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Style

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Kani Nazrul

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Warm & EARTHY

MUTED TONES **C**
EARTHY TONES WE LOVE
SUNGLASSES **P8**
SHADES TRENDING THIS SUMMER
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REFRESHMENTS FOR THE HEART AND SOUL
PHOTO: NAYMUL ISLAM
MODEL: ASMA BRISHTI, ANAMIKA
STYLING: DESIGNER IMAM HASSAN
MAKEUP: PARVEZ
WARDROBE: LABEL IMAM HASSAN

#DECOR

5 things to help organise YOUR HOME

Minimalism may be a relatively new trend but organisation and tidiness have never gone out of style. Here are a few things to get you started on the way to a clean, de-cluttered, and well-maintained home.

ENTRYWAY STORAGE BENCHES

Entryways can get cluttered too quickly, too soon. Keys and home slippers can all tarnish the first impression of your home. Entryway benches are not just helpful to sit and put on shoes but those that come with cabinets underneath can help store all the knick-knacks you need without cluttering up visible space.



BASKETS

Quite possibly the best organisational tool ever invented, baskets are not just great to look at, they are also super functional. Coming in all shapes and sizes, these versatile items can be used to store everything from bathroom or kitchen towels to cosmetics on the dresser, and rolled-up yoga and playmats in the gym or playroom.

TRASH AND RECYCLE BINS

An expansive home needs more than



one waste paper basket. Place some strategically around the house, including at the entryway and living room. Go for colours that blend in and do not attract too much attention so that stray litter can be taken care of before it makes its way into your living space.



LABELS

Organised people hold onto jars for reuse in the kitchen. Super organised folks label them. It not only helps to remember what gets placed where making it easier for you but also helps guests and visitors navigate the kitchen without getting confused. Springing for a label maker is enticing but a thriftier option is to go for a paint pen.

LAUNDRY HAMPER ORGANISERS

A chore that takes up a massive amount of

time and copious amounts of energy, doing the laundry is one of the worst woes of grown-up life. Laundry hamper organisers, however, promise to make things much easier. We usually wash laundry in lots of whites, darks, and delicate. Instead of taking additional time to sort clothes before washing, organising them into different organisers as you go is less time-consuming and much more rewarding.

By Munira Fidai

Photo: Collected





#ARTS

Creative people, all under one roof

Get ready to meet the creative virtuosos behind the hyped Dhaka Makers event. They are a thoughtful group of artists and doers, inspired to encourage, foster and promote the creative community. Don't miss out on the chance to meet the visionaries, the innovators, and the artistic trailblazers who are redefining the art scene through their hard work and dedication behind Dhaka Makers.

Maleena Gomez

Maleena Gomez is the Creative Director and Project Lead at Aneemal Studios. She is also the Creative Head for Monno Ceramics and is an accomplished digital artist pursuing her passion for creating merchandise and stationery for 'Bad Girl Nation'.

As an artist and entrepreneur, Maleena realises that finding a platform to express one's emotions through their work is incredibly important. That is why she and her company try to give clients a tailor-made experience to match the client's specific needs.

According to Maleena, the current state of art in general is heavily saturated and somewhat monotonous with smart technological applications taking over. She believes that independent artists bring a unique flavour that sets them apart and gives them the edge they need to compete in the industry.

Mahenaz Chowdhury

Mahenaz Chowdhury is a talented and dedicated artist who has devoted herself to promoting sustainability in the fashion industry. She founded Broqué, an upcycled streetwear brand in Bangladesh, and has been involved in numerous workshops, educational seminars, and film documentaries highlighting the importance of

sustainable clothing practices around the world.

She has worked with national and international organisations to promote eco-friendly and inclusive fashion and has been active in many universities and educational platforms promoting youth activism for sustainable development.

Mahenaz has always championed sustainable fashion. For the better part of the last decade, she has been putting the extra mile for designing creative storytelling workshops to create inclusive safe spaces for artisans of all ages who come from diverse communities all across Bangladesh.

Zafir Huq

Zafir Huq is the COO and Managing Partner of Turn up PR, a public relations firm focused on helping independent artists by giving them a platform to present their work to the masses.

He has worked closely with the arts and entertainment industry in Bangladesh. He says he was fortunate to live a life where he could freely express and explore his creative instincts.

Zafir thinks it's very important that there are abundant opportunities for independent artists.

He has always done his level best to help independent artists who are looking for a good, trustworthy person. His work methodology is very targeted and provides a customised experience for anyone looking for good representation. He also helps artists connect and collaborate with others to help them in the long run.

