

# Table of Contents

Intro .....	3
Chapter 1: Get Up Offa That Beat .....	4
Chapter 2: ¿Habras Salsa? Melody & Language .....	16
Chapter 3: Swing in Perfect Harmony .....	23
Chapter 4: Turn the Beat Around; Montunos in 3:2 .....	35
Chapter 5: Minor Variations .....	43
Chapter 6: Hot Sauce! Spicing Up the Montuno Rhythm .....	52
Chapter 7: Three More Essential Montunos .....	64
Mini Discography .....	70
Mini Bibliography .....	71
Acknowledgements .....	72

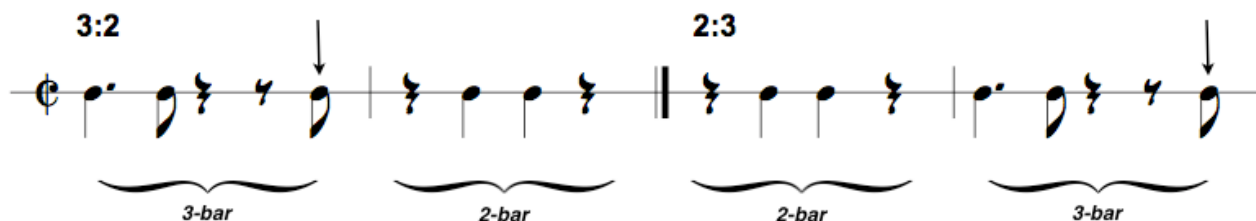
### \*\*\*Also available: Play-along tracks\*\*\*

Practice every montuno in The Gringo's E-Guide to Salsa Piano with this set of play-along Mp3s. Includes 8 Mp3 tracks which serve to practice all montunos featured in the book. Tracks are 2:10 in length and have acoustic bass, claves, congas, bongos and timbales (cáscara). Go to <http://www.vanessarodrigues.com/salsa-ebook>

## Chapter 1: Get Up Offa That Beat

### Rumba Clave

There is only one teeny-tiny difference between **Son Clave** and **Rumba Clave**: in Rumba Clave, the 3rd note of the 3-bar of the clave comes one 8th note later.



 see video example #4

**NOTE:** the difference between the **Son Clave** and **Rumba Clave** is *stylistic only*. The phrasing will follow the same rules regardless of whether it's Son Clave or Rumba Clave

**TIP:** It is WAY more important to understand the difference between **clave direction (2:3 vs 3:2)** than between **clave style (son vs rumba)!!**

For simplicity's sake, the rest of the examples in this book will only refer to **Son Clave!**

## Chapter 2: ¿Hablas Salsa? Melody & Language

### Montuno #3

One very common melodic device is to lead up to an important melody note using the two semi tones that come right before it. In the following example, the important melody note is G, and we are using F and F# as *passing tones* to lead up to it.

The image displays musical notation for a Montuno piece. It consists of three staves: a treble clef staff, a bass clef staff, and a Clave staff. The time signature is 2:3 and the key signature is C major. The piano accompaniment features a melody in the treble clef and a bass line in the bass clef. Red arrows indicate the melodic path from F to F# to G. A downward arrow points to the G note. The Clave staff shows a 2:3 rhythm pattern.



see video example #14

**REMINDER:** you can always remove the doubled octave in the RH pinky and the montuno will still sound almost exactly the same.

## Chapter 3: Swing in Perfect Harmony

### Montuno #3 (continued)

Now watch carefully ... to harmonize this in 10ths, we will take the three chords in the RH and bring them all up to the *next inversion*; the original 1st-inversion C chord will now be played in *2nd-inversion* with the 5th in the melody, and the G and F chords in *1st inversion*, with the 3rd in the melody.

The LH will stay exactly where it was, and *voilà*, you now have a montuno line harmonized in 10ths:

**NOTE:** all RH melody notes will be up a 3rd from where they were originally, so this also includes the passing notes.

The original passing notes F and F# will now become A and A#.

