# Širto
(Bulgaria)

Širto (SHEER-toh) is a Bulgarian-Macedonian dance with similarities to the Greek Syrto, in structure of the basic dance pattern and name. This couple version comes from the area of Pirin, Bulgaria and was learned by Jaap Leegwater from dancers of the Pirin State Ensemble in 1975. The Ensemble learned it from their first director and folklore researcher, Kostadin Rujčev. The first melody is from the song to which the dance was originally performed: "Sleznal Pavle ot Balkana" (Pavle came down from the Balkan mountains). Mr. Leegwater presented the dance at the University of the Pacific Folk Dance Camp in 1985.

RECORD: "Folk Dances from Bulgaria" Vol. 3 (LP) JL 1985.01   7/8 meter
            By Jaap Leegwater   Side A/5.

RHYTHM: 7/8 ♩♪♪ ♪♪ ♪♪ counted as 1,2,3.

FORMATION: Single circle of cpls (M-W or 2-W): #1 on the L side, #2 on the R, all hands joined in "W" pos.

STEPS and   Lift: Rise on the ball of the L (R) ft (♪) before making the first step on the R (L) ft
STYLING: (♩) on ct 1 of each meas.

            Dance lightly on balls of ft, in Macedonian style; slightly bouncy.

MUSIC 7/8   PATTERN

Measures

10 meas   INTRODUCTION.   No action

   I.   IN LOD AND RLOD   "SLEZNAL PAVLE"

   1   Facing slightly diag R of ctr and moving in LOD (CCW), lift on the L ft and then step on R (ct 1); step fwd L, R (cts 2,3).

   2   Repeat meas 1 with opp ftwk.

   3   Repeat meas 1, still facing LOD and moving bkwd RLOD (CW).

   4   Still facing LOD, lift on R ft and then take a small step sdwd L on L ft (ct 1); step on R across in front of L (ct 2); step on L in place (ct 3).

   5-7   Repeat meas 1-3.

   8   Release handhold with neighbors, ptrs retain joined hands, repeat meas 2, #1 dancing almost in place, while leading their ptr across in front of them to the inside of the circle, all facing LOD (CCW), outside hands joined in front, inside hands on hips, fingers fwd.

   9-12   Repeat meas 1-4, changing from holding outside hands in front on meas 9, to holding hands in "W" pos. Outside hands also in "W" pos.

   13-16   Repeat meas 1-4, closing the single circle on meas 16 (ptrs have now changed places; #1 is in #2 pos and visa versa). All hands joined in "W" pos.

   II. TOWARD CENTER AND BACK   "AJDÈ AJDÈ"

   1   Facing ctr, moving slightly diag fwd L, step fwd on R ft (ct 1); step fwd L, R (cts 2,3); gradually extend arms fwd.

   2   Facing ctr, moving slightly diag fwd R, step fwd on L ft (ct 1); step fwd on R ft (ct 2); step on L ft in front of R (ct 3) keep holding arms in horizontal pos.

3 Facing ctr, moving diag bkwd R, lift on L ft and then step on R (ct 1); step bkwd L, R (cts 2, 3). Pull arms up by bending elbows, push them fwd and down, arms straight, continue low bkwd swing (ct 1); swing arms fwd low (cts 2, 3).

4 Moving slightly diag bkwd L, step bkwd on L ft, swinging arms bkwd low (ct 1); step bkwd R, L, swinging arms fwd low (cts 2, 3).

5-8 Repeat meas 1-4, slowly raise arms horizontal in front on meas 5.

III. IN LOD AND RLOD "SLEZNAL PAVLE"

1-16 Repeat Fig I, meas 1-16, ptrs are still in exchanged pos, orig #1 is on the R side, #2 is on the L. On meas 8, #2 will dance almost in place, leading #1 across to the inside of the circle. Ptrs will be back in orig starting pos.

IV. TOWARD CENTER AND BACK; CCW TURN

1-2 Repeat Fig I, meas 1-2, moving straight fwd twd ctr, hands in "W" pos.

3 Lift on L ft and then take a small step sdwd R on R ft (ct 1); step on L ft across in front of R (ct 2); step on R ft in place (ct 3).

4 Release joined hands, make a full 3 step CCW turn almost in place; lift on R and then step on L ft starting turn (ct 1); step R, L completing turn (cts 2, 3). Hands are in "W" pos on the turn.

5-6 Repeat meas 1-2, moving straight bkwd away from ctr. All hands joined in "W" pos.

7-8 Repeat meas 3-4.

9-16 Repeat meas 1-8.

  Repeat dance from beginning. On the last ct of the 3 step CCW turn, close ft together, look at ptr, slightly bend both knees.

Description written October 1985.

ŠIRTO

SLEZNAL PAVLE

Sleznal Pavle jot Balkana   /2
dolu vâv poleto
jot Balkana so četata
dolu vâv čaršija
da si fane kleti Turci
dolu vâv poleto

chorus: *Ajde, ajde, stavajte bratja,*
           Ajde, ajde, gore vâv Balkana

Description by Jaap Leegwater ©1985   Presented by Jaap Leegwater