

## CONRADANZA EARLY CALIFORNIA

### America

The Contradanza was a remnant of the Minuet of the Baroque Period of the late 18<sup>th</sup> Century and resembles the contemporary contra dance. It was the first dance of the fandango and dancers were arranged by the *Tecolero* in order of their station and position in the community. Honored guests and elders were at the head and the younger adults were at the foot.

Sets of two couples face two couples, W on M R; progression is up and down the set. If there are enough couples, it can be arranged in a circle. The *Tecolero* calls the figures in any order. There are many more than are described here.

**RHYTHM:** 3/4, slow tempo.

**PROGRESSIVE FIGURES:** These figures alternate between called figures and move couples on to the next set.

***La Rueda (The Wheel):*** All face CW in set; M join R hands in center; W join R hands over M hands. Dance 4 running waltz steps turning set CW. Reverse to L hand wheel for four measures. On the 3<sup>rd</sup> measure of the L hand wheel, M release hands and lightly grasp W L wrist, stopping her forward movement; M then steps in front of W on 4<sup>th</sup> measure and take closed dance position. Couples then waltz CCW around each other once to home position (6 meas) and continue on to the next couple (2 measures). M helps W swing open to face new couple.

***La Cadena (The Chain):*** Join R hands with opposite person and dance two running waltz steps fwd; join hands in circle with M facing in, W back-to-back facing out; all dance balance waltz step fwd and back; release L hands and dance fwd with two running waltz steps and rejoin L hands in circle, W facing in, M back-to-back facing out; dance Balance Forward and Backward. Release R hands; M turn 1/2 turn L and take partner in Varsouviana dance position, M L shoulder adjacent. Couples dance 8 running waltz steps forward around each other to home position (6 meas) and continue on to next couple (2 meas).

Meas	Figure
	<b>Mano Derecha, Mano Esquarda (Right hand, Left hand)</b>
1,2	Inside hands joined, Balance Away and Together.
3,4	Repeat Balance Away and Together
5,6	Join R hands with opposite, Balance Forward and Backward
7,8	Change places with opposite with 2 running waltz steps, turning CW
9-16	Repeat movements of Meas 1-8 on opposite footwork, join L hands to cross over.

**La Rueda** to progress to next couple.

### **El Saludo (Wave)**

- 1,2 All join hands in circle; Active Couple dive under arch made by Inactive Couple, release hands with partner and pass behind opposite person to peek around to partner.
- 3 Active Couple wave to partner with free hand.
- 4 Active Couple dance backward one Running Waltz to end up beside partner facing forward under arch of Inactive Couple; rejoin free hands in front.
- 5 Active Couple move forward under arch.
- 6 Active Couple release partner's hand and turn away from partner to original position.
- 7,8 Rejoin hands in circle and Balance Forward and Backward.
- 9-16 Inactive Couple repeat movement of Meas 1-8.

**La Cadena** to progress to next couple.

### **El Cristo (The Christ of the Holy Trinity)**

- 1,2 Both M join hands with Active W; Inactive M and Active W make an arch; both M cross over to Active W opposite side, Active M passing under arch. Inactive W Balance Forward and Backward.
- 3,4 M join free hands palm-to-palm over W head and hold hands joined with W at waist level; Balance Forward and Backward. Inactive W dance forward (m 3); step backward and curtsy (m 4).
- 5,6 M return to original position and join hands in circle.
- 7,8 All Balance Forward and Backward.
- 9-16 Repeat movement of Meas 1-8, reversing roles.

### **La Rueda**

#### **Vals Español (Spanish Waltz)**

- 1,2 M place L hand behind back; W hold skirt with R hand, inside hands joined: All Balance Forward and Backward.
- 3,4 All waltz forward and join inside hand with opposite person; M raise R arm and move forward, turning W under raised R arm; both turn 1/4 turn to face partner.
- 5-16 Repeat movement of Meas 1-4 three more times to return to home position.

### **La Cadena**

#### **El Nudo (The Knot)**

- 1 All join hands in set; Active M step into the circle, turning L under his raised R arm.
- 2 Active M back under arch between his partner and opposite M.

- 3-8 Active M dance backward CCW around set, pulling Opposite W, then Opposite M under arch, finally turning partner under her own R arm.
- 9-16 Repeat movement of Meas 1-8, Inactive M leading.

### **La Rueda**

#### **La Sola (Woman's Solo)**

- 1 All join hands in set and dance one waltz step forward, raising arms high toward center; arms remain raised throughout figure.
- 2 Active W release R hand and dance one Running Waltz CCW around partner under his L arm; R hand holds skirt. Active M releases L hand hold with opposite W to lead partner around him, then rejoins L hand.
- 3-6 Active W continues CCW around set with 4 Running Waltz steps.
- 7,8 Active W dances backward under same arch she began to return to original position.
- 9-16 Inactive W repeats figure.

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