

LOS CONCHEROS  
(Mexico)

Los Concheros (lohs kohn-CHAY-rohs) is an ancient dance of Aztec Mexico. Los Concheros is a religious military organization, formed shortly after the conquest of Indians who had been defeated by the Spaniards and had accepted Christianity and performed dances to cover their pagan beliefs and practices. The organization is still in existence and tries to keep the old traditions alive, therefore the costumes and dance steps are rather primitive. They are called concheros (meaning "those of the shells") because many of their musical instruments are made of armadillo shells. This dance was taught by Al Pill at the 1973 Idyllwild Folk Dance Workshop.

Music: "Los Concheros," National 4541, 45 rpm;  
LP album, RCA Lado CAM 5/399 2/4 and 4/4 meter

Formation: Dancers one behind the other in a large circle; there can be a smaller circle in the ctr.

Styling: Steps are vigorous but dancers are serious in respect of old traditions.

Meas

Pattern

4/4 INTRODUCTION.

1-8 Dancers stand in place -- no vocal in this music.

FIGURE I. Chorus. (Starts when vocal starts. Dancers ft are facing LOD, but bodies are turned to face twd ctr at about a 45 degree angle.

- 1 Step fwd R (ct 1); step and close L to rear of R ft (ct 2);  
step fwd R (ct 3); step and close L to rear of R (ct 4).
- 2 Step fwd R (ct 1); step and close L to rear of R (ct 2);  
step fwd R (ct 3); hold (ct 4).
- 3-4 Turn to own R with six hops on R ft (1,2,3,4, 1,2), L ft  
is held straight down and out to L side. Jump down on  
both ft with ft astride and bodies turned a 45 degree angle  
twd outside of circle (ct 3); hold (ct 4).
- 5-8 Repeat action of meas 1-4, but bodies are turned away from  
ctr, step starts on L, hops on L, and jump with bodies turned  
twd ctr as at beginning.
- 9-16 Repeat action of meas 1-8. On final jump face ctr with  
ft astride.

2/4 FIGURE II. Toward the center. (No vocal.)

- 1 Hit R heel (ct &); hit R heel (ct 1); hit R heel (ct &);  
stamp R ft fwd (ct 2); (may wait out this meas to get ct  
and start on meas 2.)
- 2 Hit L heel (ct &); hit L heel (ct 1); hit L heel (ct &);  
step L ft fwd (ct 2).
- 3-8 Repeat action of meas 1-2 (Figure II) three times more  
moving twd ctr.
- 9-16 Repeat action of meas 1-8 (Figure II) moving bkwd away  
from ctr.

LOS CONCHEROS (continued)

4/4 FIGURE III. Chorus. (With vocal.)  
 1-16 Repeat action of meas 1-16 (Figure I). Finish all facing LOD.

FIGURE IV. The Running Step. (No vocal.)  
 1 Run fwd in LOD with R,L,R (cts 1,2,3); hit L heel (ct 4).  
 2 Run bkwd in RLOD with L,R,L (cts 1,2,3); hit R heel (ct 4).  
 3 Turn around once CW running R,L,R (cts 1,2,3); hit L heel (ct 4).  
 4 Jump up and down three times on both ft with ft astride (cts 1,2,3); hold (ct 4).  
 5-16 Repeat action of meas 1-4 (Figure IV) three more times.

FIGURE V. Chorus. (With vocal.)  
 1-16 Repeat action of meas 1-16 (Figure I). Finish all facing LOD.

FIGURE VI. The Hops. (No vocal.)  
 1 Step fwd and hop on R ft, hands fwd (cts 1,2); step bkwd and hop on L ft, hands down (cts 3,4).  
 2 Step sdwd and hop on R ft, hands to R side (cts 1,2); step sdwd in LOD and hop on L ft, hands to L side (cts 3,4). All now have backs to ctr.  
 3-8 With backs to ctr repeat action of meas 1-2,(Fig. III) three more times.  
 9-16 Turn to face ctr and repeat action of meas 1-8 (Fig. VI). On first step and hop sdwd on L ft, step sdwd twd ctr and face LOD for remainder of step.

FIGURE VII. Chorus. (With vocal.)  
 1-16 Repeat action of meas 1-6 (Figure I). On final jump, land in a slight crouch with L arm raised upward, fist closed, and R hand at jaw as though drawing a bow to shoot an arrow; eyes look up twd L hand.

Presented by Grace Nicholes