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**LATIN DANCES FEATURING THE SALSA, CHA-CHA-CHÁ, MAMBO  
AND MERENGUE UNVEILED ON NEW U.S. POSTAGE STAMPS**

WASHINGTON — Kicking off National Hispanic Heritage month, Sept. 15-Oct. 15, the U.S. Postal Service dedicated the Let's Dance/Bailamos stamps which brings to life four sassy Latin dances. The official first-day ceremonies were held in New York City at the Copacabana nightclub and in Miami at the Coconut Grove Expo Center. The 37-cent Let's Dance/Bailamos commemorative stamps are available nationwide today.

“At the Postal Service, we understand the power our stamps have in helping to celebrate American history and culture – in this case, the contributions of Latin American art and dance to American culture,” said David L. Solomon, Vice President, Area Operations, New York Metro, U.S. Postal Service, who dedicated the stamps in New York.

Joining Solomon in dedicating these stamps were Willie Colón, musician and composer; Vonzell Solomon, “American Idol” finalist and former postal carrier; The Copacabana Dancers and Maria Elena Girone, President and Chief Executive Officer of the Puerto Rican Family Institute, Inc. Both stamp artists Edel Rodriquez, who created the Cha-cha-chá stamp, and José Ortega, who created the Salsa stamp signed autographs.

“Now, people all around the country will be able to sway to the left and right, and accent their mail and packages with these high energy stamps that capture the enthusiasm of dancers moving to the beat,” said Anita Bizzotto, Chief Marketing Officer and Executive Vice President, U.S. Postal Service, who dedicated the stamps in Miami.

Joining Bizzotto at the stamp dedication were Manny Diaz, Mayor of Miami and Lissette Gonzales, former Miss Florida. Both stamp artists Sergio Baradat, who created the Mambo stamp, and Rafael Lopez, who created the Merengue stamp signed autographs.

In addition to the official stamp dedication, another celebration was held in Milwaukee, WI, at the 26th Annual National U.S. Hispanic Chamber of Commerce Convention. U.S. Hispanic Chamber of Commerce participants were Michael L. Barrera, President and Chief Executive Officer and David C. Lizárraga, Chairman of the Board of Directors.



Showcasing one of four popular dances on each stamp, four different Hispanic American artists created designs that expressed their personal interpretations of Latin Dance. Although the four stamp images are similar in style, the artists who produced the stamp images never saw the other's work.

The Mambo stamp was created by Sergio Baradat who, as a young child, left Cuba with his parents and immigrated to the United States. Known for its up-tempo beat, fast footwork and sensuous body language, Mambo laid the groundwork for its offshoots: Cha-cha-chá and Salsa.

Salsa stamp creator—artist José Ortega, of New York City and Toronto—was born in Ecuador, grew up in New York City and currently owns a Salsa club in Toronto. Salsa is a nighttime pursuit, danced at the close of day, when cares are left behind.

Capturing the famous Cha-cha-chá in a vivid stamp is a native of El Gabriél, Cuba, artist Edel Rodríguez, who resides in Mt. Tabor, New Jersey. Perceived as sophisticated and more like the European salon-style danzón, the Cha-cha-chá is slower and more constrained than the up-tempo moves of its sister, the Mambo.

To complete the Latin dance stamp series, the Merengue was captured by freelance illustrator Rafael López, native of Mexico City and currently residing in San Diego. The Merengue is a mix of European and African derived styles, slowly descending from a diverse population and re-emerging in the first half of the 20th century to become the national dance of the Dominican Republic.

The Postal Service is dedicated to honoring National Hispanic Heritage Month and plans to have a month long celebration full of festivities. In conjunction with this dedication, there will be numerous community events throughout the country. Each of these events will provide an opportunity for the Postal Service to support community outreach, celebrate Hispanic Heritage and showcase our products and services.

Current U.S. stamps, as well as a free comprehensive catalog, are available by toll-free phone order at 1-800-STAMP-24. A wide selection of stamps, other philatelic items, and licensed products are available at the Postal Store at [www.usps.com/shop](http://www.usps.com/shop). Beautifully framed prints of original stamp art for delivery straight to the home or office are available at [www.postalartgallery.com](http://www.postalartgallery.com).

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