

When we think of October, besides the obvious never-ending heat and unforgiving bouts of rain, there is also Durga Puja to look forward to. The preparations start a month earlier with the changing architecture of the city, not just around the temples but everywhere else with mandaps (dias/stages) being erected and a festive feel sealing the air. And festivals in Dhaka can only mean one thing! Where to go and what to wear... Another reason to go out and make your wallets lighter and your shopping bags heavier! Here at Star Lifestyle, we make your life easier by providing you with an accommodating guide on when to wear what and where to be for this year's Durga Puja. Enjoy reading!

The must-have fashion planner for

DURGA PUJA

LIFESTYLE



DAY 8 MAHA ASHTAMI

In Bangladesh, the eighth day of Durga Puja, especially the mornings, are usually the busiest because most worshippers flock to the mandaps to offer anjali. For most Hindus, it comes down to tradition, customs and even location when it comes to choosing which temple or mandap to go to. Some of the more popular places to visit are, Dhakeshwari Temple, Shidheshwari Temple, Banani Puja Mandap, Ramna Kali Mandir, Kalabagan Puja Mandap to name a few. If you are looking for that extra special attraction, you can partake in the largest Kumari Puja organised nationwide in the capital at the Ram Krishna Mission. In the simplest of terms, Kumari Puja is the worshipping of a young pre-pubescent girl who is chosen as the manifestation of the devi (divine female energy) for Durga Puja. In households such as mine, observing the Kumari Puja was not an obligation, but rather, an

attraction that slowly grew on me over the years. There's an air of charm, mysticism and overall excitement when the Kumari is finely revealed after the wait. Baskets of shredded flowers and leaves are distributed amongst the crowd of hundreds of hands. A sense of unity envelops the massive grounds as hundreds of people chant the mantras in unison and then put the petals back into the basket. The beats of the dhaak, and shonkho calls come to a pause as worshippers take this moment to not only make their offerings, but also pray for healthy lives and prosperity.

The best outfits for the morning prayers are usually saris. You can choose to go all out in the traditional colours of white and golden, or take the more contemporary route and pair white with a bright 'in-your-face' colour like fuchsia, violet or something similar in the same colour group. Whatever you wear, make sure

the fabric is breathable, as it gets super-hot at the mandaps during the day so say hello to your new best friends, khadi, cotton, taant and kota! Another nice alternative is to go for white chikankari shalwar kameez with a contrasting dupatta like a benarasi.

High collared top with a stylish sleeve of your choice and matching khussas, flats or sandals, there's no way you can go wrong.

Keeping the Bengali femme in mind, keep your make-up minimal, light and longstanding (again the rising temperatures); simple eyes, or just some kohl, glossed lips preferably, and don't even think about stepping out of the house without a teep!

Keep your hair up in a messy bun, or with a decorative pin and do add some fresh white flowers to it for all those aesthetic photos that you need to take, edit and share for weeks to come!

DAY 7 SAPTAMI

Durga Puja usually kicks off on the seventh day when the deity's sculpture is brought in. There usually is less crowd or traffic at the mandaps, so maybe it's best to start off from the evening of Saptami, keeping in mind that it has a more mellow, calm and soothing aura. This gives you a chance to check out the smaller mandaps in your localities and elsewhere. With an overall casual and more chilled out vibe, welcome the festivities with the yellowish spectrum of colours (mustard, orange) and maroon. Attire wise, go for a more fusion look, saving the statement outfits for Ashtami and Nabami. Mustard coloured kurtis, scarves, and tops with a play on the sleeves, jamdani saris, tie-dyed, block and even Tangail saris work well. Skirts, a nice yellow cape with maroon jeggings, flared pants also go great with batik tops in different cuts and styles.

