



From *Obsesión* to *Una Mentirita*: Interview with Henry Santos

Episode 123

En este episodio, nuestro invitado es el bachatero Henry Santos. Nos comparte el significado de su nueva canción *Una mentirita* y su experiencia conociendo a su primo Romeo Santos y formando el grupo Aventura. En nuestra conversación, hablamos sobre su carrera como artista solista y emprendedor, las ventajas de ser bilingüe, y cómo fue la colaboración entre él y Luis Vargas. Henry nos comparte su canción favorita y sorprendentemente no es una bachata.

In this episode, our guest is bachata singer Henry Santos. He shares with us the meaning of his new song *Una Mentirita* and his experience meeting his cousin Romeo Santos and becoming part of the group Aventura. In our conversation, we talk about his career as a solo artist and entrepreneur, the advantages of being bilingual, and his collaboration with Luis Vargas. Henry shares his favorite song and surprisingly it's not a bachata song.

Time	Speaker	Transcript
00:59 – 02:56	Tamara	<p><i>Hola, bienvenidos al episodio 123.</i> Welcome to episode 123 of the Learn Spanish con Salsa podcast. In this episode I sat down with el bachatero Henry Santos. He just released a new album “Friends and Legends” and he shares with us the meaning behind the lyrics of his song “Una Mentirita” from his new album, which is actually a collaboration with el <i>rey supremo de la bachata</i> Luis Vargas.</p> <p>In our Conversation Henry shares how we moved from the Dominican Republic to the United States, linked up with his primo or his cousin Romeo Santos and started the group Aventura. We talked about his experience as a member of the group, becoming famous at a very young age and how he was able to establish his career as both a solo artist and entrepreneur.</p> <p>Henry shares how being bilingual was a real advantage that helped in his career and moving to the U.S and he talks about his collaboration with Luis Vargas and all the other artists on his new album “Friends and Legends”. I also asked him what is his favorite song and you might be surprised to know that is not a bachata, so make sure you stick around to the end of this episode to find out what he is listening to on his Spotify playlist and just to heads up,</p>

		<p>this episode is in English and Spanish, so to get the transcript and also the lyrics of the song “Una Mentirita” make sure you go to the show notes page at learnspanishconsalsa.com/123 that’s learnspanishconsalsa.com/123 for episode 123 of the podcast and now, here’s my conversation with Henry Santos.</p> <p>Hola Henry, bienvenido a Learn Spanish con Salsa podcast.</p> <p>Hi, Henry. Welcome to Learn Spanish with Salsa podcast.</p>
02:57 – 03:24	Henry	<p>Gracias, I’m very excited because, you know, since the time we met... <i>El tiempo que nos conocimos me encantó la iniciativa de aprender español por medio de la música. Yo pienso que es una gran idea y, bueno, ver también que esa música es de nosotros los bachateros, de diferentes personas. Eso para mí es grandioso. Felicidades a ti.</i></p> <p>Thank you, I’m very excited because, you know, since the time we met...The time we met I loved the initiative of learning Spanish through music. I think it is a great idea and, well, to see that the music is from us the bachateros, of different people. That for me is amazing. Congratulations to you.</p>
03:25 – 03:40	Tamara	<p>Gracias, muchísimas gracias por estar aquí <i>and I know you just released a new album; we’re going to talk about that in a minute. But first I want to learn a little more about you for the audience. I know that you were born in Dominican Republic, so can you tell us where part of the Island your family is from?</i></p> <p>Thank you, thanks a lot for being here.</p>
03:41 – 04:40	Henry	<p>I was actually born in Moca, Dominican Republic, that's north en El Cibao, so you know, I grew up there and I used to listen to all kinds of music I was... My mother had a school with around 300 kids. At the age of eight I would help her to do choreographies for like talent shows in the school. And then I realized, you know, a whole bunch of kids with musical talent... that’s when I decided to do a small band with those kids and that was like my first steps in music, like directing. I was actually the director of the whole band.</p>

