



Salsa Picante Dance Company's

Salsa Newsletter

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Salsa Picante Dance Company News

Welcome to the Salsa Picante Dance Company newsletter. Here you will find the latest news regarding the company, the school and everything salsa.

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Content by [lyw](#)

Eloisa and I performed our usual number "Si Tu Te Vas" recently at a wedding for Mr. and Mrs. Salim Gangi, on Easter Sunday. The reception was amazing. We performed to 250 invited close friends and family of the bride and groom at the "The Gondola", near Keele and Hwy7.

I recently had my recital playing congas for Ruben Vazquez's student Latin jazz band at the Royal Conservatory of Music. On Tuesday, May 9, 2006, we played three songs Una Manana (a chachacha), Claudia (a bolero) and Mambo Inn (a guaracha: a fast form of son).

It was a little nerve-racking as we only had a week's notice prior to the performance and the music seemed to vibrate

more in the auditorium but we managed to pull it off. Even Marcus Chonsky, one of my percussion teachers, played maracas with us to help anchor the rhythm. Ruben, our band leader, seemed happy with the result as he was smiling during and after the

performance. He said that "we were more disciplined than his professionals as we were all there by 6:30pm".

The Royal Conservatory of Music also hosted recitals from a young R&B/Hip Hop group, a Taiko drumming ensemble, a Ghanaian drumming ensemble and from Bateria, a samba drumming ensemble.

Overall a very entertaining night.

Arthur Ga



A Pleasure to Dance With

Dance etiquette. It's not just good manners. It'll help you dance better.

There really aren't any hard rules on dance etiquette, as everybody's preferences will differ. It's more an effort made to consider your partner's feelings and comfort, as well as the people around you.

When I first started dancing salsa, I would be so nervous that I'd wear a look of severe concentration when I danced. For all my partner knew, I hated dancing with him. The tension also made it difficult to lead me. I learned fairly quickly that a

smile - a little warmth - compensated for a lot of my mistakes — and his. In fact, there were times when a smile was all I had to get through an advanced move. Remembering to smile helped me to relax. We can actually start listening and enjoying the music. In salsa, mistakes can easily be turned around with a smile and a quick recovery. I would rather dance with an average dancer who knows how to smile and have fun than an advanced dancer with the face of a Terminator.

Likewise, leaders who take the time to help their followers execute their moves safely and

smoothly will find she is more relaxed and smiles come easier to her.

Arthur adds, "Please be kind and courteous to one

another as each individual learns differently. Learning to dance salsa is slow and progressive. We will all get there in due time."

"I'm always impressed when I see a leader that I know is capable of doing all kinds of fast and fancy moves sticking with simple stuff so as not to take up an inequitable amount of the dance floor. There are a few people who can do amazing moves in a tiny space, but most of us mere mortals have to choose between showing off or showing respect for other dancers. For me, a good dancer is a respectful dancer." Jim Gronau, TSP. www.TorontoSalsaPractice.com

lyw

Congas in Salsa



The name "conga" was coined in New York, USA in the 1950's, when Cuban Son music and New York jazz fused together to create salsa.

Historically, the drum was the connection between the deities and the human body, where the player stimulated the spirits to enter the dancer's body.

Conga players are called rumberos, while conguero refers to those who dance following the path of the players.

In Cuba, the congas are known as "tumbadoras", and two sizes are used: the "macho" (male) and the "hembra" (female). When more than two drums are used, it is usually one macho and several hembras tuned to different

itches. At the same time, the first conga is called "tumba" and it is followed by the quinto or repicador and the tres or marcador.

Popular history in Cuba claims that the name "conga" first came to light during orishas celebrations.

The **conga** is a tall narrow single-headed Cuban drum of African origin, probably derived from the Congolese Makuta drums. Although ultimately derived from African drums made from hollowed logs, in its Cuban incarnation, the conga is staved, like a barrel, and they probably were originally made from salvaged barrels. It was used both in Afro-Caribbean religious music and as the principal instrument in Rumba.

Modern congas have a staved

wooden shell, or fiberglass shell, and a screw-tensioned drumhead. They are usually played in sets of two to four with the fingers and palms of the hand. Info c/o en.wikipedia.org/

There are five basic conga strokes:

Open tone: played with the four fingers near the rim of the head, producing a clear resonant tone with a distinct pitch.

Muffled tone: like the open tone, is made by striking the drum with the four fingers, but holding the fingers against the head to muffle the tone (which combined with the first is called the tumbao, played in must salsa and rumbas today).

Bass tone: played with the full palm on the head. It produces a low muted sound.

Slap: most difficult technique producing a loud clear "popping" sound (when played at fast and short intervals is called floreo, played to instill emotions on the dancer).

Touch: as implied by the name, this tone is produced by just touching the fingers or heel of the palm to the drum head.

Famous players:

Jose Luis Quintana "Changuito"
Giovanni Hidalgo
Carlos Patato Valdez
Candido Camero
Poncho Sanchez

The Salsa Dip

Arthur was reluctant to introduce a dip into the salsa classrooms because of the risk of injury. However, many salsa songs simply beg for a dip – especially the ones that end in a crescendo! And, better we do it in the class, with instruction, than winging it on our own on the dance floor. We've been practising it for a few classes now, and so far no injuries. Congratulations to the 2:30 Int-Advanced class! Maybe, next, we'll learn the Death Drop!

