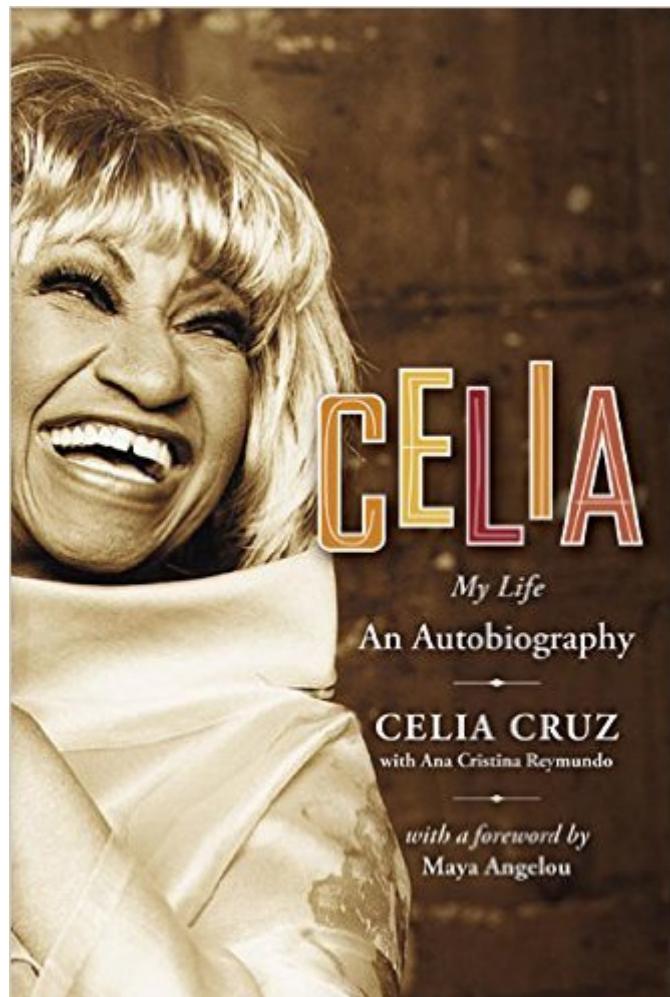


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# Celia: My Life



## **Synopsis**

From her modest childhood in Cuba, to her exile years in Mexico, to her remarkable career and life in America, Celia Cruz -- the Queen of Salsa -- was a woman of contradictions. Her flamboyant costumes clashed with her simple and straightforward demeanor. She was open and accessible to her fans, but staunchly private about her personal life. And now the woman who said, "I never wanted to write an autobiography," has done just that -- saying her final farewell to her fans. Based on more than five hundred hours of taped interviews recorded just months before her death, *Celia* includes personal photos, notes, mementos, and anecdotes celebrating the soul of an extraordinary life blessed with talent, burdened with heartbreak, and rewarded with glorious triumphs.

## **Book Information**

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## **Customer Reviews**

This is an enjoyable memoir from the great Cuban singer Celia Cruz, reminiscing on her long life of musical creativity and success. She came of age in the rich Afro/Latin/Caribbean musical scene of pre-Castro Cuba, but then had to flee her homeland, never to return, after the dictator took control and ruthlessly suppressed his people's vibrant and colorful homegrown culture. For some reason Celia never hit it big with mainstream American audiences, but she was huge in the Latin community, and hundreds of thousands of fans mourned her passing in 2003. This book is written mostly in the form of positive reminiscences on friends, faith, and successes. There is nothing wrong with that in the slightest, but I can't quite give this book a perfect rating because of some missed opportunities. Celia's life offers many rich lessons on having to flee one's home into exile,

and continuing to work for one's people through success in the outside world. Celia has many very wise and compelling things to say about Castro, the suffering of her people, life in exile, and the issues faced by black and Latin women in music. Unfortunately, Celia's experienced and heartfelt remarks on these matters usually appear for only a paragraph or two, and then it's back to the joyful reminiscing. But even though some golden opportunities for real insight are lost, this is still a great story about the life of an outstanding talent and personality. [~doomsdayer520~]

