

Blagoevgradsko horo

(Pirin, Bulgaria)

Blagoevgradsko horo (BLAH-gwev-**GRAHD**-skoh hoh-ROH) 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. The two separate steps were learned by Lee in Bulgaria at various venues.

MUSIC: Blagoevgradsko horo (7/8, counted here as "one-two-three")

FORMATION: Open circle, leader on right.

HANDHOLD: Handhold in Fig. 1: high handhold ("W"). Handhold in Fig. 2: go over to low handhold ("V") at the beginning of Fig. 2, raise hands to high handhold at beginning of Meas. 5, and lower them again during Meas. 8. Transition back to Fig. 1: do not lower hands during Meas. 8

STYLE: 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.

METER 7/8 (3+2+2)

PATTERN

I. FIRST FIGURE (R, side, in, out, sway, back to L)

- 1 Facing and moving LOD: Optional slight lift on left foot on the upbeat before you (delayed) walk on the R ft (1), walk on the L ft (2), walk on the R ft (3).
- 2 Repeat meas 1. opposite footwork.
- 3 Turning to face slightly L of center: step on R ft to R (1). Place ball of L ft next to R and bounce twice (2,3).
- 4 Repeat Measure 3, opposite direction and footwork and moving diag toward center.
- 5 Repeat meas 3, but moving away from center.
- 6 Sway L by stepping L ft to the L while turning slightly to the R, leaving ball of R ft in place on floor (1), then sway R by stepping on R ft while turning slightly to the L, leaving ball of L ft in place on floor (2-3).
- 7 Facing and moving RLOD, walk two steps: L (1), R (2-3).
- 8 Turning to face LOD, step on L ft to L (1) and, placing ball of R ft next to L, bounce twice (2,3).

cont...

II. SECOND FIGURE (Bounces, crosses, lifts and turn)

- 1 Facing and moving LOD: lift R knee on upbeat (&), bounce twice on L ft while R ft "bounces" first down ("push" or "touch") (1), then up ("lift") (2). Step on R ft (3).
- 2 Repeat meas 1, opposite footwork.
- 3 Repeat meas 1.
- 4 Repeat meas 1, opposite footwork.
- 5 Turning to face slightly L of center and with lower body twisted even more to L, plie with weight on both feet, feet together (1). Turning to face center by lifting R heel from floor, lift L knee twd center (2). Step on L ft in place (3).
- 6 Repeat meas 1, in place, facing center.
- 7 Repeat meas 1, opposite footwork, in place, facing center.
- 8 Repeat meas 5, turning to face LOD on last count.

(Styling tip: raise knee quite high on the upbeat before each "push" or "touch" movement.)

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