Tahsin N Choudhury

Tahsin is the art-loving and proactive person who has shown her passion for art knows no bounds. She is the Director

at Business Point Ltd. After completing her studies abroad and getting some advertising experience under her belt, she returned to the country and actively started pursuing her passion on the side. She was also the Branding and Partnership manager for Dhaka Lit Fest in 2023.

Tahsin believes that Dhaka has a plethora of untapped potential artisans who bring their own unique spin to the art culture of the city and it's important to embrace their artistic quirks. "Today, more than ever, it is crucial for us to embrace diverse perspectives, and it is through the exploration of distinct and unconventional artistic expressions and storytelling, that we can truly broaden our horizons," expressed Tahsin.

Mariha Q Chowdhury

Mariha Q Chowdhury is the Founder and CEO of Emerald Events, and in her own words she "transforms ordinary places into a visual treat overnight". She loves what she does and is a determined and hardworking person always striving to push boundaries.

Mariha says that it's important to recognise any artistic prowess, no matter how minute it might seem at first. Art comes in all forms big and small and it's important to view them equally for these artists to flourish in the art scene.

"Art is the only language that can free your soul and send out a message," stated Mariha.

Mariha believes that art is the universal language that connects people to each other on a spiritual level. Giving these independent artists a voice for them to be heard is paramount to her.

Taiara Farhana Tareque

Taiara Farhana Tareque is an artist,

gallerist and curator here in Dhaka. She has been a prominent presence in the Dhaka art scene for about two decades now. Her form of art is not limited to one form or medium but rather is diversified beyond imagination. She has been running Studio 6/6, a community art space acting as an anchor for hundreds of independent artists in the city.

According to Taiara, it's important to view the world through their eyes which will give us a novel perception of everything around us.

"Artists are important at all times throughout history and existence. World building and imagination create the magic we live in now," said Taiara.

DhakaYeah

DhakaYeah is an illustration project specialising in digital illustrations to capture the essence of Dhaka city. Focusing mainly on the history, nostalgia and surrealism surrounding Dhaka, DhakaYeah aims to capture the original and exceptional aspects of the city and portray it in a contemporary and whimsical way.

The unique venture comes with the objective to provide a safe and inclusive bubble for artists to freely express themselves. They aim to provide guidance and support that these new independent artists need and give them the recognition they deserve. DhakaYeah's core philosophy is to equip new artists with the skills necessary to thrive in the digital art ecosystem and encourage self-sustaining practices within this community of wonderfully talented young individuals.

By Abdul Warith Khan

Illustration: Abdul Warith Khan

Long dresses and gowns makes a comeback

If you have browsed the Internet lately, then you must have stumbled across long, full-length maxi dresses filling your TikTok for your pages and Instagram feeds. While these beautiful elegant garments were never truly out of fashion, the rise of nostalgia core, cottage core, and the general addition of the suffix core to describe aesthetics has led to the resurgence of evening dresses. Below, we break down the trend and ways you can style it to have your glamorous, elegant, main character moment.



Styling tips for long dresses

There are many different ways to create formidable looks with full-length dresses. The following tips are simple guidelines to achieve an elegant and fashionable look. But do not let it restrict you in your creativity when it comes to styling.

To provide more structure and have a defined waist, a belt with flowy dresses can be amazing. Brown belts with gold buckles are very chic but you can also go for black belts with buckles that are subtle rather than loud. Thin belts can be a good choice too. Leather belts will elevate the look, adding a rather chic and elegant air to your aura. Belts made of the same fabric as that of the dress can bring more uniformity to the look, but they are more suited for daytime casual looks.

Weave-style belts will make you look more bohemian, combined with a straw hat. Corset belts and Viking belts can be your friend if you want that horse rider look. They are very trendy and you can stand out in the crowd with the bold choice. Taking a cue from TikTok creator Benulus, you can wear multiple layers of jewellery or belts to live out your maximalist fashion dreams.

With the continuing heat waves and the scorching summer heat, this is your chance to be comfortable and protect yourself against sun damage by wearing wide-brimmed hats. Hats do not have to be tropical beach accessories only. Wide-brimmed straw hats with bows made of fabric will look lovely with practically any bright summer-coloured flowy dress. Brown and off-white are also nice colour choices for hats.

For daytime wear in the summer, slides and sandals with beige and neutral tones will work with almost every colour of the dress. Ballerina flats, strappy sandals, kitten heels and strappy low heels can lend a more feminine look. But if you are looking for ultimate comfort, then white sneakers or any other coherent sneaker will be your best friend.

