

Maharashtra Traditional Dress

The people of a region embrace a particular style of drapery or clothing, and ornaments passed on from generation to generation, retaining its individuality and changing in some aspect. Such changes & development in traditional clothing are brought about by geographic, social, political, and foreign influence. Although traditional clothing characterises one ethnicity from another, it also emphasizes the unifying solidarity among people of a certain culture.

Maharashtrian clothing not only delights the aesthetic sense but also, more importantly, portrays the state's rich heritage, be it in terms of caste, profession, or geographic factors.

Traditional Dresses of Maharashtrian Women

The following are the traditional dresses worn by women in Maharashtra:

1. Nauvari Saree
2. Himroo and the Mashru
3. Paithani Saree
4. Narayan Peth Saree
5. Karvat Kati Saree
6. Ganga-Jamuna Saree

Let's take a look at the traditional dresses of women in Maharashtra one by one:

Nauvari Saree



- The most familiar form of clothing traditionally worn by Maharashtrian women is the saree named 'Nauvari', which means 'nine yards', signifying the length of the fabric.
- It has a unique draping pattern similar to that of the 'dhoti' worn by men and allows the comfort of movement.
- These sarees are also named the 'Kashta saree'. It directs to the way it is tucked at the back after draping around the waist and legs.

Himroo and the Mashru



- Originating in the city of Aurangabad in the 15th century, Himru and Mushru textiles are a luxurious heritage that has been around since it was exclusively for the nobles.
- Woven from silver and gold threads, these fabrics combine cotton and silk in a special handloom and create a textured distinctive and comfortable finish.
- The process of weaving Himru is more complicated and requires special skills to master the finer points of the texture.

Paithani Saree



- Originating in Aurangabad in the 17th century, paithani sarees are perfect for occasions, though embroidered with gold threads and rich colours.
- Painted in traditional colours, it is made of pure silk. It has beautiful motifs and symbols, especially on the side of the Pallava, which is the diagonal line of the sari drawn across the torso.

Narayan Peth Saree



- Narayan Peth sari is famous for its wide and vibrant borders from the Solapur district.
- They are usually scattered with small rudraksha motifs, which is remarkably different from the rest of the fabric.
- The zari or Pallavas on the sari border are designed with pure gold threads.
- The impeccable motifs of Narayan Peth sari are usually of flowers and animals.

Karvat Kati Saree



- The Karvat Kati Saree was developed in the Vidarbha region of Maharashtra in the 18th century CE.
- The name 'karvati kati' literally translates to "saw-edged", directing to the designs at the ends of the fabric that correspond to the teeth of a saw.
- This saree is usually worn during rituals & ceremonies. Chandrapur & Gadchiroli are the main centres of spinning activities, while the weaving takes place at Bhandara & Nagpur districts.

Ganga-Jamuna Saree



- The traditional Ganga-Jamuna sarees of Maharashtra originate from the Solapur district and have bright colours on both sides of the tana and weft so that the fabric can be worn and presented both ways.
- The Nagpuri saree, made of tussar silk, is unique for its checks and body stripes and its embellished borders.
- Always fixed in its width and length, the Khana items are traditionally used to make triangular folded blouses and are offered to God in religious ceremonies.

Traditional Dresses of Maharashtra Men

The following are the traditional dresses worn by men in Maharashtra:

Dhoti and Kurta



- Indigenous men's clothing in Maharashtra consists of simple 'dhote' and 'kurta'.
- While tracing its roots in the 5th century BC, a non-sewn cloth called 'dhoti' or 'dhotar' was used by the wearer to fit the covering around the waist and the legs, up to the ankles.
- The Marathi dhoti is of traditional colour and consists of five knots, with the different ends of the garment wrapped in front and back.
- Churidar is likewise a type of trousers that are folded into the horizontal rings of the cuffs, deliberately lengthening the style of the legs.

Kolhapuri Sandals



- Kolhapuri Chappal is a traditional symbol dating back to the 13th century. The locals make these leather 'slippers' in the Kolhapur district, a central name in Maharashtrian culture.
- Embroidered on foot with open-toed toes and T-straps, the intricate designs of the footwear are enhanced against its rugged appearance, usually painted with vegetable colours.
- Although their design has evolved over the years, the Kolhapuri 'chappal' is remarkably durable and strong. These slippers were most popular among men in Maharashtra, whereas women preferred to be barefoot in the old days.