# The beach dress: summer’s new essential blending glamour and practicality



What we are witnessing is the emergence of a distinct wardrobe category: the beach dress, designed not only for lounging by the sea but also for stylish transitions into social settings. While the concept of a beach cover-up isn’t new, the modern interpretation is a far cry from the makeshift attire of the past—a world of sarongs and oversized T-shirts hastily thrown on over damp swimwear. Today’s beach dress has firmly established itself as a key piece in summer fashion, combining glamour with practicality.

The evolution of this garment is rooted in significant cultural shifts. Social media, combined with the pandemic’s limitations on travel, has transformed holiday experiences into curated social moments. No longer are vacations solely about relaxation and sunbathing; they’re opportunities to showcase fashion. Retailers have noted a marked prioritisation among consumers, who are willing to reduce expenditure in other areas to splurge on new holiday outfits, particularly those that embody the chic essence of beachwear.

Among the hottest contenders in this new category are dresses that not only serve as stylish coverings but enhance the swimwear beneath. The modern beach dress boasts features like openwork crochet or sheer fabrics, allowing a glimpse of the swimsuit while ensuring that it remains a focal point of the look. This juxtaposition of swimwear and dress elevates both items, creating a dynamic visual that captures attention on the sun loungers. Particularly popular are pieces like the Citara dress by Faithfull, characterized by its breezy silhouette and trendy colours, celebrated on platforms such as Instagram for its versatility and effortless style.

The savvy packing strategy for summer holidays also plays a role in this trend, where functionality must compete with style. As consumers navigate high airline fees that make hand luggage a necessity, the emphasis is on lightweight and easy-to-maintain fabrics—suggesting a preference for dresses that can seamlessly transition from beach to bar. Influencers, like Lisa Snowdon, exemplify this trend, sharing their radiant holiday wardrobes that blend bohemian elements with contemporary chicness, proving that elegance doesn’t have to be compromised for practicality.

Accessories remain essential in completing the summer look; a pair of stylish sunglasses, a favourite book, and perhaps an artisanal ice cream serve not only as practical companions but also as delightful details in our Instagram feeds. White dresses maintain their popularity, offering a striking contrast to vibrant swimwear, while darker tones promise a more forgiving option for those summer moments spent on less-than-pristine surfaces.

Ultimately, the beach dress is more than simply an outfit; it embodies a lifestyle characterised by a blend of comfort, flair, and self-expression—a manifestation of our newfound appreciation for every part of the holiday experience.

## Reference Map:

* Paragraph 1 – [[1]](https://www.theguardian.com/fashion/2025/may/28/jess-cartner-morley-on-fashion-the-beach-dress-is-this-summes-must-have), [[2]](https://www.theguardian.com/fashion/2025/may/28/jess-cartner-morley-on-fashion-the-beach-dress-is-this-summes-must-have)
* Paragraph 2 – [[1]](https://www.theguardian.com/fashion/2025/may/28/jess-cartner-morley-on-fashion-the-beach-dress-is-this-summes-must-have), [[5]](https://www.whowhatwear.com/fashion/dresses/the-dress-report-summer-2025)
* Paragraph 3 – [[3]](https://www.whowhatwear.com/fashion/dresses/faithfull-citara-dress), [[4]](https://www.womanandhome.com/fashion/fashion-news/lisa-snowdon-holiday-wardrobe/)
* Paragraph 4 – [[6]](https://www.whowhatwear.com/summer-vacation-2025-fashion), [[7]](https://www.marieclaire.co.uk/fashion/shopping/free-people-intimately)

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## Bibliography

1. <https://www.theguardian.com/fashion/2025/may/28/jess-cartner-morley-on-fashion-the-beach-dress-is-this-summes-must-have> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://www.theguardian.com/fashion/2025/may/28/jess-cartner-morley-on-fashion-the-beach-dress-is-this-summes-must-have> - In this article, Jess Cartner-Morley discusses the emergence of the 'beach dress' as a fashionable and practical addition to summer wardrobes. These dresses are designed to transition seamlessly from swimwear to casual wear, featuring elegant details suitable for both the beach and social settings. The piece highlights how this trend reflects changing attitudes towards tanning and holiday dressing, emphasizing the importance of versatile, stylish pieces that enhance the overall holiday experience.
3. <https://www.whowhatwear.com/fashion/dresses/faithfull-citara-dress> - The Citara dress by Faithfull the Brand has become a popular choice for summer 2025, gaining attention on Instagram for its effortlessly chic style. Characterized by a soft drop waist, delicate straps, and coastal stripes, the dress combines trend-forward colours like butter yellow, powder blue, and chocolate brown with a breezy silhouette. Fashion insiders and influencers have embraced it for its simplicity and versatility, making it a go-to piece for various summer occasions.
4. <https://www.womanandhome.com/fashion/fashion-news/lisa-snowdon-holiday-wardrobe/> - Lisa Snowdon's recent Instagram updates from Ibiza showcase a vibrant and bohemian holiday wardrobe, offering summer style inspiration. At 53, her fashion choices reflect a bohemian flair ideal for beach holidays, including statement pieces like red-patterned dresses by Queen of Archives and a white and green maxi dress from Boden. The article highlights the importance of versatile, breathable pieces that transition seamlessly from day to night, maximizing suitcase space while keeping holiday dressing effortless and stylish.
5. <https://www.whowhatwear.com/fashion/dresses/the-dress-report-summer-2025> - The summer 2025 'Dress Report' provides a comprehensive guide to the most impactful dress styles, brands, and trends of the season. It explores emerging and cult-favorite brands transforming the fashion landscape, highlighting the continued relevance and versatility of dresses during the warmer months. The report blends celebrity influence, designer insight, and trend analysis to reveal 2025’s definitive summer dress guide, offering readers a curated selection of styles to embrace for the season.
6. <https://www.whowhatwear.com/summer-vacation-2025-fashion> - This article presents a curated list of 52 fashion items perfect for summer vacation 2025, compiled by a fashion enthusiast. The selection includes a wide array of styles such as dresses, bikinis, shorts, skirts, cover-ups, beach bags, and accessories. The author highlights personal favorites that are already in their cart or wardrobe, providing brief, enthusiastic commentary on standout features like fabric, design, and versatility, aiming to inspire readers to upgrade their vacation wardrobes with stylish, practical, and chic pieces for the season.
7. <https://www.marieclaire.co.uk/fashion/shopping/free-people-intimately> - Chemena Kamali’s appointment as Creative Director of Chloé in 2023 launched a revival of boho fashion, prominently seen in her debut collection and widely adopted by influencers and celebrities. Her designs have influenced current spring/summer fashion trends, leading to a noticeable bohemian presence on the high street. For fashion enthusiasts seeking Chloé-inspired looks without the luxury price tag, Free People's latest Intimately collection presents an accessible alternative, offering boho-leaning style pieces that echo the aesthetic seen on Chloé’s runway.