

BALTA

Romanian

- PRONUNCIATION:** B AHL-tah
- TRANSLATION:** Swamp or marsh
- SOURCE:** Dick Oakes learned this dance from Sunni Bloland. Ms. Bloland introduced the dance to folk dancers in the United States at the 1980 San Diego State University Folk Dance Conference.
- BACKGROUND:** Balta is found in Muntenia, Romania. Muntenia is also known in English as Greater Wallachia, and is a historical province of Romania, usually considered Wallachia-proper (Muntenia, Țara Românească, and the seldom used Valahia are synonyms in Romanian). It is situated between the Danube (south and east), the Carpathian Mountains (the Transylvanian Alps branch) and Moldavia (both north), and the Olt River to the west. The Olt is the border between Muntenia and Oltenia (or Lesser Wallachia). Part of the traditional border between Wallachia / Muntenia and Moldavia was formed by the Milcov River.
- MUSIC:** Naroc Records (7"EP) NA 1054-EP, side B, band 4
- FORMATION:** Closed or open cir of mixed M and W with hands joined and held up in "W" pos.
- METER/RHYTHM:** 2/4. The alternation of the motifs is six counts with eight counts, which makes the dance non-concordant with the music at the level of the measure and phrase, but becomes concordant at the beginning of each repetition of the melody. This organization of motifs gives rise to syncopation calling for attention to performance and is common to dances from the Călușari repertoire. The Călușari were the members of a Romanian fraternal secret society who practiced a ritual acrobatic dance known as the căluș. In their dance, the Călușari carried clubs and a sword, as well as a flag and a wooden horsehead. They swore on the group's flag to treat each other as brothers, to respect the customs of the Călușari, and to remain chaste for the next nine days. Upon their return home, their flag was fixed into the ground, with one member climbing it and crying out "War, dear ones, war!"
- STEPS/STYLE:** All stamps are without wt.

MEAS

MOVEMENT DESCRIPTION

INTRODUCTION

Wait 16 meas with no action or begin with music.

THE DANCE

- 1 Facing and moving R, step R, swinging arms down and bwd (ct 1);
step L in front of R, swinging arms up to "W" pos (ct 2).
- 2 Facing ctr, step in place R (ct 1); step in place L (ct &);
step in place R (ct 2); hold (ct &).
- 3 Facing and moving to L, step L, swinging arms down and bwd (ct 1);
step R in front of L, swinging arms up to "W" pos (ct 2).
- 4 Facing ctr, step in place L (ct 1); step in place R (ct &);
step in place L (ct 2); lightly stamp R next to L (ct &).
- 5 Step R in place (ct 1); lightly stamp L next to R (ct &);
step L in place (ct 2); step R in front of L (ct &).
- 6 Step L in place (ct 1); step R diag bwd (ct &);
step L in place (ct 2); step R in front of L (ct &).
- 7 Step L in place (ct 1); leap R in place (ct &);
moving diag fwd R, step L in front of R (ct 2).
- 8 Step R in front of L (ct 1);
swinging L ft out and around in an arc and pivoting on R to turn body to R, step
L next to R (ct 2).
- 9 Moving swd out of cir with R shldr leading, step R swd to R (ct 1); close L to R
(ct &);
step R swd to R (ct 2); lightly stamp L next to R (ct &).
- 10 In place facing ctr, step L (ct 1); lightly stamp R next to L (ct &);
step R in place (ct 2); step L in front of R (ct &).
- 11 Step R in place (ct 1); step L diag bwd (ct &);
step R in place (ct 2); step L in front of R (ct &).
- 12 Step R in place (ct 1); leap L in place (ct &);
moving fwd, leap R in front of L (ct 2).
- 13 Step L in front of R (ct 1);
swinging R ft out and around in an arc and pivoting on L to turn body to L, step
R next to L (ct 2).
- 14 Moving swd out of cir with L shldr leading, step L swd to L (ct 1); close R to L
(ct &);
step L swd to L (ct 2); lightly stamp R next to L (ct &).
- 15 In place facing ctr, step R (ct 1); lightly stamp L next to R (ct &);
step L in place (ct 2); step R in front of L (ct &).
- 16 Step L in place (ct 1); leap R diag bwd turning body to R (ct &);
step L across in front of R (ct 2).

Repeat entire dance from beg.