Melodic improvisation – introducing tāns

As we have already seen, improvisation is at the heart of Indian music and in a performance of North Indian classical music by masters, such as Pandit Ravi Shankar (1920 – 2012) the majority of the performance would have been improvised.

One of the ways in which a melody can be improvised is by interspersing it with tāns, which are simply fast passages that can be both fixed or made up on the spot. Of course, they must observe the rules of the rāg that is being performed, including, for example, they must contain only the svar that are present in the particular rāg that you are performing.

Learn all seven tāns provided. Note that all seven tāns given to you in Indian Takeaway – Rāg and Tāl Basics start on mātrā one or the sam but his is not the case with all tāns.

Advice to ‘take away’: Similar to learning a new musical instrument, practice the various tans slowly in order to ensure you can play them accurately.