		Then, after that, you know, we had to travel to the U.S, which, you know, all my dreams became in a position that I thought they were over. Then I met my cousin Romeo, you know, his name is Anthony and we started talking about music. After that, the rest is history.
04:41 – 04:52	Tamara	Wow, so you started at a really young age. How was that process of moving to the U.S from D.R? Was it like a culture shock when you got here? Did you have troubles with the language? How was that for you at that age?
04:53 – 06:28	Henry	<p>It wasn't because I actually learned English when, you know... Since I was five I was at an Institute where I learn English myself because my mother knew English using classes because our dream was to come to the U.S. so we didn't want to have that barrier of the language coming over here.</p> <p>However, when I came to New York... When I arrived in New York it wasn't much of a culture shock, it was mostly the food, like, it got me sick. The food got me sick. It was like, <i>fue como un choque de sazón</i> instead of culture, because the seasoning of the food here was different so I was always feeling sick to the stomach for the first two weeks, but after that everything was smooth sailing. I felt like I lived in the U.S. I don't know why I had that feeling but I always did. The transition was pretty smooth and I went to school and they didn't drop any of my levels. I think I was 13 and I was in the 10th grade, at 13. I graduated when I was like 15 or 16 from High School. So, you know, because I could speak the language and I was pretty advanced on my studies, they allowed me to continue with my studies the way it was, and I graduated early, like just turning sixteen and I was already out of college.</p>
06:29 – 07:03	Tamara	Wow, that's amazing. Most people find it hard to make that transition to another country but then you graduated early as well. That's pretty awesome. Now, you mention your cousin Romeo and you said a lot of people know you from the group Aventura, and even thought you guys break up back in 2011, I know you had like a reunion tour, and you also collaborated a few years ago in the song "Inmortal", so can you talk about how was it to become basically

		<p>famous at such a young age? And then the transitions to being a solo artist and what types of things have you been able to do on your own that you felt like you weren't able to do as a part of the group?</p>
<p>07:04 – 11:04</p>	<p>Henry</p>	<p>Well, become... First, becoming famous at such a young age was like a dream but we didn't have any control of what was happening. We just wanted to do music and it turned out that "Obsesión" was a hit and opened all the doors for us to the rest of the world. So it was like a very nice learning experience, we grew up together; we didn't have much management so we have to count mostly on ourselves all four of us. We advise each other, if something was wrong we would just fix it ourselves. We didn't have to rely on other people. We actually become, you know, part of us four. We did everything ourselves.</p> <p>Then, we came to a point where we all needed to make a decision whether to continue with the same labor or not. Because we weren't really seen eye to eye, in the same vocal label, so then we just decided to take a break and we started working on our music. We never thought of not working together, like, that was one of the things that we... We always wanted to work together but we also had this necessity of growing and we started doing our separate projects and we were all happy to do that.</p> <p>I particularly had, you know, all the ways that I have started trying to show people my music, that I wasn't just like a... I don't know why they considered me a dancer if I never really danced in my life, but they used to tell me "you're the dancer of the group" and I was like I don't dance, I just move. I was watching a video myself the other day and I was like "what the hell, what was I doing" I don't remember what I was doing, I don't know where it came from, but they considered that a dance and people liked it. Then I did the dancing show and I won, but I didn't win because I'm a good dancer, my wife is a great dancer. She actually is a graduated dancer from Cuba and I realized that I'm not a dancer. I respect people that dance but I rather sit down and see people dancing. Whenever</p>

