

ORNATE

wedding jewellery

designs

The custom of presenting the bride with gold jewellery at a wedding is a century-old tradition, not only is it considered auspicious but also acts as the bride's financial security. Today, jewellers re-make our heritage designs and give them interesting, innovative, and contemporary twists — creating unique design languages that strike chords with modernity.



Jewellery, especially the ones given at weddings, hold special meanings in their intricate designs. Each piece has its own story to tell. The olden 'tikli' (the forehead pendant that had the star and moon designs carved up in red rubies and whitish yellow 'pukhraj' or yellow sapphire stones) promotes prosperity, wealth, and marital bliss. The lover's knot or 'prem fash' designed chain holds its meaning in the name. 'Prem' in Bengali is love, and 'fash' means a grip, so as the name suggests, it is a lover's grip, a treasured design construed in a bangle or chain given to the beloved as a wedding-night gift.

Talking about Bengali jewellery designs, the list is endless. To name a few hand ornaments, you cannot miss the 'agorjaan bala'. It is a solid gold, heavy bangle where the two gold strings are twisted in a 'S' knot. It is a heritage piece of wedding jewellery and with it in the list goes 'golap bala' (rosebud design bangle). 'Poddo chur' otherwise known as 'ratanchur' is a hand jewellery worn by the Bengali brides on the back of the palm and is attached to the finger in beautiful rings.

Statement bangles like 'bauti' is a gold jewellery that is minimalistic in design and can be worn by the brides as everyday ornament. Then there is the graceful bracelet or 'mantasha' — a rich piece of jewellery with its



roots set in the days of the Nawabs and the Khans. This heavy hand bracelet is made of pure gold and designed intricately and is attached to a golden chain and pearl strings as a clasp. The famous 'misridaana churi' is a set of loose light gold bangles worn in dozens, it is designed like sago pearls, hence the name 'daana' or small dots. An antique necklace called 'sita haar' is named after the goddess Sita and is a must-have gold necklace for weddings. This exquisite piece of jewellery is a display of craftsmanship, filigree designs are spread throughout the flat gold strands that is attached to a heavy locket in the middle. When worn it spreads flat on the chest. This gorgeous necklace was a sign of affluence in olden days. The precious layered necklace, 'saath noli haar' or 'saath lohori haar' is a long chain dotted with golden balls caged in cylindrical twirls, is worn in five or seven layers. The most prestigious gold necklace for weddings, this layered piece is a piece of heritage jewellery that is passed on from one generation to the next. It is also known as 'moopchain' in some places. A choker necklace is very popular in Bengali weddings due to its stylish and contemporary design.



This well-crafted piece works wonders with Banarasi saris and adds an extra oomph to the entire wedding ensemble.

The traditional stringed ear rings or 'jhumkas' light up a bride. This classic earring is a perfect combination of fashion and tradition. 'Kaan bala' — a popular jewellery item is an earring, which is shaped in the form of an ear. 'Kaan pasha', on the other hand, is a large gold stud with intricate designs, it is also a fancied gold item for everyday use.

The stringed nose ring or 'nath' is a beautiful nose ornament crafted out of pure gold and attached to a delicate chain that hooks onto the hair. A golden 'nath' is the most charming facial highlight of a traditional Bengali bride. Nose studs like 'bobita phul', 'bakul phul', and 'dhaaner sheesh' are popular design choices as well. Waistband with gold tassels or 'bichhaa' is a beautiful piece of jewellery that can highlight your stunning attire and accentuate the beauty of your waistline and is usually worn by the wealthy.

With the turn of the new century, there has been a strong movement for minimalist weddings where extravagances are being negated at every turn. This includes cutting down on costs that are deemed irrelevant for the future. Many may fear that jewellery may also fall into this category, but rest assured, the case for intricate wedding jewellery will always be as strong as it always has been.

— RBR

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