The Very Best Of Diana Krall

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INTRODUCTION: THE TIMELESS APPEAL OF DIANA KRALL

There are few voices in modern jazz as instantly recognizable and deeply comforting as that of Diana Krall. With her sultry contralto, masterful piano playing, and an uncanny ability to breathe new life into both timeless standards and contemporary gems, she has carved out a unique space in the music world. For decades, Krall has been the gateway artist who leads listeners from casual appreciation to genuine jazz devotion. Among her extensive catalog of studio albums and live recordings, one title stands out as the definitive entry point and collection of her finest moments: **The Very Best Of Diana Krall**. This compilation is more than a mere “greatest hits” collection; it is a curated journey through the most significant milestones of an extraordinary career. In this article, we explore the essence of this superb compilation, detailing its tracks, the artist’s evolution, and why it remains an essential possession for any music lover.

WHO IS DIANA KRALL? A BRIEF PORTRAIT OF A JAZZ ICON

Born in Nanaimo, British Columbia, Canada, Diana Krall began playing piano at a young age and was immersed in the jazz tradition by her father, an avid record collector. Her formal studies at the Berklee College of Music and later under the mentorship of legendary pianist Jimmy Rowles shaped her into a formidable instrumentalist. Krall emerged in the 1990s with a sophisticated blend of vocal and piano artistry. While many jazz singers rely solely on their voice, Krall excels equally as an accompanist and soloist, often playing intricate solos that rival the best pianists of her generation. Her breakthrough came with the 1999 album *When I Look in Your Eyes*, which won a Grammy and set the stage for global stardom. Over the years, she has collaborated with the likes of Tony Bennett, Ray Charles, and Elvis Costello (whom she later married). Her style transcends nostalgia; she makes the Great American Songbook feel fresh, intimate, and relevant. The Very Best Of Diana Krall captures the arc of this journey—from her early trio work to her orchestral arrangements and more pop-inflected explorations.

AN OVERVIEW OF THE VERY BEST OF DIANA KRALL

Released in 2007 by Verve Records, **The Very Best Of Diana Krall** is a single-disc compilation that spans her early career through 2006. It features 15 tracks that highlight her evolution as both a vocalist and a pianist. The album includes songs from her most acclaimed albums, such as *Only Trust Your Heart* (1995), *All for You: A Dedication to the Nat King Cole Trio* (1996), *Love Scenes* (1997), *When I Look in Your Eyes* (1999), *The Look of Love* (2001), *The Girl in the Other Room* (2004), and *From This Moment On* (2006). Importantly, the collection also includes two brand-new recordings at the time: "You Go to My Head" and a live version of "Mountain Greenery." The tracklist is a perfectly weighted balance of beloved standards, sultry ballads, and swinging mid-tempo numbers. For listeners asking, "Where should I start with Diana Krall?" the answer has always been this album.

Track Listing and Highlights

The compilation opens with the lush, romantic "‘S Wonderful" from *The Look of Love* – a perfect statement of intent. Other standout tracks include the gently persuasive "Peel Me a Grape," the hauntingly beautiful "I’ve Got You Under My Skin," and the deeply personal "Departure Bay," which reveals Krall’s songwriting prowess. For many fans, **The Very Best Of Diana Krall** is also notable for including one of her definitive performances: "The Look of Love." This Burt Bacharach classic became a signature hit, showcasing her ability to transform a pop standard into a jazz masterpiece. The inclusion of "Narrow Daylight" and "Almost Blue" demonstrates her later shift toward more introspective, original material. Throughout the collection, the production is impeccable, and the musicianship – from Krall’s trio to the larger orchestral backdrops – is world-class.

KEY TRACKS ON THE VERY BEST OF DIANA KRALL

While every track on this compilation is worthy of attention, a few deserve special mention for their cultural impact and artistic excellence.

"The Look of Love"

Perhaps the most famous recording of Krall’s career, this 2001 rendition of the Burt Bacharach/Hal David standard is a masterclass in mood. With a gentle bossa nova rhythm, subtle strings, and Krall’s warm, breathy vocals, the song became a hit on both jazz and adult contemporary charts. It embodies the refined sensuality that defines much of her work.

"Peel Me a Grape"

Written by Dave Frishberg, this sassy, witty number allows Krall to display her playful side. Backed by a swinging trio, she delivers the lyrics with perfect comic timing and a wink. It’s a reminder that jazz can be both sophisticated and fun.

