

GAIDA AVASI
(Pirin, Bulgaria)

Gaida Avasi or *Gaida Vasi* is a popular dance from the Sandanski/Melnik region of South-West Bulgaria. Similar dances are done in Macedonia and the Serres region of Greece. The word "*Avasi/Vasi*" is from the Turkish work "*Havasi*" which refers to dance. Below, I have described 3 different versions of the dance.

Recordings: Workshop CD

Formation: Open circle, "V" hold

Music: 2/4

Meas

8 Measure Basic

- 1 Facing R of center, Step Rft fwd (ct 1); Step Lft fwd (ct 2);
- 2 Step Rft fwd (ct 1); Touch or slightly lift Lft beside Rft and bounce twice on Rft (ct 2, &);
- 3 Still facing R of center, Rock onto Lft to L while continuing fwd (ct 1); Rock back onto Rft while moving slightly fwd (ct &); Step Lft fwd (ct 2);
- 4 Turning to face center and bringing hands up to "W" position, Step Rft to R (ct 1); Touch or lift Lft beside Rft and bounce twice (ct 2,&);
- 5 Facing center, Step Lft fwd toward center (ct 1); Step Rft fwd (ct 2);
- 6 Step Lft back and slightly to L (ct 1); Touch Rft beside Lft and bounce twice (ct 2, &);
- 7 Step Rft back (ct 1); Touch Lft beside Rft (ct 2);
- 8 Step Lft back (ct 1); Touch Rft beside Lft (ct 2);

*Note: "double bounces" are optional (especially at the end of meas 8) and meas 5-6 are often danced to the L (i.e. L side, R crossing in front, L side, Touch R). Hands/arms return to "V" position on count 1 of meas. 1.

7 Measure Basic

- 1 Repeat action of meas 1 above
- 2 Continuing to move fwd, Step Rft quickly fwd (ct 1); Step Lft fwd in front of Rft (ct &); Step Rft fwd again (ct 2); step Lft fwd in front of Rft (ct &);
- 3-7 Repeat action of meas 4-8 above but travel to the L during meas 4-5 (meas 5-6 above);

8 Measure Fast Part (*Maleshevsko*)

- 1 Facing R of center, Step Rft fwd (ct 1); Step Lft fwd (ct 2);
- 2 Step Rft fwd (ct 1); Step on ball of Lft fwd (ct "uh" before ct 2); Step Rft fwd (ct 2); (This has a Step, ker-Plunck feeling to it).
- 3 Continuing fwd, reverse ftwk of meas 2, and arms swing back and low on ct 2.
- 4 Turning to face center, Step Rft to R and swing arms fwd low (ct 1);

GAIDA AVASI cont.

Meas

- 4 Bounce on Rft and bring Lft slightly up beside Rft as arms swing back low (ct 2);
 - 5 Facing slightly L of center, Step Lft fwd to L, arms swing fwd low (ct 1); Step Rft to L in front of Lft, arms swing back low (ct 2);
 - 6 Turning to face center, Step Lft to L, arms swing fwd low (ct 1); Close ball of Rft to Lft (ct &); Step Lft in place (ct 2);
 - 7 Reverse ftwk of meas 6;
 - 8 Repeat action of meas 6.
- Note: Meas 6-8 are *Pas de Basque*-like steps to the L, R, L or even moving back slightly, or they can be used to wind the line in slightly. Arms continue their fwd and back swing on cts 1-2 but not during meas 1-2.

8 Measure Recreational Version to Kate Katerino

- 1 Facing R of center with a "V" hand-hold, Step Rft fwd (ct 1); Step Lft fwd (ct 2);
- 2 Still moving fwd to R, Step Rft fwd (ct 1); Step Lft behind Rft (ct 2); Step Rft fwd (ct &);
- 3 Step Lft fwd in front of Rft (ct 1); Step Rft fwd (ct 2); Step Lft fwd (ct &);
- 4 Turning to face slightly L of center and bring hands/arms to "W" position, Step Rft to R side (ct 1); Touch Lft slightly fwd out to L (ct 2);
- 5 Still facing slightly L of center but backing up diagonally to R, Step Lft Back behind Rft (ct 1); Step Rft back to R (ct 2);
- 6 Step Lft back to R behind Rft (ct 1); Touch Rft out to R side (ct 2);
- 7 Cross and Step Rft in front of Lft (ct 1); Touch Lft to L and begin to turn To face slightly R of center (ct 2);
- 8 Moving to R, Step Lft fwd in front of Rft and bring arms fwd and down (ct 1); step Rft to R side (ct 2); Step Lft across and in front of Rft (ct &) arms return to "V" position.

Presented by Stephen Kotansky