

Balta

Romania (Muntenia)

Balta (BAHL-tah), meaning "swamp," is the name of many dances of SE Romania. The one described here was taught by Sunni Bloland at Mendocino Folklore Camp '79 and S.F. Kolo '81 and by Dean and Nancy Linscott at the 1980 Sacramento Camellia Festival. It differs from an earlier version introduced by Sunni at MFL '69 and taught the same year by Madelynne Greene at Stockton Folk Dance Camp. As Sunni suggests, the dance does not easily fit the music. The stamp-steps across measures provide syncopation; and the four dance patterns are 4,5,5 and 2 measures long, while the musical phrasing is 4x4.

Music: LP: HAI LA JOC, Romanian Folk Dances, Noroc Vol I, Side A/1 2/4 meter.

Formation: Mixed dancers in open or closed circle, hands joined up in W-pos.

Steps and Syling: Very lively but controlled. Stamps are without taking weight.

Measures	2/4 meter	PATTERN
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16	Introduction. No movement.	
1	Facing R of ctr and moving LOD, step R as arms move fwd and down (ct 1); step L across R as arms swing fwd and up, hands returning to W-pos (ct 2).	
2	Step R, L, R approximately in place, while turning to face L of ctr (cts 1,&,2).	
3-4	Repeat meas 1&2 with opp ftwk and direction; turn during meas 4 to face ctr. Stamp R on final ct& of measure 4. During meas 3 arms move as in meas 1. For the remainder of the dance hands remain up in W-pos.	
5	Step R in place, stamp L beside R, step L in place, step R across L (cts 1,&,2,&).	
6	Step L in place, step diag back R, step L in place, step R across L (cts 1,&,2,&).	
7	Step L in place (ct 1); step diag back R (ct &); turn CW to step L twd ctr (ct 2).	
8	Turn CCW to step R twd ctr (ct 1); turn CW, step L twd ctr and face LOD (ct 2).	
9	Moving sideways away from ctr, step R to R (ct 1); close L to R with wt (ct &); step R to R and turn to face ctr (ct 2); stamp L beside R (ct &).	
10-14.	Repeat meas 5-9 with opp ftwk and direction.	
15	Step R in place, stamp L beside R, step L in place, step R across L (cts 1,&,2,&).	
16	Step back on L (ct 1); pivoting to face R of ctr, leap in LOD onto R (ct &); step on L across R (ct 2). (Sunni feels cts &,2 as "ker-plunk.")	

Dance as written repeats five times - a total of six.