

# Music & Nightlife

Edited by  
**Rob Garratt**  
robert.garratt@itp.com

## Bruno: what you should know

As Hawaiian hitmaker **Bruno Mars** prepares to make his UAE debut at the Dubai Media City Amphitheatre, *Rob Garratt* brings you the lowdown on the pint-sized pop sensation

**MORE MARS!**  
Check out this month's *Time Out Style* for an exclusive interview with the star, free with this issue in all large stores.

Nice little Bruno Mars grew up quickly. Remember 2011's syrupy mega-hit 'Just the Way You Are'? It manipulated the emotional funny bone like a well-executed rom-com, the singer supplying the perfect, breezy answer to the dreaded question 'Does this make me look [insert adjective]'. Then the video to follow-up (and second worldwide number one) 'Grenade' featured the toothsome singer vowing to catch a grenade and lie in front of a train for the object of his affections. How sweet.

Then sugary Mars wrote a new pick-up line with last year's sophomore album *Unorthodox Jukebox*. On the Prince-goes-stadium-rock 'Gorilla', he dangles the bizarre prospect of 'you and me baby... like gorillas'. Off the same album, his third US Billboard number one 'Locked Out of Heaven', is never far from UAE radio airplay. Like the rest of his material, it's derivative of other artists (in this case The Police), yet this time more raw and raunchy. So as Mars soars over the sea to make his UAE debut in Dubai Media City on Friday April 12, we do our homework on the Hawaiian hitmaker.



### Mars isn't his real name.

**And neither is Bruno.** His real name is Peter Gene Hernandez, but his father nicknamed him 'Bruno' because of his resemblance to Italian wrestler Bruno Sammartino. He adopted the stage name Mars after moving to California in 2003, because 'a lot of girls say I'm out of this world.'

### Your most memorable trips to Mars

**We asked @timeoutdubai followers for their favourite Bruno tunes...**

**@LucyScholey:** 'Just the Way You Are' was the song I got married to @jamo2017 in Sydney. I love it.

**@Mjeyung:** 'When I Was Your Man'. I love the lyrics. You don't hear such songs so often these days.

**@yangsmind:** 'Grenade'! Lyrics that cut to the heart and @BrunoMars' gorgeous vocals. #nuffsaid

**@ZaDjale:** 'Natalie' – besides the amazing production work, I can relate to it on SO many occasions.

### But he is a genuine 21st Century cultural melting pot.

He was born one of six children in Honolulu in 1985, to a Puerto Rican/Jewish father of Hungarian/Ukrainian descent and a Filipino mother of Spanish descent.

### Like his idol Michael Jackson, he got into showbiz at an incredibly young age.

Mars' parents were both stage artists, a singer/hula dancer and a percussionist who met performing at the same show. Meanwhile his uncle was an Elvis impersonator, planting the seed for one of Mars' early idols. At age four, Mars began performing five days a week with his family's band, The Love Notes, and at seven he appeared alongside Nicolas Cage in Hollywood comedy *Honeymoon in Vegas* – playing a child Elvis impersonator. **He wasn't always a success.** After moving to California in his late teens, Mars started a thwarted career DJing to pay the bills. He was then signed to Detroit's iconic

Motown records but was dropped. Luckily he later found a deal with Motown's heyday rival Atlantic. **He isn't as innocent as he seems.** In September 2010, just weeks before the release of his debut album, he was arrested for possession of illegal substances, fined and ordered to complete 200 hours community service.

### Mars is bona-fide awards bait.

Mars has picked up an impressive list of gongs, including last year's Brit Award for Best International Male, the Favourite Pop/Rock Male Artist awards at 2011's American Music Awards, and Favourite Male Artist in last year's People's Choice Awards.

**He's a Twitter magnet.** He has 15 million-plus followers, more than double the UAE's population. *Bruno Mars plays Dubai Media City Amphitheatre on Friday April 12. Regular tickets have sold out – fan pit tickets Dhs595.*

[www.timeouttickets.com](http://www.timeouttickets.com)



### Buyers' guide

#### Our verdict on Mars's two albums

#### *Doo-Wops & Hooligans* (2010)

Jumping through genres, Mars's debut was poised to make him a Bieber-grade pop star for teens. There's no doubt he has the vocal chops, but being only 25 years old when the album was released, Mars spread himself too thin trying to cover all the bases with earnest love songs and eager party anthems that cumulatively don't amount to much. (*Charted at #1 in UK, #3 in US.*) ★★★★★

#### *Unorthodox Jukebox* (2012)

Love is a familiar Mars theme, but he upped the ante here. The now-27-year-old Hawaiian is happy just to howl, as on 'Young Girls'. Smut aside, this is great music. Mars' '80s funk influences are refreshing, there are hip-hop hints in the bassy beats of 'Natalie' and 'Money Makes Her Smile', and ska infusions with a steel pan/air horn mix on 'Show Me'. (*Charted at #1 in UK and US.*) ★★★★★

▶ **NEXT WEEK:** We chat to metal behemoths Metallica ahead of their gig in Abu Dhabi