

№ 2 (2)

July 31 2012

La Via del Tango





Chacarera

Chacarera is an Argentine folk dance, a dance of courting. Nowadays Chacarera is often danced at milongas in Russia and Europe. To learn more about this dance we spoke to Alexander Ryahovskiy – the teacher of dancing school 'Quarter of Tango', St. Petersburg.

ALEXANDER, YOU HAVE BEEN DANCING CHACARERA FOR A LONG TIME AND HAS ALREADY STUDIED THE HISTORY OF THE DANCE. WHAT IS ITS ORIGIN, EMOTIONAL CONTENT AND TECHNICAL COMPONENT?

Chacarera as any representative of folklore, has a long history. In Buenos Aires it was known at the beginning of the 19th century, but before that it had slowly and surely spread across the country in the province, more among ordinary people. The origin of the dance is unclear, but it is believed to have spread from the province of Santiago-del-Estero located in the northwest of Argentina.

By its nature, the dance is fun and intriguing on the one hand, and subtle, lyrical on the other. Chacarera certainly belongs to the kind of dance that we call social. It is often danced in pairs, but can be done in a different way. Sometimes one can see that it is danced by a large number of people at the same time. Such flexibility of the pattern adds to the playful nature of the dance.

In Europe Chacarera appeared most likely due to the tango proliferation. In Buenos Aires it can be seen after Milongas in such places as, let's say, Villa Malcolm, La Viruta, outdoors at the Plaza Dorrego, and some others, though not all; and it is often danced not just for 10 minutes, as it usually happens with us, but sometimes for a longer period of time and, of course, for everyone's satisfaction. Among the dancers there are a lot of young people, many of whom dance professionally, which helps them to do it with more grace and skill. But behind all this there is usually a considerable number of hours spent studying the dance; first of all it concerns male sapateo. Chacarera is combined with malambo in men's part during sapateo. It is necessary to add, that sapateo is the men's part, closely related to the improvisation in the form of well-known tap dance, but performed in a slightly different style, more typical of folk dances. The parallel female part is called sarandeo, many movements of which take their roots in the tradition to dance chakarera in long wide skirts, that resulted in the distinctive manner of the motion of hands and a body. As far as malambo is concerned, it's frequently learned even by girls, as it is very interesting and connected with the ability to play with different rhythms.



CHACARERA CAN BE SIMPLY SEEN ON THE STREETS OF BUENOS AIRES, IN PARKS, FOR EXAMPLE, IN THE SAME REKOLETA WHEN PEOPLE GO OUTSIDE TO RELAX WITH FRIENDS AND DANCE RIGHT ON THE LAWN. THOUGH, PERHAPS, IT IS MORE COMMON FOR THE PROVINCE.

Many people who start to dance Chacarera would be probably enamored with exciting melodies and the combination of the violin, guitar, and accordion – all above leaves no one indifferent. However, one should learn to dance well enough, and at least interesting for both male and female partners. Moreover, as well as in case of Tango, it would be good to know Spanish to understand the lyrics of the songs, whereas seemingly cheerful at first glance music may be accompanied by very poetic, but rather sad lyrics. The understanding of this fact would allow us to see different shades and moods in the dance, otherwise it might lead to the fact that people, mainly foreigners, begin to look a little bizarre trying to express the emotions that are not quite appropriate with respect to the lyrics.





ALEXANDER WHEN YOU STARTED TO DANCE CHACARERA? DOES THIS DANCE DEVELOP IN ST. PETERSBURG?

