



An ode to BRIDAL SAREES



#FASHION Dear brides of today, let us get to the million-dollar question, do you really need all that bling? Yes, it's your big day, the one that you have waited for, dreamed of, and hoped for your entire life! However, when you close your eyes and think of a bride you aspire to be whose image comes up first?

Chances are it's of your mother! Demure in her resplendent red katan, her forehead bedazzled with white and red kumkum dots, her lowered head covered with a sheer, red dupatta studded with golden stars reminiscent of the night sky — she embodied bridal beauty and grace for you since you were a little girl. Her delicate gold jewellery, fondly made by her parents for her wedding, are precious heirloom to be preserved for posterity.

When you were a toddler dolling you up in her bridal katan, possibly her most treasured piece of clothing, she would imagine seeing you dressed as a bride, her eyes aglow with a million dreams and wishes for you!

Somewhere along the line, we missed a beat. So far removed from our own memories and culture we became entirely sidelined by a borrowed aesthetic that is not true to us anymore.

Heavily inspired by Bollywood, the Indian bridal style tends to be fashionable for many Bangladeshi brides. In a quest to find her bridal style, these brides end up blindly emulating actresses on screen.

What is most interesting is that these very actresses go for a very pared-down, traditional aesthetic for their own weddings! They shun sequined, mermaid lehengas, over-the-top makeup and bling they sport in the movies entirely, opting for a beautifully traditional saree or a simple lehenga in a muted shade, with just the right amount of jewellery with simple hair and makeup. Letting their radiant beauty shine they are the epitome of grace in their simple but stunning bridal style.

What a privilege it is to be in one's skin,

true to one's self on the most remarkable day of one's life! Our own heritage of handloom textiles is incredibly rich and beautiful and deserves to be upheld with dignity and pride. After all, what is more beautiful than a bride draped in a red jamdani, stunning and our very own?

While brides opting for a lehenga or a gown is perfectly understandable, a saree is timelessly chic. What's more, designers are coming up with innovative styles that are intricate and unique.

White and red are classics but a bride is spoilt for choice in terms of colour. A deep teal jamdani with copper and gold thread is absolutely stunning for reception, or a mauve one too. The possibilities are endless really.

And the prodigal "biyer katan saree"! What could be more symbolic of Bangladeshi bridal style? Many brides nowadays are choosing to wear their mother's wedding saree, revived and reinvented by designers who are more than happy to repair and restyle a decade-old saree.

In honouring a traditional garment by preserving its beauty using age-old embroidery techniques as well as modern, designers are championing the cause of sustainability, draped with style and love.

If you are a lucky girl with your mother's wedding katan here is your golden opportunity to make your childhood bridal dreams come true!

Muslin, the fabric of choice for Bangladeshi royalty of yore continues to remain relevant today in the best possible way. Embroidered, printed or painted—this miracle of a medium is extraordinary in holding its own.

An embroidered muslin saree is perfect for brides looking for understated beauty. Posh boutiques boast a stunning range of muslin sarees ideal for holiads or receptions. The best aspect about Muslin is that it is entirely customisable. Most designers are happy to accommodate the bride's wishes and create a unique, customised piece complete with a matching dupatta.

So, be a bold bride and embrace your own Bangladeshi bridal style!

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Model: Sunidhi Nayek, Neel Hurerjahan
Styling: Safiya Sathi
Wardrobe: Safiya Sathi
Jewellery: 6 Yards Story
Makeup Artist: Saleha Sarwar
Location: Saleha Sarwar Studio