"Departure Bay"

An original composition from the 2004 album *The Girl in the Other Room*, this song is a poignant reflection on Krall’s childhood home in British Columbia. Co-written with her husband Elvis Costello, it shows a more vulnerable, deeply personal side of the artist. The piano melody is simple and melancholic, allowing her voice to carry the emotional weight.

"Fly Me to the Moon"

Krall’s version of this classic is notable for its intimate, trio-only arrangement. Her piano playing is front and center, and she swings effortlessly. The recording captures the warmth of a late-night club performance.

WHY THE VERY BEST OF DIANA KRALL MATTERS

Compilation albums often get dismissed as filler or cash grabs, but **The Very Best Of Diana Krall** is a carefully assembled anthology that serves multiple crucial purposes. For the longtime

fan, it collects essential tracks from different phases of her career in one cohesive listen. For the new listener, it provides the most efficient and rewarding introduction to her music. Moreover, the compilation underscores Krall's role as a bridge between traditional jazz and contemporary audiences. In an era when jazz was struggling for mainstream relevance, Krall's recordings consistently topped charts and introduced millions to the timeless beauty of the Great American Songbook. This album encapsulates her ability to be simultaneously classic and modern. The production quality across all tracks is consistently high, and the sequencing is thoughtful – it moves from upbeat swing to balladry to introspective originals without any jarring transitions.

DIANA KRALL'S MUSICAL STYLE AND INFLUENCE

To fully appreciate **The Very Best Of Diana Krall**, one must understand the musical DNA that runs through her work. Krall is deeply rooted in the piano trio tradition, following the lineage of Nat King Cole, Bill Evans, and Oscar Peterson. Her style is marked by a restrained, tasteful approach to chord voicings, a strong sense of swing, and a delicate touch. As a vocalist, she avoids excessive ornamentation, preferring to let the melody breathe. Her voice is often described as a "whiskey-voiced" mezzo-soprano, capable of conveying both world-weary wisdom and girlish innocence. Krall's influence extends beyond jazz; she has inspired countless contemporary artists to explore standards and has opened the door for a more intimate, vocalist-pianist approach. Listening to tracks on this compilation reveals not only her technical prowess but also her emotional intelligence – she knows exactly when to pull back and when to let a phrase soar.

HOW TO BEST EXPERIENCE THE VERY BEST OF DIANA KRALL

This album is designed for immersive listening. The ideal setting for **The Very Best Of Diana Krall** might be a quiet evening with a glass of wine, or perhaps a long drive at twilight. The smooth production and dynamic range lend themselves to high-quality headphones or a good stereo system. Listeners may want to track the lyrics along with the music, as Krall's interpretations often bring new shades of meaning to familiar words. For those interested in the piano arrangements, paying attention to her solos – especially on tracks like "I'll String Along with You" and "Garden in the Rain" – reveals her deep improvisational skill. This compilation also works wonderfully as background music for dinner parties, but its true depth emerges when given focused attention.

CRITICISMS AND CONSIDERATIONS

No compilation is perfect, and some dedicated fans have noted that **The Very Best Of Diana Krall** omits certain fan favorites from her early albums, such as "All or Nothing at All" or "You're My Everything." Additionally, the album stops at 2006, which means later masterpieces like *Quiet Nights* (2009), *Glad Rag Doll* (2012), and *Turn Up the Quiet* (2017) are not represented. For a more comprehensive overview, one might also consider the 2017 anthology *Turn Up the Quiet* or the triple-disc *The Very Best of Diana Krall* (e.g., Australian version with bonus tracks). Nevertheless, this single-disc set remains the most accessible and consistently high-quality introduction to her work. It serves its purpose beautifully: to make the case that Diana Krall is one of the most important jazz artists of the last 30 years.

CONCLUSION: THE ESSENTIAL COLLECTION FOR JAZZ LOVERS

The Very Best Of Diana Krall is more than a greatest hits album – it is a testament to an artist who has consistently delivered excellence across decades. By curating her most significant recordings from 1995 to 2006, this compilation offers a complete portrait of an artist who is both a master of tradition and a modern innovator. Whether you are a lifelong jazz aficionado or a curious newcomer, this album is an ideal starting point and a reliable source of beauty. Krall's voice, her piano, and her impeccable taste are on full display here, reminding us why she continues to be one of the best-selling jazz artists of all time. If you have not yet experienced the magic of Diana Krall, let **The Very Best Of Diana Krall** be your guide. If you already know her work, this collection will feel like a warm reunion with an old friend.