		<p>someone gives me a goal or something I need to do, I do my best. That's why I think they still consider me a dancer.</p> <p>Anyways, I just realized when I became a solo artist that everything was too easy for me when I was in Aventura. Then, I had to reinvent myself. I became a solo artist with a company with a label that represents me, Venemusic, but in 2015 it turned out that they went bankrupt and they shut down everything and they returned all my music. So I was stuck here with all my music in my hands thinking "What do I do now?", so I learned the business because it was going through a transition in which the whole... Everything was becoming digital so I just grabbed a book and started learning about how to publish my own music. I've had a record label from 2005 that wasn't active so I activated it. And then I continued to do that until today. In the meantime I continue to work with Aventura, I continue to do my solo career and is very exciting, every week there's a new app or a new tool that helps artist do their own thing, you know and I'm happy to be doing it myself and you know, riding this big bull by myself. I'm happy.</p>
11:05 – 11:07	Tamara	<p>¿Entonces eres tu propio jefe ahora, no?</p> <p><i>So, you are your own boss now, right?</i></p>
11:08 – 11:36	Henry	<p>Soy mi propio jefe, tengo una distribuidora que tiene un equipo de trabajo excelente, pero hacen todo lo que yo quiera, lo que yo les dirijo. Tengo muchas personas alrededor mío que me hacen muy feliz, hacen un gran trabajo. Entonces, yo creo que estoy en el camino correcto, todo el mundo sueña con tener su propia compañía y con guiar su propia carrera y su vida y ahí es que estoy.</p> <p><i>I'm my own boss, I have a distributor that has an excellent team, they do all I want, what I direct them. I have a lot of people around me that make me happy, they do a great job. Then I think I'm in the right way. Everybody dreams about having their own company and to guide their own career and their life and that's where I am now.</i></p>
11:37 – 11:37	Tamara	<p>Es como un sueño, no?</p>

		It's like a dream, isn't it?
11:38 – 11:38	Henry	Oh, yes.
11:39 – 11:49	Tamara	Entonces, cuéntanos sobre tu nuevo proyecto “Friends and Legends” ¿Qué podemos esperar escuchar, es sólo bachata o también tiene otro género de música? So, tell us about your new project “Friends and Legends” What can we expect to hear, is it only bachata or there's another music genre?
11:50 – 13:27	Henry	Tenemos, digo tenemos porque tengo once colaboraciones. En esta ocasión decidí utilizar o acercarme a las leyendas que yo crecí pensando y soñando alguna vez en escribirle un tema. No solamente me hicieron el honor de cantar el tema sino de que yo lo cantara con ellos. Todo empezó con el maestro Anthony Santos “El Mayimbe” y se me pararon los pelitos. Fue el primero al que le hice el acercamiento con don Juan y Cupido y de ahí se me presentó una idea clara. Yo dije “tengo que hacer un acercamiento a otras leyendas”, está Joe Veras, el maestro Luis Vargas, Alexandra. We have, and I say “we” because I have eleven collaborations. On this occasion I decided to use or to approach the legends I grew up thinking and dreaming about writing a song for them. They don't just give me the honor of singing their songs, but also let me sing with them. It all started with the Maestro Anthony Santos “The Mayimbe” and my skin bristles. He was the first one I approached with Don Juan and Cupido and from there a clear idea came to me. I said “I have to approach other legends” and there are Joe Veras, The maestro Luis Vargas and Alexandra. Pero al igual añadí salsa con David Kada de allá de la República Dominicana, al igual que un poco de urbano. Primera vez que hago urbano, nunca pensé que lo iba a hacer, pero hay unos artistas nuevos que se llaman V of Vossae y Adam Nazar, un productor y una cantante que me enseñaron un tema que me enamoré y yo dije

		<p>“tengo que ser parte de este tema”. Al igual tengo perico ripiao, tengo un merengue típico con El Prodigio, otra leyenda de la República Dominicana, y el resto son amistades que he creado en la Industria: Daniel Santacruz, Lirow, también Grupo Extra, Ronny Mercedes, creo que son esos. Si se me queda alguien, que me disculpen, porque son tantas colaboraciones.</p> <p>I also added salsa with David Kada from the Dominican Republic, same as a little of the urban genre. It’s the first time I do urban, I never thought that I was going to, but there is a new artist called V of Vossae and Adam Nazar, a producer and a singer that showed me a song that I fell in love with and I said “I have to be part of this song. I also have Perico ripiao, the typical merengue with the Prodigio, another legend from Dominican Republic and the rest are friendships that I’ve created in the industry: Daniel Santacruz, Lirow, Grupo Extra too, Ronny Mercedes, I think they’re all. If I’m missing someone please excuse me, there are so many collaborations.</p>
13:27 – 13:28	Tamara	<p>Muchos artistas.</p> <p>A lot of artists.</p>
13:29 – 13:43	Henry	<p>Sí, sí. Ya el resto de las canciones, como cuatro canciones más, son en solitario, con un total de 15 temas en el álbum Friends and Legends.</p> <p>Yes, yes. The rest of the songs, like four other songs are in solitary, with a total of 15 songs in the album Friends and Legends.</p>
13:44 – 13:55	Tamara	<p>Entonces, hablando de la canción “Una Mentirita” ¿Cómo fue el proceso de colaborar con Luis Vargas? Él es conocido como “El rey supremo de la bachata” ¿no? ¿Cómo fue esa experiencia?</p> <p>Then, speaking of the song “Una Mentirita” How was the process of collaborating with Luis Vargas? He’s known as “The Supreme King” isn’t he? How was that experience?</p>

