

Blagoevgradsko horo

(Pirin, Bulgaria)

Blagoevgradsko horo consists of two typical dance motifs from the Pirin region of Bulgaria, that is to say the southwestern corner of Bulgaria. Pirin is the most “Macedonian” part of Bulgaria, and the music to this dance is in 7/8 time, that is to say the 3+2+2 or “long-short-short” count so characteristic of Macedonian folk music. The name of the music and dance means simply “(round) dance from Blagoevgrad,” a town in this region of Bulgaria.

Pronunciation:

Music: Blagoevgradsko horo

Rhythm: 7/8, 3+2+2 counted here as 1-2-3.

Formation: Open circle, leader on right. High handhold.

Styling: Typical “Macedonian” style with graceful, catlike movements. Women: hands slightly forward and upper body slightly bent forward from waist. Low leg lifts. Men: Upright upper body position and higher leg lifts.

Meas

Pattern

I. R, SIDE, IN, OUT, SWAY, BACK TO L

- 1 Facing and moving LOD, (optional slight lift on left ft on the upbeat before you (delayed)), walk fwd on the R (ct 1); walk fwd on L (ct 2); walk fwd on R ft (ct 3).
- 2 Repeat meas 1 with opp ftwk.
- 3 Turning to face slightly L of ctr, step on R to R (ct 1); place ball of L ft next to R and bounce twice (cts 2,3).
- 4 Repeat meas 3, with opp ftwk and direction and moving toward ctr.
- 5 Repeat meas 3, but moving away from ctr.
- 6 Sway L by stepping on L to the L while turning slightly to the R (ct 1); sway R by stepping on R while turning slightly to the L (cts 2-3).
- 7 Facing and moving RLOD, walk fwd on L (ct1); walk fwd on R (cts 2-3).
- 8 Turning to face LOD, step on L to L (ct1); placing ball of R ft next to L, bounce twice (cts 2,3).

II. BOUNCES, CROSSES, LIFTS AND TURN

- 1 Facing and moving LOD, bounce twice on L ft while R ft “bounces” first down (“touch”)(ct 1); then up (“lift”)(ct 2); step on R (ct 3).
- 2 Repeat meas 1 with opp ftwk.
- 3 Repeat meas 1.
- 4 Repeat meas 1 with opp ftwk.
- 5 Turning to face slightly L of ctr and with lower body twisted even more to L, plie with wt on both ft, ft together (ct 1); turning to face ctr by lifting R heel from floor, lift L knee twd ctr (ct 2); step on L in place (ct 3).
- 6 Repeat meas 1, in place, facing ctr.

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- 7 Repeat meas 1, with opp ftwk, in place, facing ctr.
- 8 Repeat meas 5, turning to face LOD on last ct.

Handhold in Fig II: Either high handhold throughout *or* go over to low handhold at the beginning of Fig II, raise hands to high handhold at beginning of meas 5, and lower them again during meas 8. Transition back to Fig I: do not lower hands during meas 8.

Repeat each figure as many times as desired. Leader (on right) signals changes.

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