Argentine Tango Salon Program

The Argentine Tango (AT) Salon Program is a CDTA BC\* initiative, developed to provide students with a structured learning format for developing social dance proficiency in Argentine tango.

The program defines specific goals to explore essential concepts and elements of Argentine tango social dance and culture. It is designed to convey and preserve the authenticity and cultural heritage of the dance.

An instructor measures student progress in periodic assessment sessions to help focus a student’s learning. Customized learning plans and goals are set to facilitate student progress. The content is divided into three progressive parts. Students enroll in one part at a time. Each part begins with a Social Dance Workshop where a student is facilitated to do a self-assessment before enrolling in the program. Each part ends with an assessment session where a student demonstrates their skill, and specific written feedback is provided for the student’s future reference. A student can learn and progress at their own pace, without deadlines.

With instructor permission, a student with adequate experience may enroll to challenge the program and be tested on all three parts in one assessment.

To enroll, please contact CDTA BC at ballroomexamsecretary@cdtabc.com. The enrollment fee for each part is $60 and includes a Program Outline, a Social Dance Workshop, a Coaching Session, an Assessment Session and Report. Along with the assessment report, the student is rewarded a CDTA pin: Pearl Pin for part 1, Ruby Pin for part 2, and Emerald Pin for part 3. A certificate is awarded after completing all three parts.

\* The Canadian Dance Teachers Association aims to advance education in the field of dance and maintains an organization of qualified dance teachers throughout Canada.



Program Challenge Study Guide – Emerald Pin  
1. Linear Motion: Walking & the cross (Caminada & Cruce)  
2. Changing Direction: Rock steps & pivots (Rebote & Ocho)   
3. Circular Motion: Turns (Molinete/Giro)

**Program Challenge skill elements and concepts:**

**The candidate is expected to demonstrate skill elements and concepts from all three parts of the program, integrated into a social dance demonstration.**

**Walking and elements of the 8-step basic:** Steady walk; pauses; weight shifts; forward, side & back steps; parallel system walk; cornering; the cross (basic position 4-5); forward across step (leader basic position 3). Bonus elements: corrida; cross system. Note: the conventional 8-step basic sequence may not be used in its entirety in the assessment.

**Rebote elements:** rock step to collect; rock step into step; parallel system; repeat rock steps. All elements of the ocho cortado should be demonstrated: rock steps leader left forward/back; side rock step to the follower’s cross. Bonus: cross system, varied rebote timing, CBM, style.

**Ocho elements and concepts:** cross-system; directional lead/follow; floor craft; disassociation; pivots; step technique; axis and motion control.

**Giro elements and concepts:** Molinete grapevine and step principles; disassociation; floor craft & navigation; step technique; clockwise and counter clockwise turns.

**Four Connections - SPMR**  
1. **S**elf: posture, balance, coordination, grounding, mental focus, navigation.  
2. **P**artner: frame, dialogue, connectedness in motion, synchronization, contra-body motion.  
3. **M**usic: rhythmic interpretation, melodic interpretation, continuity, suspension, syncopation.  
4. **R**onda: Navigation, step size, motion control, safety, courtesy.

**Checklist of student actions:**

▢ Attend the Social Dance Workshop

▢ Attend group lessons or private lessons, to learn the elements and concepts of this program. Lessons can be taken with one or more teachers. Lessons should be attended at least once a week.

▢ Practice between lessons to improve your proficiency in the skills that will be assessed.

▢ Attend practica sessions by yourself or with a partner. If going without a partner, be ready to practice on your own. Seek the advice of the practica supervisor as needed.

▢ Select a song to use during your dance demonstration in the assessment session. Select from the list of approved songs listed in this kit.

▢ Find a dance partner to dance with in the assessment session.

▢ Contact your CDTA-accredited teacher to book an assessment session and pay applicable fees. Incidental fees for additional costs may apply. (i.e. floor fee, etc.)

▢ Arrive 10 minutes early, before your scheduled assessment session with your dance partner.