13:56 – 15:28	Henry	<p>Mira, fue muy linda porque el año pasado yo estaba dispuesto a lanzar este álbum, pero yo no tenía esa canción lista. Yo estaba pensando “no la hago ahora si no me da el tiempo, pues a hago como un sencillo en un futuro” y resulta que yo lo iba a lanzar en mayo de 2020, pero dos meses antes comenzó la pandemia y yo no pensé que era un buen momento para tirar un álbum, estaba todo el mundo confundido, nadie sabía qué iba a suceder. Entonces ese tiempo me dio el chance de acercarme a Luis Vargas, de terminar de escribir la canción y “Una Mentirita” obviamente es el sencillo que es el enfoque del álbum, entonces resultó tan sabrosa esa canción que yo dije “Okay, para aquí es que es” y nada, yo creo que fue una bendición en realidad, misteriosamente.</p> <p>Look, it was very nice because last year I was ready to release this album, but I didn't have that song ready. I was thinking "I won't do it now if I don't have the time, I'll do it as a single on Youtube" and it turns out that I was going to release it on May 2020, but two months before the pandemic started and I didn't think it was a good time to release an album, everybody was confused, nobody knew what was going to happen. So that time gave me the chance to approach Luis Vargas and finish writing the song, and "Una Mentirita" is obviously the single that is the focus of the album, so that song turned out to be so tasty that I said "Okay, this is what it's for" and nothing, I think it was a blessing really, mysteriously.</p> <p>Se trata de que todos los hombres usualmente al principio de una relación no somos 100% sinceros. Algunas veces omiten decir algo, algunas veces exageran otras cosas, pero el punto es que es una mentirita blanca, o sea, obviamente para que todo funcione no deben haber mentiras, pero uno siempre trata de, no sé, de con tal de conquistar el corazón de esa mujer decirle lo que ella quiere escuchar, aunque no sea verdad.</p> <p>It's about the fact that all men usually at the beginning of a relationship are not 100% honest. Sometimes they omit to say something, sometimes they exaggerate other things, but the point is that it is a little white lie, that is, obviously for everything to work there should be no lies, but one always tries to, I don't know, to</p>
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		conquer the heart of that woman to tell her what she wants to hear, even if it is not true.
15:29 – 15:33	Tamara	Sí, es como en Inglés que decimos “ <i>Little White lies</i> ” ¿no? Yes, it is like in English that we say “ <i>Little White lies</i> ”, isn't it?
15:34 - 15:35	Henry	Exacto, claro, claro. Exactly, right, right.
15:36 – 15:52	Tamara	Y ¿Cómo has mantenido la creatividad y la creación de la música durante la pandemia y los años locos que hemos tenido últimamente? ¿Fue difícil mantener la motivación hacia la música de nuevo? And how have you kept up the creativity and music making during the pandemic and the crazy years we've had lately? Was it hard to keep the motivation towards music going again?
15:53 – 17:47	Henry	Bueno, como te conté que el año pasado ya estaba el álbum listo, o sea literalmente ya estaba listo para salir por lo que no hice la música durante la pandemia. Lo que hice fue trabajar en, bueno, ahora que lo pienso, trabajé pero en el próximo álbum. O sea ya tengo la mitad del próximo álbum lista, ahora que me lo mencionas y comienzo a pensarlo, sí, yo trabajé en música durante la pandemia. Well, as I told you last year the album was ready, I mean literally it was ready to go so I didn't do the music during the pandemic. What I did was worked on, well, now that I think about it, I worked on the next album. I mean I already have half of the next album ready, now that you mention it to me and I start thinking about it, yes, I did work on music during the pandemic. Me dio chance de estar en casita, me dio chance de organizar mis pensamientos, de preparar el próximo proyecto. Trabajar en música, pero todo remoto. Gracias a Dios que existen estas

