

TOPANSKO ORO

A "Turkish" (or "oriental") womens' dance from Macedonia, former Yugoslavia. (Slavic people in the Balkans tend to refer to several non-Slavic peoples and cultures – Turkish, Gypsy, Shiptar and Muslims generally – rather loosely as "Turkish" or "oriental," that is, "from the East," that "East" again referring to the Near and Middle East, not the Far East, as the word "oriental" is usually used in English.) I learned this dance from Ciga Despotovic, well-known folk dancer and teacher from former Yugoslavia.

Formation: open circle

Handhold: high handhold

Dance description:

count

steps

Figure 1

1&2&3&4&

Facing and moving to the right: Step right foot (1), step on left foot (&), with weight on ball of left foot and bending forward from the waist, touch ball of right foot in front of left (2), step on right foot (&). Repeat 1&2& in same direction but with opposite footwork (3&4&).

5, 6, 7, 8

Turning to face center and beginning to swing arms forwards and down, step on right foot to right (5), continuing to bring arms down, step on left foot behind right (6), starting to bring hands up again, step on right foot to right (7), step on left foot in front of right (8).

9, 10, 11&12&

In place and with ball of left foot on floor: take weight on right foot and twist body and knee to left (heel twists right) (9), twist body and knee to right (heel twists left) (10), hop on right foot (11), step left foot back, away from center (&), step on right foot next to left (12), step forward toward center on left foot (&).

13, 14, 15&16&

Repeat 9,10, 11&12& with opposite footwork.

17, 18, 19&20&

Repeat 9,10,11&12&.

21, 22, 23, 24

Release hands: step on right foot straight forward toward the center and clap hands in front of body (21), turn ¼ turn to left, step forward (to left) on left foot and clap (22), again turn ¼ turn to left and step (away from center) on right foot and clap (23), again turn ¼ turn to left and step (to the right, in direction of dance) on left foot and clap (24).

Figure 2

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| 1&2&3&4& | Take hands and repeat 1&2&3&4& from Figure 1. |
| 5, 6, 7, 8 | Repeat 5,6,7,8 from Figure 1. |
| 9&10& | Repeat 9,10 from Figure 1 two times, twice as fast as in Figure 1, while hopping on right foot. |
| 11&12& | Repeat 11&12& from Figure 1. |
| 13&14&15&16& | Repeat 9&10&11&12& (Figure 2) with opposite footwork. |
| 17&18&19&20& | Repeat 9&10&11&12& (Figure 2). |
| 21&22&23&24& | Twisting body to left, step on ball of right foot to right (21), twisting left hip forward. step on left foot in front of right (&), Repeat three more times (22&23&24&). |