



**UZBEK NATIONAL CLOTHING (TASHKENT–FERGANA, SAMARKAND–
BUKHARA, SURKHANDARYA–QASHQADARYA, KHOREZM, AND
KARAKALPAK WOMEN'S ATTIRE)**

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Annotation: This article examines the distinctive characteristics of women's national costumes that have developed in different regions of Uzbekistan. In particular, it analyzes the historical origins, tailoring techniques, decorative methods, types of fabrics, and aesthetic features of women's clothing from the Tashkent–Fergana, Samarkand–Bukhara, Surkhandarya–Qashqadarya, Khorezm, and Karakalpak regions. The study reveals how the natural and geographical conditions, customs, and cultural values of each region influenced the formation of these national garments. Furthermore, the article discusses the national traditions and craftsmanship reflected in women's attire, as well as their significance in contemporary fashion and the preservation of cultural heritage.

Keywords: Uzbek national clothing, women's attire, Tashkent–Fergana costumes, Samarkand–Bukhara costumes, Surkhandarya–Qashqadarya costumes, Khorezm women's clothing, Karakalpak women's attire, atlas, adras, gold embroidery, embroidery art, national ornaments.

The national costumes of every people represent a unique expression of their culture, customs, and historical development. Uzbek national clothing has long reflected the lifestyle, social structure, and traditions of the peoples of Central Asia. The distinctive features of local clothing were historically determined by climatic conditions, everyday life, and tribal traditions. Even in the nineteenth century, garments such as robes (to‘n), dresses, and yaktak retained ancient characteristics: they were loose-fitting, cut from whole pieces of fabric, and designed to hang freely, concealing the natural shape of the human body.

Traditional women's attire consisted of a chopon (robe), a comfortable straight-cut dress made of khan-atlas silk fabric, and wide, lightweight trousers known as lozim, which narrowed toward the ankles. Women's headwear generally comprised three main components: a small cap (qalpoqcha), a scarf (ro‘mol), and an outer head covering (kallapo‘sh). Festive women's clothing was distinguished by the elegance and beauty of the fabrics used in its production. Children's clothing largely replicated the styles worn by adults. Alongside these common features, the clothing of each district or tribe possessed distinctive characteristics related to the fabrics employed, the forms and techniques of tailoring, and various decorative elements [1].



The national costumes of women in Tashkent and the Fergana Valley are distinguished by their elegance, comfort, and simple beauty. The lifestyle, customs, and clothing traditions of the people of Tashkent and the Fergana Valley differed very little from one another. Women in this region mainly wore dresses made of atlas and adras fabrics. The glossy texture and vibrant colors of atlas demonstrated the refined taste and aesthetic sensitivity of women. In particular, the Margilan atlas fabrics were renowned throughout the East.

The dresses were long and loose-fitting, with straight-cut sleeves. They were often complemented by a kamzul (vest) or nimcha (short sleeveless jacket). The clothing of young girls was dominated by bright colors such as red, pink, yellow, and green, whereas older women preferred fabrics in more subdued tones. The doppi (embroidered skullcap) was widely used as headwear, and the Fergana doppi became especially famous for its delicate embroidery. Women's hair was braided, and tassels were attached to the ends of the braids. During festivals and wedding ceremonies, women adorned themselves with tillaqosh forehead ornaments, earrings, bracelets, and rings.


The women's attire of the Tashkent–Fergana region combined practicality with elegance and was adapted to facilitate active movement in everyday life. It should also be noted that the clothing of craftsmen from Tashkent and the Fergana Valley, as well as that of the local intelligentsia—including the Jadids, mullahs, and members of the religious community such as mosque imams, Sufis, and dervishes—had their own distinctive characteristics. The clothing culture and style of the people of Tashkent and the Fergana Valley were vividly depicted in Uzbek literature, particularly in the works of Abdulla Qodiriy, such as “Bygone Days” (O‘tgan kunlar) and “Scorpion from the Altar” (Mehrobdan chayon), where attire was closely linked to the characters' psychological and social portrayal [2].

Since Samarkand and Bukhara had long been major cultural centers along the Great Silk Road, the clothing traditions of these regions reflected the influence of various Eastern cultures. Bukhara, in particular, became famous for its art of gold embroidery (zardozi). Women's dresses were made from expensive silk fabrics and decorated with gold threads. During festive occasions and celebrations, women wore gold-embroidered robes and vests. Floral, arabesque (islimi), and geometric motifs were widely used in the decoration of garments.

Women in Bukhara wore embroidered skullcaps together with headscarves. Gold jewelry occupied an important place in bridal attire. Neck ornaments (zebigardon), forehead ornaments (tillaqosh), beads, and decorations embellished with precious stones not only enhanced beauty but also reflected the family's economic status and social standing.

The clothing of Samarkand women is particularly notable for its harmonious color combinations and exquisite embroidery. The motifs of suzani embroidery were often incorporated into garment decoration. Various garments made from traditional Uzbek silk fabrics—such as kanovuz, shoyi (silk), and khan-atlas—as well as semi-silk textiles like bekasam, banoras, and adras, were commonly worn by affluent members of society. Some of these fabrics can be described as follows.





