TOMMY CASTRO CAN'T STOP NOW

"Tommy Castro is a veteran Bay Area soul blues giant…the fury of his guitar is every bit as muscular as his vocals. A thrilling, dynamite-sounding, rollicking party…biting and ballsy." ***–LIVING BLUES***

"Gritty vocals and rollicking guitar licks fit for an arena…strong and soulful. Sit back and enjoy." ***–NO DEPRESSION***

"Tommy Castro is a legend, and he delivers the goods. He sings like a bird and plays the hell out of a guitar. It's been an honor working with him…a magic combination." ***–JOE BONAMASSA***

For four decades, award-winning guitarist, singer, songwriter and bandleader Tommy Castro has made music with fire, soul and hard-earned authority. He's a road-tested blues powerhouse whose passionate vocals, stinging guitar and high-voltage shows have made him one of the genre's most celebrated live performers. *The Washington Post* calls him "phenomenal." *AllMusic* says his music is "astonishing and raw." In 2023, San Jose-born Tommy Castro won his fourth Blues Music Award for B.B. King Entertainer Of The Year. Now, the 10-time BMA winner returns with ***Can't Stop Now***, the 18th album of his career, produced by Joe Bonamassa and Josh Smith. Fueled by an unexpected songwriting reunion, Castro turns a lifetime of blues, soul, and rock 'n' roll into his most personal album.

Bonamassa and Smith loved the newly-written songs that Castro brought them. They built the arrangements and enlisted a world-class cast of musicians, including keyboardist Jeff Babko, bassist Travis Carlton and drummer LaMar Carter, and recorded at the legendary Sunset Sound Studios in Hollywood. Both Bonamassa and Smith were so enamored of the songs, they decided to play on all but one of them. With layered guitars, horns, keys, and meticulous attention to tone, ***Can't Stop Now*** captures the giant sound of classic rock albums without losing Castro's directness and blues grit. According to Castro, "this is the biggest sounding record I've ever made."

Album opener *Eastside Days* is a highly detailed, autobiographical look back at Castro's early adventures in the rough-and-tumble neighborhoods of San Jose. From the hard-driving blues of *League Of My Own* to the breezy, sun-soaked vibe of *Rock My Baby*, *Can't Stop Now* surprises at every turn. On *One Lick At A Time*, built around a Josh Smith riff, Castro steps back to let Bonamassa deliver a searing guitar performance that Castro calls "one of the best guitar solos I've ever heard."

According to Bonamassa, "Josh and I have been Tommy Castro fans for a long time. He brought a giant bag of great, catchy songs. He's a direct link back to Elvin Bishop and Mike Bloomfield and those Bay Area legends. And, as fans first, we wanted to make the very best record." Smith adds, "Tommy's a lifer. He brought his A-game to the sessions…songs with a lot of heart and feeling."

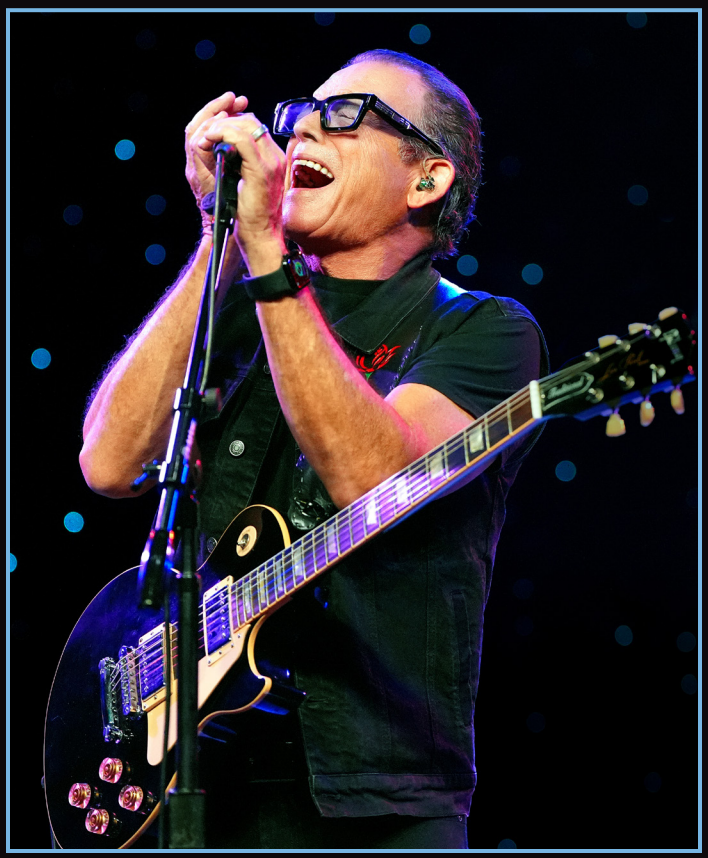
Can't Stop Now reunites Castro with songwriter Mark Gilbert, his nephew, longtime friend, and early musical collaborator. Castro and Gilbert grew up just four years apart, more like brothers than nephew and uncle. They played in bands together and wrote songs that appeared on Castro's early releases (including the tracks *This Soul Is Mine* and *Whole Lotta Soul*) and built a shared, creative songwriting language. After Gilbert was diagnosed with stage-four lung cancer, Castro suggested they start writing again, if only to lift his nephew's spirits. With no thought of making an album, they continued developing song ideas, melodies, and lyrics. Gilbert, a pianist with a sharp ear, ignited Castro's songwriting fuse. "Mark is a stickler," Castro says, "He really strived for quality." The songs arrived with remarkable speed. "After about six good ones," he continues, "I knew we had something going on here. Then, before we knew it, we had more than enough to make a record."

