

The More You NOLA: Wickedly cool costume shops

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mcross3@tulane.edu



Owned by alumna Claudia Baumgarten, Miss Claudia's Vintage Clothing & Costumes is known for its creative window displays and quirky retro clothing collection. (Photo by Sally Asher)

Never underestimate the need for a rainbow-hued wig, steel-boned corset or even lederhosen while living in New Orleans. As the city celebrates an ever-flowing stream of weekend festivals, holidays and pub crawls, residents keep an arsenal of costumes in their closets year-round. Visit these local costume shops to pick up essentials for Halloween and beyond.

Uptown Costume & Dancewear (4326 Magazine St.)

This warehouse-like emporium stocks every inch of its floor-to-ceiling space with an enormous costume and accessories selection. The shop stocks the basics (ghoulish masks, unitards and animal ears) but also carries oddball pieces, such as luchador masks and foam onesies resembling giant round halves of a lox bagel. The store also sells handcrafted, delicately detailed finds such as headdresses from Halfshell Productions. Each one incorporates elements like peacock feathers, Spanish moss, voodoo dolls, oyster shells and faux fruit into unique designs.

Miss Claudia's Vintage Clothing & Costumes (4204 Magazine St.)

Patrons are first greeted outside by Miss Claudia's colorfully coordinated window displays, hinting at the treasure trove of classic costumes and unique vintage pieces inside. The cozy boutique boasts vintage lace gowns and sequined 1980s evening wear alongside retro black velvet witches' smocks and creepy circus clown garb. The shop also includes accessories to complete any look, including suspenders, bow ties and a large variety of berets, flowery pillboxes and other hats.

Funky Monkey (3127 Magazine St.)

This resale boutique is known for its mix of contemporary and vintage clothing but also acts as a one-stop shop for the odds and ends that personalize any costume. The store features costume jewelry, kitschy 1990s throwback accessories (like holographic Dr. Martens and purses shaped like grinning green aliens) and a sizeable array of candy-colored beehive wigs and Marie Antoinette-inspired updos.