

# The Baja Marimbas

## “Lazy Days”

Listening to this music washes me with memories of my dad. His marimba playing always reflected his personality: honest, warm, and often humorous.

Growing up as the son of Julius Wechter was like having a passport to the exciting worlds of music and showbiz...not just the glamour of meeting celebrities and staying in fancy hotels (Dad often took our family along on tour!)...but also the greater thrill of seeing how he created his magic: the songwriting, arranging, rehearsals, and recording sessions.

We'd be driving, and Dad would pull the car over so he could jot a melody down on the back of an envelope. Or, once cassette tapes came about, he'd whistle a phrase into a small recorder. At night, I'd lie in bed hearing those same melodies drift through the house, as he crafted his songs on the piano.

Attending a recording session was a special treat. I remember the camaraderie of the musicians - the joking and the smoking and, most of all, the talent and professionalism of studio players at the top of their game. Mixing ran late into the night, after which Dad would come home with vinyl test pressings he'd proudly play for my mother.

Julius was definitely old school. As a teenager, he loved playing jazz with his friends. He would have hated today's technology, where musicians often record their parts alone in their home studios and email each other computer files to merge together.

“The Baja Marimbas” was formed when a few of Julius's friends coaxed him out of retirement just so they could jam together for fun. These tracks were recorded in much the same way: live...unedited...everyone in the same room.

For Dad, it must have been like being a teenager with his pals again.

— David Wechter

This album originally came out in 1990 on the Bay Cities label with the title, *New Deal*. I'd become best friends with David Wechter and, of course, I'd met his entire family and become close with them, too. I'd loved the Baja Marimba Band back in the day, and I loved being around David's dad, Julius. He even played percussion on a couple of songs I'd written that I'd recorded and included on an album in the late 1980s. I knew he'd been working with a new group and one day I just made the suggestion that we do a CD – they were all for it and it happened very quickly. We recorded it direct to two-track – live, no mixing, just that wonderful band doing what they did so well. The results, I thought, were wonderful. Less than three years later, Bay Cities was out of business and all its CDs were out of print. I was very proud of the Baja album and have always wanted to bring it out again, and now seemed like the right time. David found us some fun bonus tracks to include, and I'm just so pleased to bring this back into the world. It was important for any number of reasons: My feelings for Julius and the rest of the Wechters, my love of the music, and because it was one of my first attempts at what was about to become my full-time vocation – album producing. For those who haven't heard it before, you're in for a treat. We've given it a new, fresh mastering and we hope you'll enjoy the result.

— Bruce Kimmel