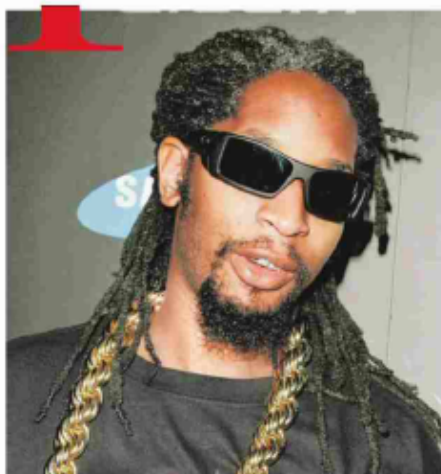


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LIL JON

LA VIDA LOCAL

Lil Jon: superstar DJ

Lil Jon knows how to throw a party. The Atlanta rapper/producer was in town over the weekend, hosting a party Friday night at Mansion and Saturday at Opium.

His latest gig: celebrity DJ.

And Jon, 38, says he's had plenty of practice spinning records.

"I started out making music as a DJ, and I've been deejaying all around the world for the last couple years," he said.

So when can fans expect a new album?

"I kind of took a break because me and the label fell out, but I've been working on getting the record done and I hope to release it in November," he said.

Spinning records has given him a new appreciation for music. "You start to know the pulse of music . . . what's making people move."

The crunk juice king also owns his own wine label called Little John Winery. His 2006 Central Coast Chardonnay recently won a silver medal at the Los Angeles International Wine and Spirits Competition.

But the hip-hop star admitted he's not a wine fanatic.

"I'm not a crazy wine connoisseur. But I definitely like some Merlot, and I like some dessert wines. It relaxes me and mellows me out."

— MICAELA HOOD