Before we move on to this and because we care about your safety, let us repeat some safety pre-cautions.

Hard rules on safe dipping.

- 1) Followers, do not arch your back. Straight back and neck.
- 2) Followers, do not fling your neck back.

3) Both Leaders and Followers, keep your frame. No loose or extended arms.

4) Leaders make sure you have enough room to dip. The lower the dip the closer her head gets to other people's heels and the floor. Prepare her for the dip.

5) Followers do not rely on the lead to take all of your weight. You should be able to dip yourself part way by tightening at least one of your hind leg muscles.

6) Leaders do not dip with your back. Remember Arthur's horse stance.

7) If you don't know each other well, be respectful of

each other's personal space.

8) And *Don't* stare at her chest during the dip. Keep your nose back!

*Lil says take him with you if you go down.

*Arthur says jump clear, why should both of you fall?



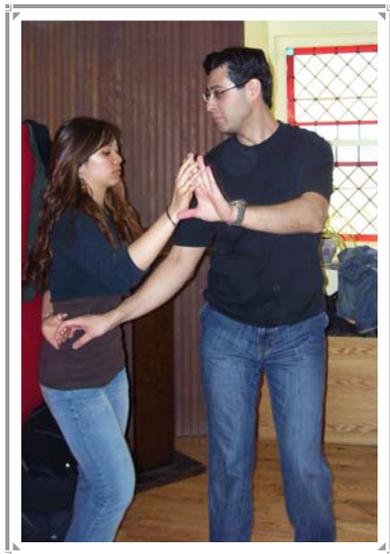
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Inter -Adv's first dip with Arthur
What is Javier doing back there?

Class Reviews



Arthur says, "We are now running 3 ongoing intermediate classes. I am pleased that all our students are progressing nicely and having fun."

The 2:30 Int/Adv class completed the Longest Routine Ever and are now playing with dips and shines.

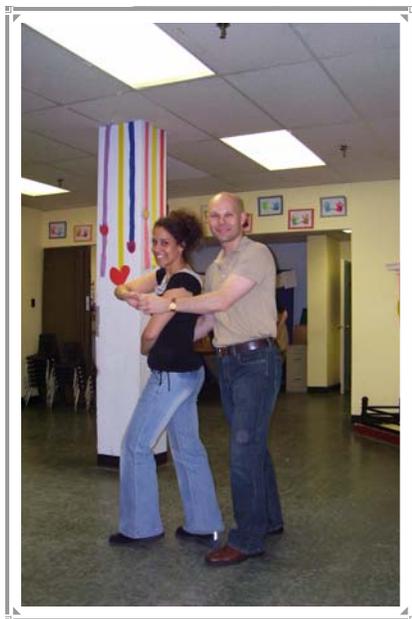
The 1:30 Intermediate class is honing their lead/follow connections. Arthur had us re-discover the cross-body lead with a turn by providing us with several variations.

To the Beginner classes, we know that you're eager to advance quickly, however, please take your time and enjoy your beginner proc-

ess. All your Intermediate and Advanced steps depend on those basic steps becoming second nature to you. And those basic steps certainly don't have to be danced basically. Make sure to ask me to dance if you see me on the dance floor.

And like any class, remember to reserve a little time for homework. 😊

Student Corner



Beginner 1 & the Sweet-heart turn @ Trinity



Action sequence with the Int.2 class

Students are invited to submit their salsa stories or ideas for this corner.

thisbusinessofdancemusic@yahoo.ca

Colour, full-size pics available. Email me.



Int-Advanced @ Trinity



Salsa Picante Dance Company

Instructor: Arthur Ga
E-mail: salsamambotero@yahoo.com
Tel: 416-728-2089

Instructor: Eloisa Tobias
Tel: 416-562-3664

Web: www.salsapicantedanceco.com

"Learning to dance should always be fun. It's a great way to meet many wonderful people and a fun form of exercise and self expression. It can change your life."

- Arthur Ga

Do you want to add some spice to your life? Salsa Picante Dance Co. is just the place for you! Come and experience with us the wonderful world of Salsa dancing!

For more information on Salsa Picante Dance Co. or to join our distribution list, please email:

Instructor: Arthur Ga
E-mail: salsamambotero@yahoo.ca

To add your salsa news, stories or opinions to our content, please email:

Editor/Writer: lyw
E-mail: thisbusinessofdancemusic@yahoo.ca
For more info on lyw & lyw services visit:
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Class Schedule 2006

(Check website for updated session details)

Location: Trinity St Paul 427 Bloor Street West (just west of Spadina)

New Cycle starts this Friday, May 26

Intermediate II 7-8pm
Beginner 8-9pm
Salsa Picante Dance Co. Salsa Social Dance Practice (TBA-tentative)

New Cycle starts Saturday, June 10

Beginner 12:30-1:30pm
Beginner-Intermediate 12:30-1:30pm
Intermediate II continues 1:30-2:30pm
Intermediate III continues 2:30-1:30pm
Hip Hop (TBA -tentative)