

## Aleksandra valss

(Estonia)

Aleksandra valss (AHL-lehk-sahn-drah VAHLS) is still quite popular among the Setu people in southeastern Estonia as well as across the border in Russia. It is known only from this district of Estonia (Setumaa) and reached its peak of popularity in the first half of the 20th century. The dance structure and name invite obvious comparison with the Russian ballroom dance Alexandrovskia. It was taught by Juha Matti ("Jussi") Aronen at the 2003 Stockton Folkdance Camp. Jussi took it from a video filmed in 1978 by Pirkko-Liisa Rausmaa in the town of Värskä. On that occasion, it was danced only by women.

CD: Estonian Dances, Stockton Folk Dance Camp, Band 1. 3/4 meter

Formation: Cpls in circle, facing each other, inside hands joined (M's R, W's L).

Steps: Waltz\*, Closed-Ballroom pos\*

Waltz Two-Step: This step occurs throughout the dance and takes two measures. M start with L ft and W with R. M step to side on L (ct 1), close R to L (ct 3); step to side on L (ct 4); close R to L, no wt (cts 5,6). Repeat in opp direction with opp ft wk. W have opp ftwk throughout, starting on R. This is a step-close-step-touch in 3/4 meter.

\*Described in the "General Glossary" of *Steps & Styling* (rev. 1996), published by the Folk Dance Federation of CA, Inc.

Meas	3/4 meter	Pattern
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4 meas INTRODUCTION No action.

### I. FACE-TO-FACE AND BACK-TO-BACK

- 1-4 Moving in LOD, dance a Waltz Two-Step (starting M's L, W's R) (meas 1,2). Turning back-to-back, repeat meas 1-2 with opp ftwk. Joined hands are held at chest level.
- 5-8 Repeat meas 1-4 moving in RLOD, starting in back-to-back pos (M start with L, W R). End with ptrs face-to-face.
- 9-16 Repeat meas 1-8.

### II. WALTZ TURNS AND TWO-STEPS

- 1-2 Ptrs join both hands briefly. Dance two waltz steps, M starting L, W R, moving fwd and away from ptr, and then back together, rejoining both hands.
- 3-4 Moving in LOD while facing ptr, dance 1 Waltz Two-Step.
- 5-8 Repeat meas 1-4, but with opp ftwk and directions. Start by M turning out to R with R ft, W turn to L with L ft. Waltz Two-Step is done in RLOD.
- 9-16 Repeat meas 1-8.

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### III. HIP TO HIP WALKS

- 1-2 Maintaining two-hand hold at chest level, M face LOD and W RLOD, R hips adjacent. M walk two slow steps fwd (3 cts per step), W back up; both start with L ft. At end of second step, pivot to face opp direction, left hips adjacent.
- 3-4 Repeat meas 1-2 in same direction, but M now back up and W go fwd.
- 5-8 Repeat meas 1-4 in RLOD, but starting with L hips adjacent.
- 9-16 Repeat meas 1-8.

### IV. WALTZ TWO-STEP IN AND OUT AND TURNING

- 1-4 In Closed-Ballroom position, dance one Waltz Two-Step twd ctr, M starting with L ft, W with R. Repeat moving away from ctr with opp ftwk.
- 5-8 Turning CW as a cpl, dance two Waltz Two-Steps (M starts L, W R). These measures can also be done as 4 Waltz turning steps.
- 9-16 Repeat meas 1-8.

Repeat dance from the beginning.

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