

We South Asians are an interesting lot. We love to feast, love to celebrate life, and all things glittery tug at the strings of our hearts! To that end we love gold jewellery ardently and earnestly in all its glory, shape, and form. It's impossible to resist the temptation of gold and wars have waged and blood has been shed in pursuit of it. When a baby is born, we adorn him or her with gold jewellery, a symbol of utmost love and affection. Our weddings are unimaginable without the signature glint and sparkle. Mothers start collecting trousseau for their beloved daughters from an early age and gold ornaments are always given high priority.



GOLD AND BENGALI WOMEN

# A timeless love affair



Photo: Adnan Rahman  
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Jewellery: 6 Yards Story  
Makeup: Sumon Rahat  
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It is not merely decorative, but is considered as a safety net for the daughter she dotes upon, that she can rely upon in a moment of crisis. Always holding good value gold accessories is never a bad investment especially in today's economic climate where some financial crisis or the other keeps on arising.

Bengal's relationship with gold is a tale extraordinaire, intertwined with colonial influences, trade, culture, politics and tradition. Dating back to first century AD the Kushana empire introduced the earliest recorded evidence of gold and its usage was predominantly coinage. Gold was used as a major form of currency among the traders, and even though Bengal was not a part of the Kushana empire it still reached its shores via trading.

Historians have unearthed evidence that owing to Bengal's maritime history and rich trade relations with Macedonia, Crete and other parts of the Mediterranean region gold was used as a major form of currency among traders and merchants. Aside from coinage various artifacts made with gold also reached Bengal shores from far and wide, creating a uniquely rich history of gold's significance in this area.

As trade facilitated and flourished gold kept flowing steadily in Bengal. So even though Bengal didn't produce gold it had a considerable flow of gold in many forms through rich and prosperous trade networks.

With Hinduism and Buddhism flourishing in these regions, gold was used for religious purposes and rituals elevating its status greatly.

That gold complements our dusky skin beautifully is perhaps the greatest reason why this metal is favoured by women of Bengal so much!

'Gold bangle on a golden arm' is an adage made popular by poets who attribute gold jewellery enhancing Bengali women's lovely rich skin even further. Our weddings are strongly rooted in traditions

and customs steeped with Bengali heritage, and gold has played a major role in it since time immemorial. There was a period of time in between when gold ornaments were considered outdated and irrelevant but nowadays traditional designs are appreciated greatly by modern women. They proudly wear and flaunt heirloom accessories belonging to their mothers and grandmothers, bringing forward their family's traditions, priceless emotions and memories such ornaments hold and evoke.

Honouring their family's heritage and legacy heirloom, jewellery is a great reminder that a thing of beauty is indeed a joy forever. Aside from weddings heirloom, gold ornaments are reimagined by women nowadays and worn with great style and élan. Pairing a chic jumpsuit with one's grandmother's gold cuff or choker is a great style statement, while also upholding one's own identity.

Gold is a forever muse to designers everywhere and its timeless beauty and appeal endures rampant trends and changes. Its versatility makes it a great foil for experimentation. Edgy, cutting-edge designs play out really nicely with gold, and precious gemstones add to that mix. Imagine a gold lariat necklace with emeralds, perfect for your next night out in town, or a pair of ear cuffs with cabochon sapphire, a splendid statement piece perfect for a cocktail party.

If you are on the lookout for gold jewellery, make sure you purchase from a trusted retailer and is reputable. There are many different carat weights so pick one in your price range.

Buying gold is surely an investment as well as an object of affection so do your research and take your time before making decisions.

So, it is time to go bold, and do it with gold!

By Sabrina N Bhuiyan

