

The Spicy Pickles feat. Hannah Rodriguez

Program Option 1

Royal Flush: The Great American Dance Bands

90 min, w/ intermission
(Swing)

Program Overview

The Spicy Pickles bring audiences back to the golden age of swing with a program celebrating the iconic bandleaders who defined America's soundtrack in the 1930s and 40s. *Royal Flush* highlights the powerful riff-based drive of Count Basie's "Old Testament" band, the elegance of Duke Ellington, the fire of Benny Goodman and Artie Shaw, and the energy of Chick Webb — capturing the spirit of a time when swing music filled dance halls and concert stages alike.

The program follows the narrative arc of swing history: beginning with the blues roots that predated the swing era, tracing the legendary 1938 Carnegie Hall concert and simultaneous battle of the bands between Chick Webb and Basie, and closing with Basie's immortal *One O'Clock Jump*. With fiery solos, engaging narration, and a mix of familiar classics and hidden gems, this show is designed for both listening and dancing — reminding audiences why swing remains timeless.

Program

First Half (~40–42 minutes)

1. **St. Louis Blues** – Jazz and blues roots (1914), reimagined through Ellington's style
2. **Don't Be That Way** – Goodman's 1938 Carnegie Hall opener
3. **When I Get Low I Get High** – Chick Webb/Ella Fitzgerald, tied to the same night as Carnegie Hall

4. **Topsy** – Driving Artie Shaw favorite
5. **Moonglow** – Romantic vocal feature, lush and timeless
6. **A Smooth One** – Goodman/Charlie Christian guitar feature; story of the electric guitar's role in swing
7. **Creole Love Call** – Ellington's sultry and atmospheric classic
8. **Happy Go Lucky Local** – Ellington's playful groove, full of humor
9. **All the Cats Join In** – Goodman's cinematic closer, sending the audience into intermission smiling

~15-minute Intermission

Second Half (~40–42 minutes)

10. **Rock-a-Bye Basie** – Tight riff-driven Basie swing
11. **Dickie's Dream** – High-energy Basie chart with solos
12. **Blue and Sentimental** – Soulful Basie ballad
13. **Moten Swing** – Audience interaction; horns step into the house for a KC classic
14. **Lullaby of the Leaves** – Vocal feature, mid-tempo swing with a strong shout chorus
15. **Blow Top** – Basie burner; rhythm section drive
16. **Pound Cake** – Basie riff tune; showcases KC roots
17. **One O'Clock Jump** – Basie's signature anthem; swing-era finale

Encore:

18. **Jammin' the Blues** – Tribute to Lester Young and the Basie band;
barnburner finale

Historical Note

On January 16, 1938, swing made history as Benny Goodman brought his band to Carnegie Hall in a landmark concert. That very same night uptown, Count Basie and Chick Webb went head-to-head in a legendary “battle of the bands.” *Royal Flush* captures that moment — weaving together Goodman’s Carnegie Hall opener (*Don’t Be That Way*), Webb’s Ella Fitzgerald feature (*When I Get Low I Get High*), and Basie’s Kansas City classics (*Moten Swing*, *One O’Clock Jump*).

The program reminds audiences that swing wasn’t just music — it was an American cultural force, bringing people together on dance floors, in concert halls, and across the airwaves.