The image shows a piano line with four chords: C, F, G, and F. The right hand (RH) is harmonized in 10ths, with the melody notes shifted up a 3rd from the original. The left hand (LH) remains in its original position. A bracket labeled '10th' indicates the interval between the original and the new RH notes.



see video example #22

## Chapter 4: Turn the Beat Around; Montunos in 3:2

And here is montuno #2a shown in both the original 2:3 and then in 3:2, with exactly the same differences in rhythm and format:

**2:3**

Musical score for Montuno #2a in 2:3 time signature. The score is written for piano and includes a Clave line. The piano part consists of two staves: a treble clef staff and a bass clef staff. The Clave line is written in a single staff below the piano part. The time signature is 2:3. The key signature is one flat (B-flat). The score is divided into two measures. The first measure contains the notes D4, F4, A4, B4, G4, F4, E4, D4. The second measure contains the notes D4, F4, A4, B4, G4, F4, E4, D4. The Clave line shows a 2:3 rhythm pattern: two eighth notes followed by a quarter note, then a quarter note followed by two eighth notes. Annotations include: "(second C on repeat)" pointing to the second C in the first measure, "(B-flat tied)" pointing to the B-flat in the second measure, "Dm7" above the first measure, "G7" above the first measure, "Cm7" above the second measure, "F7" above the second measure, and "(C played 2x)" pointing to the C in the second measure.

**3:2**

Musical score for Montuno #2a in 3:2 time signature. The score is written for piano and includes a Clave line. The piano part consists of two staves: a treble clef staff and a bass clef staff. The Clave line is written in a single staff below the piano part. The time signature is 3:2. The key signature is one flat (B-flat). The score is divided into two measures. The first measure contains the notes D4, F4, A4, B4, G4, F4, E4, D4. The second measure contains the notes D4, F4, A4, B4, G4, F4, E4, D4. The Clave line shows a 3:2 rhythm pattern: a quarter note followed by two eighth notes, then a quarter note followed by two eighth notes. Annotations include: "(C tied on repeat)" pointing to the C in the first measure, "(Bb played 2x)" pointing to the B-flat in the second measure, "Dm7" above the first measure, "G7" above the first measure, "Cm7" above the second measure, "F7" above the second measure, and "(C tied)" pointing to the C in the second measure.

## Chapter 5: Minor Variations

### Montuno #3

The major 3rd of both the I chord (Cm) and the IV chord (Fm) become minor, but the V chord (G) always stays major.

This progression comes straight from the *Harmonic Minor* scale.

The musical notation for Montuno #3 is presented in three staves. The top staff is the right-hand piano accompaniment, the middle staff is the left-hand piano accompaniment, and the bottom staff is the clave pattern. The key signature is two flats (B-flat and E-flat), and the time signature is 2:3. The progression consists of four measures, each with a chord and a melodic line. The chords are Cm, Fm, G, and Fm. The melodic line in the right hand features a sequence of notes: C4, B-flat4, A-flat4, G4, F4, E-flat4, D4, C4. The left hand provides a harmonic accompaniment with chords and single notes. The clave pattern is a 2:3 pattern, consisting of two eighth notes followed by a quarter note, then a quarter rest followed by a quarter note, and finally a quarter rest followed by a quarter note.

2:3 Cm minor 3 Fm G major 3 Fm minor 3

Clave

 see video example #32

## Chapter 6: Hot Sauce! Spicing Up the Montuno Rhythm

### Montuno #3, Rhythmic Variation #1

The musical score is written in 2:3 time. The piano part consists of two staves: a treble clef staff and a bass clef staff. The treble staff begins with a C major chord, followed by an F major chord, a G major chord, and another F major chord. The bass staff provides a harmonic accompaniment with eighth and quarter notes. Below the piano part is a single staff labeled 'Clave' showing the characteristic 2:3 rhythm pattern with eighth and quarter notes.

 *see video example #37*

## Chapter 7: Three More Essential Montunos

### Montuno #6

This is a classic fun-with-bass-players montuno!

One of the most delicious things about salsa piano is playing melodies in 10ths with the bass player!

In this montuno in C-minor, we descend from I (Cm), down through the flat-VII (Bb), flat-VI (Ab) to V (G).

The musical score for Montuno #6 is presented in three staves: Piano, Bass, and Clave. The key signature is C-minor (three flats) and the time signature is common time (C). The Piano part features a melody of eighth notes in the right hand and a bass line of eighth notes in the left hand. The Bass part mirrors the piano bass line. The Clave part shows a standard 3-2 clave rhythm. Chord symbols are placed above the piano staff: Cm, Bb, Ab, and G7. A line labeled '10th' points to the first bar of the piano part, highlighting the alignment of the piano and bass lines.

 **see video example #44**

In the first bar you can see where the montuno lines up in 10ths with the bass.