

Lašský starodávny

(Czech Republic)

Lašský starodávny (LAHSH-kee STAH-roh-dahv-NEE) is a couple dance from the Laško Region of northeastern Moravia (Silesia). The name means “old traditional dance from Laško.” Actually, “starodávny” has a rich and complex meaning that is difficult to translate. It refers to someone or something that recalls a cherished memory, for example one’s first love. In this context it refers not only to a very old dance, but to one that is fondly remembered. The name of the song for this dance is “V širem poli” which means “In a broad field.” This particular starodávny was taught by Radek and Eva Rejšek at a Dvorana workshop in Jindřichův Hradec, Czech Republic on 11 August 1997, at the 2001 University of the Pacific Stockton Folk Dance Camp, and elsewhere.

Cassettes:: Dances from the Czech Republic, Stockton Folk Dance Camp, Side A/4;
Dvorana Summer Workshop 1997, Side A/3.

Rhythm: 6/8 meter counted as 1, 2, 3 (2/8, 2/8, 2/8).

Formation: Couples in a circle facing each other, 6 to 8 ft apart, M facing out and W in.

Steps: **Starodávny Step:** Starting with either ft, step fwd (ct 1); step near the heel of that ft (ct &); step fwd (ct 2); step fwd (ct 3). Style is flowing and graceful. Flex knees on each step. Steps on cts 1 and 3 are larger than the others, and the step on ct 3 is delayed as long as possible. Step repeats exactly.

Measures	6/8 meter	PATTERN
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INTRODUCTION None

I. PROMENADE WITH TURNS (instrumental)

1-2 No action on meas 1. Bow to ptr on meas 2.

3-4 Starting with R, ptrs walk twd each other with 6 steps, turning to face LOD on last step (M touch L ft to R, no wt). M’s hands are held behind their backs and W’s to sides. Step leads with heel and rolls fwd onto ball of ft with bend of knees. On last step (meas 4, ct 3), M put R hand around W’s waist and L behind own back. W wrap L arm around M’s R upper arm and R arm is free.

5-8 Promenade in LOD for 12 more steps, starting with outside ft, slight knee bend on each step.

9-12 Turn CW with ptr in ballroom hold (R hips adjacent) with 4 Starodávny Steps, both starting with inside ft (R) (M do foot change to start).

- 13-15 M turn W under L arm 3 times while R arm is held high. No steps are taken, but M can keep time with music by slight knee flexing. W take 6 steps per meas as she turns.
- 16 W continue turning 1 more time (6 steps or 4 steps and a close, hold) without any support from M, and back into M's R side so both end up facing LOD. Take same arm holds as in meas 5-8.

II. ROCKING PROMENADE; TURNING; AND BACKING (vocal)

- 1 Rock fwd on outside ft (ct 1); rock back on inside ft (ct 2); step fwd on outside ft (ct 3).
- 2 Step fwd on inside ft (ct 1); rock back on outside ft (ct 2); step fwd on inside ft (ct 3).
- 3-8 Repeat meas 1-2 three more times (total of 8 rocking sequences).
- 9-12 Dance 4 Starodávny Steps turning CW, both starting with R ft (ft change for M). R hands are on ptr's L shldr; free hands are out straight, palms down.
- 13-14 Dance 6 walking steps, circling to L away from ptr and back. M can hold both arms out fwd, palms fwd. (Vocal ends after meas 14).
- 15-18 Repeat meas 9-12 turning CCW starting with L ft (ft change again for M); L hands on ptr's R shldrs.
- 19 Back away from ptr with 3 steps (M backing twd ctr).
- 20 Walk 3 steps twd ptr (nod to ptr).
- 21 Back away from ptr with 3 steps. M back up in RLOD and W back in LOD.
- 22 Hold (cts 1-2); nod to ptr (ct 3). M's hands behind back.

III. ARM ROCKING PROMENADE: TURNS (vocal)

- 1-8 Promenade in LOD, M go fwd starting on L and W back up starting with R, for 24 steps, arms held out and rounded. M tip body to R on ct 1 as L arm lifts; tip to L as R arm lifts on ct 2. After a few steps (about 6-8), ptrs join arms, holding above elbows and rounded as before.
- 9-11 Hook L elbows and dance 3 Starodávny Steps turning CCW with ptr, starting with inside (L) ft. R arm can be held out to side, palm down.
- 12 Turn away from ptr to own R with 3 walks circling back to ptr (M on inside of circle).
- 13-15 Repeat meas 9-11 with opp ftwk and direction. (Vocal ends after meas 14).
- 16 Bending fwd but keeping elbow hold, run 6 quick steps around each other ending with M facing LOD (1 complete turn).

IV. SHOWOFF STEPS; TURNS; AND FINALE (instrumental)

- 1-4 M to 4 Starodávny Steps making large circle around W and back to place (an option is to do 6 walks and 2 Starodávny Steps). Arms can be held straight out to the sides or higher with palms up and fwd. M can clap on ct 1 of any meas and on last ct of meas 4, facing ptr. W turn to R in place doing 4 Starodávny Steps.
- 5-6 M place R heel of in front of L, twisting hips to L (ct 1); place R toe in front of L, twisting hips to R (ct 2); close R to L with clap for emphasis (ct 3). Repeat starting with L heel. W continue turns in place with 2 Starodávny Steps.
- 7-8 M step to R (ct 1); step on L next to R (ct &); step on R to R (ct 2) with slight knee bend on each step; kick L ft across in front of R with heel thrust fwd (M can also slap L upper leg with L hand at same time) (ct 3). Repeat to L starting with L. W continue turns in place with 2 Starodávny Steps.
- 9-11 Ptrs dance 3 Starodávny Steps CW in ballroom hold (R hips adjacent), both starting with R ft.
- 12 M turn W under L arm CW with 1 Starodávny Step.
- 13-14 Dance 2 Starodávny Steps starting LOD (M start with L, W with R) circling away from ptr in small circle and back.
- 15-20 Repeat meas 9-14 (M have ft change to start).
- 21 Ptrs hold both hands. M dance large gliding step to L (cts 1-2); close R to L (ct 3). W dance 1 Starodávny Step turning out to R (first step is to R). Arms swing from slightly to M's R, to the L and then trailing hand hold is dropped and W's turn is completed with M's L and W's R only.
- 22 Face ptr (ct 1); M bows head twd prt, W bends knees and nods (ct 2); both raise head sharply and straighten legs (ct 3).