

Perfect Woman

Soft & Strong

**The Original
Item Girl...
iSha**

**Will he
leave
his Wife
for you?**

**A Society
without
girls**

**Ashleysha...
oozing oomph
all the way**

**Children
of mixed
faith**

**The Indian
designer
duo who
dressed up
Madonna,
Fergie, Katy...**

**"My maximum number
of faux pas happened
when I was trying to
be someone else," Neha**

**The Playboy Girl
Sherlyn Chopra**

Lakme Fashion Week, the round up

The Lakme Fashion Week Winter Festive season fever kick-started with celebs, journoes and buyers dressed in their best sinking in all the style and innovation presented by the designers. There was some cheering, some bitching, some gossiping, some nice and not-so-nice moments. But, what made a sartorial cut above all of the rest were some of the creations. Here is our round up...

-Pragna Rao

PW FASHION & STYLE in vogue

Colour me bright

When non-Indians think of India, they think of it as the land of colours. While we are glaringly so much more, the festivals wouldn't be fun without that burst of colours. "Colours are big-time in trend right now. I can see everyone doing bright colours," observed Nikhil Thampi who presented his 'Survivors' collection. For Mayank Anand and Shraddha Nigam's 'Technicolor' collection, the inspiration was Punjab. "It is about the women of Punjab and how they wear every colour together very beautifully," said Mayank. "We took a step towards a more festive collection, which is different from the work we have showcased so far," added Shraddha. The theme for Shruti Sancheti was 'Thar'. "It is the desert part where people wear a lot of colour to combat the harsh climate. We incorporated the colours of the region like saffron, fuchsia, red, but made it more contemporary, toned and restrained," she said. Vaishali Shadangule's 'Reverb' collection went with the theme of the festive season. "For festivals we cannot forget colours. I used shades of red, orange and blue," explained the designer. For Drashta Saravaya who always uses colours, it was the Australian painter Gustav Klimt who brought about the hues this time around.

Getting the look right is never easy. Mayank and Shraddha suggest that you go for the colours that complement your skin. "There are people who wear neon. You will be seen, but after five minutes people's head is going to start hurting," comments Shraddha. "Colours look very different under yellow light and white light. Just go out in the sun and look at it and if not that then the next best option is the tube light," adds Mayank. Shruti strongly believes that Indian skin tones are meant for colour, but that it is better to go tone-on-tone or the same palette than a lot of contrast. When it comes to the flaming colour of yellow, Drashta advises to work with a solid, one piece, colour block or print. "You can mix, match the print but stay away from certain shades of yellow depending on your skin type and height. It is just a way to balance it because it is a powerful colour and can overpower. If you crack it, you will make a statement," she elaborates.



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Accessories in the garment

Something unique spotted this time was how some of the new designers incorporated accessories in the garment. Sandhya Garg who presented a 'Timeless Collection' at the Usha Talent Box did this beautifully. She said, "I have actually tried and combined metal pieces that I have specially engineered. I see a lot of people wear them separately, they hang and do not look nice. I wanted to combine them so that one has the look ready. Plus it adds on the garment, it does not give a separate look. For people who find it cumbersome to team up things, it is easier." Aniket Satam who presented his 'Jai Ho Collection' adds, "Accessorisation has grown beyond in terms of styling the garments. Nowadays, people are looking for a complete look. If you go to us, Indians are used to wearing things in a set, whether it is a *salwar-kameez*, *dupatta* or a *lehenga*. What happens is accessories complete the look, so it becomes easier for the wearer not to run around here and there and get the complete look when they come to any designer."

Beyond lines

Don't we all want to go beyond straight, regular lines? "Asymmetrical is a big trend that has caught on because of the Indian *Anarhita*. They add a dash of glamour, look nice and they are also flattering to the silhouette. Since the last two seasons they are fashionable and are going to remain so," observed Shruti. However, when you are going to wear them she suggests that if you are very short, long can look very funny. "If you are on the heavier side or short, you shouldn't go very drastic, but if you are tall and thin you can do anything," says the designer. Vanshika informs to keep body proportion in mind and pay attention to where the symmetry is coming.



Lining on the edge

We always love the freshness and edginess the new designers bring into the show. Karishma Shahani Khan whose label 'Chauraha' displayed a new collection titled 'Silk Route' was a pop coloured fantasy that took inspiration from the different regions of India but at the same time had a very edgy feel to it. Her advice on being edgy is, "Firstly, there are no rules. You need to be true to yourself and mix and match everything. Just have fun with your clothes, do not be bogged down by what the world is wearing or what the trend is saying. If you have something you are feeling good about it today, just wear it. Mix your colours. Rework your old stuff. Like one of the blouse of my *lehanga*, I just wear it as a jacket. Just be creative. You can find so much of stuff in your own wardrobe, you won't even realise." Her brand works a lot with older piece of clothes; Karishma's mother has given a ton of clothes to her like *lehanga* and they have converted those into jackets, dresses, etc. "It is really about being a bit more open about pieces, so a skirt is not just a skirt, it could be something else. Just think about it that way and you won't even have to shop, you can have a really good time that way," says the innovative designer.



