

The six yard

NEW

The sari has outdone and redefined itself to the point that the saga of this attire has now transgressed beyond being just quintessentially Bengali. Designers, connoisseurs, and trend followers all unanimously vouch that apparently a task as simple as keeping track of the changing fashion scene of saris can often prove to be a challenge.



Sari styles change every calendar year — undergoing major experimentation with fabrics, patterns, weaves and drapes. There were phases, and once the sari was plain; considered too mundane for spirited women; a phase where the rebels went wild with floral prints, polka dots followed, often flirting with the fine line of being gaudy! And then the monochrome took centre stage — in glorious chiffons, soft silks, and comfortable cottons. And even in these seemingly 'boring' statements, they were all head-turners!

Fast forward many fashion seasons, we see the resurrection of minimalism, and if we may say, one can never go wrong with minimalism. But, that brings up a million-dollar question, does that limit options, perhaps making it borderline 'boring,' as some already say it does?

We say, No!

The British found the diaphanous saris immodest, and when one digs deep into the changing scenes of the colonial age, one sees that our 'colonial masters,' while feeling free to plunder our treasures and cripple the economy, did manage to leave a lasting impression on what and how we wear our garbs.

The pairing of the petty-coat and the blouse are now mainstream with the sari, and when teamed with post-modern myriad drapes (if we can take the liberty of terming them as such), even monochrome sheers dazzle!

A serene hue as subdued as pure white, accentuated by a monochrome vivid red or canary yellow complemented with intricate zari works brilliantly! The colour palette of the anchal takes the cue from the taller-than-usual borders. And so does the blouse.

The tops that accompany a sari are now a fashion statement in itself and has taken many twists and turns since even as late as the 2000s. From its simplest forms, the blouse now borrows from western traditions — halter necks, asymmetric or even off-shoulders. If there is any truly 'East meets West' concept, this would be it.

So, a quick recap, what has changed? Not much. But we are constantly toying with colours often in shades brighter than the dazzling sun; our fabrics are more varied than ever — cotton, to endi, and ceaseless variants of silk. And the drapes — nivi has passed its glory days, and if one hopes to stand apart at a cocktail, improvisation may just be the key.

For over two millennia, the sari in its primitive and evolving forms has been worn by women and men alike. Times changed, and so did the way it was wrapped around our body. Perhaps, it would not be wrong to say that a general style of selecting a sari type, the way it was draped — the whole nine yards — was a means to blend in. Two thousand years later, the same sari works best when one wants to stand apart!

By Mannan Mashhur Zarif



Photo: Sazzad Ibne Sayed
Model: Arpita, Tania
Make-up: Farzana Shakil's Makeover salon
Wardrobe: Niharika Momtaz
Styling: Sonia Yeasmin Isha