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WORLD CUP MEETS THE DANCE FLOOR AT COPA DEL RAVE

BY MARK STEFANOS



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SPORTS

BEAUTIFUL GAME AND THE BEAT: THE WORLD CUP MEETS THE DANCEFLOOR AT COPA DEL RAVE

BY MARK STEFANOS

The World Cup has descended on LA, bringing an endless party atmosphere with it — between the actual matches you can catch in Inglewood, the impromptu street celebrations, and watch parties across the city. One of our favorite ways to gather is [Copa del Rave](#), which unites the beautiful game with LA's beautiful party scene at two of our most legendary clubs, Academy and Exchange, for a series of watch parties.

What began in 2019 as a music-industry charity soccer tournament has evolved into a full-scale cultural activation: giant screens stream the games, while big-name DJs and some of our favorite local party crews program sets tied to the nations competing on-screen. Before and after the final whistle, the dancefloors stay hot.

Each matchday experience pairs live soccer with beats that reflect the teams on the pitch — whether Claude VonStroke and DJ Minx holding it down for the U.S., Reggaeton Rave, Gasolina, DoKnow El DJ, and Bolo's Vibraza Records representing Mexico, or Blaq Pages, Foreigner, and Afrobeats To The World channeling the African diaspora.

Curator crews including 9AM Banger, Haitian Spotlight, and Pangea Sound bring their own communities into the room, while specialty drinks and a rotating lineup of LA food trucks complete the immersive, borderless vibe. Proceeds will benefit [Common Goal](#), an organization that works to expand access to soccer for kids worldwide.

"Hosting the inaugural World Cup match watch party in LA was a huge moment not just for Vibraza Records, but the community as a whole," DJ [Bolo](#) tells *LA Weekly*. "Seeing the Latino dance community get together, forming a line to enter as early as 10 a.m., to celebrate our culture was something straight out of a dream. The energy was amazing, everyone was respectful, and Mexico bringing home the win just made for a great day and even better celebration. Big thank you to LA for the warm welcome and

thank you to all our special guests who made the party unforgettable."

[The Haitian Spotlight](#) crew echoed the sentiment: "We saw an incredible opportunity to celebrate Haiti's return to the World Cup stage in a big way," they said. "Copa del Rave created the perfect platform to amplify that excitement by bringing together music, culture, and football in one unforgettable experience. Being part of an event featuring DJs like Foreigner alongside our own DJ Trip,

while welcoming fans from across the diaspora and along the West Coast, made it feel like much more than an event. It felt like a cultural moment."

The residency runs through mid-July, with a stacked roster that also includes Todd Edwards, Ardan, Cut Snake, Life On Planets, Soraya, Kana Hishiya, and many more still to be announced.

To understand how a 2019 charity kickabout grew into this ambitious World Cup takeover, and what it means for LA's



Copa del Rave 2026

PHOTO: @MATTVELA



@MATTTVELA

music and soccer communities, we spoke with **Alastair Duncan** of [Infamous PR](#), co-founder of Copa del Rave.

LA Weekly: You've been running Copa del Rave for seven years — why did you start it? How has it developed over the years?

Alastair Duncan: The initial idea for Copa was dreamt up over a late-night game of football at a music festival, Dirtybird Campout. But it was really about combining two worlds, dance music and football. Once the name came to us, we knew we had to do it, and a charity tournament was the perfect initial vehicle for it. There is something unique about music and sport, they are both incredibly powerful at getting people's barriers down and allowing you to forget about everything else. The Copa tournament is great, because it's not that often that in dance music you can take a bunch of your peers and artists, and get rid of all the posturing, and just run around with each other. Sport is a great leveler in that

regard. It's become a really nice day of the year to get people together and raise money for good causes.

[When] the World Cup was coming up, we wanted to try something bigger. We toyed with a few options, and then we settled on the Residency and the Watch Party concept. Luckily my Copa co-founder, Jonathan McDonald, has been throwing parties all his life, and so has our partner on the Residency, Sal Moreno, so it was a great group to move this project along. We were fortunate enough to get two of the best venues in LA on-board as partners, Academy and Exchange, and since then it's been heads down with trying to book talent and bring on partners that aligned with as many of the 64 teams playing as we could.

You must love soccer, where does that love come from?

