

ŽITA
Croatia (Yugoslavia)

Žita (ZHEE-tah, "of the wheat") is a variant of a dance also known as *Kolo žita* and *Devojačko kolo* in various parts of Slavonia (eastern Croatia). It was a favorite dance of girls who had recently "joined the kolo", i.e., reached marriageable age, and in former days was done to the accompaniment of the *dvojnice* (double flute), *tambura samica* (a solo plucked stringed instrument on which both melody and chords were played), and other folk instruments. In more recent times, accompaniment has been small tamburitza combos.

The version described here was introduced in the U.S. by Dennis Boxell in 1977.

Recordings: The Folklorist FL-102, *Žita* (played on *dvojnice* and *tambura samica*); Folk Dancer MH 45-3030 A, *Kolo žita* (tamburitza orchestra).

Meter: 2/4

Formation: Closed circle, front basket hold, R arm over, L arm under. Sometimes hands are simply joined and held down at sides.

MEAS	ACTION
<u>Part 1 - Step-bounce-bounce L and R</u>	
1	Facing ctr, step Lft to L, flexing knee and bringing Rft very slightly off floor (1); slight rise on Lft, straightening knees and closing Rft beside Lft (&); come down (bounce) twice on both heels together, knees straight (2,&).
2-4	Repeat movements of meas 1 three more times to L.
5-8	Repeat movements of meas 1-4 to R with opposite footwork.
<u>Part 2 - Point-crosses and "rat-a-tat" steps</u>	
9	Touch L heel diag fwd/L (1); touch L heel across in front of Rft (2).
10	Repeat movements of meas 9.
11	With knees stiff, side-step L with Lft, stressing heel (1); close Rft beside Lft, knee stiff, again stressing heel (&); repeat movements of counts 1, & of this measure (2,&).
12	Repeat movements of counts 1, & of meas 11 (1,&); side-step L with Lft, stiff-kneel, stressing heel (2).
<u>Note:</u> Meas 11-12 consist of a total of 7 heavy, flat-footed steps L, accenting heels and maintaining very stiff knees throughout ("rat-a-tat-a-tat-a-tat").	
13-16	Repeat movements of meas 9-12 to R with opposite footwork.

(continued)

ŽITA (Cont'd)

SONG TEXT:

1. *Deder diko, pogodi,
zašto žito ne rodi?
Žito ne rodi,
jer je svila u modi.*
Say, sweetheart, can you guess
why the wheat doesn't grow?
The wheat doesn't grow
because silk is in style.
2. *Volim sunce i misec,
volim zlatnu jabuku.
Sunce i misec,
volim zlatnu jabuku.*
I love the sun and the moon,
I love a golden apple.
The sun and the moon,
I love a golden apple.
3. *Nije meni na sramotu
što ja plešem k'o na drotu.
Hej'de do mene,
srcu dragi brajane.*
I'm not ashamed
that I dance like I'm on a string.
Hey, come to me,
true pal of my heart.
4. *Ajde, diko, poskoči,
poljubi me u oči.
Samo veselo,
nek se čudi sve selo.*
Hey, sweetheart, hop over here
and kiss me on the eyes.
But do it merrily--
let the whole village be surprised.
5. *Dvi jabuke i dunje
na ormaru istrule,
dok sam jadna ja
svoga diku čekala.*
Two apples and quinces
spoiled in the cupboard,
while, poor me,
I waited for my sweetheart.
6. *Crne oči dikine,
dika za mnom izgine.
Neka izgine,
bo'me, ima za kime!*
My sweetheart has dark eyes,
and he's eating his heart out for me.
Let him eat his heart out
--By God, I'm worth it!
7. *Moja dika pomodar,
nosi kapu k'o bećar,
pa mi šapuće:
"Daj, izadji iz kuće!"*
My sweetheart dresses in the latest style,
wears his hat like a bećar,
and he whispers to me,
"Come on out of the house!"

Notes by Dick Crum