

Kilts, and Corsets, and Beads....Oh My!

We will keep this post pinned to the top of the page. Feel free to comment with any shops, links, suggestions, etc. that I may have missed. Don't shoot me for the wall of text. 😊

A word about "pirate" attire - Ye Mystic Krewe of Gasparilla (the guys in charge) does not allow non-pirate krewes to wear pirate garb. So....we steer clear of pirate hats and the like.

Shoes - Not going to make a bunch of recommendations here. Just keep in mind that we are a walking krewe and the Gasparilla parades are 5 miles at a minimum. So take care of your feet! Speaking from experience, this is very important.

Clothing - There are tons of options for men and women out there. You can find fairly reasonable kilts on Amazon but, as with corsets, it is kind of a "you get what you pay for" item. For instance, I ordered a \$30 kilt from the seller Tartanista. It is functional, but the "leather" buckles are questionable and the fabric overlap in front is mere inches, making it a wardrobe malfunction waiting to happen. Also, it is NOT a requirement to be "regimental" when wearing a kilt (that means without undergarments). In fact, doing so could lead to the aforementioned wardrobe malfunction or some serious chafing, especially during the longer parades like Gasparilla. Speaking of wardrobe malfunctions, there are varying degrees of appropriateness with the parades. The Santa Fest and Children's Gasparilla parade are, obviously, meant for kids so we dial back at those events (read much less cleavage). Krewe t-shirts are always an option.

This link (<https://sportkilt.com/accessoryguide>) gives a quick breakdown of the various accessories that can be added to your kilt attire. Of course, flashes, ghillies, proper hose, are not a requirement for the parades, but these items are things men would possibly want to consider if attending a formal event such as the Tartan Ball. Here is a link explaining the various items men could wear for a formal event: <http://www.blacktieguide.com/Supplemental/Scottish.htm> The ladies wear evening gowns typically for the formal events. I highly recommend thrift shopping for gowns if you plan to attend a formal ball.

Got Kilt - <https://www.got-kilt.com/> They offer tons of options at decent prices (\$50-\$100 range). The fabric they use is the rougher wool. They also travel around the country to Celtic festivals, Renaissance Fairs, Highland Games, etc. I have seen them locally at the Dunedin Highland Games and the Dunedin Celtic Music Festival which gives opportunity to try them on.

SportKilt - <https://sportkilt.com/> I believe they get a lot of business from us. Their fabric is a finer blend. The kilts wrap around with strong velcro closures. They can be customized as much as you wish (buckles, belt loops, pockets, fringe). Mens kilts start at \$70 and ladies start at \$60. I believe they always have a 10% discount offer on their website, but if you register with your email address they regularly send out 20% off discount codes.

Local options - [Pirate Fashions](#) and [South Tampa Trading Co.](#) carry kilts and/or corsets, but prices can be higher.

[Earle's](#) guy - His name is Adal Nawaz (adalnawaz@gmail.com). A bunch of us ordered custom utility kilts from him in the past. I believe Earle posted recently in this group about putting another order together. Adal is Pakistani and SUPER nice. Have Earle tell you the stories sometime. You will see or hear purists poo-poo the clothing coming out of the Middle East, but I'm not going to discriminate. And the kind of customer service Earle has experienced with his guy is almost unheard of.

Moving on to some corset options for the ladies (or more adventurous men 🙄)

In general, these are not a requirement. However, it is fun to see yourself squeezed and tucked and hoisted to the heavens. And the added bonus I have noticed is that the 5+ mile walk at Gasparilla that would normally have my lower back screaming is a non-issue in a corset. Just keep in mind you will probably need assistance with the lacing up part. We tend to congregate at parades or other events to make sure we're all laced up well. Also, the "sturdier" corsets can make driving and using

the ladies room/port-a-potty/float johns a little more difficult because they limit the ability to bend at the waist. So....if nature is calling make sure to give yourself time in the loo.

There are the local costume options mentioned above. I personally got my first 2 corsets from [Pirate Fashions](#). The ladies (and men) working here are amazing with sizing, fit, teaching how to lace up, etc. They also have a bunch of how-to videos on their website (<https://piratefashions.com/co.../women-s-pirate-n-wench-corset>). But they are not cheap by any means. If I remember correctly, their waist cincher/underbust start around \$100 and prices increase from there. However, these are VERY well-made, spiral steel-boned corsets. [South Tampa Trading Co.](#) usually has some corsets but not a ton of selection. And [Ravens & Rockers](#) usually has new and sometimes consignment corsets. Of course there are the Victoria's Secret or Fredrick's Of Hollywood options, too.

I have personally ordered from Orchard Corsets (<https://www.orchardcorset.com/>) with very good results. Their customer service and fit options are excellent. I would strongly recommend calling them if you wish to order. They will walk you through the process to make sure you get something that fits perfectly.

Beads - Keep in mind that we throw a lot of beads. For the big 2 Gasparilla parades, I typically bring at least 4 gross (576 strands). For the smaller parades in Ybor it is considerably less. You want to have enough to last thru the entire route without having a bunch left over that you have to haul off the float. Some people like to throw bigger, more expensive beads. Others go for the basic 27"-33" strands. It is totally up to you. If you have beads that are "fancy", that tends to draw more attention from the crowd.

Locally, beads can be purchased in bulk at [Buccaneer Beads](#) and [South Tampa Trading Co.](#) I am sure there are other places I am missing. The Rough Riders always have a bead sale at their clubhouse in the week or 2 leading up to the various parades. Their selection is usually pretty good and the prices aren't too bad. Online options include Amazon, Oriental Trading, Mardi Gras Outlet (<http://www.mardigrasoutlet.com/beads>) and others I have missed.

You will see some krewbies wearing bead belts at the parades. Others just load up one arm and throw with the other. Totally a preference thing. Dog collars from the dollar store are also great for carrying beads...load a bunch onto the dog collar and then the collar can hang from a bead hook on the float.