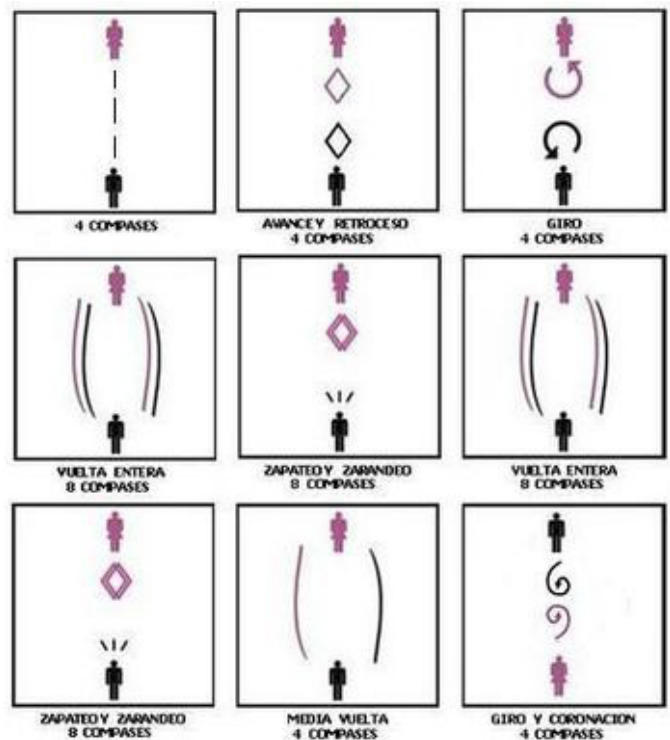
Nowadays many couples who give Tango lessons are giving Chacarera lessons as well, sometimes including it in their show. For example in St. Petersburg were Firpo, Marcelo Varela and Analia Vega, Ruben and Sabrina Veliz, Rodrigo Fonti and Mila Vigdorova, Ernesto Carmona, Dana Frigoli, Jonathan Froylikh and Julia Gorina, etc.

I started dancing Chacarera following the lessons with Mila Vigdorova in 2005. At that time those were first lessons in St. Petersburg. Later on, in 2007, when I was in Buenos, «Malcoln», I managed to see the dance what is called 'alive' for the first time, and began to dance it after the Milongas. It was very interesting, and sometimes, honestly speaking, I would not know what was more interesting – to dance or watch other people dancing. It was stunning, and, perhaps, from that time interest to that dance settled inside me. I must say that I have seen it quite a lot and it would not be always technical but somehow very difficult or unique, it would be done by people of very different body constitution, age and level of physical training, but all the same – it has been always interesting, regardless of location and age of the dancers. Perhaps, I have never seen that Chacarera would be done without some kind of inner fulfillment. As for myself, I can still see things to learn especially in terms of sapateo where there are a lot of inquisitive things.

In St. Petersburg, honestly saying, it is quite difficult for Chacarera to get accustomed as a result of probable interference with the northern character and introversion. But gradually, I think, it will start to move forward. In addition, today there are a lot of visitors who actually would be giving not only lessons of Argentine Tango but Chacarera as well and it pleases because with all its simplicity, the dance is not so effortless. This dance required people to listen to music as well as learn plasticity, rhythm and different expression of feelings, rather than in Tango. It can be difficult and unfamiliar as well, giving sometimes quite unexpected opportunities for interaction and improvisation.

DIAGRAM OF CONVENTIONAL CHACARERA:

- Figure 1:** Avance y retroceso (moving forward and going back)
- Figure 2:** Giro (hiro, turn)
- Figure 3:** Vuelta entera (exchange of positions by partners)
- Figure 4:** Zapateo y zarandeo (male and female embellishments)
- Figure 5:** Vuelta entera (exchange of positions by partners)
- Figure 6:** Zapateo y zarandeo (male and female embellishments)
- Figure 7:** Media vuelta (incomplete exchange of positions by partners)
- Figure 8:** Giro y coronacion (turnover and crowning)



More information about Chacarera, video and texts : <http://www.aquifolklore.com.ar/English/echacarera.htm>

MORE DETAILS ABOUT SCHOOL QUARTER OF TANGO

<http://kvartaltango.ru>

http://vk.com/kvartal_tango

<http://www.facebook.com/groups/273269086030084>

PHOTO IN A HALL – Alexander Ryahovskiy
PHOTO ON THE STREET – Oleg Zotin

ÖSTERSUND

Östersund is advertised as Vinterstaden — the winter city – a project launched by the municipality and city businessmen (<http://www.vinterstaden.com>). Östersund is a winter sports center with a modern ski stadium and skiing track, located exactly in the city. As in the majority of modern cities, there are tango here. More information about how tango evolved in Östersund, we were given by **Björn Norell** – the teacher of a tango and the organizer of festivals.