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Program Challenge Assessment Request and Report

Teacher & School Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Role: Leader \_\_\_ Follower \_\_\_

Song name & Orchestra: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Skill elements and concepts assessed:** (Marks: 3 – Distinction, 2 –Proficient, 1 – Needs Improvement)

## Walking and elements of the 8-step basic Mark: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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| Notes: |  |
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| **Rebote and elements of the ocho** | Mark: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ |
| Notes: |  |
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**Giro elements** Mark: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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| Notes: |  |
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**Four Connections:** 1st - Self; 2nd - Partner; 3rd – Music; 4th - Ronda Mark: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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| Notes: |  |
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| **Comments (Competencies, strengths and opportunities):** | **Emerald Pin awarded: YES NO** |
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The candidate is eligible for a CDTA BC Tango Salon Test ▢ yes ▢ no

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# Fees

* $20 Social Dance Workshop
* $60 Program enrollment. Includes: Study guide, 15-minute coaching, Assessment Session and Report, Assessment Video, optional, CDTA Program Pin.
* $35 Repeat Assessment.
* Incidental Fees.

Fees are payable to the teacher in advance. Incidental fees may apply to cover additional costs (i.e. studio rental, floor fee, travel, logistics, etc.). All fees are non-refundable.

# Assessment Format

The student should arrive 10 minutes before the scheduled assessment time. The teacher brings the music to play for the two demonstrations. The demonstrations may be filmed by the teacher for closer analysis. The video will be deleted once analysis is completed or within a week’s time, and it may be shared with the student before deletion.

The duration of an assessment is approximately 15-20 minutes, and may be like this:

* 3 minutes - warm up and stretch
* 1 minute - introductions
* 3 minutes – first dance demonstration
* 3 minutes - writing assessment notes
* 1 minute - brief break between assessments
* 3 minutes – second dance demonstration
* 3 minutes - writing assessment notes
* 1 minute - brief break between assessments

An interval of one month should pass before a repeat assessment for the same part is taken.

## The music

To preserve the dance’s authenticity, the student chooses one song for the demonstration from the list of CDTA-approved songs from the Golden Age of tango. Advance approval is required if the student wishes to use a song that is not on the list. The instructor chooses the music for the second demonstration from the same list of approved songs.

## Dance demonstration

* A student is expected to bring a dance partner to the assessment session, and demonstrate assessed elements and concepts in two partnered dance demonstrations.
* A student may choose to be assessed as a leader or as a follower.
* Only one student in the partnership is assessed in one assessment session unless video analysis is used.
* The demonstrations are done for the entire duration of one song.
* An additional demonstration may be requested by the student or by the teacher. The additional demonstration may be less than the duration of a full song. The student may be asked to partner with the teacher or their delegate, or to demonstrate without a partner.

## Form and etiquette guidelines

* In keeping with the nature of Argentine tango social dance it is important for the demonstration to be improvised, not choreographed.
* Only fundamental elements of tango should be used, also known as tango liso. Minimal adornos are permitted. However, the student is discouraged from using elements that are not part of the assessment focus. For instance, an assessment for Part 1 of the program should not have an excess of ochos, rebotes and giros, which are focuses of Part 2 and 3 of the program. The student is also discouraged from using other elements that are not part of the focus, like gancho, boleo, enganche, volcada, colgada, sacada, soltada, etc.
* Follower’s right forward step into the leader’s position is discouraged.
* Partners should wait for the music to start before embracing. Open embrace, v-embrace and close embrace are permitted as well as transitions between the embraces. In an open embrace, partners should maintain close proximity (4-5 inches apart or less).
* The demonstrations are done in a ronda (counter clockwise line of dance), in a lane without drifting.
* During a demonstration, the dancers should not interrupt the dance by breaking the embrace, talking or discontinuing dancing.
* The demonstration should conclude in a final position that is held for 2-5 seconds after the last note of the song. Extravagant or big ending poses are discouraged.
* A male dancer is expected to wear long pants - no shorts please.

Deviation from any of the above guidelines must be teacher-approved ahead of the assessment session.