

The Curious Case of the Kurta

Eid is fast approaching and of course, a new kurta is a must buy for all of us men. Well, let me tell you this, by doing so, you are laying down the seeds to adding versatility to your wardrobe whose fruit you will enjoy for the many years to come. Have a wedding to attend? About to leave for your Jumma prayer? Or, have a dinner party to attend at a fancy restaurant? Or, want something relaxed to wear at home? Kurtas will fill in for the never-ending events you will have to attend. If you're thinking that kurtas are part of the stagnant fashion trends, think again.

Coming from a Persian word meaning a collarless shirt, the ancient form of this attire is said to be spread throughout Bengal when the Aryans first came. Over the many centuries that followed, kurtas have gone through countless transformations including experimentation with the fabric and design. At first, kurtas came mostly in cotton and khadi, while silk kurtas were mostly worn by the rich, indicative of their wealth.

Over the years, kurtas have been designed in ways which go beyond our imagination. Mehruz Munir's recent Maharajan collection is a testimony to the fact that you can mould kurtas into shapes and designs to as far as your imagination goes. One of his collections showed the epitome of masculinity as he merged Pathani Kurta with a bold touch of Western to it.

Having been popularised by poets and scholars in the court of the Mughals, kurtas have taken up a range of styles according to the various regions the people belonged to. The Nawabs of Lucknow brought the Chikan Kurta to the trend which had interlacing designs and came in lightweight materials; which was perfect for the warm, humid weather.



The Sherwani Kurtas tilt far towards 'gorgeous' as they have lots of embellishments and embroideries, nudging you to wear them on occasions such as weddings.

A distinct style of kurta which has seemed to catch popularity amongst many here in Bangladesh is the Hyderabad Kurta. Its distinct keyhole neck stands out with lots of thread work near the collar region encouraging it to be worn on casual occasions.

Nowadays, many upcoming designers have introduced a new and unique touch to their kurtas by adding floral prints on the other side of their sleeves and collar band in addition to hefty gold buttons to allow you to stand out. The floral print on the sleeves add an appealing contrast to your look when folded up.

The silhouette of kurtas is such that you can wear them with pyjamas, churidars, chinos and even jeans for a more contemporary look. In addition, sandals and Oxford shoes work really well with outfits donned with kurtas. People who are confident about their style wear even sports sneakers with their kurtas.

Kurtas have added variety to the fashion industry as popular fashion designers

throughout the world have tested their imagination and brought out magic with stunning handwork, embroidery, block prints, stone works and merging western and eastern styles. When you don a kurta, your style knows no bound; so, the next time someone says that kurtas have become stagnant, sport one of your favourite ones and show them how much you can do with a classic style staple as such.

By Ali Sakhi Khan

Photo: LS Archive/Sazzad Ibne Syed/Almira



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