I grew up playing football, I have basically played every week, barring injury, since the age of about 5 or 6. I was never that great at it, but it's a constant, and it's

become even more important to me as I have gotten older. It's a great way to disconnect for me. There is a great football culture in England, but playing in LA is cool, because you play with so many people from all over the world whom you might not connect with anywhere else.

How do the vibes of the World Cup and dance music complement each other?

The World Cup, and international football in general, induces an incredible amount of passion. If you're able to imbue a bit of that energy into a dancefloor after the game, you're going to have a cracking party with a special atmosphere. The DJs are really proud to be playing for their country and the crowd are also feeling that energy. You throw in a last-minute goal, or a big win, and it's a recipe for a really good party. I think even after a loss, people will still want to dance and enjoy the World Cup moment together, as it only comes around every four years.

You've partnered with [Common Goal](#)

— what do you think about the power soccer has in youth development?

Access to youth football is really important. I know for me, football was the most accessible sport. It didn't cost any money to play in club youth teams and leagues in England. We'd always just be taking a ball to the park and kicking it around as kids and teenagers. I think that the ability for anyone to play, basically anywhere, without any special kit or equipment, is one of the reasons it is the biggest sport in the world. It's also a team sport, which, if coached well, can give you great life lessons, in terms of showing up for each other, taking responsibility and things like that. Charity has always been a central pillar of Copa, and to be able to support an awesome group like Common Goal, that is striving to increase access to football across the globe, with our World Cup project, is a great feeling. 🙌

Visit [@CopaDelRave](#) for more information and tickets to upcoming games.

FOOD

WHAT'S POPPING UP

The West Side Oyster Club and a Free Soccer Block Party

BY MICHELE STUEVEN

Santa Monica culinary legends [Greg and Yunnies Morena](#) are extending their tentacles and will open the [West Side Oyster Club](#) today, Friday, June 26. The Morenas' connection to Santa Monica's food and hospitality runs deep. Yunnies' Korean-American parents founded SM Pier Seafood, now [The Albright](#) on the Santa Monica Pier, in 1977.

The new seafood concept features everything from lobster rolls to Grand Cru Caviar. Also, it features a raw bar with West and East coast's shellfish, a tiered seafood tower, fried oyster and shrimp po'boys, as well as shanty classics that include shrimp and chips, fried calamari, clam chowder bread bowls, and a kids' menu. There are three sizes of caviar plates, served on ice with crème fraîche, potato chips, and chives, along with a full bar.

The space which previously housed Jenny Morton's Blue Plate Oysterette is designed and refreshed by Los Angeles-based David Alvarez of [Studio Alvarez](#), with a mix of painted and natural wood highlights, in a faded palette of white, blue, and nods to yellow, with large-scale art giving a nod to the local Dog Town culture and the skateboarders who used to hitch rides on the back of the Santa Monica Blue Busses on Ocean Ave.

[Randy's Donuts](#) is celebrating America's 250th with a limited-time lineup of red, white, and blue donuts available at all locations now through Sunday, July 5, and includes celebratory offerings across classic, deluxe, and premium varieties, including the 250th Long John, Red Sprinkles Iced Cake, Blue Raised with Sprinkles, Red

Texas Decorated, and Vanilla Texas Decorated.

Randy's is also offering a 250th Celebration Cake for \$15, featuring two Texas-sized donuts, a Blue Raised donut, and a red, white, and blue



COURTESY OF WEST SIDE OYSTER CLUB

Randy's Round. The build-your-own cake also comes with five streamers and is served in a signature Randy's box.

[Calle Espolón](#) is throwing a free soccer block party on Saturday, July 11, from 2 p.m. to 8 p.m. at [57 Woodward Ave.](#) in Venice.

The tequila brand will transform the beachfront venue into a free celebration of soccer culture, local businesses, and Los Angeles creatives

amid a summer packed with soccer excitement. Free and open to all 21+, expect a block party built for epic plays and perfect pours, headlined by live DJ sets from [Dina BN](#) and [Pangea Sound](#). Fans can expect a street-side mini pitch, giveaways, custom jersey experiences, fan activations, local street food from LA vendors, and plenty of specialty Espolón cocktails flowing all day. Must be 21+ and have a valid ID to enter. [\[A\]](#)



July 4 dozen box.

COURTESY OF RANDY'S DONUTS