



# ETHNIC DANCE CHICAGO

*Dancing As A Second Language*

## What is Ethnic Dance Chicago?

- Ethnic Dance Chicago (EDC) is a multi-ethnic group of people of all ages who enjoy dance and music of many countries from around the world. You might say the participants think of "Dancing As a Second Language". Ethnic Folk Dancing is a great social mixer and an aerobic workout of which personal trainers would approve.
- Since 1987, EDC (a not-for-profit organization) has promoted the enjoyment, sharing, understanding and preservation of the dance and music heritage of Chicago's many ethnic groups as well as the heritage of traditional American dance and music.
- Join our Friday dances where we offer dance lessons between 8:00pm and 10:00pm. Ethnic dancing is a lot more than doing the "Chicken Dance" or the "Macarena". You'll learn and enjoy dances with strange names such as Oro, Kolo, Csardas, Drmes, Jarabe, Tsamikos, Halay, Kujawiak, Highlife, Pravo, Debka, Syrtos, Dansul, Krakowiak, Hambo, Jota, Polska, Briul, Ondo, Racenica and also more familiar names such as Schottische, Polka, Reel, Jig and Waltz.
- For a schedule, an events calendar, travel directions, photo, video & music galleries: [www.ethnicdance.net](http://www.ethnicdance.net)

## Where's the group meet?

- EDC meets most Friday during the year: (**Most Fridays**): Chicago Latvian Community Center, 4146 N Elston Ave in Chicago, SW Corner of Elston Ave (NW Diagonal) & Hamlin Ave (3800W). **Last Fridays**: S.P.A.C.E. Academy Center for the Arts, 3433 W Peterson Ave (6000N), Chicago, IL 60659. S side of Peterson, just W of Kimball Ave (3400W).
- Check the Website for schedule changes ([www.ethnicdance.net/calendar](http://www.ethnicdance.net/calendar)) and directions ([www.ethnicdance.net/directions](http://www.ethnicdance.net/directions))
- The cost for the evening is \$5.00 per person with discounts for full-time students and children under 12. It would be hard to find a better return on investment for your entertainment dollar!

## Why do people dance?

- Participating in dance and music celebrations is a strong unifying factor among the many ethnic groups. One of the world's best-kept secrets is that there is a segment of the population that finds its own unity in learning, doing and enjoying the dances and music of other cultures - that is, cultures not necessarily part of their own heritage and experience.
- Ethnic Dance Chicago provides a safe haven where all folks (and sometimes their pets too) are accepted and no one has to give up their own ethnicity to participate. Besides, as a participant you can:
  - Keep in touch or re-establish contact with your own roots
  - Learn and do dances and songs of different traditions
  - Enjoy the cultural celebrations of others
  - Experience good physical and mental exercise
  - Meet an interesting variety of people you might not otherwise encounter
  - Be challenged by new and unusual musical rhythms and dance forms
  - Introduce your friends to a new and challenging experience and meet new people
  - Get some exercise
  - Have fun!

## How do I get started?

- If you're interested in ethnic dance and/or ethnic music and you live in the area, or are visiting or passing through Chicago, why not drop in and see about making dance your second language?
- The first night you attend, you might feel overwhelmed by the variety of material presented. You'll probably think that all the other folks there are expert dancers. But many of them started from scratch years ago. If you give yourself time to learn the language of ethnic folk dance, you too can become quite competent.
- After a few weeks, you'll start to recognize that there are many common elements in dances from different cultures and some unique elements of style in each dance form. You'll also begin to recognize dance and music forms, styles, names, tunes and countries of origin. You'll also notice that many of those you once thought of as "dance experts" are just plain folks, like yourself.



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## Do I have to know how to dance?

- No, you don't need to have any background in dance. You just need to be willing to try and to learn.
- We offer a teaching session early in the evening followed by an open dancing period. If you stick around for the open dancing, you'll learn a lot more by trying things that you haven't yet learned by getting in between experienced dancers or by following behind the lines.
- In general, easier dances are taught early in the evening and more challenging dances are taught later. During the open dance program, previously taught dances and other popular dances requested by the participants, and some occasional "old chestnuts" are done until about midnight.
- While we do accept Visa and MasterCard for payment, we don't accept the statement: "I don't know how to dance" as an excuse!

## What are EDC's other activities?

### • Month-end Parties

We celebrate the last dance of each month with a party, where people bring food and beverage to share. On most weeks, participants bring refreshments anyway, and that's allowed. NOTE: The last dance of a month is not always the last Friday. Sometimes we offer live music for dancing at parties.

### • Group Dinners

On occasion, we organize group dinners at local ethnic restaurants or clubs, where there is good food, music and entertainment and sometimes ethnic dancing. Many "real" ethnic people are surprised to find that people outside of their group know something about their culture. Recent excursions have included dinners at Turkish, Uzbek, Greek, Japanese, Romanian, Bulgarian and Ecuadorian restaurants.

### • Weekend Festivals & Workshops

Ethnic Dance Chicago sponsors and supports weekend ethnic dance workshops, dance parties with live and recorded music, dance/music concerts and catered ethnic dinners. EDC will also cancel some dance dates in order to support other groups' events. Be sure to check EDC calendar for special events and schedule changes: ([www.ethnicdance.net/calendar](http://www.ethnicdance.net/calendar))

### • Dance Performances/Demonstrations/Instruction

Do you need a dance performance or dance leader for your event? Ethnic Dance Chicago will demonstrate ethnic dances at schools, community organizations, festivals, etc. Many of our dancers participate in these events because they enjoy performing and learning new dances, plus it demonstrates how much fun ethnic folk dance can be to new audience. We can also include dances for audience participation in our programs.

### • Dance Instruction/In-Service Workshops (One-Time or On-Going)

Would you like an ethnic dance instructor or contra/square dance caller for your school, church, community, social or corporate event? EDC instructors excel in making dancing fun and accessible to new or inexperienced dancers:

- EDC instructors teach various styles of ethnic dance with live or recorded music
- EDC callers & lead traditional American square and contra dances with live or recorded music

Clients have included: community organizations, public & private elementary and high schools, colleges, universities, churches and religious organizations, fundraisers, social clubs, weddings, birthday parties, special events, government agencies and corporations.

### • City-Wide Cultural Events

EDC Instructors have taught ethnic and American dance to the general public at city-wide festivals at Navy Pier, Daley Plaza, Millennium Park, Grant Park, the Chicago Cultural Center and at local neighborhood community centers.

## For Additional Information and/or To Get on the EDC/DCFF Mailing List:

[info@ethnicdance.net](mailto:info@ethnicdance.net) or (847)-846-8139