The explosion of Latin music in America did not start with the likes of Ricky Martin, Jennifer Lopez or even Gloria Estefan. No, the introduction of the pulsating, hypnotic, rhythmic beats of Latin America was started over forty years ago and owes its unveiling in part to the powerful and soulful voice of Celia Cruz. Written by the diva herself, *CELIA: MY LIFE AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY* is a sentimental celebration of a musical journey that spanned more than half a century. Born of African descent in Havana, Cuba to a loving family of humble means, music was always a part of Celia's life from the first time her mother sang her a Spanish lullaby. Growing up, Celia was enthralled with the beautiful fusion of the Afro-Cuban music that was drenched within the island's culture. Cuba's musical landscape was quite eclectic and she was captivated by the varied musical styles that swept her homeland. She was influenced by everything, from salsa to samba. Acknowledged by family, friends and neighbors as having a glorious voice, Celia was encouraged to share her gifts with the world. Persuaded by a cousin to enter talent shows, as a teen she began wowing local audiences with her talent. It was just a short time before she became the toast of Cuba. With the blessing of her friends and family except her father, who wanted her to pursue a more "respectable" profession, Celia began pursuing music. She began perfecting her skills by working the various nightclubs and musical revues in Cuba. It is through Celia's eyes that we are given a front row view of the beautiful and sultry nightclubs that were once part of Cuba's night life. The reader is given a rare look on and behind stage from Celia as she allows us to experience the exhilarating thrill of her performances. Through Celia's narration we are also given a bird's eye view of the changing politics of Cuba and the rise of Fidel Castro. She frankly discusses how she witnessed the political turmoil that nearly tore her homeland apart and ushered in a dictator. Disenchanted with the political changes in Cuba, with a heavy heart Celia decided to escape from the communist nation; sadly she left all she knew and loved behind. Upset and humiliated that one of the nation's most celebrated entertainers had defected from his country Fidel Castro forbade Celia from ever stepping foot on Cuba's soil again. Despite being banished from her homeland and a few personal and professional setbacks, *CELIA: MY LIFE AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY* is a joyful testimony of a legendary singer's

triumphs in life and within the music industry. Celia Cruz recently passed on leaving behind a catalog of wonderful music that will continue to be enjoyed by her legions of fans for years to come. Her voice will forever inspire and invite future generations to celebrate and treasure the pulsating beats of Latin music. Reviewed by L. Raven James of The RAWSISTAZ Reviewers

Thank you Celia, for sharing your life with us! Latin or any other nationality, it would benefit you learn about Celia Cruz. Beside being an amazing performer and world known singer, she shares this gift of entertainment with the world with so much love, and yes, Azucar! Wonderfully shared in this reading! Thanks!

Que Triste Me hace, Pero Que Feliz tambien porque Celia Era Una/es Persona Tan Linda, Una Voz Lindisama. Que Libro. In Paz Descanse Celia mi Negrita Cubana Y La Reina. How sad it makes me, Yet How Happy also, Because Celia Was/Is A Beautiful Person, So Beautiful, Beautiful Voice. Great Book, Rest in Peace Celia My Cuban Queen.. Highly Recommend this book. I have it in spanish. Makes Me Feel proud to be of Cuban Parents and Family.

Nice that it is Celia's own words, but it really does not give details about her life the way I wanted. Mostly focuses on artistic accomplishments.

what a wonderful, well written book about an amazing women. I can highly recommend this book.

In this book we can read the story of Celia Cruz in her own words. She shares important anecdotes with the reader, many of them so emotional that they absolutely will move your heart and you will be able to know the wonderful woman she was. An excellent example of courage, perseverance, self-esteem and faith to all the immigrants and all the people of this country!

The book is like new I was very impressed

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