

# Music of the World

## Chordophones: Spanish and Mexican Plucked Stringed Instruments



**Guitarrón Mexicano** or Mexican Guitar, is a very large deep six-string acoustic bass played in Mariachi groups. It was derived from the 16<sup>th</sup> century Spanish *bajo de uña* which translates “fingernail plucked bass.”



The **Mexican Vihuela** is a five strings guitar-like instrument that is tuned like a guitar. It was influenced by the **Vihuela** (right) which was a 15<sup>th</sup> century Spanish stringed instrument that was fretted and plucked. It was tuned like a lute. (There was also a bowed version, *vihuela de arco*.)



The traditional Mariachi Band consists of two trumpets, two violins, a Mexican vihuela and a guitarrón mexicano, however none of these are examples have five.

Here is a band that has four members: *Mariachi Flor De Toloache*:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-rl26QKPHtE>

This band has five violins, 3 trumpets, a harp, a **Mexican vihuela** and a **guitarrón mexicano**:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vtRn2qmmOes>

Here is singer, Linda Ronstadt accompanied by a large Mariachi Band:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=g95cHSQ8qUI>

Mexican singing superstar, Luis Miguel, shows the sights of Mexican fiesta with a mariachi band and dancers. [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=12\\_eYjSP5G8](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=12_eYjSP5G8)