

• The French DJ talks about how his new headphones, his sound and controversial video

By **Yusra Farzan**,
Special to tabloid!

You'd think we would run out of things to talk about with David Guetta, considering how regularly he is here. Luckily for us the French DJ and house music powerhouse is constantly innovating and has something new to share with us every time he is here.

This time it was his Beats Mixrs, a light-weight headphone aimed at DJs and the masses alike, which was launched ahead of his show at Atlantis on Friday.

"I am not making music for the headphones, I am making headphones to make my music sound in the same way that

I imagined it to be and sound like it does in the studio. That's a challenge," said Guetta. "When I sat down to discuss ideas with Jimmy and Dre [Beats Audio is the brainchild of rapper and producer Dr Dre and chairman of Interscope Geffen A&M Records, Jimmy Iovine] we were very frustrated. It was the era of the mp3s and iPhones. We were spending so many hours in the studio to make music sound amazing and people were listening to it on very bad headphones. They were ruining our work." Guetta first met Iovine when he produced the track *I Gotta Feeling* for the Black Eyed Peas. "He had good ears because he thought that was the biggest record on the album way before it was released. And the single went on to become a huge success," he said about Iovine.

Iovine, like Guetta, was also a producer before he went on to start Interscope and then develop the Beats headphones with Dr Dre. He initially wanted to start a label with Guetta. "I did not want to have the headache of a label, I was honoured to be asked though. Jimmy used to talk about Beats with so much

enthusiasm and I realised that it was something I would love to be a part of," said the French DJ. "I was very picky about the design and sound of the headphones that it took two years for us to finally come out with something. During that period Beats became one of the leaders in the world and the hottest product on the planet. I could have endorsed any existing product but I really wanted to develop something. I am glad I did because it is going to be very big."

FUNKY COLOURS

Two years in the making is a long time. We wondered what it was about the product that sets it apart. "I wanted to come out with a range of headphones for DJs so the sound quality and strength is amazing but what really sets it apart is the design," he said.

"The neon colours make it cross over to the mainstream, men and women alike can use it. Headphones are usually very big and for a woman this is not necessarily elegant. That these are smaller in size in funky neon colours without compromising on quality are probably the reason it is so successful."



Surprise! Akon joined David Guetta during his show in Dubai.

Headphones aside, Guetta has been scaling new heights elsewhere: he just surpassed the landmark number of 40 million fans on Facebook and was the first DJ to be VEVO certified for reaching over 100 million views on six of his videos. However, for Guetta the social media accolades are just an extension of the long-standing relationship he has shared with his fans.

"When I perform I do not think of myself as the star of the show, rather I look at it like me going to party with the people. I come from a music scene that at the beginning in the early '90s was not supported by the media. The police would forbid us from performing," said the DJ.

"When I started we used to do raves; we would give out a phone number to people and people would call us on the number and at the last minute we would give them the location of the party so that when the police got wind of it they couldn't stop us. I come from a culture where I was always in direct contact with the crowd. That's probably why I have enjoyed successes when the internet came because it was already part of my process to be connected directly with the fans."

Having collaborated with the creme de la creme of music, launched his own record

label (Jack Black Records) and now his headphones and with these social media milestones under his belt, we wonder what could be on the cards next for Guetta. His eyes twinkle as he says he's going back to doing what he loves the most – making music.

"I have just released *Play Hard*, a collaboration with Akon and Nelly. It is the last single from my album *Nothing But the Beat* which has been an incredible success," said Guetta, that twinkle

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DAVID GUETTA | DJ

not leaving his eye. "I am starting to work on music again which is very, very exciting and it makes me so happy. I spent the last month recording in Los Angeles. I make music to be free I don't want to confine myself to a particular style so I am still searching for a new sound. I make music to be happy it is wonderful!" However, not all has

been rosy in Guetta's nick of the woods. The video for *Play Hard* has come under fire for its portrayal of Mexicans, with *Houston Press* reporter Marco Torres, a Mexican-American writing, "There are so many 'What the F***' moments in this video, I had to play it five times in order to count them all." Cuban-American blogger Perez Hilton called the video "wacky and tacky".

Guetta says he does not understand the controversy surrounding the video. "I am writing a statement because I really love Mexico and Mexicans love me too, I had a big tour at Azteca Stadium which is the biggest stadium in Latin America. I feel very sorry that some people in Mexico felt offended by that video," he said, before being cut short by members of his crew.

Dubai has not seen the last of Guetta. The music powerhouse is sure to be back as he says he loves the city.

"I love this place and the concert is a great excuse for me to come here and have a good time. The crowd is always great and I love how cosmopolitan it is, it is so great to see so many people from different parts of the world," said the Frenchman, a wide smile beaming on his face.

"I love the food, you have amazing hotels. Coming here does not feel like work for me."

Guetta's got new beats

DON'T MISS IT

The neon Beats Mixr headphones are Dh1,130, available at leading electronic stores in five neon colours: blue, green, orange, pink and yellow and come with an in line mic, articulating ear cups, coiled cable and a carrying case.