

VALLJA DEVOLLIÇE

(Albania)

Vallja Devolliçe (The Dance from Devolli) is a well-known performance dance from the *Devolli River* region of south-eastern Albania near the city of Korça, and it is still danced by local dancers at weddings and other dance events. As a performance dance, it is danced by male dancers who perform acrobatic squats (including an amazing “collapsing line”) and fast spins. The dance has two parts: slow in a 7/8 meter (*Devolliçe*) and a fast part in ¾ or 11/16 sometimes referred to as *Gorarçe* or *Qakiston*. The dance, in Albania, is generally a combination of “kinetic motifs” or dance step patterns determined by the leader or a choreography. I am introducing a set pattern as might be done at a wedding by men and women together.

Recording: Workshop CD

Formation: Open circle with a “W” of “V” handhold

Music: 7/8 (S-q-q) 11/16(S-q-q-q-q)

Dancer’s cts: (1-2-3) (1- 2 - 3)

Meas: Slow Part

- 1 Facing R of center, lift on Rft and hook-swing Lft across and in front of R shin/knee (ct 1); step Lft fwd to R (cts 2-3);
- 2 Continuing to dance fwd to the R, repeat action of meas 1 with opposite ftwk;
- 3-6 Repeat action of meas 1-2 (lift-steps) moving fwd to R but turn to face center on cts 2-3 of meas 6.
- 7 Facing center, step Lft to center (emphasized) (ct 1); bring Rft behind L calf and bounce on Lft slightly two times (cts 2-3);
- 8 Step Rft back away from center and begin to bring Lft around and back (ct 1); bounce on Rft slightly two times (cts 2-3);
- 9 Turning to face slightly L of center, leap slightly onto Lft behind Rft (ct 1); step Rft across and in front of Lft (cts 2-3);
- 10 Turning to face center, step Lft to L (ct 1); bounce Lft slightly two times and bring Rft around behind Lft (cts 2-3);
- 11 Moving to L, step Rft behind Lft (ct1); lift Lft slightly up in front and bounce on Rft slightly (cts 2-3);
- 12-15 Repeat action of meas 10-11 two more times (3 times in all);
- 16 Step Lft across and in front of Rft and turn to face center (ct 1); bring Rft around and up in front of L shin/knee (cts 2-3);
- 17 With Rft up and in front of Lft knee (R leg is bent), dip on Lft (ct 1); bounce on Lft slightly in place and bring Rft around and to back (cts 2-3);
- 18 Rock step Rft back behind Lft (ct 1); rock fwd step onto Lft in place (ct 2); hold (ct 3);
- 19-22 Repeat action of meas 17-18;
- 23 Repeat action of meas 17;
- 24 Turning to face R of center, step Rft slightly fwd to R with emphasis (ct 1);

Vallja Devolliçe cont.

Meas:

24 Hold (cts 2-3).

Repeat Slow Part from the top until slow music stops.

*Variation: During meas 1-6 replace “Lift-steps” with “slow-quick-slower” syncopated two-steps (l-r-L, r-l-R, etc)

Fast Part

- 1 Facing center, step Lft into center (ct 1); bring Rft up behind L calf and hop on Lft (ct 2); step Rft back slightly in place (ct 3);
- 2 Kick Lft fwd twd center (ct 1); bounce on Rft and bring Lft around and back (ct 2); step Lft back behind Rft (ct 3);
- 3 Rock-step Rft to R (ct 1); rock-step onto Lft to L (ct 2); turning to face slightly L of center, step Rft across and in front of Lft (ct 3);
- 4 Hop on Rft and lift Lft (leg straight and low) fwd (ct 1); hop on Rft again (Lft remains lifted straight and low) and turn to face R of center (ct 2); step Lft fwd to R (ct 3);
- 5 Leap fwd onto Rft to R (ct 1); step Lft fwd to R (ct 2); step Rft fwd to Rft and turn to face center (ct 3).

Repeat Fast Part until the end of the music.

*Variation:

Squat-Turn

This variation is a two measure “insert” which my informants did 3 times in succession (6 meas all together).

- 5 Replace meas 5 with a low knee bend onto R knee (ct 1); hold (ct 2); raise up onto Lft (ct 3);
- 6 Turn a full CW turn to R with two steps (R,L) (cts 1-2); touch Rft beside Lft to end turn (ct 3).
- 7-10 Repeat action of meas 5-6 of Squat-Turn, but step onto Rft with emphasis on ct 3 of meas 10.
Return to basic 5 meas Fast Part by repeating action of meas 4-5 of Fast Part.

Presented by Stephen Kotansky