

In times gone by, when shepherds still lived with the sheep out in the fields, they often used to entertain themselves with home-made flutes, but also the animals listened to the sound of the instrument. The Kaval belongs to the category of those simple folksy wind instruments. Playing is a challenge though, as the Kaval is blown without any mouthpiece on the upper end of the tube, like the Turkish Ney.

Kavals are played in Armenia, Turkey, Bulgaria and a few other Eastern European nations. The construction and scale of the flutes differ, depending on the country. The narrow tube, between 30 and 80 cm, is often carved from plum, cherry or box wood. There are 7-8 playing holes and some additional holes for fine tuning. Nowadays the Kaval is also sold as an easy-to-play wooden overtone flute — similar to a recorder — providing a scale of overtones.