

LA VARSOVIANA

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A Mexican Folk Dance

The Varsoviana is a form of folk dance found in many countries. There is, for example, a Swedish Varsovienne and many versions of an American Varsoviana too. The New England version for example is quite different from a Texas Varsoviana. The Mexican form of the dance is perhaps the most involved with many figures.

RECORD: FOLK DANCER MH 1095

FORMATION: Couples facing line of direction, assume varsouvienne position after bow.

PART 1: All facing CCW around the ring, dance forward with four "two-steps" (step-together-step) beginning on the Left foot. Drop Left hands and take four more two-steps. Girl turns under joined R hands twice around to R, both progressing forward. Repeat this whole sequence three times all told, the last time the lady turns only 1-1/2 times around to face partner.

PART 2: Partners facing, gents back to center of circle, hands outstretched and joined at shoulder level. 1st Varsouviana step: Cue: Back, step, close; back, step, close; back, turn the girl around and step point.
MAN: Lift R heel as you bring L ft back (towards ankle), step L ft, close R ft to L ft; Repeat; Bring L ft back, take four small walking steps, then point L toe to L. (On four walking steps turn girl under your left hand.) Continue to do this three more times. End in ballroom position.
LADY: Lift L heel and bring R ft back, step on R ft and close L ft to R ft; Repeat; Bring R ft back and turn around to the Right and end with R toe pointed to R.

PART 3: "Kick up your heels" step. Ballroom position, man's back to center of circle. The man moves backwards to his Left in place with three running steps as, at the same time, the lady moves forward and turns to her Right with three running steps. Both finish in opposite places, man now faces the center, lady has back to center. Both put out heel to side. (Man's R heel, lady's L heel). Repeat this figure, this time man starts on R ft. lady on L ft, and man moves to his R, lady to her L and finish with man's L heel out, lady's R heel out. Repeat this whole figure again. Each time heel is placed out to side that was in original line of direction
In doing the running steps, heels are kicked up behind with exaggeration. Lady tosses head to and fro to make her pigtails fly.

PART 4: Partners face and join hands outstretched again, man's back to center of ring. Do the simple Varsouviana step, without woman turning as follows:
MAN: (Varsouviana step as before) Start with L ft; Cue words: Back, step, close; back, step, close; back, Left, Right, Left, point R ft (to R)
LADY: Varsouviana step starting with Right foot; Cue words: Back, step, close; back step, close; back, Right, Left, Right, point Left to Left.

This step is done four times in all - first to man's Left, then to his Right, to his Left, and to his Right.

(Continued)

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PART 5: This is done exactly the same way as Part 3.

PART 6: Man kneels, Lady places her Left hand in man's Right hand. Lady waltzes 6 waltz steps around man (CCW). On last 2 measures (count 7 & 8) man rises and twirls lady under joined hands and kneels down again. Repeat all of above. Assume a two-hand hold, hands outstretched at shoulder level. Gent's Left shoulder, woman's Right shoulder towards center.

PART 7: Varsoviana step -- "in and out of circle" MAN: Sweep L foot back, step forward Left, close Right foot. Back, step close, back, walk 3 steps to center (L, R, L) at this time turn woman under his Left arm. Both finish facing twds outside. Repeat step going out. Repeat all going in & out. End with lady on outside, facing "in", Man on inside facing "out".

PART 8: Jumping step: Man places hands behind his back. Lady holds skirt out. Both jump on Left foot 3 times, pointing Right toe forward at same time. Then quickly change feet so that you now point Left toe. Pause, Now jump on Right foot, tapping Left toe three times. Repeat with Right and with Left -- but last time with Left, tap only twice then cross Left foot over Right and turn full turn to Right. Repeat ALL.

PART 9: Repeat Part 2. End with a bow to partner.

NOTE: There are several versions of La Varsoviana, and the direction of the turns sometimes varies also, according to individual dancers. In this case there are definite prescribed figures for each sequence of the music. This is a stately, ballroom type folk dance with the peasant style bursting forth in Parts e, t, and 8.

Presented by Nelda Drury at Maine Folk Dance Camp 1987



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