ÖSTERSUND (ШВЕД. ÖSTERSUND [œstø'ʂønd]) — municipality and the city in the central Sweden, located on the shore of the fifth largest lake in Sweden Storsjön (the Swede. Storsjön), opposite the island Frösön. The population is about 60 thousand inhabitants.

I started to dance tango in 1998, and was taking classes frequently between 2000-2006 all over Europe and in Buenos Aires. Following that, I had some years when I spent most of the time organizing and teaching in my home town. Nowadays, I mostly go for festival milongas and marathons. I still take classes, particularly from a few teachers whose dancing styles and pedagogic I like the most.

As I live in the small town of Östersund in the far inland of Sweden I have to travel a lot to dance. I like to «discover» new festivals, new places, new countries and I meet a lot of friends everywhere.

Tango in Östersund started in 2002 and I was involved from the very beginning. We organized weekend workshops by external Swedish teachers several times a year and I took care of the practices. Soon after, the tango weekends got very popular with around 130 visitors from all over Scandinavia and we started to call them festivals.

These days, we have those small familiar festivals two times a year, the first weekend of February and the first weekend of October. We had visits from international masters like Eduino Capussy, Mariana Flores, Esteban Moreno, Federico Naveira, Ines Muzzopappa, Oliver Kolker and Silvina Valz, among others. The object of that is getting more professional all the while and we have started to get visitors from outside Scandinavia. Therefore we have plans to develop our website.

Our small community has around 20 active dancers, and we organize milongas and give regular classes from beginners to intermediate level, except during the summer and winter vacation period. Currently we have several instructors and I give fewer classes than some years ago...

...which means that I have more time for my travelling again!

MORE DETAILS ABOUT REGULAR CLASSES OF A TANGO IN ÖSTERSUND, AND CONTACTS OF ORGANIZERS MILONG AND FESTIVALS:

