

NEVESTINSKO (BRIDE'S DANCE)

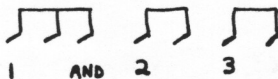
This dance is not a truly traditional folk dance. It was created by members of the Macedonian national ensemble "Tanec" in about 1949 or 1950 based on the actual movements and steps of a number of dances with which the individual members were familiar, some of which were in fact "Nevestinska Ora" from their own regions. The dance which they created is very elegant, and has since been done as a standard part of the repertoire of most Macedonian folk ensembles. It is always done in the traditional folk costume of western Macedonia, primarily of Mijak villages such as Galičnik and Lazaropole, but also of Debar and Debarski Drinkol.

"Nevestinsko Oro" as a type of dance exists. In many areas, the bride must lead the first dance done after she has been brought to the groom's house. The same dance may also be done on other, non-ritual, occasions. Such dances are often done by both men and women, although this dance, as it was choreographed, is intended only for women. It is reminiscent of certain rites which Mijak brides performed as a group once a year.

The word "nevesta" not only means "bride" in the sense of a girl on her wedding day, but may be applied to a married woman for the rest of her life by the family into which she has married. In fact, she might possibly be referred to only as "nesta" or "nevesta" and never by her actual name.

The song to which the dance is done by Tanec (and often in the USA) is "Prsten mi padna, male", which is a stylized version of a real folk song found throughout southwest Macedonia, especially the Bitola-Prilep area. The song is actually "Prsten ti padne, Nešo".

The rhythm is 7/8. We will indicate the beats as follows:



Open circle of women. Face RLOD. Hands are joined and held forward at shoulder level.

Measure	Beat		
I	1	Step R forward	Step slowly onto R foot and sink until you reach a position with full foot on the ground and R knee bent. L knee is also bent. L foot is near R foot, but just off the ground.
	and	Step onto ball of L foot	Straighten L leg so that body rises. R leg is held down and slightly forward. R knee straight and R foot barely off ground.
	2	Step onto R in place	R knee is flexed. L leg is by R and L knee is also flexed.

cont

NEVESTINSKO, CONTINUED

Measure	Beat		
	3	Slowly straighten R leg and roll weight onto the ball of the foot	Free L leg is slowly brought forward and straightened in preparation for a step forward.
II		Reverse footwork of I, still moving RLOD.	
III	1	Step onto R forward	Slowly sink by flexing R knee and then straightening it to prepare for a step forward. Free L is first bent at knee and held by R, and later is brought forward and straightened.
	2	Step onto L forward	Reverse of 1.
IV-v		Same as I-II, except turn to face center, and dance moving into the center a bit.	
VI		Turn to face RLOD and do III.	
VII-VIII		Same as IV-V (so face center again.)	
IX		Same as IV, but step back on R, still facing center.	
X	1	Turn to face diagonally L of center, and step forward on L	
	2	Step forward on R	
XI	1	Face diagonally R of center. Step back on L (so you are moving diagonally out of the circle.	
	2	Step back on R, still facing diagonally R of center.	
XII		Same as II, turning to face RLOD.	

Cont

These notes have been written on the basis of my own experience in learning most of these dances from Pece at his summer institute at Oteševo in 1971 and 1972, and on the basis of many hours of discussion between us. However, Sitna Lisa, Zetovskoto, and Kavadarka are dances which I have never done, nor seen done to music, and are written up on the basis of demonstrations by Pece. For this reason, inaccuracies are particularly likely to exist in these dances.

I have attempted to make these notes conform as much as possible to the way in which Pece has danced and taught these dances, but of course there is bound to be some personal interpretation on my part as well.

Although I have attempted to make these notes quite complete, it must be remembered that **THESE NOTES ARE INTENDED ONLY TO REFRESH THE MEMORY OF SOMEONE WHO HAS ALREADY LEARNED THE DANCE.** It is near impossible to make the notes so complete that a person may read them and do the dance correctly without ever having seen it done, and I strongly advise against any attempt to use them this way.

As to their accuracy: If you see Pece do a dance slightly differently from what is written here, it may be that there is a mistake in the notes. But it may also be that Pece has done it differently that time. This is not to say that Pece makes many changes in the dance each time he does it. He is, in fact, very consistent in his dancing. However, there are some folk dancers who worry about precisely how many inches a foot is lifted from the ground, and so on. The actual truth is that given ten villagers from a village, all of whom know the dance well, each would dance slightly differently, and the differences among them would be quite considerable and quite visible. It should be no wonder if Pece dances slightly differently from some other person you meet who knows the dance, or even if he dances the same dance differently at different times. His style will vary slightly with his mood: for instance, faster music and exuberance may tend to produce a slight "čukče" as a grace note to a step on the other foot.

Despite the above warnings, I have gone into great detail in these dance descriptions, and in order to make for easier reading, I have often written the basic step on the left, with the details in brackets to the right. It should thus be equally possible to just skim through the basic steps or to recall a fine point.

I hope that the notes will be useful, and will gladly receive your comments, corrections or criticisms.

ROBERT LEIBMAN
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DEFINITIONS OF SOME TERMS

A "čukče" on the R foot: with weight on the R foot, lift the R heel off the ground before the beat. Then, on the beat, come down on this heel.

"RLOD" means "right line of direction" - i.e.: around the circumference of the circle towards the right. "LLOD" means the same to the left.

In contrast, "forward" or "backward" makes reference to the direction you are facing, not the line of direction.

A notation such as "3+" means halfway between beat 3 and beat 4. Similarly, "3++" means three-quarters of the way from beat 3 to beat 4.

"Bloop-bloop" (accent on the second "bloop") applied to two steps indicates that the first step takes place just before the beat, and the second step on the beat. For instance, on beats 3++ and 4.