

The Papar Kadazan Costume



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The Kadazandusun community is widely spread throughout Sabah. Their costumes identify the home district of the wearer. For example, the Kadazan costume most commonly worn by women is the Penampang version: a long velvet skirt and sleeveless blouse with gold trimmings.

The Papar Kadazan costume is slightly different; it has a knee-length skirt (gonob) with a horizontal and a vertical cross-stitched panel lined with gold thread, and a short jacket (sia) with brass buttons, worn over a white blouse. The costume is complemented by a conical hat (siung) made of fine bamboo strips. Coloured feather-down or artificial flowers at the top of the hat show the wearer's marital status—feather-down for unmarried women and flowers for married women. Widows, grandmothers and other elderly woman wear neither feather-down nor flowers on their hats. A scarf (soundung) is usually worn under the siung. The outfit is further adorned with silver dollar (British trade dollar) belts, called rupia or lupia. Unmarried women wear four rupia, whilst married women wear only two. The arms are adorned with lolilit, flat silver bracelets shaped like a spiral.

The men's costume is fairly simple. It consists of a long-sleeved jacket (sia) similar to the women's, worn with a pair of velvet trousers with gold trimmings (souva). A dastar cloth is folded into a headdress known as the sigal.

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