PW FASHION & STYLE in vogue

Going with the flow

There is a certain playfulness associated with flowy dresses and we women have a fascination for them since childhood. "Gustav's work is very romantic, so flow is something that goes absolutely hand-in-hand with the femininity of flowy garments, not particularly fond of very constructed ones," says Mayank. There is another reason why designers go for such garments. Mayank Anand, Shraddha Nigam and Shruti Sarsheti strongly believe that their clothes are meant for every woman and these dresses suit all. "We, as a brand always account for the figure flaws of women," Shruti states. "Our clothes are meant for the real women. The message is that you do not have to be a supermodel to get into our outfits," explains Shraddha.

Though flowy looks nice on everyone, there are some things one needs to keep in mind. "It is nice but then of course, you cannot have everything going flowy and asymmetrical. If you are wearing an asymmetrical neckline you should opt for a sleeveless one. Some part should be structured and some should be flowy and asymmetrical. You should team it well and understand your body and your lifestyle," says Shruti.

The Bold and Beautiful accessories

For accessory designers from Felix Bendish, Sanam Chopra to Saurabh Kant Srivastava, 'Big and Bold' was the common thread. Sanam Chopra presented a desirable leather based collection 'Medieval Pop'. She says, "There are only so many places where people can go shopping. What big accessories do is they make you stand out because you might wear a nice dress, but if you accessorise it correctly people will notice you and that is the idea." Her advice is that when you are dressing up, you have to look in the mirror and just edit and subtract and more so, do not be scared to try something new. Felix Bendish presented a fascinating collection titled 'Flow'. His signature goldfish and lizard brooches were a rage with many sporting them at the fashion week. "What is happening today is, our women are working, they do not want too much of fuss. They want to be very comfortable, so they want to club it with a nice garment; so, the accessory could be a little loud, over-the-top and the colours stand out instead of getting the whole garment colourful." His tip is to have one design feature, it could be in the form of texture or colour.

Another accessory designer who bedazzled at the Usha Talent box was Saurabh Kant Srivastava with his 'Diplomatic Hunter' collection. The theme is a rather interesting one; the collection based on the expression of a woman in terms of a man. "They are hunting, but they are diplomatic at times, they want to impress men so they want to look sexy and chic, they want to attract men, but when they are done, they want to overcome men and be powerful," said the designer. About big accessories he explained, "A lot of people want to carry accessories to make a statement and it times they just want to flip their dresses for some new look and fresh treatment, because they are bored of the same one. So, they can just wear a crazy piece, it looks different and something interesting. It is in trend." He suggests doing away with everything matching in the accessories like how you would team up the traditional jewellery.



Drape it like a charm

We Indians have a fascination for drapes as well. "Drapes are meant to be fun and comfortable and bring home that sensibility of our traditionally made saris that we have inherently in our DNA," says Shraddha. "For me, drapes are something that I am very excited about. They create the drama required, which keeps me apart from the regular ones. The days when women wore skin tight, which looks like it's painted on your body are totally gone. Everyone is comfortable in their own skin and they do not want to show it off to people," muses Nihkil Thampi. Aniker Satam feels, "Drapes is a very tricky thing. Though most of us wear it, it can add bulk to the body if there is too much of cowl. If you have a wider hip, you shouldn't go for something that accentuates the hip area. Instead, you can have the cowl around the neck, so the focus on your wider hip goes to the neck itself. Same thing applies if you have a fuller torso; if you wear something around the neck it will accentuate the bust area," he advises.

Cut above the rest

Here is what we really loved:

Southern inspiration

The rich heritage of the south was always given a miss. That is why it was such a delight to see when Gaurang Shah recreated the beauty of *kanjeevaram* silks with his collection 'Ardhagini'. "After the show a lot of people came and said 'Oh this is *Benarasi* and I said no, this is *Kanjevaram* because here they are not aware of how it really is. People were astonished, this is so soft," he mentions. The intricacy of the craft was quite commendable and also the effort to keep age old tradition intact. "I like the traditional designs and am a very traditional person. I have been working with weavers since the

last 12 years and have 450 looms all over India," says Gaurang.

Peplums

We love peplums. The chic drama they create and also how they fashionably hide that flab. Drashta's collection was a sight to behold. "I think peplums have the power to make your waistline look slimmer and considering women have a pear shaped body, they are perfect because they remove the emphasis from the hips and put it on the waist. It looks cinched since there is volume underneath. So I have tried to work on a lot



Mayank S. Shrivastha



Nihkil Thampi



Mayank S. Shrivastha

of different types of peplums and tried to create interesting silhouettes," emphasised the designer.

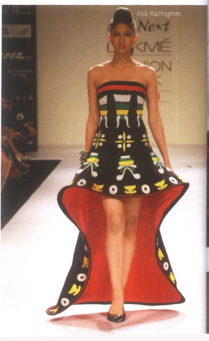
Going structured tribal

Tribal prints always stand out and when they are crafted in a structured and liner form, it makes for quite an interesting combination. Asa Kazingmei's 'Immortal' collection did just that. "My collection is traditional colours... red and black, very well constructed. I love to work in a contemporary style, which is very artistic and not flowy. I am very interested in using leather, mismatching with some ribbons."

So overall, new and interesting trends and old ones being revived was quite welcome. This time, it was more about the complete look than about a particular garment.



Drashta Pivrom



Asa Kazingmei