



HANDS-ON REVIEW

SAMSUNG A9 INTRODUCES QUAD CAMERAS

The A9 is Samsung's upper mid-tier device trying to show the big boys what's to come. Usually the A series gets all the toned down and handed down goodies from the flagship S series. This time, it is role reversal. Samsung is debuting features via the A series before showing them off on the flagships. Most notably the four camera units and the shockingly bright colours.

PINK?

Yes. This particular shade known as Bubblegum Pink is a strangely attractive gradient along with a blue/yellow version called Lemonade Blue. This seems to be Samsung's attempt at keeping up with the trends. Colour is right now very in once again since the phone wars of the early 2000s. Of course, if you want to blend in with the crowd, go with black.

ARE WE HEADING TO A CAMERA FILLED BACK?

It seems that way. The A9 is the first Samsung device to hit the number 4 in the race for more is better. The Upcoming S10 is rumored to have six. You get the picture, quite literally.

The four cameras are arranged vertically on one corner. From top to bottom, the cameras include an ultra-wide angle 8MP, f/2.4 unit offering 120-degree view. Then there is a 10MP, f/2.4 telephoto unit with 2x optical zoom. There is the 24MP, f/1.7 main camera unit that will be taking the majority of your shots. And finally there is the 5MP unit used specifically for depth sensing and creating craftily highlighted portrait shots.

WHY SO MANY CAMERAS THOUGH?

There is good reason to have all four. Typically, two camera setups include one main camera and the secondary being either a wide-angle lens or a depth sensor unit. With four separate units, you get an option to choose the correct option lens for the type of photo you want to shoot. It is like being at a buffet and having meat, dessert, fish and even a vegan option.



SPECS

Display: 6.3 inches, Full HD+ Super AMOLED, 1080x2220pixels
OS: Android 8.0
CPU: Octa-Core (4x2.2GHz + 4x1.8GHz), Snapdragon660
GPU: Adreno 512
RAM: 6GB
ROM: 64 GB
Camera: Back- 24 MP, f/1.7 (wide), 8 MP, f/2.4 (ultrawide), 10 MP f/2.4 (telephoto), 5 MP, f/2.2 (wide), & Front- 24MP, f/2.0 (wide)
Features: Fingerprint (rear-mounted), accelerometer, gyro, proximity, compass
Battery: 3800mAh
Price: Tk. 49,990/-



Such as the dog in my sample shots who refuses to sit still (all sample photos are online). Pictures are sharp with mostly neutral colours. In case of the dog, the fur shows up well although there is plenty of software sharpening going on that result in slightly blown out details. The hardware of the camera units sound promising but the software is over enthusiastic when processing the images.

DOES THAT MEAN YOU HAVE DIFFERENT, INTERCHANGEABLE LENSES TO CHOOSE FROM LIKE IN A DSLR?

Almost. But not quite. YOU do get different types of shots of the same scene while standing at the same spot. Naturally, the wide-angle will create barrel distortion at the edges where the corners squeeze inwards to accom-

modate more of the peripheral scene. It is also grainier than the main camera images due to the smaller f/2.4 aperture.

CAN YOU WIN CONTESTS WITH THE PICTURES?

The camera has little lag between focusing and snapping. The quick response is appreciated when you need to shoot things quickly.

I was hoping image clarity would match up to at least Samsungs S8 considering the price bracket of the A9. The shots are very good for your usual social media applications though. Just don't expect much clarity of detail when zoomed in.

The front camera is a 24MP f/2.0 unit with fixed focus that does take decent pictures but can get grainy and jittery when the lighting is low. You need to hold it very, very still. In good light though, there is a soothing, softening effect that is good for creating dreamy selfies.

WHAT ABOUT THE USUAL STUFF?

The display is a 6.3 Super AMOLED screen with 1080x2220 resolution. Beautiful screen that has adamantly held off from adopting another trend: the notch. There is none but then there are thick slabs of bezel on top and bottom when these days it is all about minimizing bezels. The screen gives you ample control allowing you to set and adjust individual colour profiles and temperatures to suit your needs. And that always on display featuring the clock and chosen information is a nice touch taken from the flagships.

