



SPOTLIGHT

# Loafers

In a country like Bangladesh, which has unbearably hot and humid weather conditions during most of the year, comfort often trumps fashion, especially when it comes to footwear.

The muddy surroundings during monsoon also act as encouragement to switch to washable footwear alternatives that don't look too casual. For the longest time, sandals and flip-flops were go-to goods for finishing off

Although the first ever pair of loafers was developed near the mid-nineteenth century in London, the trend has only recently seeped into our country and is currently spreading like wildfire. Clearly, this was long overdue. Loafers are practical. They are stylish, comfortable and classy. The most significant advantage of owning a pair of loafers is that they can be paired up

with almost any outfit. You can choose to dress up or dress down and, add a common pair of loafers to complete your look – these shoes rarely fail to adapt. In terms of comfort, cloth loafers lie between sandals and sneakers. They are easy to slip on, have flexible soles and refrain from giving you blisters during the break-in period.

Loafers are essential for men who wish to maximise the utility of a minimalistic wardrobe. Investing in three to four good pairs of loafers can serve to complete several different outfits and also last for about a year at least. They can be worn to classes, hangouts, parties or casual workplaces. In fact, you can also don a pair of high-end loafers on for semi-formal or formal occa-

sions such as weddings, black-tie events or proms.

Two to three years ago, loafers were not available in most Bangladeshi shoe stores. People who owned a few pairs usually acquired them from abroad. Now, not only are these shoes widely available within the country, the products are also of great quality and sold at an affordable price.

Availability of men's loafers has reached an all-time peak in Bangladesh as the country experienced a massive influx of shoe stores over the past few years which both locally produce and import to meet shoe-shoppers' demands. Bata, Apex, Leatherex, Jennys, Hush Puppies, Bay Emporium, Mustafa Mart, Fortuna – these are some of the more popular shoe stores which can cater to your loafer needs. The price range for loafers in these stores hovers between BDT 2000 to BDT 7000, depending on the quality and brand. The type and quality of these loafers vary between washable, cloth ones to high-maintenance leather ones.

To find a great variety of loafers under one roof, it is wise to shop from local malls such as Bashundhara City, Metro Shopping Mall, Rapa Plaza, Jamuna Future Park, to name a few. But, the best bargains can only be found in New Market or Elephant Road, although your quality-inspection and haggling skills have to be top-notch in order to hustle in these areas. Apart from these options, loafers by high-end brands can also be bought from both local and international online stores, albeit prices are likely to be higher including shipping/delivery costs.

Women's loafers have not gained as much popularity in Bangladesh yet and hence, the only sure fire way