The shoe styles mentioned above can also be worn at night. However, classic pumps and boots will make you look the chicest at any event you attend.





Accessorising has the power to take your look from a 5 to a solid 10. When it comes to accessorising with modern-day dresses, less is more and simplicity is key. Take inspiration from the old Hollywood glamour and do not go overboard with your jewellery. Simple rhinestone and white stone neck pieces, dangle earrings, drop earrings, and teardrop earrings are very elegant. Stone studs, elegant bracelets and large stone rings look great.

You can also opt for simple statement gold jewellery like chain necklaces, and small gold hoops. Choker-style necklaces will look perfect with off-the-shoulder gowns. Pearls are the perfect accompaniment for any classy event. It is best to refrain from wearing shiny jewellery and antique silver and oxidised jewellery. They can look good in dresses but runs the risk of looking too stuffy and outdated. Finally, a brooch can be a fun addition to complete the design of your dress.

Simple straight hair can be boring with these dresses. Tousled, breezy beach waves look absolutely stunning with dresses, especially this summer season. Sleek buns will transport everyone to the glamorous old Hollywood era. Some other hairstyles could be side swept curls, side buns, fishtail braided updos, messy buns, messy ponytails, double braid ponytails, etc. Accessorise these hairdos with beaded clips and bands.

Finally, if you want to emulate the fun, flirty and girly side of yours, then wear fun matching headbands with your dresses. From velvet thick bands to bands with floral attachments and polka dots. Let Blair Waldorf from Gossip Girl serve as your inspiration for headbands and dresses.

By Maliha Arosha Hasan

Photo: Sazzad Ibne Sayed

Model: Antora

Styling: Sonia Yeasmin Isha

MUA: Sumon Rahat

Wardrobe: Enigma by Molly

Location: Radisson Blu Dhaka



Embracing EARTHY TONES

Fashion is a means of expressing ourselves and highlighting our individual characteristics. Embracing earthy tones can drastically enhance our style and highlight our features. These warm, rich colours not only look good on our skin, but they also bring out the best in our features, creating a beautiful, harmonious look.

The colour olive, which is like something out of nature, has a timeless elegance that goes well with our skin tones. This shade is a flexible neutral colour that can easily be integrated into different outfits, be it casual or formal. It enhances your skin's natural warmth and adds depth to your ensemble, whether you choose an olive-toned dress, pants, or even shoes and accessories. Olive can be used as a blank canvas for other colours, making it an excellent starting point for experimenting with various patterns and styles.

Nude tones, which are frequently associated with our skin tone, have become extremely popular in the fashion industry due to their capacity to celebrate diversity. For people of our region, nude shades go about as a characteristic expansion of our tone, featuring our exceptional elegance. From delicate beige to profound caramel, these colours have the power to elevate even the simplest looks. Nude coloured dresses, tops, and even traditional attires give us a seamless appearance that highlights our skin's undertones and gives us a graceful and subtle charm.



Another group of hues that go well with brown skin tones is the muted colour palette, which is characterised by being more muted and less saturated. Dusty pinks, warm greys, and muted blues are examples of these gentle, understated tones. Muted colours bring out the richness of our complexion and create a delicate balance when worn against brown skin. They lend an air of elegance to both casual and formal occasions and add a

sophisticated touch to any outfit. Earthy tones make all the difference in upgrading our normal features, from the glow of our skin to the profundity of our eyes. For instance, olive tones emphasise the brilliance of the skin, allowing it to glow naturally. Nude colours, on the other hand, create a harmonious background that brings out our face's contours and highlights our eyes, lips, and cheekbones. Muted colours provide a soft contrast

that highlights our features without overwhelming them because of their subtle and gentle nature. The fashion industry has become increasingly diverse and inclusive in recent years, recognising the beauty of brown people and embracing a wide range of skin tones. The appreciation for earthy tones has increased as a result of this shift. These hues are currently being actively incorporated into the collections, runway shows, and

personal styles of fashion enthusiasts, influencers, and designers. So, let's embrace the beauty of earthy tones as they truly suit us best.

