Birthplace of Latin Rock

San Francisco was part of Mexico until 1848. Since then, the city has attracted Mexican immigrants, as well as migrant laborers who came from Texas to California’s Central Valley. The sizeable Puerto Rican community dates from 1900, when laborers recruited to work in Hawaii stayed in San Francisco. Immigration from Central and South America, due especially to political violence, increased in the 1970s and 1980s.

The Mission District’s population in the early 20th century included Irish, Polish, and Italian immigrants, but after World War II it became predominantly Latino. Broadway Avenue and North Beach were also known for Latin music clubs in the 1950s.

In the late 1960s, public spaces like Dolores Park, Aquatic Park, and Golden Gate Park became popular gathering places for drummers who played African and Caribbean styles. Congas and timbales helped define the sound of Bay Area Latin rock.