



"Leyenda" Made Easy

by [Steve Eckels](#)

For many years the great classical Spanish masterpieces of Isaac Albéniz have been out of reach for recreational guitarists. These beautiful pieces have been the province of only those with much training and ability. Finally, two great pieces, "Leyenda" and "Granada", are available through my book [Fingerstyle Classics Made Easy](#) (21089BCD). Students who gain confidence and ability through these arrangements will find them nice stepping-stones to the full concert

versions should they desire to learn them.

The arrangement of "Leyenda" retains most of the form of the original, but has been transposed to the key of A-minor to take advantage of the open position. This piece is fun to learn because it takes advantage of the guitar's natural characteristics, or in other words it is "guitaristic". The composer, Isaac Albéniz is considered the greatest of the Spanish "nationalistic" composers. As a nationalist, he wanted to portray the feeling or essence of Spain. He did this by emulating the Spanish guitar style in his piano compositions.

There are just a couple of preliminaries to review that will make learning the piece quite easy. First, review the natural note scale in open position. Play it using your thumb only. Here are the string and fret locations starting from the low E string:

013/023/023/02/013/013

Notice that the open string is played in each case. Also notice that strings 6, 2 and 1 are the same - 013. Strings 5 and 4 are also the same -023. The third string is unique -02. If you are not already practicing this scale, you should know it inside and out; it should flow like water. When it does you will find that everything is easier.

Let's do a preliminary exercise with the right hand. There is a picking pattern that continues throughout the whole piece that is part of what gives the song its identity. The pattern consists of an alternation between the thumb, which plays a bass melody, and the middle finger which plays a repeating treble note or "drone". The best way to warm up for this piece is to practice the picking pattern without the distraction of the left hand. Begin by alternating the thumb (*pulgar p*) on the second string, and the middle finger (*medio m*) fixed on the first string. Then follow this string pattern, and make up your own:

21212121,31313131,41414141,51515151,61616161 etc.

To create a variation, try using the index finger and the ring finger to play the drone on the first string.

Now that we are warmed up, learn the melody with the thumb. My suggestion is to memorize it. Start with only one page and learn another page another day. Once you can play the melody with your thumb, add the drone with finger of your choice.

Finally, I would direct your attention to measure 25. In my view, this is the only measure that merits extra work. The measure begins with the full F barre chord configured 133211. The fingering for this chord uses the pinky on the fourth string, third fret. The trick here is to *leave the pinky down* for beat two and replace it again for beats five and six. When you reach this page, start with this measure and when you have it, reward yourself with the rest of the page.

I am pleased to give you the opportunity to enjoy this masterpiece, and encourage you to check out the others in *Fingerstyle Classics Made Easy*.

Sincerely,
Steve Eckels

Listen to [Leyenda.mp3](#)!



Leyenda

Isaac Albeniz (1860-1909)
arranged by Steve Eckels

♩=102

A

Am

Musical notation for measures 1-3. The first system shows a treble clef with a melody of eighth notes and a guitar accompaniment with fret numbers 0, 2, 3, 0, 2, 3. A double bar line with a slash is in the middle. The second system continues the melody and accompaniment.

Musical notation for measures 4-6. Measure 4 starts with a first ending bracket. Measure 5 has a second ending bracket. Measure 6 has a **B** chord symbol above it. The guitar accompaniment includes a triplet in measure 5 and a sequence of notes 0, 2, 3, 0, 3, 1 in measure 6.

Musical notation for measures 7-9. Measure 7 starts with a first ending bracket. Measure 8 has a double bar line with a slash. Measure 9 ends with a double bar line. The guitar accompaniment has fret numbers 0, 2, 0, 2, 3, 0 in measure 7 and 2, 3, 0, 2, 3, 2 in measure 9.

Musical notation for measures 10-12. Measure 10 starts with a second ending bracket. Measure 11 has a double bar line with a slash. Measure 12 ends with a double bar line. The guitar accompaniment has fret numbers 0, 0, 0, 0, 0, 0 in measure 10 and 3, 0, 2, 3, 0, 2 in measure 12.

C Am

12

0 3 0 3 0 1 0 3 0 1

0 5 6 3 5 1 0

0 5 6 3 5 1 0

1. 2.

15

3 0 0 1 0 3 0 0 1 0

3 0 0 1 0 0 0 0 3

D E

17

0 0 0 0 0 0

0 2 3 0 2 2

E Am

19

0 0 0 0 0 0

0 0 0 0 0 0

* may substitute B as the drone

23

F

0 0 0 0 0 0 | 0 0 0 0 0 0 | 1 1 1 1 1 1

0 2 3 0 2 3 | 0 2 3 0 2 3 | 3 0 2 3 3

26

Dm E

1 1 1 1 1 1 | 0 0 0 0 0 0 | 0 0 0 0 0 0

0 2 3 0 0 2 | 2 3 0 2 2 | 2 3 0 2 2

30

F/E

F E

0 0 0 0 0 0 | 2 2 | 0 0 0 0 0 0 | 0 0 0 0 0 0

3 5 2 3 3 | 2 2 | 2 3 0 2 3 | 2 3 0 2 3

34

0 0 0 0 0 0 | 0 0 0 0 0 0 | 0 0 0 0 0 0

0 2 3 0 2 3 | 0 2 3 0 2 3 | 0 2 3 0 3 1

37

E F/E

0 0 0 0 0 0
2 2 3 0 2
0 2 2 3 0 2

0 0 0 0 0 0
3 3 0 2 3
0 3 3 0 2 3

0 2 2 3 0 2

41

E

0 0 0 0 0 0
2 2 3 1 3
0 2 2 3 1 3

0 0 0 0 0 0
2 3 1 3
0 2 3 1 3

0 0 0 0 0 0
2 3 1 3
0 2 3 1 3

rit.

44

E

arm 12
muted -----

12-13-10-12-7

5-6-3-5-0

0 2 3 0 2 2
0 2 3 0 2 2