By Maisha Tarannum Iqbal
Photo: Naymul Islam
Model: Asma Brishti, Anamika, Elias
Styling: Designer Imam Hassan
Makeup: Parvez
Wardrobe: Label Imam Hassan

Here's how sunglasses can safeguard your vision in this scorching summer

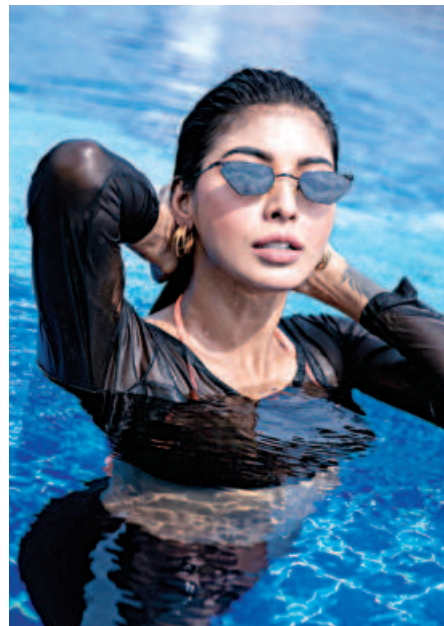
With the heat wave in full swing, our throats are parched and our skin is left sunburned, sweaty not to mention sticky. While we are chugging litres of water and turning to summer-friendly habits, let's not forget to give our peepers a little break from the harsh rays of the sun. Much to our dissatisfaction, the pressures of work and other responsibilities often require us to venture out into the furnace. But according to studies, excessive heat can damage many of the tissues in your body and our eyes are no exception.

In 2022, a study found that heat and humidity trapped in a pair of goggles might damage your eyes over time. This can lead to eye issues such as fatigue, pain, soreness, and blurred vision. Moreover, summer months are known for causing eye dryness due to excessive spells of heat and wind. The weather, like we are currently experiencing, dries out the tear-inducing film that keeps our eyes lubricated and protected.

Our eyes have three layers of fluid inside them that keep them moist. An oily layer that forms the outside of the tear film, a watery layer that forms the middle of the tear film, and a mucus layer on the innermost part of the tear film. These layers combined help lubricate our eyes to help them stay moisturised whilst washing away debris. When they are dried out, symptoms like stinging or burning, eye redness, scratch sensation as if there's something floating inside or even sensitivity to light. But thanks to ophthalmologists and the fashion industry, sunglasses were made with the intention to cater to comfort and style statements to consumers. The following reasons will remind you to keep those shades on under the blazing sun —

Protection from UV rays and airborne debris

Between 9 AM – 3 PM, the sunlight is at its harshest, especially during this heat wave.



If you are out for classes, running errands, working, or simply meeting people, it would be essential to carry your favourite sunnies.

Wearing sunglasses protects your eyes from ultraviolet (UV) rays which can adversely affect eyelids, cornea, lens, and retina. A good pair of sunglasses block 100 per cent of the sun's harmful UV rays. Moreover, the glasses work as a shield to protect your eyes from the wind blowing dust, sand, and other airborne particles which could irritate your eyes and even scratch the cornea which could permanently damage them.

Navigate better through light-sensitivity

Too much of a good thing can sometimes be a bad thing. The same goes for sunlight — even though it's necessary for us to soak

up some Vitamin D, too much exposure to the sun can very well blind us. If you are having to squint or block the sun's rays with your hand, that's not exactly a pristine vision. Additionally, if this occurs whilst you are crossing a main road or driving, it can easily become a recipe for disaster. In order to prevent these situations, shades come in handy as they can help you navigate safely, especially if you have issues like light sensitivity; they can safeguard you and others from meeting with severe injuries or accidents.

Reducing future occurrences of eye diseases perpetuated by sunlight

There is substantial research that shows that exposure to the sun's harmful UV rays on a daily basis can gradually increase the risk of developing cataracts, macular degeneration, and other eye conditions over the years. Cataracts are a yellowish clouding of the eye's natural lens that can cause light sensitivity and blurred vision. Macular degeneration is a deterioration of the macula—the central part of the retina responsible for your detailed, up-close vision, such as seeing people's faces, reading or watching tv. The sun's rays can also cause eye cancer and a condition called pterygium, a growth of excess tissue on the eyeball. Hence, it's advisable to keep wearing sunglasses to prevent such diseases from occurring in the future.

Improves outdoor vision

The best way to ward off the brightness and glare of the blazing sun is to invest in polarised lenses to improve your vision. These can immediately cut down the sun's glares that bounce off horizontal surfaces such as the sea, sidewalks, or glasses. Thus, adjusting your ability to see colour and contrasts.

Reduces headaches or migraines

If you are someone who frequently suffers from headaches or migraines, you would know better that sunlight can often trigger these pain flares. When buying sunnies, make sure you get dark lenses, preferably sold at outlets which specialise in medically approved optical wear, particularly those which fully block UVA and UVB rays. This way you can both enjoy the sunlight while safeguarding your vision.

