

Los Músicos de Cesar E. Chavez Avenue



ALEXANDRA CHAVEZ
STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

The street formerly known as Brooklyn Avenue runs throughout East Los Angeles into the heart of Downtown Los Angeles. East Los Angeles is the home to working class immigrants predominately from Mexico. The city reflects the culture of immigrant parents and their American children. Walking down Cesar E. Chavez Avenue, one can't help but be engulfed in the Mexican American culture that thrives in the environment and its inhabitants.

Norteño musicians looking for work congregate at the corner of Chicago Street and Cesar E. Chavez Avenue in front of El Appetito restaurant. Norteño music, which literally means "northern" music in Spanish, is popular both in Mexico and the United States, especially among the Mexican American immigrant community.



The norteño sound developed in the 19th century when European immigrants from Germany and Czechoslovakia brought the accordion and the polka rhythm to northern Mexico. A blend of the traditional Mexican Style and the polka rhythm shaped the sound of norteño music.

The intensity in all aspects of the culture and vibrancy of the atmosphere lures people to Cesar E. Chavez Avenue. It is a place of familiarity and comfort for immigrant families striving to keep their beliefs and customs in a foreign country. It is a place for the Mexican American identity.