

Hora nuntașilor

From Timiș (Banat), Romania
Presented by Sonia Dion & Cristian Florescu

The word *nuntașilor* means wedding guests. Whether in western Romania (Banat) or any other region in the country, marriage is a commitment that still today is an important stage in people's lives. Marriage is synonymous with a multitude of rituals and customs, which vary from region to region, but everywhere weddings are always celebrated with a lot of spirit and given much importance. Due to the significance of the event, everyone prepares for it long in advance.

In Romania, two crucial people must be chosen: the witnesses, referred to as the "godfather" and "godmother." They become members of the family and play a major role in all the wedding preparations, the civil and religious ceremonies, and the celebrations.

In the city, organizing a wedding can give rise to arguments about the guest list (you mustn't forget anyone but you can't invite everyone!), the date, the priest, the invitations, the hall, and so on. In the country, some of the problems are easily solved. For example, the invitations may be extended by the *vorniceii* (best men), who go around to all the houses, their flasks of *țuică* (brandy) in hand, announcing the wedding in song and inviting everyone that way.

An occasion for merrymaking and countless feasts in the country, the wedding begins with the matchmakers' meal followed by the engagement or "fir tree" feast (the fir tree symbolizes fertility), which reaches dizzying heights of partying, as does the wedding banquet proper. The wedding will begin to wind down with the meal for the *vorniceii* and *druște* (bridesmaids), one for the in-laws, another for the cooks, the meal of *colaci* (a kind of Romanian bagel) and finally the meal held a week after the wedding at the bride's parents' to thank them for their daughter's purity.

At the wedding banquet, guests are welcomed with bread and salt, and in some places, with an offering of *colaci*. Each guest is greeted with a musical march and then takes his or her place before a first course—usually an appetizer: sausage, salami, *mici* (meat croquette), *cașcaval* (cheese), olives, *icre* (fish roe spread), tomatoes, spring onions and a small glass of *țuică*. The best dishes—*ciorbe* (soups), *sarmale* (cabbage rolls), *mamaliga* (Romanian polenta), veal escalope, fish, etc.)—painstakingly prepared by the village women, are set down, one after the other, for hours as lively traditional tunes are played. Amidst all these dishes, roast fowl will be presented as people dance and the "godfather" is teased. At all times drink flows, whether it is *Murfatlar* wines or different kinds of brandy such as *țuică*.

One of the most important customs, which is still very much alive today, usually comes after the first coffee and the cake (*cozonac*) are served: the gifts are announced. The *vorniceii* go from table to table announcing aloud the offers of gifts. The "godfather" will be generous so as to raise the stakes. The grander a wedding, the more guests must loosen their purse strings. Each gift is followed by exclamations and musical approval, depending on the size of the present.

Throughout the wedding, dance has pride of place, of course. In some regions, the dances are done in a precise order and will always be done following the tradition. *Hora nuntașilor* is usually done after the newlyweds' dance. All the guests must join in and the accompanying lyrics sing the praises of the main celebrants. *Trăiască mirii!* Long live the bride and groom!

Formation: mixed open circle

Position: hands in W pos, facing center

Pronunciation: HOH-rah noon-TAH-chee-lohr

Meter: 2/4

Pattern of *Hora nuntașilor*

Meas. Count

1-16 **Introduction** (no action)

Figure 1 (with singing)

- | | | |
|-------------|---|---|
| 1 | | Do one <i>two-step</i> starting with R ft facing and moving LOD |
| 2 | | Do one <i>two-step</i> starting with L ft facing and moving LOD |
| 3 | 1 | Step on R to the right and turn facing center |
| | 2 | Touch with L ball close to R ft |
| 4 | 1 | Step on L to the left facing slightly RLOD |
| | 2 | Touch with R ball in front of L ft |
| 5 | 1 | Step on R crossing in front of L ft |
| | 2 | Step on L to the left |
| 6 | 1 | Step on R crossing in front of L ft |
| | 2 | Touch with L ball close to R ft |
| 7 | 1 | Step on L to the left and turn facing center |
| | 2 | Touch with R ball close to L ft and turn slightly facing to the right |
| 8 | 1 | Step on R bkwd |
| | 2 | Step on L bkwd (very slightly) |
| 9-32 | | Repeat measures 1-8 , three more times (4 total) |

Figure 2 (instrumental)

- | | | |
|------------|-----|-------------------------------------|
| 1-2 | 1-3 | Do 3 steps R, L, R twd center |
| | 4 | Touch with L ball (no wt) next R ft |
| 3-4 | 1-3 | Do 3 steps L, R, L bkwd |
| | 4 | Touch with R ball (no wt) in place |
| 5 | 1 | Step on R across in front of L ft |
| | 2 | Step on L to the side |
| 6 | 1 | Step on R behind L ft |
| | 2 | Step on R to the side |
- (**5-6** = one *grapevine* step)

Meter: 2/4 Pattern of *Hora nuntașilor* (continued)

Meas. Count **Figure 2** (continued)

7-8 Repeat measures **5-6**

9-10 Do 2 *two-steps* starting with R ft facing and moving RLOD

11-12 Repeat measures **5-6**

13-16 Repeat measures **1-4**

Final pattern:

Repeat 4 times; F1 + F2

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Song for Hora nuntaşilor

Banat, Romania

1.

**Bună seara dragi nuntaşi
Mândre naşe si nănaşi
Gazdelor ce ne primiţi
Şi cu drag ne omeniţi**

Good evening, dear wedding guests,
The proud “godmother” and “godfather,”
The host receiving us
with love and honour.

Chorus:

**Asta-i nuntă ca-n poveşti
Miresucă să trăieşti
Asta-i nuntă nu-i orice
Să traiască mirele
Asta-i nunta nunţilor
Voie bună tuturor
Şi la miri şi la nănaşi
Dar şi nouă la nuntaşi**

This is a fairy tale wedding
Long live the bride!
A wedding unlike any other
Long live the groom!
The wedding of all weddings.
Joy and happiness to all,
To the couple and to the “godparents”
But to us, the wedding guests, also!

2.

**Î-i cea m-ai frumoasă nuntă
Mireasa i-aşa de scumpă
De mire nu-i ce vorbi
Ca el altu n-ar m-ai fi**

This is the loveliest wedding
The bride is fabulous!
The groom? It goes without saying,
There’s no one else like him!

3.

**La cea-ţi venit oameni buni
Hai petrecem până luni
Să bem şi să chefuim
Cu horinca şi cu vin**

Why have you come, good people?
Let’s party until Monday,
Let’s drink and celebrate
With brandy and wine!

4.

**Ni-om porni cu toţi la joc
Haide-ţi sus nu staţi pe loc
Muzica-i frumoasa tare
Ne ridică în picioare**

Let’s start the dance all together
Stand up, you can’t just sit there
The music is very beautiful
And urges us to get up.

The chorus is sung after each verse
and twice (2x) at the end.

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