By Rubab Nayeem Khan

Photo: Sazzad Ibne Sayed

Models: Amit & Arnira

Styling: Sonia Yeasmin Isha

MUA: Sumon Rahat

Location: Holiday Inn Dhaka



#FOOD & RECIPES

5 drinks to keep you hydrated in summer

With summer comes heat and humidity. One of the best ways to cool down in this hot weather is with a refreshing, delicious summer drink. Here, are some easy and delicious recipes that are perfect for staying hydrated and beating the heat.



WATERMELON LEMONADE

The combination of the lemon's tartness and the watermelon's subtle sweetness gives a well-balanced flavour to this summer drink.

The drink typically has a smooth, creamy texture with a slight pulpy consistency.

Ingredients

- 4 cups of cubed, seedless watermelon
- ½ cup freshly squeezed lemon juice
- ¼ cup honey
- 4 cups cold water
- Ice cubes
- Mint leaves

Method

In a blender, blend the watermelon until smooth. In a large pitcher, combine the watermelon puree, lemon juice, honey, and cold water. Stir well until the honey is dissolved. The mixture should be chilled for at least an hour in the refrigerator. Serve the watermelon lemonade over ice cubes and garnish with mint leaves if desired.

ICED HIBISCUS TEA

Some people describe the taste of hibiscus tea as slightly earthy or herbal. Overall, iced hibiscus tea offers a flavour that is both tart and sweet, making it a perfect summer beverage.

Ingredients

- 4 hibiscus tea bags
- 4 cups boiling water

- ¼ cup honey
- 2 cups cold water
- 1 lemon, sliced
- Ice cubes

Method

Dip the hibiscus tea bags in boiling water for 5 minutes. To dissolve the honey, remove the tea bags and add it while stirring. Add cold water and stir. Refrigerate for an hour. Serve the iced hibiscus tea over ice cubes and garnish with lemon slices.

PINEAPPLE MINT AGUA FRESCA

An energising and flavourful beverage that is popular in Mexican cuisine is pineapple mint agua fresca. Due to the pineapple pulp's smooth, slightly thick texture, and the addition of mint's herbal flavour, this drink is ideal for overcoming summer exhaustion.

Ingredients

- 4 cups chopped fresh pineapple
- ¼ cup freshly squeezed lime juice
- ¼ cup honey
- 4 cups cold water
- Ice cubes
- Fresh mint leaves

Method

Blend the pineapple until smooth. In a large pitcher, combine the pineapple puree, lime juice, honey, and cold water. Stir well until the honey is dissolved. Chill in the fridge for an hour. Serve the pineapple mint agua fresca over ice cubes and garnish with fresh mint leaves.

RASPBERRY PEACH SMOOTHIE

It is an excellent option for breakfast or as a snack on a hot day because of its texture and overall flavour.

Ingredients

- 1 cup frozen raspberries
- 1 cup frozen peach slices
- 1 cup unsweetened almond milk
- ½ cup vanilla Greek yoghurt
- 1 tbsp honey
- Ice cubes

Method

Blend the raspberries, peach slices, almond milk, Greek yoghurt, and honey until smooth. Add ice cubes as needed to thicken the smoothie and blend again. Serve the raspberry peach smoothie chilled.

CUCUMBER LIME COOLER

This is a tasty beverage that combines the tartness of lime with the crisp, fresh flavour of cucumber.

Method

- 1 cucumber, peeled and chopped
- ¼ cup freshly squeezed lime juice
- 2 tbsp honey
- 4 cups cold water
- Ice cubes
- Fresh mint leaves

Method

In a blender, blend the cucumber until smooth. In a large pitcher, combine the cucumber puree, lime juice, honey, and cold water. Stir well until the honey is dissolved. Keep in a refrigerator for 60 minutes. Serve the cucumber lime cooler over ice cubes and garnish with fresh mint leaves, if desired.

By Tahmina Khatun Fahima

Photo: LS Archives/
Sazzad Ibne Sayed



#TRAVEL

ALHAMBRA

Europe's love letter to Moorish culture

For centuries, the Muslims have ruled large swaths of an unconverted population in Spain, the Balkans, and India. Each of these countries has endured periodic cycles of religious violence and ethnic cleansing of the Muslims — Balkans in the 1990s and the bitter partition of India in 1947. There are still Muslims in the Balkans. And despite partition, which saw the creation of a predominantly Muslim Pakistan, there are still around 210 million Muslims in India.



What makes Spain unique is that here ethnic cleansing was fully realised. Yet, everywhere in the Andalusian part of Spain my wife and I went recently, we were surrounded by the remains of the Moors, who are Muslims from North Africa. This was particularly so in Granada, which is all about the Alhambra, "Europe's love letter to Moorish culture".

