

## Alicia Machado Biography

"Perhaps any woman crowned Miss Universe expects to be offered a recording contract, but that was not my case, because I was not typical". With these words, Alicia sums up her personality and her history.

Alicia Machado Fajardo became famous on May 17, 1996 when she was crowned as Miss Universe in Las Vegas. "That was one of the happiest days of my life. That's when my career started. But my story begins way before. "

Alicia was born in Maracay, Aragua state, on December 6, 1977. Her father, Arturo Machado, is from Spanish descent and a toy store owner, while her mother, Martha Fajardo is of Cuban descent and owns a restaurant.

Alicia always loved learning new things, whatever they were. When she was only 4 years old, she discovered her passion for dancing. "During 12 years, I performed in musical theater. I was part of a dance company until I turned 16. Every year, we performed during two seasons. In August, we would do three weeks of shows, and in December, another two weeks. We did children's musicals, classical and modern dance, and jazz which was my favorite".

Her other passion was music, something she discovered when she was 10 years old and then joined the school's choir. "It wasn't the best experience, because I'm a contralto, my voice is low and it was unusual. They would always put me in the last corner of the church, way far, behind the Christ. But I liked to be on the first-row, with all the other girls. They would give me a chorus to perform, bom-bom, bom. But it wasn't what I really wanted. I like all types of music, but I've always been a rocker, at heart. I love Latin rock. I grew up listening to Mecano, U2, Soda Stereo and also English rock bands such as the Police. And I was always a big, big fan of Alejandra Guzman and Marta Sanchez". But Alicia's day in the sun was still far, far away.

At 15 years old, she graduated from high school and began her college career. She first majored in business administration at the *Universidad Tecnológica del Centro* in Valencia, and later studied law. She only attended college for a year and a half because almost immediately she began working, doing commercials, modeling, and going to castings, trying her luck as an actress. After many failed attempts to land a job in television, she had the opportunity to participate in the Miss Venezuela beauty pageant.

However, there was an enormous difference between her and the majority of young women who dreamt of becoming a beauty queen. That was never Alicia's dream. "I am a Miss by accident", she insists. One of her goals was to make it in show business through acting and singing. Her idea was to become a finalist in the pageant, and use her exposure as a launching pad for her career. Little did she know that at 18 years of age, she would become the most beautiful woman in the universe. And with the crown, Alicia began to write her new history.

During her year as reigning queen, she focused on charity work and humanitarian causes. She even went above and beyond her duties, asking to speak in private with then-president Ernesto Samper of Colombia, with whom she discussed the conflicts along the border with Venezuela. In spite of her achievements, the media focused on just one thing: her weight gain. Those were difficult and challenging times, but the controversy didn't damage Alicia's image. On the contrary, she became one of the most famous Miss Universes - ever. "They made me famous, there is no doubt". Her reknown became a trampoline, and once Alicia returned the crown she was able to use her talent the way she had always intended.

Her original idea was to record an album, but she received tempting offers to star in soap operas (telenovelas). Alicia wisely took advantage of all the opportunities presented to her, not without polishing her skills with several acting coaches in Venezuela, Mexico, and the United States.

Her first telenovela was *Samantha* (1998), and her challenging role won her an ACE award in New York as the New Actress of the Year, and the Midia Award in Spain. She then starred in other two telenovelas, "Infierno en el Paraiso" (1999) in Mexico, and "Mambo y Canela" (2002) in Venezuela.

Tired of just working in novelas, she decided to focus all her energies on her true passion: music. "Three years ago, when I moved to Miami to work on the sitcom "Estamos Unidos", life just showed me the way to reach my dream. From the moment when I returned the Miss Universe crown, I attempted to get a record deal several times, but obviously I did not know how to go about it. Not only was I not prepared as a singer, I didn't know anything about the business aspect of the music industry. All I knew, is that I wanted to sing, that I loved to sing and to write songs, that's it. But during all the years that I was working in show business, I never stopped working for my dream. When I was not working, I was studying. I

worked during the day, and at night I studied music, and took voice and guitar lessons. Besides, all my friends have always been connected to music, in one way or another".

One of those friends, singer and songwriter Ricardo Montaner, helped her to take the first steps in her singing career. Alicia took his advice, beginning with her choosing a good vocal coach, Jose Miguel Velasquez. "We began to work on this project 3 years ago. Jose Miguel not only has been my voice coach, but also the person who helped me write songs, think about the lyrics. He believes in me, not as a product but as an artist. The word "product" bothers me a lot. Jose Miguel thinks that I can not only sing, but also interpret a song, that I can say things, express myself through music." Together, they began this journey that finally bears fruit: Alicia's first record, self titled with 10 songs and a dream come true.

"These are things that are in my heart, things that I lived at a particular moment in time. But perhaps the most important thing is that this record is the work of all of my friends. It has been a collaborative effort. The best thing that has happened to me these past years, is that I've been able to solidify my friendships. That's so important to me, and for my life. It's not something temporary. My friends are always going to be by my side in this journey. I trust that success will follow. People already know me, they know that I was Miss Universe, that I've starred in telenovelas. This year I also hope to work on a movie. They know that I say what I want to say, and they accept that. They gave me permission to be myself, and I intend to take full advantage of that fact".

"I always wanted to sing. Ever since I can remember, music has been part of me", Alicia affirms with solid conviction.

And she has worked arduously so that dream can become a reality.

Slated for an April 13 release, her debut album hits the stores; and under Universal Music Latino's umbrella, the world will be able to witness her enormous talent and impressive performance.

The result is simply spectacular. An album whose main base is rock, fused with ballads and pop, with very romantic and well written lyrics, loaded with intensity and extraordinarily honest "Alicia's style".

"There are two songs written by me, one is titled *Eres*, dedicated to my father; the lyrics are mine and the music was composed by José Miguel Velásquez. The other one is *El País de las maravillas* composed by Fernando Osorio and me. Famed composers and Kike Santander contributed with *Fuiste tu el primero* and *Detrás del olvido*, respectively.

Tracks:

**Como Decirte Que No** (José Miguel Velásquez)  
**El País de las Maravillas** (Alicia Machado-Fernado Osorio)  
**Defintivamente** (José Miguel Velásquez)  
**Eres** (Alicia Machado- José Miguel Velásquez)  
**Porque regresas a mi vida** (José Miguel Velásquez)  
**Detrás Del Olvido** (Kike Santander)  
**Fuiste Tu El Primero** (Franco De Vita)  
**La Vuelta Al Mundo** (Fernando Osorio)  
**Yo soy La Otra** (Rayito)  
**Este Amor No Morirá** (José Miguel Velásquez)