<http://www.tangoamt.com>

<http://www.facebook.com/EVENTS/307924889281773>

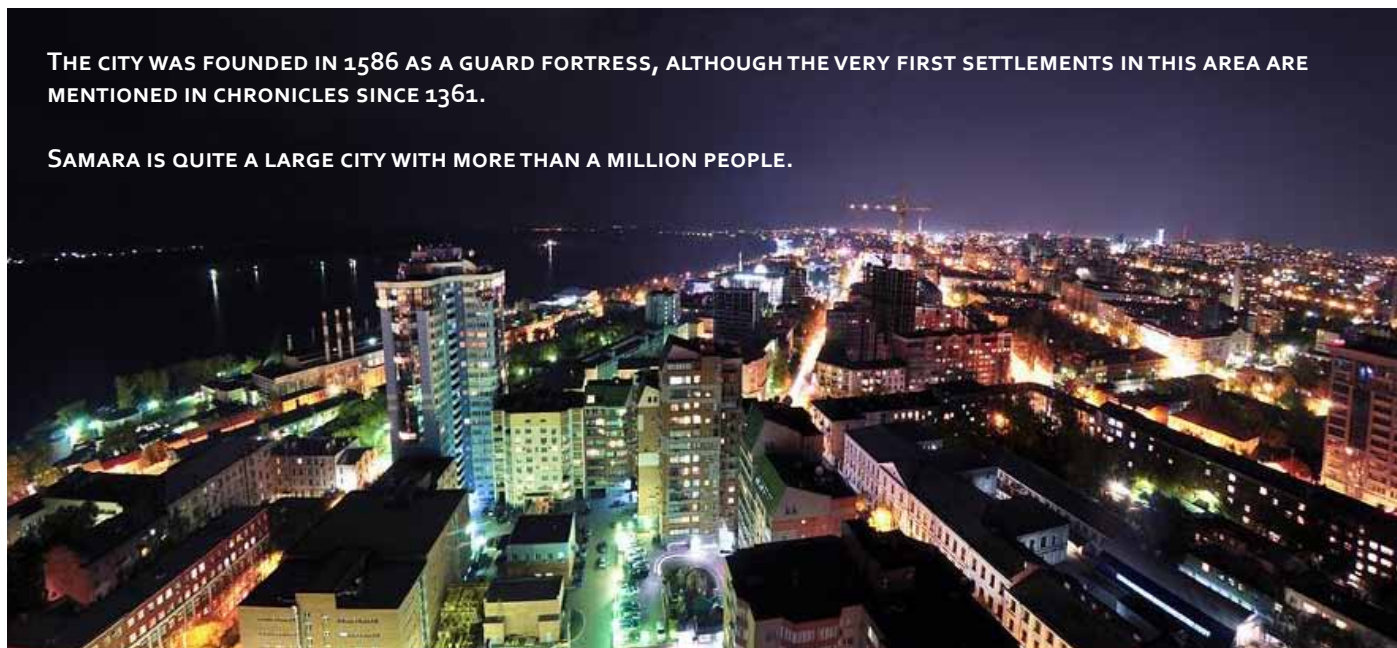
SAMARA

Tango in Samara has been existing for more than 7 years. Currently there are 5 schools. Milongas are held once a week – on Sundays.

To get to know how Tango evolved in Samara and what is happening in Tango community nowadays, we spoke to **Irina Matikaynen** who was one of the first to start Tango in the city.

THE CITY WAS FOUNDED IN 1586 AS A GUARD FORTRESS, ALTHOUGH THE VERY FIRST SETTLEMENTS IN THIS AREA ARE MENTIONED IN CHRONICLES SINCE 1361.

SAMARA IS QUITE A LARGE CITY WITH MORE THAN A MILLION PEOPLE.



HOW DID THE TANGO IN SAMARA BEGIN?

The first attempts to teach «not sport» tango in Samara were in nineties by Oleg Russu – the teacher of dance sport club «Fandango», and subsequently by Alexander Grigorevskiy. However, the group did not manage to exist for a long time.

Contemporary Argentine tango appeared in Samara after the rector of Samara's Academy of Humanities Natalia Voronina invited me and my partner Ruslan Krasko to teach in the academy.

HOW DID YOU AND RUSLAN CAME TO TANGO?

In the late nineties - early zero there was no so called «social dances» in Samara. In general, there was no any dance schools for adults. Adults, wishing to learn dancing in pairs, could go only in a ballroom dancing (SBT). I came to ballroom dance school and in

the same week met Ruslan. Since then we are together.

SBT are competitions, «trainings», and generally – «faster – further - stronger». I was 24, he was - 30 and before that we had never danced. Neither he, nor me were engaged in any sports besides chess. And the contests are competitions on the same dance floor with young people. We used to perform not good because of some objective and subjective reasons (age, lack of a habit to competitions, etc.). And emotionally it was difficult to us.

After 7 years of competitions we were tired of that. In general we wanted something different. I started to look for information on any pair dances that were existing. «Vkontakte – did not exist yet, about Live Journal we have not heard either... I found several addresses in Moscow, and we visited Yakimanka (there was 'bachata'), hustle and something else... We did not find it

inspiring. By chance, we found a web site of 'La Milonga' school – the organizer Alexander Vistgof. We got straight to his 'Open - Air' at Frunze Embankment. The impression was profound! I mean, at first we could not understand it: «No dynamics, no amplitude! And how are they holding their hands! And where is the posture? Also look, everyone in special footwear! And what they are thinking about themselves!», – typical reaction of someone who used to do ballroom dancing and would see Argentine tango for the first time. We decided to try it out. Came on the dance floor... We could neither feel the music not understand it – «What is it? Is it Tango? And what did we used to dance at our competitions? It looks like tango, but it is not! Elbow is close, yet can't bite it».

At first we thought that «not in this life». However, back in Samara, feeling both enthusiastic and incomprehensible at the same time I wrote a post to the

local ballroom web-site about seen in Moscow. My post was read by the early mentioned Natalia Voronina – at that time she danced ballroom dances and decided to invite Alexander Cherenkov from «La Milonga» to hold seminars in Samara.