An exquisite ensemble of Islamic architecture and art, celebrated for centuries in poetry and songs, its image endlessly replicated on postcards, the Alhambra represents the essence of Andalusia. As the last and greatest Moorish palace and one of the world's finest architectural wonders of the Islamic Golden Age in Europe, it is a historic landmark encrusted with romantic associations.

The Alhambra — al-qa'la al-hamra in Arabic, meaning red fort or castle — is more than just a palace. Named for the reddish walls and towers that surround the citadel, it is a walled city within the city of Granada.

Perched on top of the Sabika Hill and set against the majestic mountain range of Sierra Nevada, the impressive palace was built between the 13th and 14th centuries by the Moorish monarch Ibn al-Ahmar and his successors of the Nasrid Dynasty, one of the longest-ruling Muslim dynasties in Spain.

After reigning for more than 250 years, Moorish rule was on the decline and eventually ended in 1492 with the Christian Reconquista of Granada. However, unlike the conquerors who ripped apart every semblance of other cultures elsewhere, Catholic Monarchs Queen Isabella of Castile and King Ferdinand of Aragon walked into Alhambra and probably thought, not this one.

The palace is beautifully laid out in three sections: The Mexuar where matters concerning the administration of justice were dealt with, Palace of Ceremonial Rooms — a throne room where the rulers of Granada received foreign envoys, and the Palace of the Lions — the Sultan's private quarters.

We took a guided tour because it is impossible to go through the complex on one's own. Walking through the rooms of the palace was a progressive experience that became more and more marvellous.

Exotic Middle Eastern tiles, stucco decorations, and delicate carvings on the walls of the lavishly decorated rooms and serene courtyards speak loudly of the finest achievements of Moorish art and architecture in the world. While the rooms are empty, it takes a little bit of imagination to picture the ornate furnishings that filled the vast rooms when the Moors ruled Spain.

Carved wood, intricate plaster arches, decorative columns, and elegantly laid mosaics define the Alhambra. Islamic calligraphy, mostly poems, floral patterns and verses from the Quran etched on mosaic could be seen everywhere. The phrases "Allah hu Akbar" and "La Ilaha Illa Allah" are repeated thousands of times throughout the palace.

There is a hall with a dome displaying in great detail a dazzling honeycomb that appears to drip like icicles in a cave. It is called the "Hall of the Two Sisters"



because of the two large identical slabs of marble on the floor. The walls of the hall are covered with extremely fine plasterwork with different themes, among which is Kalima Tawayyab: "There is no god but God but Allah, and Muhammad is His messenger."

An alluring structure in the Alhambra complex is the Courtyard of the Lions. It has a central alabaster fountain encircled by twelve white marble lions spewing jets of water. The courtyard was a private area for the king, his family, and mistresses. Encompassing the

courtyard is an ornately decorated gallery supported by white marble columns. There is a pavilion with filigree walls and a wooden domed ceiling, projecting into the courtyard at each extremity.

At the east end of the Courtyard of Lions is the Hall of Justice where 15th century ceiling paintings are wonderfully preserved its alcove-like recesses. Most noteworthy are three paintings on leather depicting scenes of court life with portraits of rulers and councillors, a hunting scene, and rescue of a maiden from the clutches of a wild man.

Another section of the palace that impressed us beyond measure is a spacious courtyard called Patio del Mexuar. It features graceful arcades and two fountains, feeding a pond. The green water of the pond contrasts brilliantly with the white marble patio and the parapet above the northern gallery that reflects in the pool on a clear day. It is also called the Courtyard of the Myrtles. The myrtle bushes that surround the central pond and their bright green colour pleasingly accentuate the whiteness of the surrounding stone.

We eventually emerged into an area of terraced gardens called Jardines de Partal. Here a reflecting pool stands in front of the Palacio del Partal, a small portico-style building with its own tower.

From the Partal gardens, we continued along a path to the Generalife, our last stop at Alhambra. Taking its name from the Arabic phrase jinan al-'arif, meaning "Garden of the overseer," Generalife is a terraced garden, situated on the slopes of Cerro del Sol, which is Spanish for Hill of the Sun. Pools, patios, trickling fountains, maze-like hedges along with exotic flowers, fragrant orange trees, cypresses, roses and a soothing ensemble of pathways combine to form an enchanting effect at Generalife. Simply stated, the garden is stunning, something that looks like out of a fairy tale.

In sum, the graceful, reticent decoration and inlay of the Alhambra give the eye a sense of lightness. In the words of a European visitor, Alhambra is "so magnificent, so exquisitely executed that even he who contemplates it can scarcely be sure that he is not in a paradise."

