

## **Bizourka and Freestyle Flemish Mazurka**

(Belgium, Flanders, and North France)

These Bizourka (bee-ZUR-kah) and easy-going Flemish Mazurka (also spelled *Mazourka*) variations were learned by Richard Powers at a 2009 Carnival ball near Dunkerque, northern France. Participants were mostly local, but also from Belgium and other parts of France. Evolved over 50 years, the steps have very diverse origins, typically the waltz and Polish Mazur, more recently the tango and salsa. Presented by Richard Powers at the 2011 Stockton Folk Dance Camp, at University of the Pacific

Music: 3/4 meter. CD: Richard Powers, 2011 CD, Track 2. Flemish folk mazurkas, 136-154 BPM.  
Video: Stockton Folk Dance Camp 2011 DVD: Richard Powers, Dance #2. This video is available for viewing in the UOP library, or by contacting a camp participant who purchased it. See also *You Tube*: Bal Musette 2011.

Formation: Couples in informal closed waltz position are scattered on floor in position and orientation.

Steps and Styling: Flemish Mazurka: M: Step L to L (ct 1); shift wt back to R in place (ct 2); bounce on R, closing L to R without wt (ct 3). W footwork is opposite.

Rotary Waltz: The turning waltz that most folk dancers know begins with M stepping L to turn CW around in front of W, as W steps fwd R between M's ft to begin CW turn (ct 1). Turn continues smoothly in cts 2 and 3; M and W ftwks are reversed during second meas.

Waltz Balance: M step R to R (ct 1); step L beside R (ct 2); step R in place (ct 3). W opp.

Running Mazurka: Move fwd L, R, hop on R while raising L (cts 1-3).

Meas	Meter = 3/4	DANCE PATTERNS
2		<u>INTRODUCTION</u> . Instrumental.
		<u>Fig I. MAZURKA STEP, GRAPEVINE AND TWISTS</u> (W's movements mirror M's).
1-2		Dance two Flemish Mazurka steps.
3		M: Step L to L (ct 1); step R behind L (ct 2); step L to L (ct 3).
4		Step R in front of L (ct 1); step L beside R, twisting legs so that bent knees point diag R (ct 2); twist legs so that knees point diag L (ct 3).
		<u>Fig II. SHORT GRAPEVINE</u> (W's movements mirror M's).
1		M: Dance one Flemish Mazurka step.
2		Step L behind R (ct 1); step R to R (ct 2); step L beside R, leaning body slightly R (ct 3).
3		Dance one Flemish Mazurka to L with opp ftwk.
4		Step R behind L (ct 1); step L to L (ct 2); step R beside L, leaning body slightly L (ct 3).
5-12		Repeat Fig I and Fig II, meas 1-4.
		<u>Fig III. WALTZ TO CRADLE POSITION</u>
1-2		Ptrs dance two Rotary Waltz steps, circling once CW, ML hand holding WR.
3		W waltz-turns ½ CCW under raised arms to end fwd-right of M, facing in same direction. M waltzes in place, L hand holding WR, to end with her R arm crossed forward above her waist, as MR hand holds WL, her L arm crossed below her R arm (Cradle Pos) (cts 1-3).

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### Fig IV. BERCEUSE (Cradle Song) AND WHEEL

- 1 Maintaining hand-holds and arm positions, dance one Waltz Balance, M stepping R to R as W steps L to L into Cradle Position with W on M's L as ptrs look at each other (cts 1-3).
- 2 Repeat meas 1 with opp ftwk & direction, returning to original Cradle Position.
- 3 In 3 light running steps, rotate CW as a couple, W beginning L and backing up as M begins forward on R (cts 1-3).

### Fig V. UNWIND AND WALTZ

- 1 Circling under ML arm, W unwinds from Cradle Position in a full CW turn (cts 1-3).
- 2 Under MR arm W dances another CW turn, starting L and backing up as cpl drops hands to take closed ballroom pos. (cts 1-3).
- 3-4 Cpl turns once CW with two Rotary Waltz steps.

### Fig VI. MAZURKA AND TOUR SUR PLACE

- 1 Dance a Flemish Mazurka step in LOD, W swinging R ft behind L on ct 3.
- 2 Hands still joined, W dances solo CW grapevine (R behind L; L to L; R in front of L) while M pivots CW in place to achieve R-Side Position (face opp with R hips adjacent) (cts 1-3).
- 3 M & W dance Running Mazurka (L,R,hop), traveling fwd CW around each other (cts 1-3).
- 4 Circling CW, each steps fwd L, R, hold (cts 1-3).

Sequence: Repeat Bizourka as desired or share music with Freestyle Flemish Mazurka (see below).

We thank Joyce Ugglá for many valuable suggestions.

## Freestyle Flemish Mazurka

Danced freestyle, there are many figures for the Flemish Mazurka; some are described here. With M leading, each figure described below follows these guidelines: 1) meter =  $\frac{3}{4}$ ; 2) figure-length = four meas; 3) ftwk and direction of rotation are each reversible.

- a. 2 Flemish Mazurka Steps; 1 full CW Rotary Waltz (the most common variation).
- b. 1 Mazurka Step; 1 CW Half Waltz (turn halfway in 3 steps); 1 Mazurka Step "over the elbows" (i.e., opp ftwk); 1 CW Half Waltz.
- c. 1 Mazurka Step; 1 Half CCW Reverse Waltz step (M leads W CCW); 1 Mazurka Step; 1 CW Half Waltz step. M faces same direction throughout.
- d. 3 Mazurka Steps; 1 CW Half Waltz.
- e. 2 Mazurka Steps; roll apart solo in 2 meas, M (W) turning once CCW (CW).
- f. 4 Mazurka Steps.
- g. Any elements from Bizourka.