That is how all began. I and Ruslan were feeling responsible for that seminars; we organized advertising amongst our friends and went to all the lessons. Cherenkov saw our interest, he had «blessed» us to teach Tango in Samara. We began to keep our classes in the auditorium of the Academy, at Dybenko, 21. Up until now – the most famous venue in the town but this time without us. We started with only three figures, which we knew – «Salida, krussada, resolyusyon», ocho and ocho cortada. Seems Stephen Hawking once mentioned that when he was invited to teach mathematics in MIT, he also didn't know much and learned this subject along with his first course – he would go one chapter of the textbook ahead. The same thing we did. We were giving lessons for about year and a half and had a lot of people, on Saturdays – we drank tea and watched films together! Barbolin and Zuyeva came, Slava Ivanov! Some students of that first group became tango teachers.

In 2007 we moved to another place and now teach in Samara School of the Olympic reserve. At Dybenko began to teach Natalia Voronina and Petr Rusyaev. Their school is called «Tango Province». There are two more couples of the teacher in that school and a branch of school in Togliatti. School quite big, with good base and excellent teachers.



IRINA, COULD YOU TELL ME MORE ABOUT TANGO COMMUNITY IN SAMARA AND COMPARE IT WITH TANGO IN OTHER CITIES?

Probably as in all tango communities, we leaved not very friendly. Eventually everyone has got tired about it and we decided to create a «union», and created such community <http://vk.com/samaratango>, joined all local teachers and DJs, and this really improved our situation!

For me quite difficult to compare tango in Samara and other cities. We were only in Moscow and St. Petersburg. Also we were in Kiev once and attended Milonga – it was great! The difference with Samara – everyone was dancing so calm.

Probably, any internal uneasiness forces us to «run» on a dance floor, – many of us have such problem, and we yet don't know how to solve it... Perhaps, it is local character... as in ancient Samara song it is sung: «fidgety I, calm me»...

WHAT IS THE MAIN IDEA YOU ARE TRYING TO BRING TO YOUR STUDENTS?

Remember, like in the roman «The Magus» (John Robert Fowles): «The only one precept: don't torment the near in vain». Tango is just a dance, simply dance, only dance; of course there is a cultural stratum, music, tradition (that is not of our own) etc. But with what we have deal – is our body that has already been repressed from all sides.



«WHAT IS IT? IS IT TANGO? AND WHAT DID WE USED TO DANCE AT OUR COMPETITIONS? IT LOOKS LIKE TANGO, BUT IT IS NOT! ELBOW IS CLOSE, YET CAN'T BITE IT».

AT FIRST WE THOUGHT THAT «NOT IN THIS LIFE»



And I don't want to increase amount of suffering and pain, pathetically speaking. I closed to the ideas of dance-movement therapist and tango teacher Aleksandra Vilvovskaya about regarding attention to our bodies, about respect and appreciate it. Therefore «let's dance and be happy». «Dance and be happy» is such widely known slogan of the ballroom dancers, but it's not always possible to them ... After all we came and remained in a tango because only here we felt happiness. Yes, sometimes it is difficult and sick, but there is a real happiness here.

About happiness. I appreciate in my partner that he is very patient, «accepting» teacher. He can not only console and raise people's self-evaluation, but also implement a movement skill. Another thing is that there is an objective problem: all of us started to dance at adult age, people without the expressed dancing abilities, had not dance and sports occupations «in the anamnesis» – we are can't do a lot of things. And we can not do a lot of things because the body isn't ready to that we want. And here it is necessary to understand and decide on priorities. If there is a desire of any «high achievements», it is necessary to be engaged in a body. Dancing yoga, stretch ...

For me the tango is almost constant challenge to spirit, a body, self-conceit ... to optimism. Perhaps, I dramatize, but this dance is really difficult, technically and emotionally difficult ... So let's dance! Don't stop, don't despair, be not afraid to meet the restrictions, failures - it is normal and it will be with us many times, but after all there will be also a pleasure. Let's be grateful to the body, to the partners and neighbors in community. We are wealthy that we have all this, we actually fairly rich, we are lucky. You only imagine that all this with us could not happen?



