

## Hora nuntașilor

(Timiș, Banat, Romania)

The word nuntașilor, means wedding guests. Whether in western Romania (Banat) or any other region in the country, marriage is a commitment that still today is an important stage in people's lives. Marriage is synonymous with a multitude of rituals and customs, which vary from region to region, but everywhere weddings are always celebrated with a lot of spirit and given much importance. Due to the significance of the event, everyone prepares for it long in advance.

In Romania, two crucial people must be chosen: the witnesses, referred to as the "godfather" and "godmother." They become members of the family and play a major role in all the wedding preparations, the civil and religious ceremonies, and the celebrations.

In the city, organizing a wedding can give rise to arguments about the guest list (you mustn't forget anyone but you can't invite everyone!), the date, the priest, the invitations, the hall, and so on. In the country, some of the problems are easily solved. For example, the invitations may be extended by the vornicei (best men), who go around to all the houses, their flasks of țuica (brandy) in hand, announcing the wedding in song and inviting everyone that way.

An occasion for merrymaking and countless feasts in the country, the wedding begins with the matchmakers' meal followed by the engagement or "fir tree" feast (the fir tree symbolizes fertility), which reaches dizzying heights of partying, as does the wedding banquet proper. The wedding will begin to wind down with the meal for the vornicei and druște, (bridesmaids), one for the in-laws, another for the cooks, the meal of colaci (a kind of Romanian bagel) and finally the meal held a week after the wedding at the bride's parents' to thank them for their daughter's purity.

At the wedding banquet, guests are welcomed with bread and salt, and in some places, with an offering of colaci. Each guest is greeted with a musical march and then takes his or her place before a first course—usually an appetizer: sausage, salami, mici (meat croquette), cașcaval (cheese), olives, icre (fish roe spread), tomatoes, spring onions and a small glass of țuica. The best dishes—ciorbe (soups), sarmale (cabbage rolls), mamaliga (Romanian polenta), veal escalope, fish, etc.—painstakingly prepared by the village women, are set down, one after the other, for hours as lively traditional tunes are played. Amidst all these dishes, roast fowl will be presented as people dance and the "godfather" is teased. At all times drink flows, whether it is Murfatlar wines or different kinds of brandy such as țuica.

One of the most important customs, which is still very much alive today, usually comes after the first coffee and the cake (cozonac) are served: the gifts are announced. The vornicei go from table to table announcing aloud the offers of gifts. The "godfather" will be generous so as to raise the stakes. The grander a wedding, the more guests must loosen their purse strings. Each gift is followed by exclamations and musical approval, depending on the size of the present.

Throughout the wedding, dance has pride of place, of course. In some regions, the dances are done in a precise order and will always be done following the tradition. Hora nuntașilor is usually done after the newlyweds' dance. All the guests must join in and the accompanying lyrics sing the praises of the main celebrants. Trăiască mirii! Long live the bride and groom!

## Hora nuntașilor—continued

Pronunciation: HOH-rah noon-TAH-chee-lohr

Music: Sonia Dion & Cristian Florescu, 60th Stockton Folk Dance Camp, Band 12/4 meter

Formation: Mixed open circle, hands in W-pos, facing center.

MeasPattern

16 meas INTRODUCTION (no action)

FIGURE 1 (with singing)

- 1 Do one two-step starting with R, facing and moving LOD.
  - 2 Do one two-step starting with L, facing and moving LOD.
  - 3 Step on R to R, turning to face ctr (ct 1); touch ball of L next to R (ct 2).
  - 4 Step on L to L facing slightly RLOD (ct 1); touch ball of R in front of L (ct 2).
  - 5 Step on R crossing in front of L (ct 1); step on L to L (ct 2).
  - 6 Step on R crossing in front of L (ct 1); touch ball of L in front of R (ct 2).
  - 7 Step on L to L, turning to face ctr (ct 1); touch ball of R next to L ft, turning slightly to face R (ct2).
  - 8 Step bkwd on R (ct 1); step fwd on L (but still in back of previous position, similar to a ball change) (ct 2).
- 9-32 Repeat meas 1-8, three more times (4 total).

FIGURE 2 (instrumental)

- 1-2 Do 3 steps (R, L, R) twd ctr (cts 1,2,1); touch ball of L (no wt) next R (ct 2).
- 3-4 Do 3 steps (L, R, L) bkwd (cts 1,2,1); touch ball of R (no wt) next L (ct 2).
- 5 Step on R across in front of L (ct 1); step on L to the side (ct 2).
- 6 Step on R behind L (ct 1); step on R to the side (ct 2). (meas 5-6 = one grapevine step.)
- 7-8 Repeat meas 5-6.
- 9-10 Do 2 two-steps starting with R facing and moving RLOD.
- 11-12 Repeat meas 5-6.
- 13-16 Repeat meas 1-4.

Sequence: Repeat 4 times; F1 + F2  
On 4 repetition, Figure 2 is danced with the singing.

Presented by Sonia Dion & Cristian Florescu, ©2007

Hora nuntașilor—continued

### Song for Hora nuntașilor

Bună seara dragi nuntai  
Mândre nașe și nănași  
Gazdelor ce ne primii  
Și cu drag ne omeniți

Good evening, dear wedding guests,  
The proud “godmother” and “godfather,”  
The host receiving us  
with love and honour.

Chorus:

Asta-i nunt ca-n povești  
Miresucă să trăiești  
Asta-i nuntă nu-i orice  
Să traiască mirele  
Asta-i nunta nunților  
Voie bună tuturor  
Și la miri și la nănași  
Dar i nouă la nuntași

This is a fairy tale wedding  
Long live the bride!  
A wedding unlike any other  
Long live the groom!  
The wedding of all weddings.  
Joy and happiness to all,  
To the couple and to the “godparents”  
But to us, the wedding guests, also!

Îi cea m-ai frumoasă nuntă  
Mireasa i-așa de scumpă  
De mire nu-i ce vorbi  
Ca el altu n-ar m-ai fi

This is the loveliest wedding  
The bride is fabulous!  
The groom? It goes without saying,  
There’s no one else like him!

La cea-ți venit oameni buni  
Hai petrecem până luni  
Să bem și să chefuim  
Cu horinca și cu vin

Why have you come, good people?  
Let’s party until Monday,  
Let’s drink and celebrate  
With brandy and wine!

Ni-om porni cu toți la joc  
Haide-ți sus nu stați pe loc  
Muzica-i frumoasă tare  
Ne ridică în picioare

Let’s start the dance all together  
Stand up, you can’t just sit there  
The music is very beautiful  
And urges us to get up.

The chorus is sung after each verse and twice (2x) at the end.