

Maverick Magazine – July 2007

Mike Aiken – *Just Add Salt*
Northwind/Aspirion Records – NW1553-06

★★★★

Play this when you are lazing in the garden on a hot summer's day with a long cool drink in your hand. Then allow the music to take you on a musical cruise around the world.

Mike Aiken has the kind of lifestyle that most people can only dream about. He lives on a 42-foot boat (or cutter) called *Ocean Girl*, with his wife Amy, and they sail the world performing the music they love. Mike is every bit a troubadour, and his music is a pick-me-up for people toiling in this work-a-day world...a veritable tonic in that long cool drink I mentioned! His music encapsulates the places he has visited on his many travels, which is why his sound can move effortlessly from rootsy to Americana and from Celtic/folk to Calypso/Caribbean. The one thing that doesn't change, though, is the way his voice just relaxes you as you listen...best therapy I've been able to find after a hard day in the office!

Mike has written ten of the twelve songs, and a lot of them ensnare his wonderful lifestyle, such as the country calypso styled *No Fishin' Pole* with some lovely harmony vocals from Amy. Other great titles include; *Hillbilly Beach Bum*, *Back To The Beach* and *Fisherman's Wife*. He also does a wonderful version of Lyle Lovett's *If I Had A Boat*. In the liner notes Mike Aiken says about the album title, "Salt...It's that extra bit of spice that can really make the difference. Salt air on the breeze, saltwater under you keel, and salt on the rim of your glass! I wrote and recorded these tunes to add spice to your days, and nights. Accept no substitute...JUST ADD SALT!" Well I'm just off now to top up my glass before hitting replay on the CD player!!