

# How Architecture Helped Music Evolve in India

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## Abstract

In India, architecture has played a principle role in the evolution of music, mainly through the design of sacred and performance spaces that influenced acoustics, musical styles, and traditions. The places we see today as a place of worship was also in-fact used as a hub for cultural and musical performance. Over time with the use of different type of materials and different styles of building, the music throughout India has evolved to suit the space its being played in. From the pillared halls we see in temples which were designed to host music and dance performances allowed the rich, resonant sound of musical instruments to carry over large spaces, this influenced how the srutis (keys) and the raags (a collection of pitches) were structured with slower tempos and melodic styles, to the darbar halls (courtrooms) of the Mughal and Rajput palaces were the key centers for Hindustani classical music. Fast forward to today's scenario concert halls in Mumbai, Delhi, Bangalore have impacted the evolution of contemporary Indian music, depicting how architecture from ages ago has been influenced by cultural landscapes and music around it and vice versa.

**Keywords:** Indian architecture, Temple acoustics, Architectural acoustics, Indian music.

## 1. Introduction

India a land of diverse culture has an amazing history on the evolution of instruments over time with the architecture evolving around it till this day.

India's grand temples, mosques, churches, and royal palaces are more than just architectural marvels. These spaces have served as historical hubs for artistic expression, including music. The interplay between these structures and the music performed within them is essential to comprehending the development of Indian music. The acoustics of these diverse spaces, determined by factors such as size, roof height, materials, and openness, shaped the way sound traveled. This, in turn, influenced the types of instruments and musical styles that thrived in each environment. This relationship between architecture and music shaped both the instruments and musical styles that emerged.

Indian temples, with their open courtyards and sacred sanctums, provided ideal acoustic environments for rhythmic complexity and percussive instruments like the tabla and mridangam. Conversely, the tall, resonant interiors of churches, introduced during the colonial era, were well-suited for slower, harmonic melodies played on organs and harmoniums. Similarly, the grand Mughal and Rajput palaces, with their expansive halls and open-air courtyards, fostered the development of both intricate classical music and lively folk performances.

The intimate relationship between Indian architecture and its diverse music traditions is evident in how the physical characteristics of performance spaces influenced not only the styles of music but also the very essence of the musical forms that emerged within each context. This paper delves into how the interplay of architectural design and musical practice shaped the evolution of Indian music over time.