

# PANDIT HARI PRASAD CHAURASIA



Pt. Chaurasia was born in Allahabad, India. He trained as a wrestler until one day he picked up a bansuri. That single event changed the entire course of his life and the history of music. He then blossomed under the tutelage of maestros like **Raja Ramji, Pt. Bholanath and finally Guru Annapoorna Devi, the daughter of the famous Ustad Allauddin Khan, the sister of Ustad Ali Akbar Khan.**

As a world-renowned virtuoso of the Indian bansuri, Pt. Chaurasia has delighted and enthralled audiences around the world with his unique mastery of the North Indian bamboo flute (bansuri), his versatility and inimitable style. He is one of the busiest and most sought-after contemporary musicians in the world today.

He is a flutist extraordinaire. His unparalleled mastery over the *bansuri* has won him the highest acclaim across the globe. His life's mission is to globally popularize the *bansuri* (**Krishna's Flute**) and make its sounds and melodies as immortal as Lord Krishna himself. His dream - the establishment of gurukul styles of schools throughout the world to accomplish his mission.

Pt. Chaurasia has received numerous awards and honors, some of which are: **Padma Vibhushan (2000)** by the Government of India, the 2nd highest civilian award; Hafiz Ali Khan Award for Outstanding Contributions to Indian Classical Music (2000), Rajiv Gandhi Ekta Award (1999), Kalidas Samman (1999), Padma Bhushan (1992), National Award by the Sangeet Natak Academy, Maharashtra Puraskar, Konarak Samman, Honorary citizenship of the City of Baltimore, and Proclamation of July 25 as Hari Prasad Chaurasia Day in San Francisco.

Pt. Chaurasia represents a confluence of many influences, Eastern and Western, vocal and instrumental. As a musician, he is a rare combination of innovator and traditionalist. He has significantly expanded the expressive possibilities of the classical North Indian flute playing. Through uncanny breath control and his unique, masterful blowing techniques, he has been able to adapt the fast tempo of the *jod* and *jhala* to the flute. Immensely popular not only in his native India but worldwide, he is one of the very few classicists who have made a conscious effort to reach out and expand his audience throughout the world.

He is acknowledged to be the greatest living master of the *bansuri* (the North Indian bamboo flute). Pt. Chaurasia has performed throughout the world, winning acclaim from varied audiences and fellow musicians including the late **Lord Yehudi Menuhin and Jean Pierre Rampal**. He has served as the featured artist in festivals of India, England, United States, and Russia.

Pt. Chaurasia's musical repertoire also extends beyond North Indian Classical music to Indian folk and popular music and Western music. He has composed music for many Indian films including "Silsila" which, in collaboration with Pt. Shiv Kumar Sharma, was a platinum disc in India.

Equally impressive was his experimental album "Eternity", which incorporated many Western elements alongside North Indian art music.

He has also collaborated with Western artists and groups from John McLaughlin's Shakti to Ian Anderson's Jethro Tull, to George Harrison, Mickey Hart, Jan Garbarek, Egberto Gismonti, Larry Coryell, to the Bay Area based saxophonist George Brooks and others, adding to his international appeal and widespread popularity. He has toured the world, touching on almost every continent. He has hundreds of audio, video, and CD recordings to his credit.