

Traditional Costumes and Ornaments of Uttarakhand

The state of Uttarakhand can be broadly divided into the two divisions of Kumaon and Garhwal. The traditional costumes of the people belonging to the two divisions are quite similar. However, it has also been described separately in great detail.

Head-dress:

The men wear a *cap* or a piece of cloth tied around their head like a *turban*. The women cover their head with a scarf-like piece of cloth called *dupatta* or *orni*.

Costumes:

The men traditionally wear a loin-cloth called *dhoti* or *lungi* with a long loose shirt called *kurta*. They may also wear *kurta* with *pyjama* (a pair of loose pants tied by a drawstring around the waist). The women generally wear *ghagra* (an oriental long skirt), *choli* (an Indian blouse) and *orni* (a cloth covering the head and the upper body, attached to the waist). Young girls often wear *salwar* (similar to pyjamas but narrow at the ankles), *kameez* (knee-length loose shirt) and *dupatta* (a length of cloth used as a scarf by women of the Indian subcontinent). Some women also wear a *sari*. Affluent people wear woolen coats during winter.

Ornaments:



Nath

The men generally wear rings on their fingers. Some may also wear a gold chain around their neck. Married women smear kumkum on their forehead and wear silver toe-rings called *bichhuwas*. They also wear copper or silver anklets. In Garhwal, married women wear a black beaded necklace called *chareu*. Women are very fond of jewellery and wear small nose-studs called *keels*, gold nose-rings called *nath*, gold ear-rings, and various types of necklaces. *Hansuli* and *chandanhar* are two popular styles of necklaces. Necklaces made of colourful beads, coins, or teeth and claws of tigers and panthers are also worn. Turquoise studded silver amulets are worn on the arms and necks. Bangles or *churis* made of gold, silver, coloured glass or plastic are worn on the arms.

Traditional Costumes and Ornaments of Kumaon

On the basis of climatic conditions and the people inhabiting the various regions, Randhawa (1970) had divided Kumaon into the following four zones: the trans-Himalayan Tibetan desert zone, the inner Himalayan Bhotia alpine zone, the middle Himalayan Khassian zone, and the outer Himalayan Kumaon zone. The clothing of the people living in each of these zones varies distinctly. The people living in the trans-Himalayan Tibetan desert zone and the inner Himalayan Bhotia alpine zone wear thick woolen clothes to protect themselves from the intense cold of the region. The women wear thick woolen skirts, blouses, waistcoats and woolen shoes and socks, while the men wear woolen coats, trousers, and caps. In comparison, the other two zones are low in altitude, and thus the people here wear clothes of lighter materials, generally cotton. The men wear *dhoti* (long elaborate loin-cloth) and *kurta* (long shirt), or *pyjama* (a pair of loose pants tied by a drawstring around the waist) and shirt. Women wear a long skirt called *lehenga* or *ghagra* and a blouse called *kurti* or a *dhoti* (long elaborate loin-cloth) and blouse. During fairs and other festive occasions, women wear a coloured *ghaghra* (skirt), *angari* (blouse) and a *pichhora* (scarf) while men wear traditional *chudidar* trousers (similar to pyjamas but loose at the thighs and tight near the ankles where it is gathered in folds), neck-buttoned coats, round caps etc. The women are very fond of jewellery and embellish themselves with numerous gold and silver ornaments.

Traditional Costumes and Ornaments of Garhwal

Based on climatic conditions, Garhwal can be divided into Upper Garhwal, Middle Garhwal, and Lower Garhwal. The clothing of the people inhabiting these three zones varies due to marked differences in the climatic conditions and culture of the people inhabiting these regions.

In Upper Garhwal, the high valleys are inhabited by the Bhotias while nomadic pastoralists like the Gaddis and Gujjars traverse the alpine pastures. The Bhotia men wear woolen trousers and a loose gown tied at the waist with a woolen cloth called *patta*. On the head they wear a woolen cap. The women wear loose woolen undergarments instead of trousers and a woolen gown similar to those worn by the men except theirs is more colourful. The women may also wear a woolen skirt called *ghaghra* or a black woolen loin-cloth called *dhoti*, a shirt called *lava*, and a white woolen waistcoat called *sadari*. They wrap a piece of cloth around their head like a turban. The women are very fond of jewellery and wear a profusion of beads, rings, and other gold and silver ornaments on their ears, neck, and nose. The dress of the Gaddis and Gujjars is similar to that of the Gaddis and Gujjars of Himachal Pradesh.

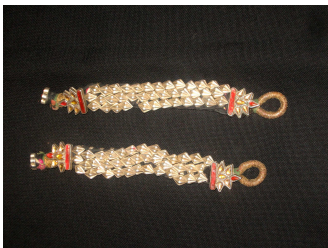
In Middle Garhwal, great variety is observed in the clothing of different groups of people. A group of



Dokha



Bichhwa



Paunje

pastoralists called Khadwal wear an unstitched sleeveless gown made of goat wool that reaches just below the knees, called *dokha* or *tyonkha*. Underneath, the men wear a cotton shirt called *sutti vani* and wrap a blanket made of hemp fibre called *gati* around their body, while the women wear a shirt called *kurti* and tie a long cloth called *pagarh* around their waist. In the middle Alakananda Valley, the men wear the *dokha* with close-fitted trousers and a buttoned-up long coat called *achkan*, while the women wear *ghaghra*, a blouse called *angari* or a shirt called *lava*, *pagarh*, and a shawl or *chaddar*. In the lower Alakananda Valley, the men wear trousers or a white loin-cloth, shirt, coat and a cap, while the women wear a loin-cloth, blouse, and a shawl or *chaddar*. In the lower valleys of Middle Garhwal, the men wear close-fitted trousers, buttoned up long coat and a cap, while the women wear a *ghaghra*, a blouse called *angari* and a scarf like cloth tied around the head known as *dhantu*. In the Bhilangana valley, the men wear a type of long coat called *angarkha* that is tied by strings instead of buttons. The men of upper Yamuna Valley wear a *suthan* (trousers), a shirt, buttoned up coat and a cap called *sikoli*, while the women wear a *ghaghra*, a blouse called *choli*, and *dhantu*. In Jaunsar-Bawar, the men wear a loose frock-dress called *chola* (also called *talko*), a large double-breasted coat called *loiya* and close fitted trousers called *jhangel*, made of wool during winter and cotton during summer. A strip of woolen or cotton cloth called *manjan* is tied around the waist over the coat. A long shirt reaching down to the thighs called *jhoga* is also worn. They wear small knickers (underwear) or loin-cloth while working in the fields. The traditional Jaunsari head-dress is a round woolen cap with folded edges called the *Digwa*. Leather shoes called *chamraudha* are worn during festive occasions while *khursa* (made of leather soles and woolen uppers) is used to walk on snow. The women wear *ghaghra*, *kurti*, *dhantu*, and a woolen coat called *khilka* or *mekhra*. They are very fond of ornaments and wear nose-ring, gold ear-rings, glass and plastic bangles and gold and silver wristlets. A nose pendant called *bulak* is very common in Jaunsar though it is not worn in Bawar.

In Lower Garhwal, people generally wear cotton clothes throughout the year, except during the few winter months. Men wear trousers, shirt, bush-shirt, and coat, while women wear blouse, loin cloth, dupatta or shawl. Due to its close proximity to the plains, the region is greatly influenced by modern fashion trends.