

Costume of Uttarakhand: The Tradition of India

Rishika Bhankar¹, Devika Kumari¹, Saurabh Srivastava²

¹ B.Des (Fashion Design), FDDI Noida

² Jr. Faculty, FDDI Noida

[DOI:10.5281/ScienceWorld.15352605](https://doi.org/10.5281/ScienceWorld.15352605)

The traditional costume of Uttarakhand, a state in northern India, varies by region and ethnicity, with distinct attire for men and women.

Uttarakhand is home to two primary groups, the Garhwalis and Kumaonis, depending on the region. The state boasts a vibrant culture, with music and dance playing vital roles. A variety of languages are spoken here, including Garhwali, Kumaoni, Bhoti, and Hindi. Traditional Uttarakhand attire features significant silver and gold jewelry. Visitors to Uttarakhand will often see women adorned with gold kundal (earrings) and multiple ear piercings.



The region is also diverse, inhabited by various ethnic groups such as Rajputs, Brahmins, and tribal communities like Tharu, Jaunsari, and Bhotia, resulting in a rich variety of traditional clothing.

Garhwali Traditional Attire:

Women's Traditional Garments

In the Garhwal region of this northern state, women traditionally wear a sari styled in a unique manner, with the pallu draped from the front and knotted at the shoulder, complemented by a cloth waistband. This style is practical for women as it facilitates carrying food and does not hinder their work in the fields. Traditionally, the sari was paired with a full-sleeved Angra (blouse) featuring silver buttons to keep women warm. They also wear a headscarf to protect their hair from damage and assist in carrying the harvest.

A married woman is typically adorned with several silver ornaments, including a hansuli (neck piece), guloband (similar to a contemporary choker), a black beaded necklace known as chareu, silver payal, a silver dhagula (bracelet), and bichuye (toe rings). The application of sindoor along with a bindi is also essential for married women. Even today, the Gulaband remains a significant symbol of marriage, often designed with a maroon or blue band featuring gold square pieces arranged on it.

Hansuli

A woman adorns a gold bulaq on her nose. Traditionally, it is customary for a newlywed woman to wear a prominent gold septum ring known as a bulaq, which is gifted as part of the dowry from the bride's family. Weddings hold great significance within this community. The bride typically wears a vibrant red ghaghra, complemented by an elaborate nath (nose ring), maang teeka, bulaq, guloband, and kamar bandh (silver), among other exquisite gold ornaments.



Men's Traditional Attire

Garhwali men typically don a kurta with either pyjama or churidar, a choice often influenced by their age. This ensemble is the most prevalent in the community. Younger men complement their outfits with a topi, while older men wear a pagadi for warmth. The influence of British culture has also led many men to adopt suits. The fabric used varies according to the region's climate, with wool favored in colder areas and cotton in warmer ones.

During weddings, grooms traditionally wear a yellow dhoti paired with a kurta.



In the past, men would walk long distances and, to safeguard against theft, carried silver coins in a pouch tied around their waist, concealing it beneath their clothing.

Kumaoni Traditional Attire Women's Traditional Clothing

In the Kumaon region of Uttarakhand, women typically wear a ghagra paired with a kameez (shirt) as a blouse, which closely resembles the clothing style of many women in Rajasthan. Additionally, Kumaoni women adorn themselves with pichoras, a traditional garment often worn during weddings and special ceremonies. Traditionally, this attire was dye and made at home and was yellow.



Even today, women wear the traditional pichora on their wedding day.

In the Kumaon region, married women adorn themselves with large gold naths that cover their entire cheeks, along with hansuli, a black beaded necklace or chareu, silver bichuye (toe rings), and sindoor. These elements are deemed essential. A woman dressed in this traditional jewelry represents the heritage of Pithoragarh.

Men's Traditional Attire

The everyday clothing of men from the Kumaon region closely resembles that of Garhwali men. They typically wear a kurta and pyjama, complemented by a turban or topi. Unique to the Kumaon area, it is also common for them to adorn themselves with jewelry on their necks or hands.



Reference:

Available on request