		<p>herramientas de las que estábamos hablando, donde pude comunicarme con mis músicos, con diferentes artistas a los que les hice más acercamientos. Y todo ha ido fluyendo de esa manera.</p> <p>It gave me a chance to be at home, it gave me a chance to organize my thoughts, to prepare the next project. Working on music, but everything is remote. Thank God that there are these tools we were talking about, where I could communicate with my musicians, with different artists to whom I made more approaches. And everything has been flowing that way.</p> <p>Para nosotros los músicos, la creatividad no se necesita un tiempo, para mí me fluye hasta lavando las losas o sea <i>washing the dishes</i>, I love washing the dishes, you know, I put my headphones on y ahí es donde yo me inspiro, escuchando música de diferentes géneros viendo cómo puedo incluir esas cositas dentro de mi genero y bueno, así es que nace mi proceso de creación. Entonces, uno siempre tuvo miedo y nos mantuvimos cuidándonos ayudando nuestro sistema inmune durante todo ese tiempo, pero gracias a Dios las cosas ya están calmándose e igualmente, después que pase, espero podamos continuar con la gira de Aventura que empezamos el año pasado y desafortunadamente no hemos podido continuar hasta la hora.</p> <p>For us musicians, creativity doesn't take time, for me it flows even washing the dishes, I love washing the dishes, you know, I put my headphones on and that's where I get inspired, listening to music from different genres and seeing how I can include those little things within my genre and well, that's how my creative process is born. So, one has been always afraid and we kept taking care of ourselves by helping our immune system during all that time, but thank God things are calming down and anyway, after it passes, I hope we can continue with the Aventura tour that we started last year and unfortunately we have not been able to continue so far.</p>
17:48 – 18:09	Tamara	<p>Muchas gracias Henry por estar aquí en el podcast y yo sé que esta es una pregunta muy difícil pero, voy a preguntarte de todas maneras: ¿Tienes una canción favorita? No necesariamente una</p>

		<p>canción tuya o una de aventura, pero una canción que ha sido tu canción favorita desde que eras niño.</p> <p>Thank you so much Henry for being here on the podcast and I know this is a very difficult question, but, I'm going to ask you anyway: Do you have a favorite song? Not necessarily a song of yours or Aventura songs, but a song that has been your favorite song since you were a kid.</p>
18:10 – 19:05	Henry	<p>Oh wow, that's a good question. No me habían preguntado eso, pero no sé por qué razón, sí hay una canción que desde que la escuché, la primera vez que salió, sentí que era maravillosa. Pensé que de alguna manera el artista me la estaba cantando a mí, no sé por qué, que se llama "Foolish Games" by Jewel, esa canción desde que comienza el piano y la letra, el feeling que tiene esa canción, yo no sé por qué me encanta hasta el sol de hoy, la pongo y es como la primera vez que la escucho. Yo fui un gran seguidor de toda la música de Jewel, partiendo de esa canción y considero que hay millones de temas que son fenomenales y me encantan, pero no sé por qué esa siempre me agarra, siempre me atrapa.</p> <p>I had not been asked that, but I don't know why, but there is a song that since I heard it, the first time it came out, I felt it was wonderful. I thought that somehow the artist was singing it to me, I don't know why, it's called "Foolish Games" by Jewel, that song from the beginning of the piano and the lyrics, the feeling that song has, I don't know why I love it to this day, I play it and it's like the first time I hear it. I was a great follower of all Jewel's music, starting with that song and I consider that there are millions of songs that are phenomenal and I love them, but I don't know why that one always grabs me, always catches me.</p>
19:06 – 19:10	Tamara	<p>Interesante, es una sorpresa para mí.</p> <p>Interesting, it's a surprise for me.</p>
19:11 – 20:06	Henry	<p>No, si yo te digo la sorpresa... Si yo te digo los géneros musicales en los que yo me meto a estudiar, no me lo creerías. System of a Down</p>

