

# Gaida Serres

(Greek Macedonian)

Gaida is the generic name for a number of dances from Greek Macedonia. The steps in this particular variation come from the town of Serres. I learned this dance while living in Greek Macedonia during part of the summer of 1989. My primary source is the Konstantino family of Flambouro.

MUSIC: Any appropriate Gaida melody, especially one from Serres and/or one with Rom influence.

FORMATION: Long curved line, leader on R, often with a handkerchief in his/her R hand. Low handhold ("V") on traveling step and fast ending step, very high ("U") handhold otherwise.

STYLE: Heavy and masculine during the slow music, increasingly lively during the fast music at the end.

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METER: 4/4

PATTERN

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Meas

**I. SLOW MUSIC: 2 traveling steps plus leg-lifts and sways**

- 1 Facing and moving to the R, low hands: step on R ft to R (1), lift L leg behind, bent knee(2), brush L ft fwd (3), raise L leg forward, knee slightly bent (4).
- 2 Continuing to face and move in LOD: step on L ft fwd and slightly left(1), hold (2), step on R ft diag bk from L (3), step on L ft fwd and slightly L (4). (*These steps have a "waddling" character.*)
- 3-4 Repeat meas 1-2. (That is: 2 "traveling steps," all told.)
- 5 Continuing to face LOD but slowly raising the arms: Take a large step onto the R ft (1), bring the L leg through to a raised position in front (that is: pointing in LOD), knee slightly bent (2), bend and straighten R knee (3&), again bend and straighten the R knee (4&).
- 6 Continuing to face R: take a step bkws onto L ft (1-2), turning to face diag L, shift weight onto R ft (3-4).
- 7 Facing diag L and moving RLOD: Take a large step onto L ft (1), bring the R leg through to a raised position in front (that is: pointing in RLOD), knee slightly bent (2), bend and straighten L knee (3&), again bend and straighten the L knee (4&). (*Return hands to low ("V") position as you turn to the R to begin the next step.*)

## **II FASTER MUSIC: running "sta tria"**

1½

Facing diag R and moving to the R: Step on R ft fwd (1), step on L ft fwd (2), step on R ft fwd (3), step on ball of L ft beside R heel (&), step on R ft fwd (4), step on L ft fwd (5), step on ball of R ft beside L heel (&), step on L ft fwd (6). *(The dance step takes 6 counts, that is: 1½ measures of music, although the music phrases may also be irregular here.)*

The leader can introduce variations of the running "sta tria" step freely as the music becomes faster. Popular variations are:

- 1) Crossing the L ft behind the R on the "&" count after "3" and jumping the next "two-step" diag slightly to the L.
- 2) Leaping on cts 1 and 2 and throwing the free ft to a position slightly crossed behind the supporting leg.
- 3) Changing the rhythm of the "two-steps" to "a-3,4" and "a5,6" (instead of "3&4" and "5&6.")
- 4) Using a crossing, skipping step (instead of walking, running or leaping step) on the first 2 steps, that is: hopping on the upbeat then stepping crossed in front on the beat ("a-1, a-2.")

Styling note: A hesitation, or slight delay of weight transfer on the slow steps is considered good style during the slow part of the dance.

On this recording, one way to begin is to start dancing measure 5 as soon as the drumbeats are heard, or alternatively, waiting 3 meas more and beginning the dance on meas 1. Starting like this, on this recording, gives you a clear and logical place to go over to the running "sta tria" steps: immediately after the drum solo in the middle. (Then you have time for circa 4 repetitions of each of the 5 variations - the basic step, plus the 4 variations - before the end of the music.)