

BĂLTĂREASCA

Romanian

PRONUNCIATION: buhl-tuh-REAH-skah

TRANSLATION: From the swamp (or marsh)

SOURCE: Dick Oakes learned this dance from Sunni Bloland who learned it during her 1967-68 research trip to Romania from Anca Guirchescu, dance ethnographer at the Institute of Ethnography and Folklore in București (Bucharest). Ms. Bloland introduced the dance to folk dancers in the United States at the 1969 Balkan/Near-East Festival in Portland, Oregon.

BACKGROUND: Băltăreasca, formerly danced by men only, is from the village of Traian, Județ Teleorman (Județ means "county") in the southern Romanian ethnographic region of Muntenia, about five miles west of Turnu Măgurele. It is danced on any village dance occasion. Băltăreasca is characteristic of the many stamping dances of this region of Romania and includes another common element, the "vîrf-toc" (literally, "lift-heel," which may be likened to a hop in which the toe does not leave the floor, followed by the heel being placed forcefully down). 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 2.

FORMATION: Closed cir of mixed M and W with hands joined and held with bent elbows at shldr level in "W" pos.

METER/RHYTHM: 2/4

STEPS/STYLE: VÎRF-TOC: Literally, "lift-heel," may be likened to a hop in which the toe does not leave the floor, followed by the heel being placed forcefully down. It is usually followed by a stamp or step with the other ft. All steps are small, quick, and sharp. All stamps are without wt.

Arm movements are somewhat difficult and may require much practice and may require much practice to coordinate them with the steps. Because the arm movements are continuous and, thereby complicated, they are notated separately following the pattern description.

MEAS

FTWK MOVEMENT DESCRIPTION

INTRODUCTION

None.

I. FIGURE ONE

- 1 Facing ctr, step R across in front of L (ct 1); step L swd (ct &); step R across in front of L (ct 2); step L swd (ct &);
- 2 Vîrf-toc L in place (ct 1); stamp R next to L (ct &); step R in place (ct 2); step L in place (ct &);
- 3 Repeat action of meas 2;
- 4 Vîrf-toc L in place (ct 1); stamp R next to L (ct &); stamp L next to R taking wt (ct &); pause (ct &).
- 5-8 Repeat action of meas 1-4.

II. FIGURE TWO

- 1 Step R swd (ct 1); step L across in back of R (ct &); step R swd (ct 2); stamp L next to R (ct &);
- 2 step L swd (ct 1); stamp R next to L without wt (ct &);
- 3 Step R swd (ct 2); step L across in back of R (ct &);
step R swd (ct 1); stamp L next to R without wt(ct &);
- 4 Step L swd (ct 2); step R across in back of L (ct &);
step L swd (ct 1); stamp R next to L without wt (ct &); stamp R next to L without wt (ct 2);
pause (ct &).
- 5-8 Repeat action of Fig II, meas 1-8.
- Repeat entire dance from beg.

MEAS

ARM MOVEMENT DESCRIPTION

INTRODUCTION

None.

I.FIGURE ONE

- 1 With hands in "W" pos, jiggle elbows quickly dn-up as follows: on step R, jiggle elbows dn (ct 1); up (ct uh); on step L, dn (ct &); up (ct uh); on step R, dn (ct 2); up (ct uh); on step L, dn (ct &);
- 2 On Vîrf-toc, beg swing arms fwd out and dn (ct 1); on stamp, swing hands down low and back, arms straight (ct &); on step R, swing hands up fwd (ct 2); on step L, bring hands into "W" pos;
- 3 On Vîrf-toc, beg swinging arms fwd and dn (ct 1); on stamp, complete swinging arms down at sides (ct 2); on step R, beg swnging arms fwd and up fwd (ct 2); on step L, continue swinging arms up fwd, arms straight (ct 2);
- 4 On Vîrf-toc, swing hands up high, arms straight (ct 1); on stamp, quickly bring hands dn into "W" pos (ct &); jiggle hands slowly up (ct uh); on stamp, bring hands dn into "W" pos (ct 2); pause (ct &);

II.FIGURE TWO

- 1 With hands in "W" pos, jiggle elbows slowly dn-up as follows: On step R, bring elbows dn (ct 1); on step L, up (ct &); on step R, dn (ct 2); on stamp, up (ct &);
- 2 on step L, beg swinging arms slowly fwd and dn, arms straight (ct 1); on stamp, continue swinging arms slowly dn, arms straight (ct &);
- On step R, swing hands low and back, arms straight (ct 1); on step L, beg swinging hands up fwd, arms straight (ct &);
- 3 on step R, continue swinging hands up fwd, arms straight (ct 1); on stamp, swing hands up high, arms straight (ct &);
- On step L, swing hands quickly out fwd and dn, arms straight (ct 1); on step R, swing hands low and back, arms straight (ct &);
- 4 on step L, swing hands fwd and up, arms straight (ct 1); on stamp, swing hands up high, arms straight (ct &); on stamp, bring hands into "W" pos (ct 2); pause (ct &).

Repeat entire dance from beg.