



of you hopping mandaps!

Pack on the glam because this is the last day of Durga Puja. Play up your monotone sari with a contrasting embellished blouse and bring out the silks, tussars and muslins for evening wear or if you prefer three

pieces, go for anarkalis and shararas. A personal favourite of mine is donning my grandmother's plain red georgette sari with all over golden hajar-buti and golden tassels on the anchal coupled with a white and golden katan blouse. Metallic, dark,

jewelled tones are also great for the evenings. Embrace the more dramatic make-up looks, and go all out with accessories, which also include your hair. Wear chunky earrings, jhumkas and pair it with uncountable colourful glass or thin gold bangles.

## DAY 9 NABAMI

This honestly is the day to party it out like there's no tomorrow, especially as the hours get longer. The mandaps are buzzing as is the neighbourhood and the restaurants; with people decked out to celebrate and attend dinner parties. Basically, the ultimate level of socialisation, which means there's nothing wrong with a little bit of vanity.

This is the best day to also go mandap hopping. As a child, I detested this part the most because it meant being stuck in traffic for hours before getting to the mandap where everything looked the same to me and I would be exhausted and ready to go home even before the clock struck 10! As an adult, the same lack of excitement remained until my late twenties, when, on a whim, one year I decided to tag along with a group of friends to Old Dhaka.

Yes, this is a MUST and do you want to know why?

Because the narrow alleys of Shankhari Bazar and Taantibazar are unrecognisable as successive elevated horizontal stages are constructed in between the alleys, on top of which the deities are kept. The elevated stages also act as passageways; imagine walking under an actual stage only to be greeted by another one a few feet later.

The music, lights, and decorations is a one of a kind unforgettable experience especially for those who usually frequent mandaps on the other side of the city mostly. End the excursion with something from the many delicacies that Old Dhaka offers (Beauty'r Lassi is god-send by the time you are ready to leave).

Keep it tres-chic, but tres-casual for all the mandap hopping outings in comfy, but stylish palazzo or straight pants with the little details at the bottom, paired with a top of your choice. Nothing beats a kurti in bright colours and patterns; or if you want to be a head turner, couple a white stitched kurti with a bold coloured palazzo. Opt for either option with minimal accessories or just one statement piece necklace or earrings like something in silver (anything oxidised or silver is all the rage this year) or matte gold.

Dinner invites or ending the outing with lounging somewhere with a cup of coffee are very common on this day, so make sure to amp up the style quotient with printed palazzos or printed slim pants and a plain kurti or kameez in the same colour with minimal detailing and embroidery. Khussas or comfy flats and sandals are a must to make sure your feet do not give up in the midst

## STYLE COUNCIL



## DAY 10 BIJOY DASHAMI

It is an emotional day for the more pious believers, and traditionally, it starts off with the 'Shidur Khela'- the ritual of married women smearing vermillion on the deity Durga's forehead and feet before smearing it onto other married women's faces as well as young girls who usually join in on the fun, dancing to the music and celebrating the last day.

Truth be told, it goes on even well after the 'Bishorjon'- a great procession in which the clay statues of the deities are ceremoniously immersed into a nearby river or pond, so don't get side-tracked and make sure you get a taste of both. During the procession, the congregation sings emotional songs of farewell. As the statue touches the water, it is said to be symbolic of Durga's return to Mount

Kailasha with Shiva. Because Bijoy Dashami is an array of mixed emotions and the end of the festivities, this is the one day you see everyone dressed in white saris with a red border, jewellery is minimum but the big red teep has to be the focus of the look.

In general, at the mandaps, do keep a look out for a few of the attractions, which not only includes the delicious offerings (bhog), but also dance performances known as 'Dhunuchu Naach' where people dance with incense burners, and is an integral part in rituals.

If possible, join in the fun when people start dancing to the beat of the dhaak!

By Supriti Sarkar

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