

Rokoko

(Bačka, Croatia)

This dance comes from the Bačka region (which is part of the Vojvodina region) where the Croatian people live in the areas between the Danube and Tisa rivers. In numerous debates and written articles about these people, they are often referred to as the Bunjevci and Šokci. The region is situated around the ancient town of Bač—which was once a district and also the seat of the Catholic Church. This is how it got its Slavic place-name. The migration of the Dalmatian Croats in the Bačka region (upon liberation from the Turks) did not happen at the same time. Their arrival occurred from the beginning of the 15th to the end of the 17th century. Despite the long period of their being among other nationalities, the Bačka Croats have survived and kept their speech patterns “ikavian” as well as their wealth of costumes and art forms. This dance is done during wedding and during other social gatherings. The dance was learned by Željko Jergan in 1987 at the *Smotra Folklor Zagreb* and in 1989 at *Dakovački Vezovi* (from a Village Group from Tavankut), which are both annual folklore festivals in Croatia. The name translates as “beautifully dressed girl.”

Pronunciation: ROH-koh-koh

Music: Tape: “Croatian Folk Dances, Vol. I” Side B/2, 2/4 meter
 “Treasury of Croatian Dances” by Jerry Grcevich, “Let’s Dance” by Skitnice
 CD: “A Road Less Traveled” by Skitnice.

Formation: Closed Circle beg hands joined in V-pos and changing to W-pos and shldr hold.
 The more traditional form has M facing ctr and forming a closed inside circle joining hands in V-pos. W form a circle behind the M, with W R hand on M L shldr and the W L hand on M L wrist.
 Individually, W put loose fists on the fwd part of hips with elbows pushed slightly fwd. M hands are behind his back with L hand on top of R, palms facing out (away from body).

Styling: Small ftwk done almost in place. All movements are from the knees down with no upper body movement. M improvise steps with the bells attached to their boots. W dance elegantly as a backdrop for M.

Steps: 7 steps sdwd with hops:
 Facing ctr and moving sdwd R, beg R, do 7 small steps sdwd R: Step R to R (ct 1); close L with wt (ct &); repeat for a total of 7 side-close steps (cts 1,&,2,&,1,&,2); hop on R as L moves twd R ankle (ct &). The wt is on balls of ft with heels slightly off floor.

M’s 4 side-click steps:

Facing ctr and moving sdwd R, step on R to R with a very slight bend of knees as L does small lift (flair) sdwd (ct 1); close L to R (with wt) clicking heels as knees straighten (ct &); repeat cts 1, & 2 1/2 more times (cts 2,&,1,&,2); click L to R ankle (ct &). Ftwk is very small. (4 side heel-clicks).

Meas

Pattern

INTRODUCTION. Hold for 7 meas, then stamp R-L-R (no wt on last stamp) in place (meas 8, cts 1,&,2), and do Var I, music A, only one time (8 meas); or beg with music and do Var I, music A, two times (16 meas).

Rokoko—continued

VARIATION I

Everyone in a closed circle with hands joined in V-pos. Preferably M-W-M-W.

Music A: Walking grapevine

- 1 Facing R of ctr, step (walk) R-L fwd in LOD (to R) (cts 1, 2).
 2 Facing L of ctr and still moving in LOD, step (walk) on R to R (ct 1); facing very slightly L of ctr, step on L behind R (ct 2).
 3-4 Facing ctr and dancing in place, run lightly RLR-hop, LRL-hop (cts 1,&,2,&,1,&,2,&). Small ftwk, on hop free ft lifts beside weighted ft's ankle.
 5-8 Repeat meas 1-4, except on last meas, stamp L-R-L in place.
 9-16 Repeat meas 1-8 (2 times in all if beg with music).

Music B: 7 steps sdwd with a hop + 3 steps sdwd with a hop

- 1-2 Facing ctr and moving sdwd R, beg R, dance 7 steps sdwd with a hop on R.
 3-4 Repeat meas 1-2 with opp ftwk and direction.
 5 Moving slightly sdwd to R, step on R to R (ct 1); close R to L with wt (ct &); step on R to R (ct 2); hop on R in place as L moves twd R ankle (ct &).
 6-7 Repeat meas 5 twice more alternating ftwk and direction. (LRL-hop, RLR-hop)
 8 Stamp L-R-L in place
 9-16 Repeat meas 1-8. (2 times in all)

VARIATION IIMusic A: Step-hop grapevine

Join little fingers (pinkie) in W-pos if in an all-W line; if line is mixed, join hands in W-pos.

- 1-16 Repeat Var I, meas 1-16, music A, except walks become step-hops.

Music B: M side-close with heel-clicks; W 7 steps sdwd with hops

- 1-2 Facing ctr and moving sdwd R,
M do 4 steps sdwd with clicks .
W do 7 steps sdw and hop on R.
 3-4 Repeat meas 1-2 with opp ftwk and direction.
 5-7 W repeat Var I, meas 5-7, music B. (RLR-hop; LRL-hop; RLR-hop).
M repeat Var I, meas 5-7, music B, except on ct 2 "&" of each meas, hold in place on weighted ft and click free ft to weighted ft.
 8 Stamp L-R-L.
 9 Repeat meas 1-8 with opp ftwk.

VARIATION IIIMusic A: Moving twd LOD (R)

- 1-2 Joining in shldr hold, do 8 side-close steps (cts 1,&,2,&,1,&,2,&).
 3-4 Dancing in place, step R-L-R-hop, L-R-L-hop (cts 1,&,2,&,1,&,2,&). On hops, free ft moves twd ankle of hopping ft.
 5-16 Repeat meas 1-4, 3 more times. (4 in all)

Rokoko—continued

Music B: Side-close

- 1-2 Facing ctr and moving sdwd R,
M do 4 steps sdwd with clicks
W do 7 steps sdwd with hops.
- 3-4 Repeat meas 1-2 with opp ftwk and direction.
M:
- 5 Hands behind back, palms out and dancing in place, step-hop on R as L does a double-kick in front of R (cts 1,&); repeat with opp ftwk (step-hop L) (cts 2,&).
- 6 Repeat meas 5. (4 step-kicks in all—RLRL)
- 7 Jump into a stride pos, with bent knees (ct 1); jump into air clicking ft together (ct &); repeat jump-click (cts 2,&).
- 8 Land on R (ct 1); stamp L-R in place, no wt on R (cts &,2).
- 9-16 Repeat meas 1-8. (2 times in all)
W:
- (5) With fists on hips and elbows pushed fwd slightly, step R-L-R-hop in place, turning to face R of ctr.
- (6) Repeat meas 5, alternating ftwk and direction.
- (7) Turn CW (R), step R-L-R-hop.
- (8) Stamp in place L-R-L, facing ctr.
- (9-16) Repeat meas 1-8. (2 times in all)

Dance notes by Željko Jergan and Dorothy Daw 6-96
 Presented by Željko Jergan