

NISIOTIKOS SYRTÓS (SYLVIRIANÓS)
(Greece)

Source: Nisiótikos Syrtós (Nee-see-OH-ti-kohs Seer-TOHS) means the island syrtós. More particularly, this syrtós is from the islands of the Aegean Sea. It is sometimes called Syrtós Sylivrianós (See-lee-vree-ah-NOHS) because of the very popular melody, "Sylivrianós," which is often used for the dance. This melody is named for the Greek town of Sylivria which is not too far from Konstantinoupoli and now part of Turkish Asia Minor. Sometimes this dance is also known as Polítikos Syrtós, or syrtós of the City (Konstantinoupolis). You can see this dance wherever there are Greeks from Asia Minor or the Aegean Islands. It is often used as an introduction to the Ballos.







Bibliography: Elliniki Hori, V. Papahristos (Athens, 1960).
Folk Dances of the Greeks, T. Petrides (New York, 1961).
Greek Folk Dances, M. Vouras & R. Holden (New Jersey, 1965).

Music: 2/4 meter,
Any Nisiótiko Syrtós may be used; any Sylivrianó or Polítiko Syrtós recording may be used. Some available recordings are:
Picnic In Greece LP OL-24-13
His Master's Voice "45" #3349
"Concerto for Bouzouki" LP Vol. II (Alector)
"Aegean Echoes" LP (Nina)

Formation: The dance is done in an open circle with hands joined at shoulder height; elbows are down. The hands should not be pushed forward into the circle, but should be comfortably back near the shoulders.

Characteristics: This syrtós is really an improvisational dance. Some people, in trying to follow this dance, might come to the conclusion that the leader does not know the basic step to the syrtó. Actually, it is the leader's right to do the step in any way he chooses. The basic Syrtós is usually a four measure step. The Nisiótikos or Sylivrianós, however, may use three, four, five, or more measures. The leader, especially, does variations in ftwork and turns; the rest of the dancers follow the leader with respect to beginning and end of the syrtó sequence. Many dancers in the bouzouki taverns of Athens and other cities do the same type of dance to the more modern "syrtó-tsifte-telli" tunes.

Continued...



NISIOTIKOS SYRTÓS (SYLVIRIANÓS) (continued)Meas ctsI  Facing R, step fwd on the R ft. (LOD)II  Take a small step fwd on the L ft.III  Take a small step fwd on the R ft.IV  Step fwd on the L ft.V  Take a small step fwd on the R ft.VI  Take a small step fwd on the L ft.VII  Step fwd on the R ft.VIII  Take a small step fwd on the L ft.IX  Take a small step fwd on the R ft.X  Step bkwd (RLOD) on the L ft.XI  Step in place next to L on R ft.XII  Step in place on L ft.

NOTE: The first, or slow, step on each meas may have a slight, gliding dip of the leg holding wt as you step fwd.

Often the above sequence is only three measures long, or sometimes five or more measures long. In other words, the dancers may repeat measures I-III if they desire, before doing meas IV (the bkwd or RLOD) movement.

Variation (Step Touch)

I-II Same as above.

III  Take a small step fwd on the R ft.IV  Touch the L ft next to the R and then lift the L ft, bending the L knee slightly.V  Step in place on the L ft.VI  Touch the R ft next to the L and then lift the R ft, bending the R knee slightly.

NOTE: Measures III-IV of the above variation may be done more than once if the leader desires; thus you might have a six-measure sequence or perhaps longer.

The variations I have described may also be done facing and moving to the ctr, or facing and moving to the L (the dance shouldn't move too much to the L, however). The dance may sometimes be done with an odd number of measures which would make the ftwork opposite from what I have described. Like many Greek dances, this improvisation may make for momentary confusion, but that is part of the fun of the dancing.

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