

Clothing

THE LATVIAN FOLK DRESS

Folk dress in Latvia has played and still plays an important symbolic role in the preservation of national values and cultural heritage and in the creation of a common social awareness among people. Nowadays the traditional folk dress is worn for festive occasions both personal and national level. The garments not only display a social status but also origins and traditions of a particular region of Latvia.

It is possible to make out two historic periods of specific traditions that characterize Latvian folk dress. First is the period from 7th to 13th century, which is also known as the “ancient dress” period. The second one dates back to 18th and 19th century and is often referred as “ethnic” or “ethnographic dress”.

<http://www.latvia.eu/culture/latvian-folk-dress>

<http://www.senaklets.lv/eng.php>

SEASONAL CLOTHING IN LATVIA

Major summer/winter temperature differences mean that Latvian street fashion is highly seasonal.

Summer clothing can be skimpy but it should still cover upper thighs and torso. Anything less than that is acceptable only for swimming and sunbathing. Being naked/topless is only common in nudist beaches/saunas, some of which are gender-segregated.

Spring/Autumn clothing is warmer, hands and face remaining the sole uncovered portions of the skin.

During wintertime Latvians throw in many layers of clothes to combat the frost: furs, scarfs, gloves, caps, socks... Most of these warmest clothes are removed while in heated interiors (at some institutions this is even mandatory), showing the usual Spring/Autumn clothing underneath.