By Dr Quamrul Haider

The writer is a Professor of Physics at Fordham University, New York, USA.



#FASHION & BEAUTY

Top 5 handbag essentials for monsoon



What started off as a means of transporting goods from one place to another, handbags soon enough became a fashion statement. Brands all around the world started capitalising on this and hence, became an essential which most women do not even leave their homes without!

However, the use of it for carrying essentials is still the main priority. Seasonal changes bring about a stir in the elements inside of a handbag. Summer makes a hand fan, sunscreen mandatory whereas winter makes a hydrating moisturizer and mittens a necessity. So, what about the monsoon? To help you navigate through this season of storms and sunshine, here are our top 5 handbag essentials for monsoon:

Pocket Umbrella

Pocket umbrellas expand to be regular sized umbrellas but come in a compact packaging. They can be safely tucked in one corner of your bag and can save you big time!

Dhaka's monsoon is one of my worst fears and greatest delights. I have to be wary about timely arrival at my superbly distant office from home. These are the times my pocket umbrella becomes my best friend. I would rather leave myself

home than leave my miniature umbrella.

Waterproof Pouches

Just like life, rain too can be unpredictable. To ensure your prized possessions are safe, carry a waterproof pouch with you. These are usually transparent, ready-to-use, lightweight pouches that are available in a variety of sizes. You can use this to protect your phone, glasses, headphones and the list goes on. Select the one that fits your bag for the day and you are all set!

Dry Wipes or Napkins

The best memories and the worst nightmares are never anticipatory. Imagine setting out right after a mighty rainfall and the rain drops choose not to leave your side? Yeah, that's not something we ideally are a fan of. In such cases, a cotton/nylon napkin or disposable dry wipes are a life-saver. Thanks to e-commerce industries going, the choices are now endless and of high-quality.

Disinfectant Spray

Rainy days bring about a ton of contagious diseases like typhoid, cholera, and seasonal flu. In times where we have segmented our hours to a granular level, it is equally hard to be prepared with an immune system that has enough antibodies to fight such diseases. Hence, comes in the disinfectant spray.



Disposable Shower Caps

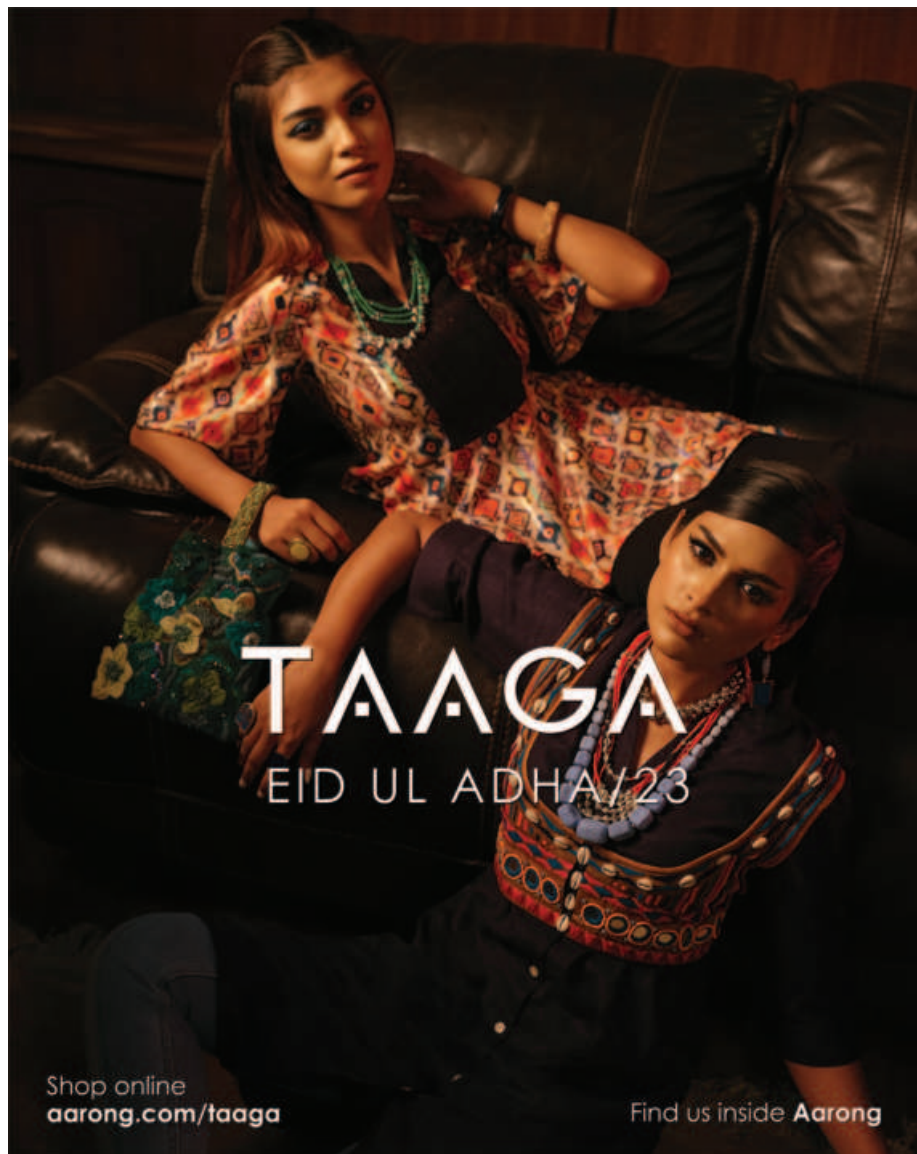
This is a guardian angel for people with oily or damaged scalp. Especially those who regularly style their hair with heating devices or gel, this protects their hair against rain water as it often contains harmful toxins from the environment. It even shields it against the fast-flowing winds that can make the hair rougher with time. These disposable shower caps are very lightweight and come in a lot of colours and prints. Grab a pack on the

