

LS PICK

# The wonders of Doja Market

For fashion-lovers and aspiring designers out there, the ever-bustling hub of inspiration on a budget has always been Doja Market, opposite of the main gate of Dhaka College near New Market. Thanks to our flourishing readymade garments industry, the latest trends will first hit these crammed stalls before venturing out into the world and finally making its way onto the shelves of well-known brands in the West. An in-depth research into this apparel wonderland reveals its quirks and perks.

## THE BRANDS

Being one of the largest exporters of western brands means samples of almost every western brand wear can be found here. Scrolling through the alleys inside the market, you can pick your favourites from brands like Dorothy Perkins and H&M. While you might be sceptical about the quality, more often than not, these brands end up here for the most trivial of reasons.

Missed buttons, wrong tags and misspelt words are a few common causes that turn them into 'rejects'. Scan the apparel for defects to ensure quality and if there are no flaws, you know you have found yourself a good deal.

Secondly, haggle. One of the perks of buying from these stalls is that prices are subject to one's ability to bargain and spot a decent buy.

But what exactly do you buy? Well, that printed crop top you saw on Vogue last week? It's probably here somewhere in the racks between the georgette Mango shirts, Esmara tops, and Primark t-shirts. From the trendiest Terra nova floral prints to the chic Mohito striped shirts, they have it all!

With cold-shoulders, off-shoulders, pant-



suits and denim jackets, this is indeed the ultimate heaven for fashionistas. In fact, it is not uncommon to see piles of Denim Co jeans at the stalls. In various shades of blue, you could get them for as low as Tk 350. Ripped jeans, high-waisted jeans and faded designs are a few of the variations available.

The stalls are not limited to just women! The little ones can adorn themselves in European brands such as Zara kids, Yigga and even Japanese giants like Okaidi. With the entire second floor being dedicated to men, clothes from Gap, Pull and Bear, and Zara Men more or less dominate as the Doja Market offers funky graphic t-shirts, stylish shirts and comfy hoodies. From trendy pullovers to heavy overcoats, these are perfect for winters abroad, thus making these stalls one of the most visited shops in the city.

## LOCAL LOOK ALIKE BRANDS

While there are always the 'high-end rejects' to choose from, plenty of counterfeits are

also available with almost the same designs and patterns. These are basically lookalikes of the foreign brands, and while prices are slightly lower, they are less likely to have defects. However, do check the quality first as it is mainly made for the local market and tend to be of poorer quality in terms of fabric.

Whether you are looking for a new pair of slim fit jeans or a bold graphic t-shirt for casual wear, these local counterfeits can easily be a good alternative. So, while you may have difficulty finding a crop top or an off-shoulder dress of these brands, there is always a plethora of shirts, long skirts and harem-pants to pick from. Whether it is the famous Burberry checks or the classic Chanel designs, the ditto copies can fool even the experts!

The counterfeits are hardly limited to just foreign products. You can find copies of local giants such as Yellow and Ecstasy, and even smaller fashion boutiques. The kurtis

and shalwar kameezes found are often the same colour combinations and design patterns as the local giants, although there are slight variations in the cuts. One of the major problems however is the fact that the finishing is often not as polished or streamlined as the high-end local brands, but it is surely worth the risk for the price difference!

For men, replicas of Cats Eye shirts and Occult t-shirts are readily available on the second floor. You could also find fake leather belts, which are perfect for regular wear. In fact, denim brands such as Rm denim, which is only for the local markets, not only copies Denim Co but almost tricks you into thinking they are of the same



quality. So, take pride! The wonders of Doja Market not only meet worldwide standards but silently set them as well!

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