

Selena Quintanilla-Pérez, known simply as Selena, was an American singer, songwriter, and fashion designer who became one of the most beloved Latin music stars in the world. She was often called the “Queen of Tejano Music.” *Tejano music* is a style of music from Texas that blends Mexican and American influences, including polka, country, and pop.

She was born in 1971 in Lake Jackson, Texas, to a Mexican American family. From an early age, Selena showed incredible talent for singing. Her father, Abraham Quintanilla, recognized her gift and formed a family band called Selena y Los Dinos, with Selena as the lead singer, her brother A.B. on bass, and her sister Suzette on drums.

At first, Selena faced challenges because Tejano music was dominated by male performers, and female singers were not taken as seriously. But her powerful voice, stage presence, and charisma quickly won over audiences. *Charisma* means a special charm or appeal that attracts and inspires people.

In the 1980s and early 1990s, Selena began to rise in popularity. She released albums in Spanish, and her music included love songs, dance hits, and ballads. Her unique style mixed traditional Tejano sounds with pop, R&B, and Latin rhythms, which helped her reach a wide audience.

One of Selena’s major breakthroughs came in 1987, when she won the Tejano Music Award for Female Vocalist of the Year. She continued to win this award every year afterward, proving that she had become a dominant force in the genre.

In 1990, her album *Ven Conmigo* included the hit song “Baila Esta Cumbia”, which became one of her signature songs. Later, in 1992, she released *Entre a Mi Mundo*, which featured the song “Como La Flor.” This song became an anthem and made her a superstar in Latin America as well as the U.S.

Selena was also a talented fashion designer. She loved creating her own outfits and was known for her sparkly bustiers (a type of fitted top) and glamorous stage costumes. She eventually opened two clothing boutiques called “Selena Etc.,” showing her creativity went beyond music.

In 1994, Selena reached a new level of success with her album *Amor Prohibido*, which included hits like “Amor Prohibido” and “Bidi Bidi Bom Bom.” The album was a massive success and earned her a Grammy Award for Best Mexican-American Album, making her the first female Tejano artist to win this honor.

Selena dreamed of crossing over into English-language music to reach an even larger audience. She was working on her first English album, *Dreaming of You*, when tragedy struck. In 1995, she was murdered at the age of 23 by Yolanda Saldívar, the president of her fan club. Her death shocked fans worldwide.

After her death, *Dreaming of You* was released and debuted at number one on the U.S. Billboard charts, proving Selena's potential to become a global pop superstar. Her music continues to inspire and influence artists today.

Selena's legacy lives on through her songs, her fashion, and her story. In 1997, the movie *Selena*, starring Jennifer Lopez, introduced her to a new generation of fans. She is remembered not only as a talented singer but also as a role model for the Latino community and beyond.

In summary, Selena was more than just a singer—she was a cultural icon. She broke barriers for women in Tejano music, brought Latin music into the mainstream, and continues to inspire people with her passion, talent, and vibrant spirit. Her life, though tragically short, left a lasting mark on music history.