

NIŠKA BANJA

Serbia/Macedonia (Yugoslavia)

Niška banja (NEESH'-kah`BAHN'-yah, "the Turkish baths in Niš [city in Serbia]") has for years been a favorite song among Serbians and Macedonians. Its verses are improvised, the singers constantly inventing new ones about the supposed goings-on at the Turkish baths in Niš. In 9/8 meter, the rhythm is associated with Gypsy music, especially the dance Čoček (CHOH'-check). The dance described here is a line or circle dance which has become popular among recent immigrants from Yugoslavia in the U.S., and is known simply as Niška banja. Its European origins, if any, are unknown.

Recording: DY 8405-B, "Niška banja"

Meter: 9/8, in a quick-quick-quick-slow pattern:

	q	q	q	S
Count:	1	2	3	4
Note value:	♪	♪	♪	♪.

Formation: Mixed men and women in large open circle or line, hands joined at sides.

Measure

Pattern

Part 1 (verse) - Traveling to right

- 1 Facing center, step Rft sideward R (1); step Lft behind Rft (2); turning to face slightly R, step Rft in LOD (3); continuing in LOD, step Lft across Rft (4).
- 2 Continuing in LOD, step R-L-R-L (1,2,3,4).
- 3-8 Repeat mov'ts of meas 1-2 three more times for total of four.

Part 2 (chorus) - Forward & back with claps

- 9 Facing center and releasing hands, step Rft forward (toward center), clapping hands in front (1); step Lft forward, clapping hands (2); step Rft forward, clapping hands (3); bounce on Rft, letting Lft kick slightly forward, clapping hands for the 4th time (4).
- 10 Reverse footwork and direction of meas 1, i.e., 3 steps and a bounce backward (away from center) beginning with Lft, clapping 4 times.
- 11-16 Repeat mov'ts of meas 9-10 three more times for total of four.

Presented by Dick Crum