

# ALMA MATER STUDIORUM UNIVERSITÀ DI BOLOGNA

## A Taste of India: a Multicultural Experience

### A Journey Through India's Fashion

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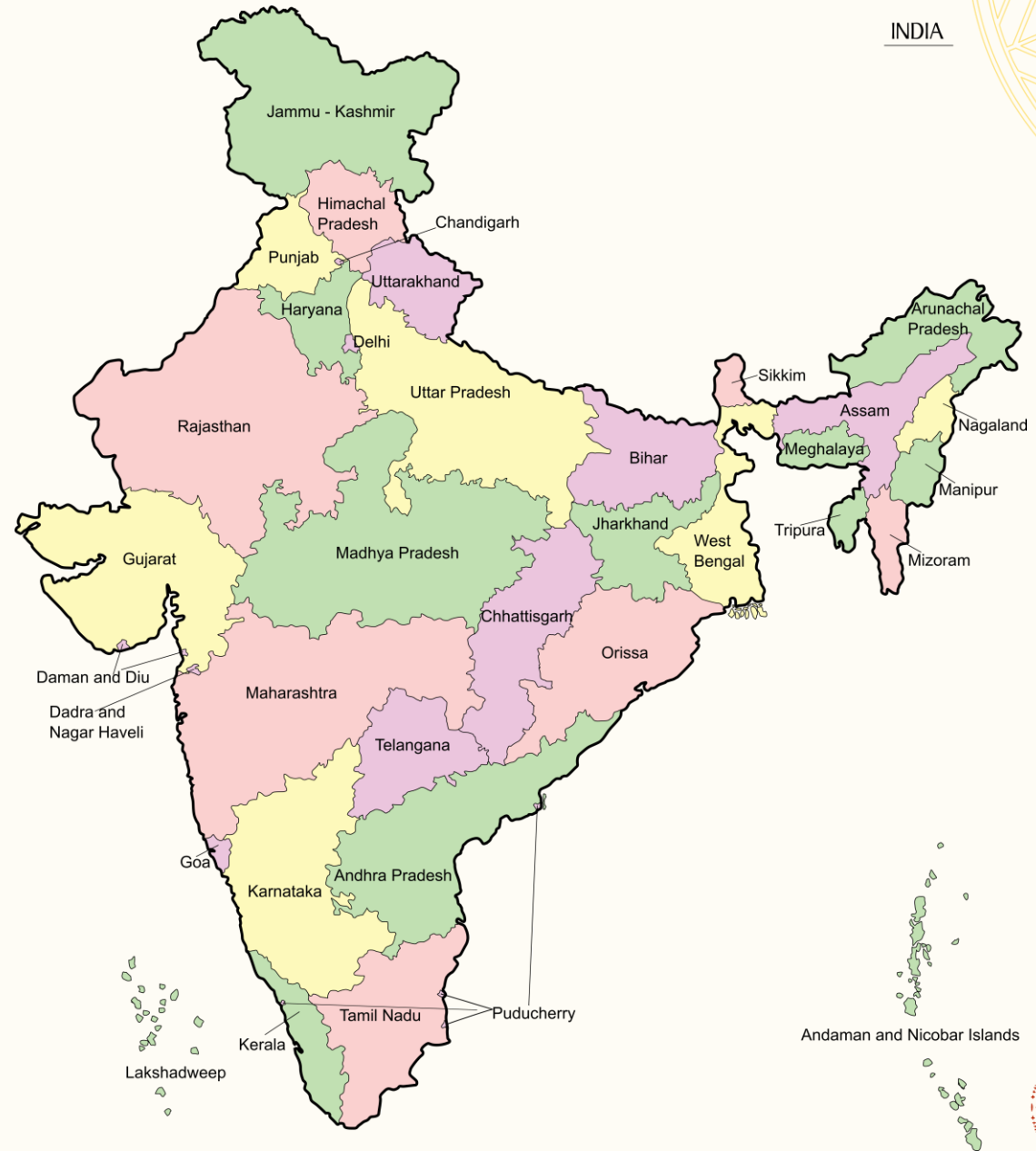
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# History of Indian Dress

The history of Indian attire stretches back to the 5th millennium BC with the Indus Valley civilization, which was highly advanced in spinning, weaving, and dyeing cotton. Throughout the Maurya and Gupta periods, people wore both stitched and unstitched garments, with the anariya, a white cotton garment tied at the waist, being particularly common.

