

CA LA BREAZA

Romania

Ca la Breaza (kah lah bree-AH-zah, 'as in Breaza') is only one of the names for this dance, variants of which are found in southeast Transylvania, northern Muntenia and southwest Moldavia under names such as *Ungurească*, *De doi*, *Brează*, *Mocănească*, etc.

Historically, this dance probably originated in Transylvania and migrated over the Carpathian mountains into Muntenia and Moldavia at some point in the 19th century, carried by the so-called 'Ungureni' (people from the 'Hungarian' lands), i.e., Romanians coming from Hungarian-occupied Transylvania.

The version given here comes from the region of Argeş in Muntenia, where, after the *Brîu* and *Sîrba*, it is the most popular dance at Sunday afternoon dance gathering and other village social events.

Recordings: There are many recordings for *Ca la Breaza*, most of them on hard-to-get Electrecord imports. The best recordings readily available in the U.S. are: Folkraft LP-32, Bd A-1, *Calabreaza*, and Gypsy Camp Vol II, 2-5, *Ca la Breaza*.

Meter: 2/4. The various figures have different syncopated patterns.

Formation: Couples, scattered about the dancing area. (This is the most recent formation; a generation ago, in many villages, dancers formed columns or danced counterclockwise around the dancing area.) The two most common positions for partners are:

"London Bridge" Position: Partners face and grasp hands (R in partner's L) high in front.

"Back-Cross" Position: Partners side-by-side, W on M's R, arms crossed in back, W's L arm "over" M's R arm, R hand in R hand, L hand in L hand.

MEASURE	ACTION
<u>BASIC STEP</u> :	
	Footwork same for M and W. Described as danced in place, but can move in any direction, including turning as couple in place.
1	Slight hop on Lft, Rft may kick loosely fwd or simply raise beside Lft (1); step Rft beside Lft (&); hold (2); step Lft beside Rft (&).
2	Step Rft in place (1); step Lft in place (2).

(continued)

CA LA BREAZA (concluded)SEVENS:

Moving to R:

- 1 Slight hop on Lft (1); light step with Rft R (&); light step with Lft across in front of Rft (2); light step with Rft R (&).
- 2 Light step with Lft across in front of Rft (1); light step with Rft to R (&); light step with Lft across in front of Rft (2).

Moving to L:

- 1 Slight hop on Lft (1); light step with Rft across in front of Lft (&); light step with Lft to L (2); light step with Rft across in front of Lft (&).
- 2 Light step with Lft to L (1); light step with Rft across in front of Lft (&); light step with Lft to L (2).

Note: The "Sevens" pattern can also be done moving forward or back (in which case there are no crossing steps), or tracing a curved pattern on the floor as if traveling around the face of a clock.

FIGURES

Ca la Breaza is basically an improvised dance made up of various figures led by the man. Among the most popular are the following:

1. Basic Step forward around the room or in any other direction, in "Back-Cross" position.
2. Basic Step spinning in place as a couple in either direction.
3. "Inside-Out": Using "Back-Cross" position and one or two Basic Steps, partners turn away from each other (M to his L, W to her R) without releasing hands. Now facing the opposite direction, dancers may proceed forward in the new direction, or "rewind the film," i.e. return to original position, M turning R, W turning L.
4. "London Bridges": The smoothest way to get from "Back-Cross" position to the "London Bridges" position is to start an "Inside-Out", releasing hands as you do so, and as soon as you have turned sufficiently to be facing your partner, simply raise both hands high and form the bridge.

In the "London Bridge" position, dancers may do the Basic Step in place or in various directions, or may do "Sevens", sideways or around, each dancer accommodating his/her footwork to that of partner.

5. From "London Bridges" position, dancers release hands, link R elbows and circle around each other with Basic Steps, then reverse elbows.
6. From "London Bridges" position, dancers release hands, M takes W's R hand in his R hand and twirls her once or twice under joined hands using the Basic Step.