Power comes from a Snapdragon 660 supported by 6GB of RAM and giving you 64GB of storage space. Eight CPU cores and the Adreno 512 GPU provide hiccup-free performance. It is the era of PUBG and the game performs flawlessly. That happens to be the questions a lot of new smartphone buyers ask me: can they kill each other online without hardware lag?

The phone survived an entire day's worth of heavy usage so no surprises there. Although you PUBG warriors may want to juice up once more before surviving the evening despite the 3800 mAh battery.

WORDS AND PHOTOS:
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Hype worthy smartphone design leaks

ASIF AYON

Smartphone designs are leaked all year round and typically there's little to get hyped about. But given how most phone designs have become an all-glass and notch sandwich, some manufacturers are trying break that cycle. And in that process, we've had many interesting designs pop up in our peripheral vision within the last year. So, maybe it's time to take a look at some of the smartphones that may just be consumer ready in 2019. It is however recommended to take these concept designs with a grain of salt, since they are based on industry insider information, patents filed by the manufacturers.



SAMSUNG S10

Look out for the "hole-punch" display with Samsung's upcoming flagship. The company will announce further details at their February 20 event dubbed Samsung Unpacked. Reports suggest that there will be three different models of the S10 and that there may be a jump in price. There has been a lot of information leaked so far, from TechRadar all the way to Forbes, and trust me there's a lot to catch up on, but the main takeaways are – the new Snapdragon 855 processor, three different screen sizes, an in-screen finger print sensor and a dual, triple or quad-lens rear camera.

GOOGLE PIXEL 3 LITE

Codenamed "Sargo", the Google Pixel 3 Lite made its debut on a YouTube channel in classic Google unveiled fashion. The unboxing video published by Andro News which shared most of the phones details, has since been taken down however. But they reported that the Pixel 3 Lite has the same back camera as the Pixel 3 XL. It will come with a 5.5-inch LCD screen, the new mid-tier Snapdragon 670 chip, 4GB RAM and 32GB storage. The phone will feature a full plastic body and get this, a headphone jack up top as well.



MOTO RAZR V4

The Moto Razr V3 is a revolutionary piece of hardware, and it changed the mobile industry back in its heyday. Its sleek and stylish foldable design is etched in all millennial memories and Lenovo, who now own the Motorola brand, are planning to bring the Razr brand back with modern technologies at the forefront of the engineering. The Razr V4, as it's being called, is said to feature the new foldable screen technology. Motorola were awarded a patent last year on a folding smartphone design and YouTube channel TECH CONFIGURATIONS were quick to make the concept designs that you see floating around the internet today.

NOKIA 9 PUREVIEW

HMD Global, the owners of the Nokia brand, deserve praise for the brand's resurgence. However, it seems like they left their biggest play for 2019. 91mobile and insider information from Nokia's own distribution channel suggests that the penta-camera Android smartphone could make its debut well before Mobile World Congress 2019, which starts from February 25, 2019. Tech publication T3, have reported that codename Beyond, or otherwise known as the Nokia 9 PureView, will feature an in-display finger print sensor, a 5.9-inch QHD display, 8GB RAM, a Snapdragon 845 processor and the Carl Zeiss five camera setup.



AMARROOM.COM, A NEW ONLINE HOTEL BOOKING SITE IS HERE

Amarroom.com, an online hotel booking portal exclusively for Bangladesh, is now available tourist to book their rooms. The site will give you a wide range of options with exclusive discount, hotel photos, and available amenities of the hotels. You can also see the 360-degree view of the hotel and rooms. Moreover, it provides 'lowest rate guarantee' for the amarroom.com special hotels.

A bug on Twitter leaves Android users exposed



Twitter has accidentally revealed the private tweets of some Android users'. Twitter's "Protect your Tweets" feature allowed people to use Twitter covertly. However, due to a bug on the social media site, these private tweets were made public. This bug has only been brought to site's attention on January 14, 2019. Twitter has issued a public state-

ment informing the affected users to re-enable the "Protect your Tweets" feature. This feature was disabled on a number of Twitter accounts and those accounts can now access the feature given that the situation has been resolved on Twitter's end. However, Twitter does not have a full list of affected users and the number of users with exposed tweets can even be greater.

While, this was a huge oversight on Twitter's part and as a result of which, this bug has existed ever since November 3, 2014; Twitter has assured users that, after this incident, they have resolved issues relating to the "Protect your Tweets" feature and other associated bugs.

ASIF AYON