***Capriccio Espagnol***

*Capriccio espagnol*, [Op](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Opus_number). 34, is the common Western title for a five movement [orchestral suite](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Orchestral_suite), based on [Spanish](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Spain) folk melodies, composed by the [Russian](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Russia) composer [Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nikolai_Rimsky-Korsakov) in 1887. It received its premiere on 31 October 1887, in St. Petersburg, performed by the Imperial Orchestra conducted by the composer.

The work has five movements, divided into two parts comprising the first three and the latter two movements respectively.

The first movement, Alborada, is a festive and exciting dance, typically from traditional [Asturian music](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Music_of_Asturias#Songs) to celebrate the rising of the sun. It features the clarinet with two solos, and later features a solo violin with a solo similar to the clarinet's.

The second movement, Variazioni, begins with a melody in the [horn](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/French_horn) section. Variations of this melody are then repeated by other instruments and sections of the orchestra.

The third movement, Alborada, presents the same [Asturian](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Asturias) dance as the first movement. The two movements are nearly identical, in fact, except that this movement has a different instrumentation and [key](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Key_%28music%29).

The fourth movement, Scena e canto gitano ("Scene and [Gypsy](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Romani_%28people%29) song") opens with five [cadenzas](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cadenza) — first by the horns and [trumpets](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Trumpet), then solo violin, [flute](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Flute), [clarinet](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Clarinet), and [harp](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Harp) — played over [rolls](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Drum_roll) on various [percussion instruments](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Percussion_instrument). It is then followed by a dance in triple time leading [*attacca*](https://en.wiktionary.org/wiki/attacca) into the final movement.

The fifth and final movement, Fandango asturiano, is also an energetic dance from the [Asturias](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Asturias) region of northern Spain. The piece ends with an even more rousing statement of the *Alborada* theme.

The piece is often lauded for its orchestration, which features a large percussion section and many special [techniques](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Category%3AMusical_performance_techniques) and [articulations](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Category%3AArticulations_%28music%29), such as in the fourth movement when the violinists, violists, and cellists are asked to imitate guitars (the violin and viola parts are marked "quasi guitara")

A complete performance of the *Capriccio* takes approximately 16 minutes.

**Resources:**

[Rimsky Korsakov Capriccio Espagnol Op 34 Berliner Phil Dir Zubin Mehta YouTube](https://youtu.be/Lh6mDL-VwYw?si=QD1S5apU68_kq22h)

[Rimski-Korsakov – Capriccio Espagnol – Baltic Sea Youth Philharmonic](https://youtu.be/QdoNgY-7Fks?si=39jgVJ0WTxi4U7H4)

[Rimskij-Korsakow: Capriccio espagnol ∙ hr-Sinfonieorchester ∙ Pablo Heras-Casado](https://youtu.be/X_HSpn3tE_A?si=NGzlSg0KEyi37FdI)

[Ballet Alhambra "Capricho Español" de Rimski-Kórsakov](https://youtu.be/v-jmJzIm-7E?si=roQEcV8ePZYYzqlZ)