More than a new release, ***Can't Stop Now*** is the sound of a lifelong connection reignited at exactly the right moment, helping transform a dark family trial into a triumphant work of art. With Bonamassa and Smith's help, Castro created one of the most emotionally charged albums of his career. Gilbert is now cancer-free and continues to own and operate Firefish Grill on the Santa Cruz Wharf, the restaurant he has run for four decades. Asked what's good there, Castro laughs: "What's good? It's all good."

BIOGRAPHY:

Born in San Jose, California in 1955, Tommy Castro first picked up a guitar at age 10. He fell under the spell of stars like Elvin Bishop, Taj Mahal and Mike Bloomfield. Almost every major rock and soul act, from Ike and Tina Turner to Janis Joplin to Tower Of Power, toured through the area, and Castro was at every show. He saw John Lee Hooker, Albert King, and Buddy Guy and Junior Wells at a local club, JJ's Blues Bar. Castro often jammed at JJ's, dreaming of busting out and making a name for himself. He created his own personal sound and style by mixing the blues, R&B and funk music he loved into his own, instantly recognizable brand of uplifting, soul-healing music.

As his reputation spread, Tommy played in several Bay Area bands, quickly making a name for himself as a hot live artist bursting with talent. In 1985, he became lead singer and guitarist for the regionally well-known blues band NiteCry before joining popular Warner Brothers' artists The Dynatones, gigging all over the country. He formed the first Tommy Castro Band in 1992 and has not stopped touring since. After a series of successful releases on various labels, Tommy Castro joined Alligator Records in 2009. His label debut, ***Hard Believer***, launched to massive popular and critical acclaim. His subsequent albums, each with its own distinctive sound, style and well thought-out production, drew more and more fans to Castro's now-storied live performances. *No Depression* says, "Castro plays gritty, string-bending blues like a runaway train....a glorious blend that rocks the soul and lifts the spirits."



In 2023, Castro received the prestigious Blues Music Award for B.B. King Entertainer Of The Year for the fourth time. He's now taken home a total of 10 Blues Music Awards and is among the genre's most decorated artists. His relentless road-dog approach—gig after gig, 150 nights a year—continues to earn him loyal, lifelong fans everywhere he plays.

In early 2025, Castro released ***Closer to the Bone***, a raw, unvarnished, critical and fan favorite. The album went straight to the top of the *Living Blues* chart. At the 2026 Blues Music Awards, Castro won Blues Rock Artist of the Year and Song of the Year (for *Can't Catch A Break*). He landed the cover of *Vintage Guitar* magazine, where he was celebrated for his enduring tone and his decades as a road warrior. On the road, around the world, Castro and his band The Painkillers—bassist Randy McDonald, keyboardist Dave Fleschner and drummer Stewart Burr—are operating at the absolute peak of their powers.

TOMMY CASTRO ON ALLIGATOR RECORDS:

2027 *Can't Stop Now*
2025 *Closer To The Bone*
2021 *A Bluesman Came To Town*
2019 *Killin' It—Live*
2017 *Stompin' Ground*
2015 *Method To My Madness*
2014 *The Devil You Know*
2011 *Tommy Castro Presents*
The Legendary Rhythm & Blues Revue—Live!
2009 *Hard Believer*

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