Trade routes introduced new textiles to the region, including silk from China and indigo dye from Rome. The Mughal era significantly advanced textile techniques in India, turning dyeing into a refined art and popularizing methods like mordant dyeing, resist dyeing, and Kalamkari.

Historically, textiles were a vital aspect of India's international trade, linking the country with China, Southeast Asia, the Roman Empire, the Arab world, and later Europe. The trade of printed calicos, chintz, muslins, and patterned silks was especially prominent and played a key role in the English market and later in India's nationalist movement.



# Traditional Dress of Women

## Saree – A symbol of India

The saree, a quintessential garment from the Indian subcontinent, ranges in length from 4.5 to 8 meters and is about 1 meter wide. Typically, it's wrapped around the waist with one end draped over a shoulder, exposing the midriff. Alongside a choli and a petticoat (parker), sarees are central to traditional attire and can be styled in over 80 ways.

For weddings, red sarees are prevalent. Regional variations often feature handloom fabrics like silk, cotton, and block-print textiles.

Some of these styles are as depicted in the pictures:



Kasavu Mundu



Madisar Saree



Seedha Pallu



Nivi



Bengali



Gujarati



Assamese



Maharashtrian



Kodagu



Kunbi Saree





# Traditional Dress of Women

## Salwar Kameez

The salwar kameez, commonly worn in Punjab and known as the Punjabi suit, includes trousers that taper at the ankles (salwar) and a tunic top (kameez). Often, women also wear a veil over the head or shoulders. This outfit is popular among teenage girls and Bollywood actresses.



## Churidaar

Churidaar is a variation of the salwar. It is loose around the knees and tight around the calf. It can be worn with any kind of upper garment or as a part of the anarkali suit (see below).



## Anarkali suit

This style features a long, dress-like top paired with slim-fitting pants, primarily worn by women in North India, Pakistan, and the Middle East. Anarkali suits are popular for traditional festivals, annual celebrations, and formal events, helping to preserve traditional customs and attire.



## Lehenga Choli

This is the traditional dress of women in Rajasthan and Gujarat, and it is also worn during some folk dances. It is a combination of three pieces: a lehenga, a long skirt; a choli, which is a blouse shell garment; and an odhani, a shawl-like scarf.



# Traditional Dress of Men

## Dhoti

Considered the national dress of India, the dhoti is a cotton cloth ranging from four to six feet in length, commonly worn in villages. The traditional dress for Indian men is the dhoti, which is an unstitched piece of cloth usually 5 yards long. It is tied around the waist and legs, with the knot at the waist. It is secured by wrapping or with a belt at the waist, and men typically wear shirts over it. The styles and attitude bearing the dhoti changes depending on the state or province. It has marked its presence in various functions and proceedings.

It has many regional names in different Indian states like Mundu in Kerala, Dhotar in Maharashtra, Laacha in Punjabi and Mardaani in Uttar Pradesh and Bihar.



Dhoti  
Bengal



Mundu  
Kerala



Dhotar  
Maharashtra



Laacha  
Punjab



Mardaani  
Uttar Pradesh



Dhoti  
Karnataka





# Traditional Dress of Men

## Panche (or Lungi)

Known also as a sarong, the lungi is a traditional Indian garment, with the mundu being a white version of it. It can be worn knee-length or down to the ankles, often tucked in during work or left long as a sign of respect in places of worship.



## Anchkan/Sherwani

An anchkan is a long coat with visible buttons down its length, ending just below the knees, and features a stand-up Nehru collar. It's typically paired with churidars, trousers that are loose at the hips and thighs but tight at the ankles. Commonly worn by grooms, the anchkan is usually in shades of cream, light ivory, or gold.



## Bandhgala

A bandhgala, also known as a Jodhpuri suit, is a formal suit worn by Indian men that combines a Western-style coat and trousers with Indian hand-embroidery. Originating from Jodhpur and popularized during the British Raj, it often includes silk fabric with embroidered linings on the collar and buttons.



## Sari jama

The jama is a long coat popularized during the Mughal period. There are many different kinds of jama, even if they are not as used as in the past. However, some men still wear the jama known as angarkha.







