

SWEDISH MASQUERADE

Source: Even though the name of this dance is 'Swedish' Masquerade, it is nevertheless Danish. Many European folk dances have such misleading titles. For example, the French Reel is not French, but Danish. La Russe is English, not Russian, etc. To avoid misleading the public, it is sometimes referred to as "Danish Masquerade."

Parts

- 1 Couples side-by-side, W to R of M. All face CCW. Link inside arms and march briskly FWD 16 steps. Free outside hands are swing freely at sides. Now turn about and march 16 steps briskly in opposite direction.

NOTE: In recent years, some folk dancers erroneously have confused the first part of this dance with other dances and instead of walking briskly, walk in a slow wedding march style. This is not correct as can be verified by checking the official handbooks issued by the Danish Folk Dance Society.

- 2 Join inside hands, free hands on hips. Starting on outside foot, take 4 waltz steps FWD, then take ballroom position and waltz 4 steps around the ring. Do 4 more open waltz steps and 4 more in closed ballroom position.

NOTE: If you keep the inside hands joined with elbows bent, and move the hands like a lever, you will have more of a Danish style. It is NOT a face-to-face or back-to-back movement, but a waltz straight FWD w/only slight shoulder movement. If you can get to see a real Danish dancer to the Masquerade you might be able to learn the Tyroler Waltz style for this figure.

- 3 Still retaining joined inside hands, couples dance FWD w/4 step-hops starting on outside foot. Move straight FWD on each hop and do NOT turn face-to-face or back-to-back. Then take shoulder-waist position and turn w/4 step-hops. REPEAT the step-hops in open position and then in shoulder-waist position.

NOTE: Again, some folk dancers turn the last part into a rowdy brawl by jumping on both feet with a loud bank, instead of doing step-hop. A good leader will try to show how it can be just as much fun to do the dance Danish style, traditionally. The Danes put in a little bit of extra, calling it a Tyroler hopsa, which you can learn from observing Danish folk dancers.

Teaching Hint: This is a good dance to get your group to learn a basic waltz and step-hop... this open and closed type of figure being found in a great many dances. In teaching the waltz, we like to have dancers just walk FWD, accenting the first count of each three counts thus: ONE, two, three; ONE, two, three. Then we have them stretch the leg for a longer step on count one, and rise up on toes for count two and three. After a little practice of this straight ahead, it is easier to grasp the waltz in couple position. Try it!

