

Klompens Dancers & Their Costumes | A Tulip Time Tradition

COSTUME TRIVIA

- › They're called Klompens Dancers because the Dutch word for shoes is "klompen," a logical word for footwear that goes "klomp-klomp" when you walk or dance.
- › Nearly 1500 high school students and alumni wear modified reproductions of authentic costumes representing different areas of the Netherlands and perform Dutch folk dances in wooden shoes.
- › Dancers wear about 5 pairs of socks in their wooden shoes.
- › Several Dutch costume directors are the only ones who have the patterns for the costumes. Costumes are cut out under strict supervision evenings in the participating high schools. Seamstresses work from instruction sheets not patterns. Authenticity is maintained throughout with inspections after the costumes are completed.
- › A Dutch costume can cost over \$200 with half of the cost going for fabric. Wooden shoes cost an additional \$15-20.
- › "Kissers" on the Walcheren and Middelburg costumes are metal ornaments worn near the face under the caps. They were traditionally used to show marital status and to display jewels as a sign of family wealth.
- › No elastic or zippers can be used in the costumes. Aprons and skirts are fastened with hooks and eyes. Skirts and pants are made extra full to allow dancers to perform the high kicks in the Dutch Dance.
- › The Middelburg costume requires the most material, 9 1/2 yards.



ACHTERHOEK

The Achterhoek is from Gelderland. The pants of this costume are not as baggy as those of the Volendam, and the dancers like this one because it is the only costume with pockets. The top is a blue and white striped, collarless shirt, which is worn with a black brocaded vest with a velvet collar. A red kerchief is tucked inside the vest at the neck.



FRIESLAND

This girls' costume is a rather dressy one from the Province of Friesland. The skirt is full and made of a plain color. The bodice is plain and tight with lace trimming and short sleeves. The distinctive feature of the costume is the lace, which crosses the front. In the Netherlands, partly to show a degree of wealth, the under cap was made of real gold, topped by a beautiful overcap. The Klompens Dancers use only gold-colored satin.



GRONINGEN

This costume is from the Groningen region of the northern Netherlands. It was introduced to the Tulip Time Festival in 1995. The Groningen has an elegant design featuring a color-on-color pattern and can be seen in vibrant shades of green, rose, blue, and wine. Complementing the dress is a white lace shawl worn across the shoulder and clipped in front with a decorative 2" broach. The skirt is high-waisted and is covered by an all-white apron, while petticoats made in coordinating colors are worn underneath. A cap of gold lamé is worn under a lace and tulle that cascades over the shoulders.

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ISLE OF MARKEN - GIRL'S

The Isle of Marken costume has a bright blue skirt with a yellow band at the hemline. This costume, and the Staphorst, is the only ones with shorter hemlines. The striped blouse has three-quarter sleeves and is covered by a yellow and red bolero. Three parts make up the cap: an inner cap with a piece of lace, a close-fitting white cap, and a printed cap which ties under the chin and matches the printed bib.



ISLE OF MARKEN - BOY'S

First offered in 2000, there are several unique features in the Marken boy's costume. The shirt is blue and white or gray and white stripes with red stitches and buttonholes. Under the shirt is a white dickie with a red plaid band on the collar. A double-breasted red vest with gold buttons shows below the shirt. It is finished off with a red plaid scarf. Although the other costumes are worn at the waist, this knicker-style pant is worn a little below the waist. It has a fedora-style hat.



MIDDELBURG

In recent years, the Middelburg has become the most popular of the dance costumes. It features a full black skirt and bodice highlighted by a brilliantly striped apron. The printed dickie is edged with embroidered lace. A large white collar, heavily starched and edged in lace, is tucked into the apron band. The small fitted lace cap holds the "kissers" right to the head. Over this is a cone-shaped, starched cotton cap.



