

Traditional Calabrian Dances



A Viddhaneddha

- ▶ Among the most unique pieces of Calabria is a typical folk dance called "Viddhaneddha", which originated in rituals coming from Magna Graecia, with liberating rhythm and aggressive gestures of courtship and competition that create very choreographic attitudes.
- ▶ The steps and behavior of the dancers clearly suggest a Greek origin. The rhythmic quality is given by the tambourine, which originated from the tympanon, in imitation of Hellenic castanets, or by clapping hands by the dancers.
- ▶ The dance can be both woman to man (courtship), or man to man (duel and supremacy). In a dance with a mixed couple (man and woman), there takes place a mimick of courtship, innuendos and desires. Dancing men and women are arranged along the edge of the circle facing each other. The first dance steps are slow: he stares into her eyes, she looks down, her hands on her hips with palms facing outward, a position full of coquetry that enhances the hips and breasts.



How to dance the Tarantella

- ▶ The dancing steps follow a ritual. The pair formed under the command of the master start dancing for the possession of the circle. The contestants are arranged around the circumference and, looking at each other, try to imitate steps. The purpose is to push the opponent to the center of the circle. The movements of the upper and lower body, ideally divided into two at the waist, are independent: legs frantically increase speed, while the trunk is mostly static, just swaying.
- ▶ Sometimes a finger is pointed upwards in defiance. Other times dancers try to impress and confuse the partner with a "soprapasso", a difficult dance step made crossing feet and hitting the ground with one foot outside the other alternately.



THE TARANTELLA DANCED BY A LOCAL GROUP OF DANCERS FROM PELLARO -
REGGIO CALABRIA

Songs in Calabria

- ▶ **Calabria regional songs**
- ▶ The music of Calabria, though related to other southern Italian traditions, has its own identity, both in the melodies and instruments used. This music is performed with the accordion and tambourine, while the "organetto" has come to replace the ancient "ciarameddha" (bagpipes).



Wonderful Organetto player



CALABRISELLA MIA

Nina ti vitti all'acqua chi lavavi
E lu me cori si jinchiu d'amuri.
Mentre li panni a la sipala 'ampravi
Io t'arrobbaì lu megghiu muccaturi.

**Nina, I saw you at the fountain washing
and my heart was filled with love,
while you were hanging the laundry on the hedge
I stole the most beautiful handkerchief**

Calabrisella mia, Calabrisella mia,
Calabrisella mia, Facimmu amuri
Calabrisella mia, Calabrisella mia,

Calabrisella mia, let us love





Quandu pe' studiu jivi a la cittàadi
Bedda non vitti a nudda com'a tia
Pensai cu pena a s'occhi nnamurati
E 'nta stu muccaturi ti ciangìa.

**When I went to study in the city
None I saw as beautiful as you
I thought with pain to your loving eyes
And in this handkerchief I cried.**

Calabrisella mia, sta vucca d'incantari
Calabrisella mia, fammi baciari.
Calabrisella mia, sta vucca d'incantari

Calabrisella mia, let me kiss you.

Tirullalleru, lalleru lallà
'sta Calabrisella muriri mi fa!
Tirullalleru, lalleru lallà

this Calabrisella makes me die!



'U Pecuraru

The song expresses the strange character of the shepherd almost unaccustomed to normal life. A solitary and roguish man, unable to communicate with civilized society.

The expression in the last line "malandrinu", meaning rogue, scoundrel, is typical of the widespread contempt for a man who lives in the company of sheep and dogs.

Lu pecuraru sta sia juorni fora:
u sabato barune si nne vena;
u sabatu si chiama allegra core
ppe chine tena bella la mugliera.
Chine l'ha brutta le scura lu core
è mieglu ca lu sabatu nun vena!

The shepherd stays six days away:
on Saturday he comes back to the village;
Saturday the heart is happy
for whom has a beautiful wife.
who has an ugly one, his heart is dark
better not to come back on Saturday!



ITALY
Tarentella



Traditional costumes in Calabria



Typical Calabrian Costumes

The male costume:

Since ancient times there were differences in the way of dressing between different social classes.

The male costume has similar characteristics throughout the region but is also linked to social status. Very characteristic is the costume of the peasant: "u tamaru" who wore:

“**A Camísa**”: white linen shirt without a collar, but with a simple cuff called ‘U rivítu, which had essential embroidery or was high-necked with wide lapels.

“**A mariola**”: a jacket in black moleskin or blue velvet, with metal buttons.

“**U Juppuni**”: a rigidly buttoned waistcoat that was worn at a certain age.

“**I cazi**”: Trousers were short to the knee, open at the sides, and held by a large leather belt called "curria" from which the ax was hung.

“**A Scarf**”: A wool band in a different color to be wrapped around the waist and falling on one side.

“**U giléccu**”: a vest in fabric of various colors or in black velvet.

“**U muccatúri**”: handkerchief wrapped around the neck.

"A giacchéta ca ggióbba": short jacket with a back pocket which, when filled, assumed the shape of a hump.

"A cappa": cloak in black wool cloth with a fur collar.

"I cazetti": white wool socks supported by the red laces of the "calandreddi" called "crocili".

"I calandreddi": tanned oxhide shoes that were tied on the back of the foot with long red wool cords and that were wrapped around the socks. The calandrella left the heel bare and is the only shoe that the yokel could use, having to climb trees, jump from branch to branch and, sometimes, from tree to tree due to the need to graze the cattle

"A giubba": goatskin jacket, used to shelter from the cold or wind.

"A birritta": a flat, blue-colored headdress, so long that it could be folded over the shoulders, where it formed a sort of pocket, in which the handkerchief and even money were stored.

Dress of the "Calabrisella"

The typical Calabrian dress that was mostly used by women is certainly the work one, that is, a country dress; a dress to wear every day, lighter and with fewer ornaments to be able to work more easily at home and in the fields. Then there was the party dress, to be worn on Sundays or on special occasions, rich in decorations and adorned with jewels. The dress was generally characterized by bright colors when worn by young women, dark or black for the older ones. The details vary from country to country, but the dress always remains very similar. In Calabria the typical costume of Calabrisella was composed as follows:

- **Juppuni:** short-sleeved jacket in black velvet with satin embroidery to be worn over the bodice, to cover the shoulders
- **Bodice:** Vest front in black velvet decorated with trimmings and closed by a golden ribbon, on the back in satin colored according to the shade of the apron.
- **Cammisa:** Shirt in white cotton or linen enriched with lace and embroidery

- **Faddha or goneddhra:** A very pleated wide skirt in various colors of hep for married young women; pastel colors for little girls; dark colors or black for the elderly) enriched with floral embroidery on the bottom, long to the feet.
- **Faddhetta:** White cotton underskirt
- **U ricciu:** circular collar of silk, lace or tulle sewn or attached to the shirt
- **Vantali:** Satin apron to match the back of the gilet, pleated at the bottom
- **Sciallu:** Satin shawl decorated with floral motifs and silk crochet fringes
- **Muccaturi:** Foulard
- **Tuvaghia:** white silk tablecloth or headdress for single women, black for married women or widows.
- **Cazetti:** white thread socks
- **Scarpi:** black shoes

The dress was usually worn with rich jewels and hair was styled in a long braid gathered at the nape or head.

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*Watch and learn
How to dance the Calabrian Tarantella*