		<p>es uno de los artistas que yo adoro, porque me ayuda a hacer ejercicio, me sé todos los temas de System of a Down. Escucho country, escucho muchos boleros, cosas del pasado Frank Sinatra. O sea si tú escuchas mi iPod, mi música en Spotify, mi lista de la música que yo escucho tú dices “¿Cómo vas de Frank Sinatra a Teodoro Reyes?” por ejemplo, “¿Cómo vas tú de Luis Miguel a Chicho Severino?” que son cosas que son, o sea, de un lado a otro que no hace sentido, así que es mi cabeza.</p> <p>No, if I tell you the surprise... If I told you the musical genres I study, you wouldn't believe me. System of a Down is one of the artists that I love, because it helps me exercise, I know all the System of a Down songs. I listen to country, I listen to a lot of boleros, Frank Sinatra stuff from the past. I mean, if you listen to my iPod, my music on Spotify, my list of the music I listen to you say "How do you go from Frank Sinatra to Teodoro Reyes?" For example, "How do you go from Luis Miguel to Chicho Severino?" which are things that are, I mean, from one side to another that do not make sense, so that's my head.</p>
20:07 – 20:17	Tamara	<p>Y creo que es un proceso de creatividad, escuchar todo tipo de música es una mezcla de todo, pero creo que eso es una influencia también en tu música. Entonces eso es bueno.</p> <p>And I think it's a process of creativity, listening to all kinds of music is a mix of everything, but I think that's an influence on your music as well. So that's good.</p>
20:18 – 20:20	Henry	<p>Absolutamente, muchas dimensiones.</p> <p>Absolutely, many dimensions.</p>
20:21 – 20:30	Tamara	<p>Muchísimas gracias. <i>Thank you for being on the podcast and where can the folks find you if they want to follow you on social media and more importantly where can they grab “Friends and Legends”?</i></p> <p>Thank you very much.</p>

20:31 – 21:06	Henry	Well, <i>Friends and Legends</i> will be available everywhere, every digital platform, please listen to it and comment. Share it if you like it, I'm sure that you're going to dance with the salsa, you're going to dance pegaíto con la bachata y el perico ripiao, so... Henry Santos mostly in IG, on Instagram and also in Tik Tok Henry Santos header for now and let me see what else... henrysantos.com you will find all my social media in one spot to make it easy for you.
21:07 – 21:09	Tamara	Okay, muchísimas gracias. Okay, thanks a lot.
21:10 – 21:11	Henry	Thank you so much, Tamara
21:15 – 22:12	Tamara	I hope you enjoyed my conversation with Henry Santos. If you want to check out the song “Una mentirita” make sure to go to our show notes pages at learnspaceconsalsa.com/123 that's learnspaceconsalsa.com/123 for episode 123 of the podcast and you'll be able to download the transcript with a translation to English as well as the lyrics of the song “Una Mentirita” or Little white lie. You can also check the official music video to the song “Una Mentirita” on our show notes page and also I'll link to you the song that Henry Santos mentioned in this episode. And I have to say I was so surprised that he has such a diverse taste in music, so make sure you check out that song as well as his single “Una Mentirita” con Luis Vargas. As always I hope that something that you've heard today has helped you go one step closer from the Spanish beginner to bilingual. <i>Hasta la próxima.</i>

Show Notes: <https://www.learnspaceconsalsa.com/123>

Links and Resources

- [Una mentirita by Henry Santos feat. Luis Vargas](#)
- [Jewel, Foolish Games](#)

Guest Information

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