

PO ZELENOJ TRATI

Slovenian couple dance from Prekmurje

Notes by Dick Crum, revised 10/88.



Po zelenoj trati (poh zeh-LEH-noy TRAH-tee, 'on the green') is a couple dance from the Prekmurje (PREK-moor-yeh) region of Slovenia, an area which was long a part of Hungary. The dance is a Slovenian variant of one that spread throughout Hungarian territories in the 19th century under many names (Hungarian *Gólyás*, Slovak *Slovenská polka*, Croatian *Sirotica*, etc.).

In Prekmurje it was called either *Po zelenoj trati* or *Mali čardaš* ('little csárdás') and was popular up until the mid-1930's at weddings, pre-lenten (Carnival) dance events, etc., along with polkas, waltzes and various other local dances. The people danced to the accompaniment of small combos consisting of violin, bass and cimbalom.

The name *Po zelenoj trati* comes from the first line of the song whose melody is used for the dance:

*Po zelenoj trati pleše Barika,
pa še ne pogleda svoj'ga Franceka...*

(Barika is dancing on the green,
but doesn't look at her sweetheart, Francek...)

Just at the time the dance was fading in popularity, it was preserved by an organized group of dancers in the village of Beltinci, who performed it at a number of folk festivals in Yugoslavia before and after World War II. Their version (described below) has become standard among folk dance groups in Slovenia, including the France Marolt group of Ljubljana, from whom I learned the dance in 1954.

Recordings: Folk Dancer MH 45-3034-A, *Po zelenoj trati*; Folkraft F-1542x45, *Po zelenoj trati*; Slovenian Traditional Dances 104 (cassette), *Šamarjanka-Po zelenoj trati*.

Meter: 2/4

Initial formation and position: In Figure I, couples in a circle facing center. M is behind W. Starting position is similar to that of the Varsouvienne, excepting that M is directly behind W instead of to one side. M holds W's R hand in his R, her L hand in his L, just above shoulder height. See below for Figure II position.

MEAS	COUNT	ACTION
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Note: M and W's footwork is identical throughout, unless otherwise indicated.

FIGURE I

1	1	Step Rft sideward to R, on ball of ft with gentle flex of R knee.
	2	Close Lft beside Rft in same style as count 1.
2	1	Again step Rft sideward to R, on ball of ft with gentle flex of R knee.
	2	Close Lft beside Rft in same style as count 1, sharing weight momentarily on both feet.
3-4		Repeat mov'ts of meas 1-2 to L with opposite footwork.
5-6		Repeat mov'ts of meas 1-4; this time, however, as dancers move R the W looks over her R shoulder at M, and as they move L she looks at him over her L shoulder.

CHORUS

1		Same as meas 1 of Figure I.
2	1	Step on Rft. Both dancers bend R, and M presses with L arm to draw W's face toward his as if kissing. Weight is on Rft and Lft is closed (no weight) beside Rft, L toe pointed beside R instep, L knee bent.
	2	Pause.
3-4		Same mov'ts as meas 1-2 of Chorus, but L with opposite footwork.
5-8		Both drop L hands and place on own hip. M marks time with 8 steps in place, beginning with Rft, as girl uses 8 steps beginning Rft to make 2 full turns in place clockwise (to her R) under joined R hands.
9-16		Repeat whole Chorus.

FIGURE II

Dancers release hands and place both hands on own hips.

Man's movements:

1	1	Step Rft sideward R.
	2	Close Lft to Rft taking weight.
2-3		Turning to face almost in LOD, take 4 walking steps (2 per meas) in LOD.
4	1	Turning to face center, step Rft.
	2	Stamp Lft (no weight) beside Rft.
5-8		Mov'ts of meas 1-4 but to L with opposite footwork.

Woman's movements:

1	1	Step Rft sideward R.
	2	Close Lft to Rft taking weight.
2-4		With 5 walking steps beginning with Rft, W twirls along in LOD, making 2 full turns clockwise and keeping up with M, ending up facing center for stamp of Lft (no weight) beside Rft on count 2 of meas 4 (coincides with M's stamp).
5-8		Mov'ts of meas 1-4 but to L with opposite footwork (turns CCW).

CHORUS