



Photo by Andre Ranieri
BackStage on Broadway employees show just what Halloween is all about, as they dress up to offer patrons costumely advice.

Costume creativity comes to life

Whether one becomes Captain Hook, Scarlett O'Hara, Buzz the Bumblebee or Sam the Spud, the trick to Halloween dressing is to come as you aren't and treat yourself to a little fantasy.

"Halloween is a great time to be something or someone you've always dreamed of being, and have fun getting away with it," said Ellen Woeste, manager of BackStage on Broadway, the costume store downtown that carries over 120 different outfits from the historical and hysterical to the fantastic and sexy.

But what's really turning Halloween into a scream is how people are steering away from tradition and coming up with their own weird and wacky original costume ideas.

At BackStage on Broadway, they've had someone going as an undertaker and a couple pairing up as a sheik and a camel. And at the Chazpro Family Fun Shop, just two blocks down from campus, college students are going for the bizarre and flamboyant.

According to Chuck Leach, owner of Chazpro Family Fun Shop, the guys dig the mad-scientist/crazed-maniac look while the girls prefer something a little more glamorous in the likes of a southern belle, showgirl or a flapper.

But not everyone comes in with a definite idea when they want to be. That's when the staff steps in and lends a helping hand.

"About 90 percent of the time our customers don't exactly know where they're heading," Leach said. "We help them realize their fantasy with suggestions on what would look good."

"We try to make it a fun activity; after all, that's what the spirit of Halloween is all about," Woeste said, pointing out that even her staff dresses up to get everyone into the All Hallows mood.

But if you really want to stand out and look different, a little make-up and accessories can do wonders.

"Depending on how elaborate you want to look, a little simple and effectively applied make-up or the right accessories, such as a wig or a mask, can set you apart from all the rest," Woeste said.

At Chazpro Family Fun Shop, masks are the specialty, with over 100 varieties to pick from. Check out the current favorite — a weird giant eye mask.

Fancy as it all sounds, it doesn't cost much to look your ghoulish best.

The average costume costs anywhere from \$24 to \$60, and accessories go for under \$10 at BackStage on Broadway. You also get free advice on make-up, and if you want your make-up done for you, be sure to make an appointment one day in advance. BackStage on Broadway,

located at 41 W. Broadway, is opened from 9:30 a.m. to 6 p.m. Monday through Saturday.

Chazpro Family Fun Shop can help you piece your costume together for \$10 to \$15. Masks range from 95 cents (basic half-masks) to \$80 for the more elaborate ones. Spooky party decorations such as spider webs, tombstones, bats and bugs are also sold. The store, located at 603 E. 13th Ave., is open from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Monday through Friday.

— Ming Rodrigues

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