

## Purpose and Tradition

Each raga is meant for a specific time of day during a specific season. Our set work *Rag Desh* is meant to be played at night during the monsoon (rainy) season. It's meant to give a feeling of romance and devotion.

Indian music is taught through the oral tradition—listening and playing by ear.

# Rag Desh

Three different versions

The main vocabulary you must know for this song:

**Alap and Gat**

**Rag, Tala and Tan**

**Sitar**

**Tambura**

**Tabla**

Saranjii and Esraj (or Indian violin)

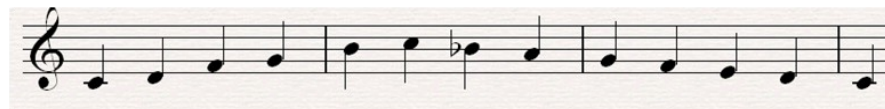
Bansuri (or bamboo flute or Indian flute)

Version	Instruments * = main melody	Structure	Extra points
<b>Live Version</b> (Anoushka Shankar—sitar)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sitar*</li> <li>2 tabla</li> <li>Tambura drone</li> </ul>	<p><b>Alap</b>—slow, no pulse, free time (sitar + drone only) improvised</p> <p><b>Gat 1</b> - steady pulse, faster, tabla provides a definite pulse, more rhythmic, melody is composed and more developed and is louder. Fast scale passages appear here (these are called tans)</p> <p><b>Gat 2</b>— a bit faster</p>	In the alap you can hear strumming, plucking and bending of notes on the sitar
<b>Vocal Version</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Voice*</li> <li>Sarod (small sitar)</li> <li>Sarang (bowed strings)</li> <li>Tambura drone</li> <li>Pakhawaj (large drum)</li> <li>Cymbals</li> <li>Tabla</li> </ul>	<p><b>Alap</b>— Sarangi and then singer <b>improvise</b> a melody based on the rag in free time</p> <p><b>Bhajan</b>—like a gat but with a singer, the tabla join in and tempo gradually increases. This section is a <b>fixed composition</b>—a song that has been worked out before and so is mostly un-improvised.</p>	<p>Voice uses lots of vibrato, scoops up to notes and slides (portamento = vocal slide)</p> <p>Vocal part more elaborate, lots of trills and portamentos. Hand cymbals used towards end.</p>
<b>Studio Version</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Bansuri* (bamboo flute)</li> <li>Esraj (bowed string)</li> <li>Tambura drone</li> <li>Tabla</li> </ul>	<p><b>Alap</b>—slow, no pulse. Tambura drone starts. Bansuri and esraj <b>improvise</b> using the rag</p> <p><b>Gat 1</b> - steady pulse, faster, tabla provides a definite pulse, more rhythmic, melody is composed and more developed and is louder. Fast scale passages appear here (these are called tans)</p> <p><b>Gat 2</b>— lots faster.</p>	In gat 2 the tabla plays fat complicated rhythm. Melody is more structured here and made up of runs of the raga.

## How are elements used?

### There are three main layers in Indian music:

**Melody**—based on the **rag** and played on sitar or other pitched instrument, or sung. These pieces are all based on the same rag—you need to learn it off be heart and be able to write it down in notation!



**Drone**—can be one or two notes, traditionally played on a tambura (tanpura) but often electronic nowadays

**Rhythm**—a repetitive, cyclic rhythmic pattern called a **tala** played on the tabla

### Structure

Each version has the same basic structure:

**Alap**—introduces the rag by **improvising** in a slow section with no pulse (i.e. it is meterless) and no tabla.

**Gat**—tabla start to play the **tala**, tempo increases and a pulse is introduced. The main melody in the Gat section is usually **composed** i.e. the performers have worked it out beforehand, and it is often quite fast and complex compared to the alap (also, other instruments often improvise around the fixed melody). The Gat sections often speeds up too.