go to keep your hair looking as sleek as it does!

Monsoon brings about a lot of emotions that we all want to live to our fullest. Amidst that, it's equally important to stay prepped in terms of convenience, health and safety. We believe these 5 handbag essentials will be a great starter pack for you to begin with.

By Zeba Fareha Hossain

Photo: Collected





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#DECOR

New ways to decorate your living room

It is one of the most used areas of the house, serving as a place for gathering, entertainment, and relaxation. Finding comfortable furniture is a great place to start when designing your living room area. Paint, wall decorations, curtain designs, storage options, and locating the ideal-sized rug are just a few of the many factors to think about in terms of living room décor ideas. To help you revamp your living room in fresh ways, we have compiled some stunning, doable living room designs and ideas!

For the living room layout, put the biggest furniture at the very front. This could be the couch or an armchair. You should face any artwork towards the room's focal point, whether it is beside a window, TV, gallery wall, or anything else. Sofas should be kept away from windows whenever feasible, so as not to obstruct any natural light. Then, put smaller pieces of furniture, such as chairs or loveseats, across from or next to the first one. The next step is to round out the room with decorative pieces like lamps, end tables, coffee tables, and ottomans. Make sure that there is a table or counter within easy reach of every seat.

Living room interiors with a white colour scheme never go out of style, but there are many more options you can explore. The living area can be painted a soothing blue-gray and furnished with sleek and modern furniture pieces. The space's laid-back vibe can be maintained with the addition of woven chairs, a light wood side table, and a tree-stump coffee table. It will strike the ideal mix between casual and formal. A

huge pendant light can add a casual touch, while marigold accents can complement the wood furniture and break up the room's monochrome colour palette.

A whole wall of bookshelves could create immediate drama and serve to show prized possessions in your living room. Something about a room filled with old books has the unique ability to transform its atmosphere with a more mystic-filled aura. Used books, new books, and books you have inherited should all be shown on open bookshelves in the living room. They give the room personality and complement the layered cosiness of the decor. In fact, they can also invite some amazing conversations!

Bring the outdoors in by planting some unusual indoor trees and plants. Large interior plants and trees, such as a luscious tree in a corner for an added flash of life and colour, or asymmetrical topiaries on the



ledge, are a great way to spruce up those bare nooks and crannies in your home.

Now, buying new furniture for your living room is like bringing a new member of the family into the home. And of course, like any other member, new furniture and decor are going to take up not only your valuable time and energy but also a big portion of your money. Buying all the materials on EMI (equated monthly instalment) is a wonderful method to alleviate this financial stress.

Fixed payments paid by a borrower to a lender on a regular basis are known as EMIs. The loan is repaid in full over a certain period of time by making monthly

payments that cover both interest and principal. These EMI plans are available at many furniture stores, which can aid you in the allocation of your funds into more affordable monthly payments. The EMI can help find your target furniture and décor without wasting too much money. Suffice it to say, EMI plans offer a feasible solution for you if you wish to revamp your home without incurring too many financial liabilities. By opting for EMI payments, you can enjoy the comfort and aesthetic appeal of your new purchases in the living room for years to come!

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