

# Syrto Kofto

(Thessaly-Epirus, Greece)

Syrto is the most common dance found in Greece but with individual styling and modification in the various provinces and islands. Syrtos is not only a generic dance for all of Greece, but a classification of numerous forms of dances in subdivisions of different styles and patterns. The Kalamatiano is a perfect example of the form of "Syrto" but danced with the distinctive "pidikto" (leaping) style as opposed to the Syrto (dragging) which is with a sedate gliding effect. It is known to be an ancient dance, and there are evidences in the works of ancient writers such as Homer. The Kofto segment of this particular form is a style that is akin to the provinces of Thessaly and neighboring areas of Epirus. It is distinguished by a "kofto" or (cutting), or a stop or pause in the musical phrase, and quickly revived to continue. The dance reflects that element indicating a dramatic effect, as well as the playfulness, which is a revealing element in the music of this area. The pause or stop is just as much a part of the dance as any of the other movements. The leader may execute improvised steps, but it would not be uncommon to indicate for everyone in the line to accompany with variations such as turns, kicks, leaps, or hops.

Pronunciation: seer-TOH koff-TOH

CD: The Spirit of Greek Dance with Athan Karras AK2001

Rhythm: 7/8 meter 1-2-3, 1-2, 1-2 (S,Q,Q) counted 1,2,3.

Formation: Open circle facing center, hands joined in V-pos.

## Meas

## Pattern

### A. BASIC SYRTO STEP

- 1 Step on R to R (ct 1); step on L behind R (ct 2); step on R to R (ct 3).
- 2 In LOD, step fwd on L (ct 1); step fwd on R (ct 2); step fwd on L (ct 3).
- 3 Step on R to R (ct 1); step on L across in front of R (ct 2); shift wt onto R in place (ct 3).
- 4 In RLOD, step on L to L (ct 1); step on R across in front of L (ct 2); shift wt onto L in place (ct 3).

### AA. KOFTO STEP

- 1-3 Repeat Fig A, meas 1-3.
- 4 Leap onto L in RLOD (ct 1); bring R to L, no wt (ct 2); pause (ct 3). Pause indicates the "kofto" by raising arms up slightly. Musical phrases always play one phrase of Fig A and one of Fig AA.  
Repeat Fig A and Fig AA.

### B. GYRISMA (turn to the left)

- 1-3 Repeat Fig A, meas 1-3.
- 4 Drop hand hold and make one full turn in RLOD with L,R,L (cts 1,2,3).  
Dance Fig B and Fig AA twice.

### C. GYRISMA DEXIA (double turn to the right)

- 1 Repeat Fig A, meas 1.
- 2-3 Drop handhold and do two complete turns to LOD (cts 1,2,3,1,2,3).
- 4 Resume handhold and repeat Fig A, meas 4.

## Syrto Kofto—continued

Dance Fig C and Fig AA twice.

D. KATO (squat down)

- 1 Repeat Fig A, meas 1.
- 2 Bring L to R and Squat, bending knees (ct 1); step on R to R (ct 2); step on L to R (ct 3).
- 3 Bring R to L and Squat (ct 1); rise and quickly step on L across in front of R (ct 2); shift wt to L in place (ct 3).
- 4 Repeat Fig A, meas 4.  
Dance Fig D and Fig AA twice.

E. BASIC AND KOFTO

Dance Fig A and Fig AA twice.

F. PSALIDI (scissors step)

- 1-2 Repeat Fig A, meas 1-2.
- 3 Step on R to R, kicking L to R (ct 1); step on L to L, kicking R to L (ct 2); step on R to R, kicking L to R (ct 3).
- 4 Repeat meas 3 with opp ftwk, kicking in air (cts 1,2,3).  
Dance Fig F and Fig AA twice.

G. PSALIDI PIDIMA (scissors leap step)

- 1-2 Repeat Fig A, meas 1-2.
- 3 Leap onto R to R, kicking L across R (ct 1); leap on L to L, leaving R up (ct 2); bring R ft in front of L and leap onto it (ct 3).
- 4 Leap bkwd onto L, leaving R up (ct 1); hop twice on L, R still raised (cts 2,3).  
Dance Fig F and Fig AA twice.

H. BASIC AND KOFTO

Dance Fig A and Fig AA until end of music.

Presented by Athan Karras