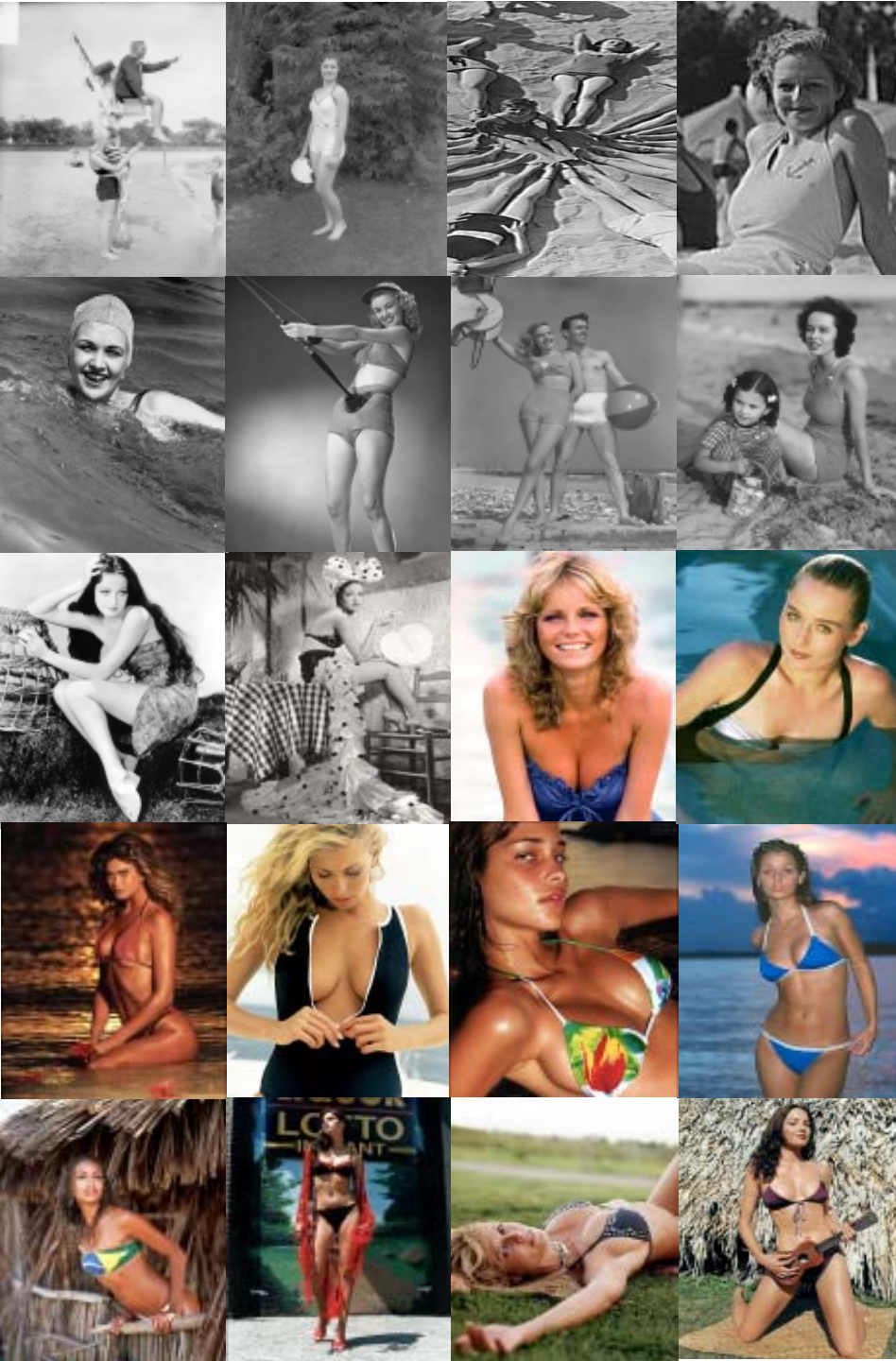




SWIMSUITevolution
100 years of fashion



The 20th Century began the swimwear revolution, brought about by: the major increase in recreational sports oriented activities and the influence of the exotic cuts of French swimwear. The clumsy and uncomfortable corset was being discarded and the work of eroticizing the body was replaced by exposing more and more of the skin. This particularly interesting, in that there really was nothing available to equalize or camouflage the shape of the female form. So swimwear began to shrink and more and more flesh was exposed. Creating a line of bathing suits is the ultimate fashion challenge for any designer. Just a minimum amount of fabric is expected to make the customer appear to have a curvaceous bosom, small waist, hips in proportion, a long torso supported with long legs.

To achieve this, the components of design - silhouette, line, texture, and details - are manipulated and juggled until a pleasing and desired effect is achieved. Then fiber, fabric, and color selections have to be made. Now the question is, what to do with the future of swimsuits.

Just as women's suits have undergone a gradual evolution process, men's swim wear has undergone many changes since its inception. Designed from the beginning to be markedly different from the female's suit, the male swimsuit's characteristics of boxiness and solidity contrasted with the female's exaggerated curves. In other words, the gender properties of the suits were clearly defined. With women's suits becoming more flamboyant than ever during the 1950's and beyond, the male bathing costume was not to be outdone, resulting an explosion of color patterns and fancy detailing. "Cabana sets" consisting of matching boxer trunks and shirts with loud prints such as zebra stripes and pony prints enjoyed much popularity during this time.

Boxer trunks were here to stay — becoming a sort of "screen" to project the men's hobbies and interests. While women's swim wear underwent almost constant transformation in style, men's swim wear was confined, for the most part, to the basic boxer and brief.

SWIMWEAR timeline

1900s

The turn of the twentieth century marked a new and daring era in swimwear for women. In 1907, Australian Annette Kellerman caused quite a stir, when she was arrested in the US for wearing a one piece suit.