NOORD - WORKDAY

These men's costumes are also from the Volendam area, but represent an earlier time period, c. 1905. Both the "Everyday Workday" version and the "Sunday Dress" version of this men's costume were directly reproduced by our costume staff, after careful study of vintage costumes in the Holland Museum. The c.1905 "Workday outfit" is easily identified by its buckskin colored pants and red striped jacket. In both Marken and Volendam one can still find local people in costume today.



NOORD - SUNDAY

These men's costumes are also from the Volendam area, but represent an earlier time period, c. 1905. Both the "Everyday Workday" version and the "Sunday Dress" version of this men's costume were directly reproduced by our costume staff, after careful study of vintage costumes in the Holland Museum. The boy's c. 1905 "Sunday Best" presents a distinguished black suit with a striped vest underneath. In both Marken and Volendam one can still find local people in costume today.

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STAPHORST - GIRL'S

The Staphorst costume comes from the town of the same name. Staphorst is a quaint and very religious community where the outside world is considered base and very sinful. The costume features a shorter blue-striped skirt with a dark blue apron over a bright red petticoat. It is the only costume with a colorful petticoat. The black silky blouse has a flowered vest worn with a checked shawl. The hat matches the vest and must be tied under the chin.



STAPHORST - BOY'S

A new Dutch costume added in 2002 is the boy's Staphorst. It is a navy blue outfit with long pants and a long-sleeved shirt. The shirt has 7 rows of plain or ornamental buttons along with a white dickie and red neck kerchief. The costume is set off with a pair of white suspenders. The hat is a common cotton or wool fisherman's hat.



URK - GIRL'S

From the town of Urk comes the original layered look. The costume features a dark skirt and bodice with a checked apron. Over the bodice, the girls wear a striped vest (sometimes referred to as a corset cover), which laces at the waist. The costume is topped with an over blouse without sleeves. Tradition from the Netherlands says that a girl may embroider designs on her over blouse, but if she is over 21, she may not embroider hearts on it. The costume is completed with a small, pleated, close-fitting cap.



URK - BOY'S

This boys' costume was introduced in 1987 and is from the island of Urk in the Zuider Zee. The distinctive features of this costume are the pants, which end just below the knees, and a predominantly red (with light-colored stripe) double-breasted jacket fastened with white buttons. A black tie is worn with the outfit and a high black hat which is tied with red bows and faced with a medium blue color.

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VOLENDAM - GIRL'S

The Volendam is the oldest of the dancers' authentic costumes. It features a winged cap of starched lace. The multi-striped skirt is full, and over it is worn an apron of black sateen with a band of printed cotton at the top. The same design is usually used for the square bib at the neck. The blouse has a tight bodice, a square neckline and short sleeves



VOLENDAM - BOY'S

The boys' Volendam costume has baggy black pants with a flap in the front held up by two big buttons. A white under-dickie has a little stand-up collar. All that shows of this piece is the collar with a black embroidery stitch around it and two small buttons. The over-dickie is made of small checked material. This is all topped by a jacket that is either plaid or checked with a facing on the lapels and sleeves of gray and white or blue and white seersucker stripe. The black scarf around the neck is worn outside the jacket.



WALCHEREN

One of the most popular costumes is the Walcheren. It has a dark blue or black skirt with an identically colored blouse. The skirt is covered with a checked apron. A dickie of printed cotton has a pleated strip of the same material tucked into the blouse opening. There are two caps, one close fitting and another, which is an all-over embroidery, dotted Swiss or lace, which flows out into a shoulder-length ruffle.



ZUID BEVELAND

This distinctive costume has an unusually large hat. It has a short-sleeved blouse that buttons in the back. The large floral print dickie is topped with the pleated scarf, which tucks in at the waistline with the blouse. The black skirt is covered with a black apron. The small white head hugging under cap has square gold "kissers" sewn in so they fit at the temples. This is covered by a big hat, which comes to the neckline in the back. The square cap would be worn by a girl of the Roman Catholic faith; a more rounded cap indicates a Protestant.

Information provided by Herrick District Library (05/2008)

Costume information courtesy of www.tuliptime.com.

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