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VARSOVIENNE WALTZ

(American)

This version of the Varsoviennne consists of the Varsoviennne step combined with the regular ballroom waltz. The dancer should learn to recognize the music for the long phrase, short phrase and waltz and adjust the pattern of the dance to follow the music.

MUSIC: Records: Decca 25060—no introduction, 4 short, 2 long, 16 waltz—3 times.
Ford 110—same as above.
Linden 134 and Imperial 1031 have different arrangements and are not commonly used.

FORMATION: Couples in Varsoviennne position* facing LOD.

STEPS: Varsoviennne Long and Short Phrase*, Waltz.*

*Described in *Folk Dances From Near and Far*, Vol. VI or VII; *Let's Dance!* Vol. A.

MUSIC 3/4	PATTERN
Meas.	
	I. <i>Four Short Phrase Varsoviennne Steps</i>
1-2	Beginning L, move diagonally fwd 1 short phrase step (W moves to M L).
3-4	Beginning R, move diagonally fwd 1 short phrase step (W returns to M R).
5-8	Repeat Fig. I, meas. 1-4.
	II. <i>Two Long Phrase Varsoviennne Steps</i>
1-4	Beginning L, move diagonally fwd 1 long phrase step (W moves to M L).
5-8	Beginning R, move fwd 1 long phrase step (W returns to M R).
	III. <i>Waltz</i>
1-16	On chord and pause, bow to partner and assume closed ballroom position. Waltz freely around room. Turn W to Varsoviennne position on last meas. Repeat entire dance to end of music. Finish with a bow to partner.

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Background Notes

The Varsovienné has been a favorite of dancers in many countries for several centuries. It is only in comparatively recent times that dances have been recorded in written form, or a study made of their original sources. It is quite natural therefore, that a dance like the Varsovienné, which has traveled widely from country to country, would call forth many interesting and diverse explanations of its early history.

The extremes of these views place its origin in South America and in Italy, where it was said to have been originated by an Italian who called it *La Versuvianna* in honor of Mount Vesuvius. The most logical and convincing evidence shows its origin to be in Poland. It has frequently been referred to by folklorists as the Dance of Warsaw. One story relates that it was a

minuet in mazurka rhythm, composed for a reigning beauty of Warsaw, and later traveled to Spain where it became a couple dance.

In the beginning of the eighteenth century, Polish dances were the fashion in the upper classes of society. They traveled usually to France, Spain, Sweden and the British Isles, where they acquired the characteristics of each country which adopted them. Along with the change in form occurred the change in the name and spelling of the dance. The French spelling frequently prevailed. This was true of the Varsovienné.

Before overland routes were established between the eastern and western coasts of the United States, this dance was enjoyed in both sections. Like other European dances, it no doubt traveled to the West from Spain to South America, to Mexico, and then north to New

Mexico, California and to Arizona. In California, those who traveled in ships might have also influenced some of the early forms found along the California coast line. In the Southwest, particularly in New Mexico and California, the dance was spelled *La Varsovianna*, *La Varsovianna* and *La Varsovianna*. In Texas, where the words of the song, "Put your little foot," or "See my new shoes" were associated with the dance, these phrases were frequently substituted for the name of the dance.

The Varsovienné has always been a social, or ballroom dance, and it is not a folk dance in the traditional use of the term. It came to the United States about the middle of the nineteenth century, so many variants have developed in different sections of the country. They can be classified according to position and step pattern under three general headings:

1. Danced in closed dance position, with the woman on the left or right side of her partner. Found in the older forms.
 - a. The number of times the long and short phrases are repeated varies. Dance progression is LOD, with no complicated patterns. Partners not exchanged.
 - b. Danced with or without the waltz step.
 - c. Dignified, smooth quality of movement with medium to slow tempo.
2. Danced in what has been called "Varsovienné position."
 - a. Same as 1a.
 - b. Same as 1b.
 - c. Same as 1c.
3. Newer inventions with a variety of starting positions, but usually employing the "Varsovienné position."
 - a. The number of long and short phrases varies, with a fairly complicated pattern, frequently using half turns, whole turns, and spins. Partners may be exchanged during the dance pattern, or at the conclusion of a completed pattern.
 - b. Danced with or without the waltz step.
 - c. Wider range of tempo. A cowboy variation of New Mexico is quite fast and stamping is the rule.

A number of versions are danced by our folk dance groups. The Varsovienné position is taken and the record used dictates the number of times the long and short phrases are repeated, and whether or not the waltz is a part of the dance.

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