When someone who have been dancing from the childhood and have grown up in this environment would say to me: «Relax! and you will do it!», it would remind about Marshak's (editor note – Russian children writer) fairy tale about 12 months where squirrels were teaching a rabbit how to jump: «Swing your tail, and up to branch!» - anything difficult! In Russia, however, in most cases we have another approach – technique, technique, technique. It is not well too, our typical Post-Soviet repressive approach.

WHAT WOULD YOU ADVISE TO YOUR STUDENTS?

To pupils, community colleagues and to myself... What to tell for self-support?

TANGO SCHOOLS IN SAMARA

Tango province

<http://www.samaratango.ru>

The Argentina Tango in DKZh of A.S. Pushkin

<http://vk.com/club29640760>

Samara tango club (Entrada)

<http://vk.com/entrada>
www.tango.samaradance.ru

Dancing studio «Luna»

<http://luna-dance.ru>

Libertango

<http://www.libertango.biz>

ROMAN AND NADEZHDA GLADKOVY

School «Tango motion», Nizhny Novgorod, Russia

In May, 2012 Roman and Nadezhda held seminars on Argentine tango in the city of Samara within the framework of «Tango-session 2012». The impressions which have remained from a trip, they share with us.

«This is the second time in May we visited Samara with the lessons, though that time the program was richer: group and private lessons, performance at milonga and for a dessert a concert in the Samara Philharmonic Hall where we danced on the same stage with a beautiful Argentine couple - Christian Duarte and Lilach Mor.

We were pleasantly surprised with such a warm meeting. At the masters there were a lot of couples but with larger amount of men (a tendency, however). It was a pleasure to work with them, the feed-back at the lessons is amazing - people are going into details of every word, and what is more important – ask a lot of questions. A distinctive feature of the Samara dancers is work in the open embrace; a lot of them are dancing with a non-tango or modern music. In fact, Samara's tango community is not small, as we initially thought, it is just not everyone attend milonga; well, it is a problem not only of Samara.

A big concert at Samara Philharmonic Hall was a culmination of «Tango-session 2012». The hall was packed to capacity; even the aisle tickets were sold. Dancing on the same stage with tango stars is always exciting and enjoyable experience. We will surely repeat it next year».

To learn in more details about Tango Motion school and the lesson schedule, visit a web site: <http://tango-motion.ru/>



**PETER RUSYAEV,
CANDIDATE OF HISTORICAL SCIENCES,
TEACHER OF SCHOOL "TANGO PROVINCE":**

Roman and Nadejda Gladkovy have been dancing tango for a quite long time, and it is obvious that they feel and understand each other and they do it at a highly professional level. They took lessons from the remarkable Argentine teachers of new generation, and dancing Tango in the original authentic style. In my opinion, they are one of the 10 best couples in Russia. Wonderful teachers, their lessons are very methodical and useful for dancers of all levels.

MILONGA AT KVARTAL TANGO

28.07.2012, Saint Petersburg

PHOTO BY VLADIMIR RYZHOV
[HTTP://WWW.FACEBOOK.COM/RYZHOV.VLADIMIR](http://www.facebook.com/ryzhov.vladimir)

