

LIFE&TIMES **STYLE**

# Make a simple dress look great

It is the season to dress up and put on your Sunday best but the key is not to over-accessorise, writes **Aneeta Sundararaj**



The casual look of Leisure Fun

**A** FRIEND tells you that your photograph is in the society pages of a magazine. Eagerly, you run out and buy the glossy. You find the photo and you gasp.

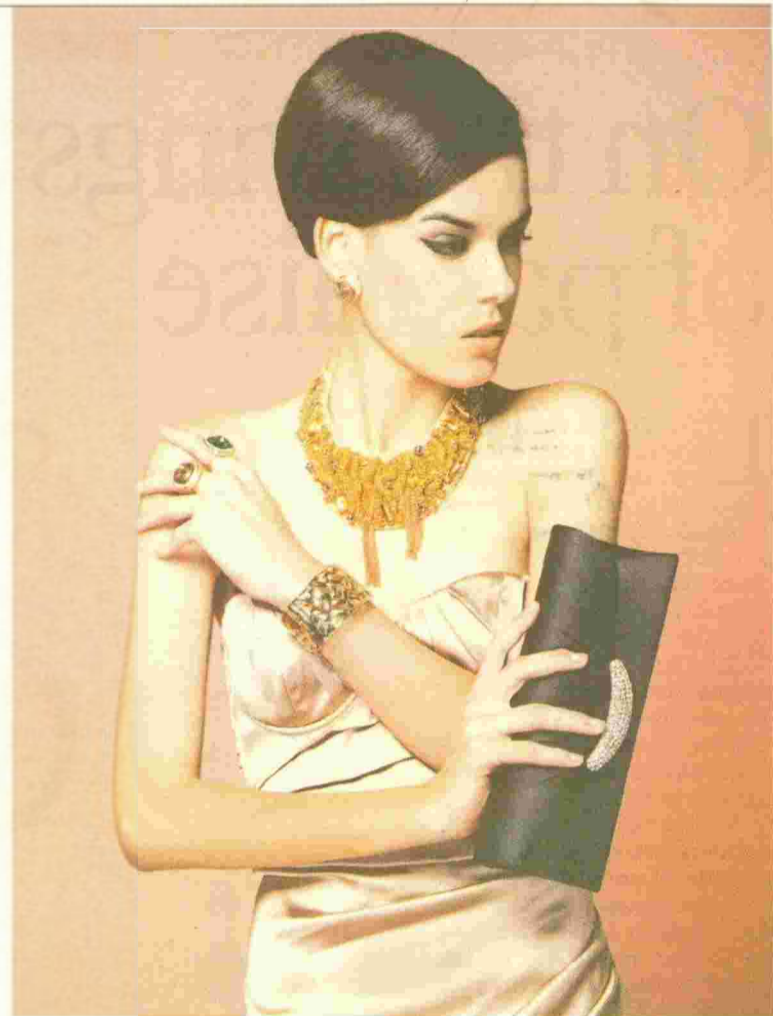
Horrors! You deeply regret not thinking more about your accessories — a pair of dangly diamond earrings, shoes embellished with rhinestones, platinum bangles and a thick gold necklace — to complement your sequined dress.

“Some people overdo it and look like a Christmas tree,” says Datin Sharifah Shawati Syed Mohd. The image consultant, former television presenter and mother-of-two says: “They don’t understand that the accessories used during the day can’t always be worn at night. When used correctly, accessories present a world of possibilities for any woman. They can make you look taller, thinner and more elegant.

“And you don’t have to spend a fortune to do it. Once you understand how to accessorise correctly, you can start putting these little pieces to work for you — and create your own distinct style.”

Her main advice is this: Aim for simplicity. “Less is always more,” she says. “Accessories are not just earrings and necklaces. They also include your glasses, shoes, handbag, scarves and even a pashmina.

“You must also



An elegant style for Evening Glamour

know where you’re going and what your role is.”

For instance, one of the things that she abhors is wearing a jacket over a kebaya. Simply put, if you combine traditional and Western attire, the message you’re portraying is that of confusion.

“Traditional clothes are delicate. People will show you more respect if you wear a jacket over a pant-suit or skirt and blouse, not when you wear a jacket over a kebaya.”

Sharifah Shawati, who also practises neuro-linguistic pro-

gramming (a form of psychotherapy), insists that a woman needs to understand who she is and what works for her in terms of the accessories she uses.

“If you have a square jawline, using round earrings may help soften sharp lines of the face.”

When choosing your accessories, make sure that they belong to the same category and the craftsmanship. Don’t mix a plastic bangle with a pearl necklace or a platinum bracelet with a gold necklace.

“The idea of using the right accessory for

### Three taboos

**WHEN** accessorising:  
1. Don’t mix your metals, they should belong to the same type and craftsmanship. If wearing gold, stick to gold.  
2. Don’t pile all your best accessories in one wear — leave the garish, bold style for the Christmas tree.  
3. Mixing Western and Eastern styles is a delicate balance. Better to streamline and stick to one style at a time.

“When used correctly, accessories present a world of possibilities for any woman.”

Sharifah Shawati



The Night Sparkle looks