

## Ballroom Dancing - The Paso Doble

The Paso Doble, originally a Spanish folkdance, has the distinction of being one of the only ballroom dances that is only danced in the ballroom world. You will find people in clubs doing the Waltz, or the Tango or the Quick Step but you won't see them performing a Paso Doble.

Although bullfights can be traced all the way back to ancient Greece they weren't a part of the culture of Spain until the 1700's. The excitement and tension of the bullfight, the pride and dignity of the matador as well as the flair of his cape are all portrayed in the Paso Doble. Paso Doble is Spanish for "Two Step" which is a reference to the marching style of this dance with its 1-2 count.

For the ballroom competitions the Paso Doble is done with chest high, shoulders wide and down, head back but slightly tipped down. The body leans slightly forward and the majority of the forward steps are done with the heel leading. The dance is further enhanced with strong steps and dramatic poses. The Paso Doble is one of the most dramatic of all the ballroom dances.

The Paso Doble is one of the few dances that is for the man. The woman's part in this dance is strictly a supporting one. Depending on their interpretation she may take the part of the matador's cape, or the bull, or in some cases even the matador at different times throughout the dance.

Some distinctive steps of the Paso Doble are the chassez cape (where the man uses the woman as the cape), the Apel, where the man stamps his foot as if to attract the attention of the bull (a very strong move) and the Arpel which is a movement that starts with stamping of the feet then the couples walk in opposite directions.

## Ballroom Dancing - The Cha-Cha

The London dance instructor Pierre Lavelle, who was responsible for having the Cuban Rumba declared the official Rumba, while on a visit to Cuba, had noticed that sometimes there were extra beats added to the Rumba. Upon his return to England he taught these steps as a completely new dance. It has been suggested that the name Cha-Cha (or Cha-Cha-Cha as it is called by some people) was coined for the sound of the 3 quick steps after the forward and back step (or back and forward steps). The steps for the Cha-Cha are taken on the beats accompanied by a strong hip movement as the leg straightens on the half beat.

The Cha-Cha is a fun, flirty, lighthearted dance that gets its distinctive "cha,

cha, cha" rhythm because there are 5 steps danced to four beats. Dancers work parallel with each other in well synchronized movements sometimes employing the "New Yorker", a step where one of the dancers steps across the other and checks to change direction. Cuban motion, the hip motion derived from alternately bending and straightening the knees, is an important factor in this dance.