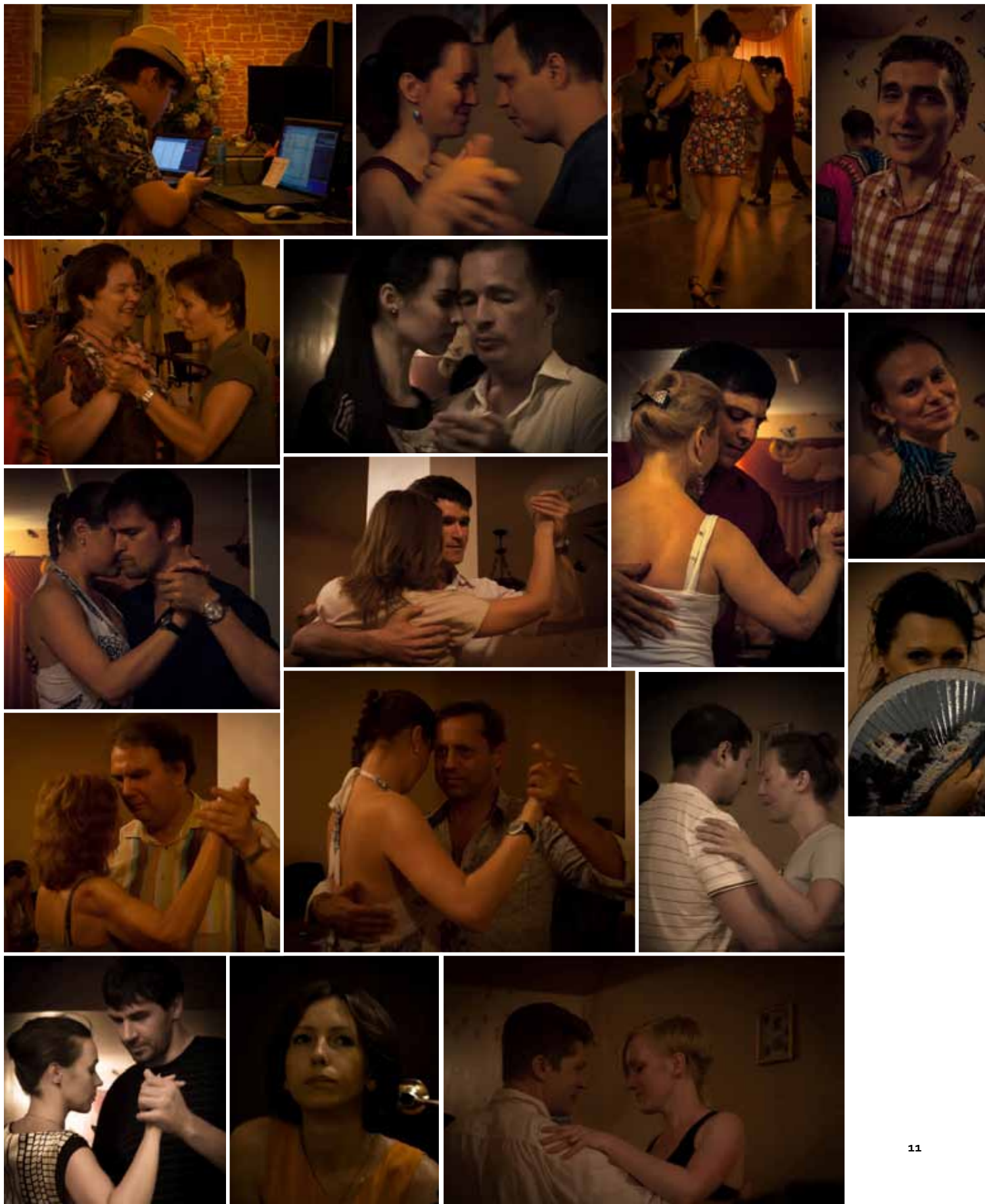


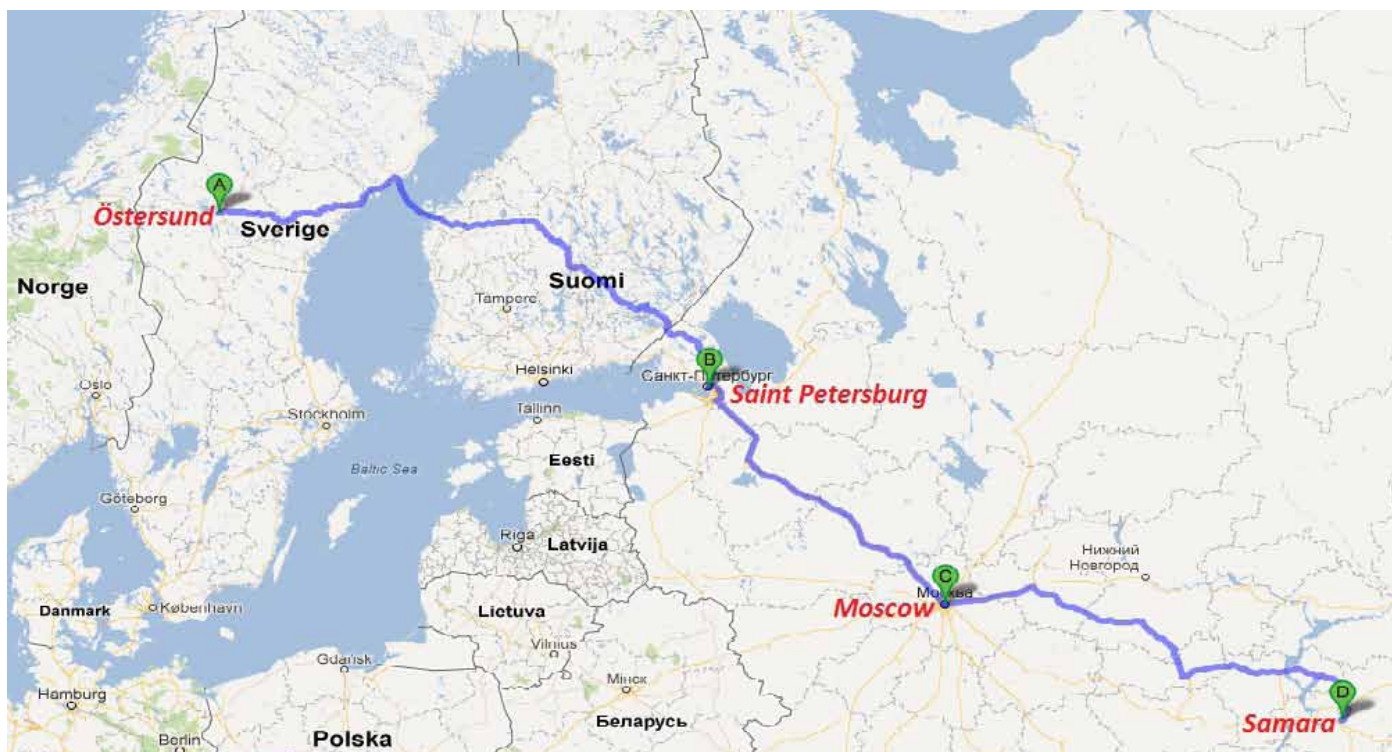
MILONGA RONDA

02.08.2012, Nizhny Novgorod

full album <http://www.facebook.com/NN.Tango>

PHOTO BY NATALIA BULYGA
NBULYGA@GMAIL.COM





ÖSTERSUND

is located in 464 km. from Stockholm and has own airport (<http://www.swedavia.com/ostersund/>).
 The minimum time of flight to the Stockholm airport (Arlanda) from St. Petersburg takes near 1,5 hours, from Moscow – 2 hours.
 The distance from Stockholm to Östersund the plane overcomes less than for an hour.
 Time in Sweden lags behind at 2 o'clock the Moscow.

- ! To reserve hotel in Östersund and to read responses is possible on a site
- <http://tophotels.ru/main/hotels/90/?Re=2342>

ST. PETERSBURG AND MOSCOW

have good transport connection. Distance between the cities on a straight line about 634 km, and about 700 km by an automobile route.
 From one city in another it is possible to reach by high-speed train (about 4 hours per ways) or usual train (from 8 o'clock), plane (about an hour) or on the car (from 10 o'clock in a way).

SAMARA

can be reached by plane from St. Petersburg in 2,5 hours or from Moscow in 1,5 hours.
 Moreover, from Moscow there is a train – about 19 hours per ways.
 Traveling by the car it takes approximately 15 hours.



Schedule Moscow Milongas and practicas, announcements of international festivals:
<http://tangoproject.ru/>

Questions, wishes and offers are to be send to: nbulyga@gmail.com

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<http://www.facebook.com/olgaphilippova>