Andhra Pradesh



Arunachal Pradesh



Assam



Bihar



Chhattisgarh



Goa



Gujarat

## Dresses of India



Haryana



Himachal Pradesh



Jharkhand



Karnataka



Kerala



Madhya Pradesh



Maharashtra



Manipur



Meghalaya



Nagaland





Odisha

Punjab

Rajasthan

Sikkim

Tamil Nadu

Telangana

Tripura

Uttar Pradesh

Uttarakhand

West Bengal

## Dresses of India



Ladakh

Puduchchery

Lakshadweep

Chandigarh

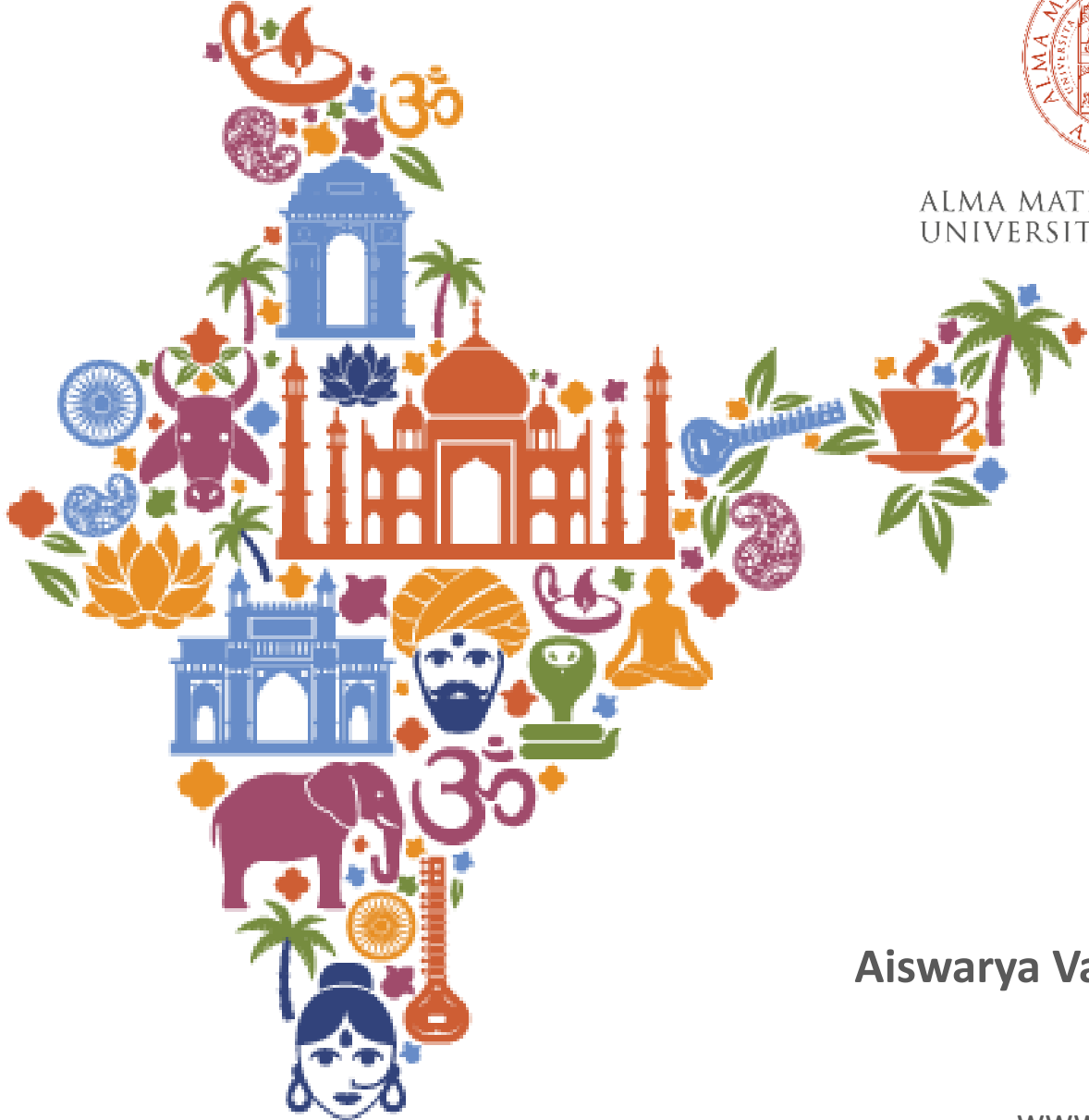
Andaman and Nicobar Islands

Daman and Diu

Delhi

Jammu and Kashmir





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