIE WOOGIE • HEY, TITE FILLE • CHER  
CATIN • ZYDECO SONT PAS SALE • JE MARCHE LE  
PLANCHER • RELEASE ME • I'M A HOG FOR YOU •  
LOUISIANA TWO STEP • BLACK GAL • MONEY • I'M ON  
THE WONDER • WOO WOO • HUSH, HUSH • CALINDA □



**"Live! at the  
Long Beach  
and  
San Francisco  
Blues Festivals"**

CD 404 or CASS 404

INTRODUCTION and THEME • I'VE HAD MY FUN (Going  
Down Slow) • ZYDECO TWO-STEP • CALINDA • WHAT'D  
I SAY? • PARTY DOWN • I'M COMING HOME • PINETOP'S  
BOOGIE WOOGIE • THEY CALL ME CRAZY • ZYDECO  
CHA CHA • YOU GONNA MISS ME • CALEDONIA • NEW  
ORLEANS BEAT • CLIFTON'S ZYDECO • LET THE GOOD  
TIMES ROLL • ROCK ME • LOUISIANA TWO-STEP • CHER  
CATIN • I'M THE ZYDECO MAN □

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CD 9001

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File Under: ZYDECO

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