

Dancer Expectations: Belly Grams & Private Parties

Getting Started

Dancers should arrive 30 minutes before their scheduled start time. You should arrive in clean “dress casual” or “business casual” attire. Aside from last minute touch-ups, you should arrive in hair and makeup. If you are running late, call the client & Andrea immediately. (Andrea’s Cell Phone is 590-1905) Be sure you have these numbers with you or programmed into your cell phone before you leave for the venue.

Get good directions. Make sure you have a good street map if you are going someplace unfamiliar. Make sure you have plenty of gas and toll money for the turnpike.

When you arrive, greet the hostess or contact person. Introduce yourself. Ask what to do with your music, where to change, & who will be letting you know when its time for your sets.

Give your CDs to the DJ or host, set up your tip jar & business cards, and take care of any other business before getting into costume.

Costume

Professional quality, well maintained costumes are required. Acceptable costumes: Egyptian bra & skirt sets, cabaret dresses, or a bedlah and skirt.

Make sure your costume fits, and that all hooks, fasteners, and straps are sewn on securely at least 24 hours in advance.

A veil or a cover-up is required if you will be doing multiple between sets.

Footwear is required. Acceptable footwear: hermes sandals, ballroom dance shoes, nude or metallic character shoes.

Music

Music should be authentic Arabic, Turkish, or Greek belly dance music. No western or fusion music.

Burn your music onto a CD. Use a new CD for each set, if doing multiple sets. Clearly label each CD with your name & the songs you recorded. Always bring one full-length master copy of a CD such as Bellydance Superstars as a back up in case your burned CDs do not play.

Each CD/set should have: 1 up-tempo song suitable for an entrance, 1 medium tempo song for slower, fluid movement & greeting your audience, 1 drum solo, 1 up tempo song for finale.

Choose songs that are between 2:30-5:00 in length. Sets should be between 9-15 minutes long. If business is slow or attention is waning, you can ask the DJ to cut the 4th song.

Performance

Your first song should include an entrance & be performed on stage or in the center of the dance floor if available. The second song is for greeting each table or group of guests. Choose a few centrally located, high visibility spots for your drum solo. Use the final song to re-circulate through the venue & return to the stage for the end of your set. Finish with a strong pose/ending. Quickly return to your dressing room.

Remember the audience is expecting a high energy and engaging dancer. Music choices and dances should focus on external energy rather than internal.

Finger cymbals are not props, they are musical instruments & may be played by dancers with suitable skill.

Be prepared for costume tips. If you will not be accepting tips, have a friendly gesture for accepting tips & setting boundaries. Example: *As the customer attempts to place the tip in your bra, gesture to the bra and wiggle your finger 'no'. Playfully bounce hip drops towards the customers hand, point to the belt and nod 'yes'. OR Take the tip in your hand & toss into the air over your head with a loud "Oopah".*

Always thank guests that tip you.

When You're Done

Change into your street clothes before leaving the dressing room after your last set.

Collect your CDs, tip jar, & business cards.

Clean up your dressing room.

Thank the client & leave.

Odds & Ends

PROMOTE YOURSELF!!!!!!! Bring business cards and leave some with the hosts, plus 3-5 in the restrooms. Use this blurb if it helps:

Many clients ask us about the appropriate way to tip their dancer. There are several ways to tip your dancer. In a "Money Shower" bills are tossed gently over the dancer's head or at her torso. Some dancers will accept tips in the belts of their costumes, at the side of the hip. If you'd like to tip on the body, wave your bill politely at the dancer to get her attention. She will use the opportunity to playfully interact with your table. The dancer will let you know through this interaction if you may tip her costume or if she would prefer a money shower. Do not force costume tips on the dancer. You may also put tips directly into the dancer's tip jar.

If you are bringing an escort, make sure he or she is dressed in clean, professional attire. Your escort should stay in a discrete location at the party. He or she should never fraternize with the clients, or accept food & beverage. The escort should politely decline any such offers. Your escort may coordinate music with the DJ and collect tips from the floor on your behalf.

You are responsible for knowing & upholding the contracted agreement with the client. Always bring a copy of the contract with you. Be prepared to hold the client to the terms of the contract. I may or may not be available to help you at the time of a dispute. It is ultimately up to you to handle disputes in a professional, non-combative fashion. An example of an appropriate response would be: *I'm sorry, it seems as though we understand the terms of the contract differently. The copy I have says {show contract and reference point of dispute}. Our director is unavailable at this time & I am not authorized to make changes to the {schedule, terms of payment, time slot, tip minimum...}. If you cannot {have a dancer tonight, pay me in cash, start or end on time, guarantee my tips tonight...} I will have to leave now and have the director call you to clarify the terms of the contract. I apologize for the confusion/inconvenience.*