

Hot Ballet Costumes

Ballet is an art form that is visually stunning. The breathtaking displays are created not only by the dancers' performances, but also by the costumes they wear. From simple and elegant to intricate and even outlandish, ballet costumes are an important element in the centuries-old history of the dance.

The French monarch Louis XIV is said to be first to wear lavish ballet costumes. As a teenager in 1653, Louis XIV achieved his most memorable feat as a dancer; dubbed the "Sun King", the young Louis XIV performed in a golden Roman-cut corset with a kilt of golden rays.

Of course, ballet costumes are much simpler now. Throughout the twentieth century, progressions in choreography have led to diminished set designs and limited ballet costumes. Today's dancers prefer simplicity, as diminutive costumes allow for easier movement, and let the audience see the dancers' intricate steps and body movements. Modern ballet costumes consist primarily of knitwear, tights, leotards, tutus, skirts, and dresses.

Knitwear Dancers prefer lightweight knitwear costumes, as they provide freedom of movement.

* Danskin: These lightweight knits help to keep the dancer comfortable, without being too bulky. This particular collection offers legwarmers in a unique cobweb design. Soft tie-front sweaters, dainty pull-on skirts and full-length flared legwarmers offer chic alternatives to classic knitwear choices.

* Gaynor Minden: Another popular brand of ballet costumes. Boy cut shorts are a welcome addition to every dancer's wardrobe. Gaynor Minden offers silk knit shorts that are soft and comfortable, without compromising unsurpassed style.

Tights * Prima Soft Seamed Convertible Tights: These seamed tights are crafted with matte supplex nylon lycra. To create a "one size" fit, the seams are intentionally sewn on the outside of the tights. In these fashions, the seams are able to stretch when worn and become three times narrower.

* Capezio Sparkle Tights: Many dancers choose these tights for their sparkling effect, created by the highly reflective silver lurex yarn.

Leotards Unlike the leg coverings that most of us know as "leotards", the leotards worn as ballet costumes are body suits, similar to a woman's tank-style swimsuit. These body coverings are ballet costume staples.

* Premiere Contrast Tank Leotard: A popular choice among dancers, Premiere two-toned tanks feature flattering textured rib contrasts. Dancers appreciate the comfort and style provided by a moderate low back, gathered detailing at the bust, and a supportive power mesh bra lining. A variety of colors are available, including a light blue top contrasting with black or chocolate brown bodice.

* Gilda Marx Halter Leotard: This is a relatively new design known as a "jazz leg halter". The seamless garment provides the ultimate in mobility and performance, while the unique yarn combination molds to the body and has moisture management capabilities. Body-conscious rib detailing is visually slimming and provides invisible support.

Tutus The short, frilly skirts called "tutus" are a common perception of ballet costumes.

* Bando Tutu: For show or for play, this is a traditional ballerina style created with four layers of nylon net sewn ruffled on to an elastic waistband. A satin bodysuit can be purchased separately.

* Leo's Juliet Tutu: This style is worn just below the knee. It is sewn with two full layers of nylon netting, and is paired with a basic satin bodysuit. It is an affordable choice that can easily be adorned with extra trim for added sparkle.

Skirts Unlike tutus, ballet costume skirts create a more elegant, flowing silhouette.

* Danskin Handkerchief Mesh Skirt: This innovative skirt has a handkerchief hem with a Shirred fold-over waist. The comfortable mesh fabric moves nicely and provides plenty of airflow.

* Body Wrappers Chiffon Wrap Skirt: The free-flowing chiffon of this skirt provides easy movement and a dramatic effect. These skirts are dyed to provide a perfect match to Premier Collection leotards. Dancers enjoy a secure fit due to the fold-over elastic waistband and ties.

Dresses Some dancers choose the ease and convenience of a one-piece dress, rather than a leotard/skirt or leotard/tutu combination.

* Mirella Strapless-Look Dress: Truly elegant for a special performance, the strapless appearance of this dress is created using nude-colored nylon or spandex mesh in place of straps. (Though this depends on whether the material matches your skin tone or not.) There is a side front slit on the right side of the attached skirt for ease of movement.

* Capezio Camisole Dress: This classic camisole dress features a scoop front neckline and deep V-back. The matching georgette skirt is gently flared, with a mid-thigh length in front and a gentle dip in the back. A shelf bra lining provides support and flexibility.

Ballet costumes have come a long way since a teenaged Louis XIV adorned the stage as the Sun King. While they may be less flamboyant, today's modern ballet costumes continue to make a beautiful performance all the more breathtaking.