1920s

During the "The Roaring 20s" an appreciation for recreation and leisure time was increasing dramatically. Swimwear was now becoming skimpier, slimmer - and would you believe - sexier, and then very athletic.

1940s

The 1940s had bathing beauties, pin-up girls, glamour girls wearing high heels, and jewelry to accessorize their bathing attire. The most exciting was a 2-piece creation call the "bikini."

1960s

The 1960s were a time of daring. Rudi Gernrich came out with his monokini (the topless swimsuit). Thin was hip and really in, and a leggy look was so great to have at one's favorite place to swim and sunbathe.

1980s

The 1980s was an era of plastic surgery. Now, women began padding their bodies with implants. Plastic surgery also lifted the bosom to create a younger look. Feeling more confident about their looks, women started wearing more revealing suits.

2000s

A bathing suit must look good dry or wet. It must be attractive day or night and needs to look good at the pool, jacuzzi, lake, river, ocean, spa, and on a cruise and the suits continue to become more and more daring showing more and more skin.

1910s

The swimwear revolution was brought about by: the increase in sports activities and the influence of the exotic cuts of French swimwear. The clumsy and uncomfortable corset was discarded and eroticizing the body was replaced by exposing more skin.

1930s

The 1930s had a new generation of designers turning out swimwear garments that were functional, sleek, and streamlined. The 1934 swimsuit hugged the body and was constructed to allow shoulder straps to be lowered for tanning.

1950s

As long as a woman had a bosom, a woman was desirable in the 1950s. Because all fashion ends in excess, the more she had the better. They padded their bosoms with cotton, the early Wonderbra.

1970s

Burning bras was to protest against admiring women for their bosom. The no bra look came in. They did away with the stuffing and the construction. What you see is what you get.

1990s

Because of problems from implants that leaked, the women returned to suits with intricately engineered wires, silicone inserts and other fiber-fill push up devices.

