

VALLJA E BRADASHESHIT (Albania)

Vallja e Bradasheshit (The Dance of Bradashesh) comes from the environs of Elbasan in Central Albania. We first learned this dance from the famous Albanian singer Merita Halili who danced it with her father. We also learned a version in 2016 from dancers in the town of Belsh which is near Bradashesh and Elbasan. This arrangement of steps was taught to us by Genci Kastrati in Tirana last September, 2018. The faster, second part of the dance is called *Elbasançe* (“Elbasan-like”).

Recording: Workshop CD

Formation: Open circle with a “W” handhold

Music: 25/16 with 7 dancers’ cts 3-(2-2)- 3-(2-2) -3-(2-2)-(2-2) (7/16 + 7/16 + 11/16)

Dancers’ Cts: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Meas: Touch-Step Travel

- 1 Facing R of ctr and moving to R, Touch Rft fwd to R (ct 1); step Rft fwd to R (ct 2); touch Lft fwd to R (ct 3); step Lft fwd to R (ct 4); turning to face center, step Rft in twd ctr (ct 5); step Lft back (ct 6); turning to face R of ctr, bounce on Lft and lift Rft up and behind Lft calf/knee (ct 7);
- 2-4 Repeat action of meas 1 above of Touch-Step Travel;

Basic Side to Side

- 1 Facing ctr with Rft extended fwd low (shin level), bounce on Lft and pull/swing Rft across and in front of L shin (ct 1); bounce on Lft and swing/kick Rft fwd low (ct 2); bounce on Lft and pull/swing Rft back and behind (ct 3); bounce on Lft and bring Rft slightly out to R side (ct 4); step Rft to R side leading with heel and upper body swaying slightly to R (ct 5); step Lft across and behind Rft (body sways back to L slightly) (ct 6); step Rft to R as upper body sways slightly to R (ct 7);
- 2 Reverse action (ftwk and direction) of meas 1 above of Basic Side to Side;
- 3-4 Repeat action of meas 1-2 of Basic Side to Side;

Slow Lift Behind and Syncopation

- 1 Facing ctr, lift Rft slowly up and behind Lft calf/knee (cts 1-2); step Rft back and behind Lft (ct 3); with wt mostly on Rft, twist L heel slightly in twd R (ct 4); quickly step on ball of Lft in place and twist L heel slightly L (ct &); lower/land on Rft in place (ct 5); slight leap onto Lft in place (slightly in front of Rft) (ct 6); shift wt back onto Rft in place and begin to bring Lft around and behind Rft (ct 7);
- 2 Reverse action (ftwk) of meas 1 of Slow Lift Behind and Syncopation;
- 3-4 Repeat action of meas 1-2 of Slow Lift Behind and Syncopation;
Dance repeats from the beginning as written and finishes with the Touch-Step Travel, as written, by closing Rft to Lft.

ELBASANÇE

Music: 7/8 2-2-1-2 (S-S-q-S)

Dancers' cts: 1 2 3 4

Meas:

Side Swings

- 1 Facing ctr, step Rft to R side and turn to face slightly to L (ct 1); lift/swing Lft in front of R shin (ct &); step Lft to L side and turn to face slightly to R (ct 2); lift/swing Rft in front of L shin (ct &); step Rft slightly to R ct 3); long step Lft across and in front of Rft (ct 4);
- 2-4 Repeat action of meas 1 of Side Swings (4 time in all);

Travel to Right

- 1 Step Rft to R (ct 1); step Lft to R across and behind Rft (ct 2); quick step Rft to R (small leap) (ct 3); turning to face slightly R of ctr, step Lft across and in front of Rft (ct 4);
- 2-4 Repeat action of meas 1 of Travel to Right (4 times in all);
Dance repeats from the beginning of ELBASANÇE until the end of the music.

Presented by Susan and Stephen Kotansky