Bekasam is a striped fabric used for sewing everyday robes for men, women, and children, as well as quilts and bedding. Banoras differs from bekasam mainly in its color variations and was used to make the paranji, a traditional outer garment for women. Parpasha is a thicker fabric than bekasam and was employed in making both paranji and robes. Adras is a semi-silk fabric decorated with ikat patterns created from dyed warp threads. Other widely used fabrics included kanovuz, shoyi, khan-atlas, floral kimkhab brocade, and dukhoba velvet. Silk and semi-silk textiles such as bekasam, adras, yakruyo, kaltak shoyi, tovlanma shoyi, and abrshoyi featured a rich variety of decorative floral designs [3].


Women's clothing in the southern regions of Uzbekistan is distinguished by its preservation of ancient traditions. The attire of women from Surkhandarya and Qashqadarya clearly reflects distinctive ethnographic characteristics. At the beginning of the twentieth century, as women became increasingly involved in the workforce and sought clothing that allowed greater freedom of movement, women in the regions under study began to wear dresses with wide sleeves, turned-back cuffs, and decorated collars. Within the household, women usually wore loose dresses without belts. In the districts of Shahrisabz, Kitab, and Dehqonobod in Qashqadarya, as well as Boysun, Sherabad, and Sariosiyo in Surkhandarya, where Uzbeks and Tajiks lived side by side, women belonging to Tajik, Qo'ng'iro't, Chig'atoy, and Barlos communities tied belts around their wide, long dresses so that the garments would not interfere with their daily household activities.

The dresses were made long and loose-fitting, and the collar areas were often decorated with embroidery. Fabrics such as adras, bo'z (plain cotton cloth), and silk were commonly used. In the mountainous villages of Surkhandarya, women engaged in livestock breeding wore winter trousers called tivit ishton, woven from goat down (*tivit*). Warm, thick trousers designed for winter use can also be found among other peoples. The wide sleeves of these garments were adapted to the hot climatic conditions of the region. Women's headwear in this area appeared in various forms, and there were distinctive methods of tying headscarves. In some districts, women adorned their heads with ornaments decorated with silver coins [4].

Traditionally, trousers (*lozim*) made for young girls and women were sewn from brightly colored fabrics, whereas simpler and more modest materials were preferred for older women and the elderly. Trousers intended for everyday wear were generally made from locally produced, plain fabrics. Those worn at weddings and festive ceremonies, however, were sewn from silk and semi-silk textiles such as shoyi and atlas, as well as from expensive imported fabrics whenever possible.

Girls' jewelry often included amulets, strings of beads, and silver ornaments. These items served not only as adornments but were also regarded as protective objects believed to ward off the evil eye. Ethnographers have noted that certain elements of the ancient Bactrian culture have been preserved in the traditional attire of Surkhandarya women.

The national clothing of Khorezm women is distinguished by its magnificence and unique decorative features. In the Khorezm oasis, women's dresses were cut loosely and were often made from red and other dark-colored fabrics. The sleeves and hems of these garments were



richly embroidered. It was also customary to wear a nimcha (short vest) or chopon (robe) over the dress. The headwear of Khorezm women differed significantly from that of other regions of Uzbekistan [4].

Jewelry held a special place in this region. Large silver earrings, bracelets, necklaces, and forehead ornaments were widely used. Bridal costumes, in particular, were exceptionally luxurious and enriched with numerous decorative elements. Closely connected with the dance traditions and folklore of Khorezm, these costumes reflect the rich cultural heritage of the oasis.

The national costume of Karakalpak women is considered one of the oldest and most distinctive clothing traditions in Central Asia. It is characterized by colorful embroidery and elaborate headwear. Women's dresses were wide, long, and straight-cut. The color red predominated in the design of these garments, complemented by embroidery in white, yellow, and blue threads. The embroidery frequently featured geometric motifs with symbolic meanings [5].


One of the most famous elements of Karakalpak women's traditional attire is the saukele, a tall headdress worn by brides. This ceremonial headpiece was richly adorned with silver ornaments, beads, and various decorative elements. Silver jewelry was widespread among Karakalpak women and often indicated a woman's age, marital status, and social position within the community. Among the most important ornaments were chest decorations, bracelets, earrings, and hair accessories.

The clothing worn by Karakalpak women at different stages of life reflected their entire way of life and social identity. During festive occasions, women and girls wore red garments or blue dresses decorated with embroidery. Young women preferred colorful garments made from Uzbek ikat fabrics, while older women wore white-and-red checkered clothing. Elderly women, in turn, dressed in garments woven from plain white fabric.

Thus, the traditional clothing of Karakalpak women represented not only an aesthetic expression of beauty but also an important marker of age, marital status, and cultural identity, preserving ancient customs and artistic traditions that have been passed down through generations.

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