

Cream dinner jackets

Description

It's a regrettable truth that if you wear a cream or white dinner jacket someone will accuse you of looking like an Italian ice cream salesman, and that a shiver of fear will run down your spine every time you see someone carrying a glass of red wine. However, if these are the costs associated with wearing one of the most elegant, and little-seen garments in the male wardrobe, then it's a small price to pay.

The fact is that a black dinner jacket, while indispensable, can sometimes seem a little mundane after a while. If you want to distinguish yourself from the eveningwear crowd you may wish to consider ordering a cream dinner jacket, so that you can leave your black, or midnight blue, jacket in the wardrobe, at least during the summer months.

The good news is that you needn't buy a new pair of trousers to go with it, as the cream jacket is worn with standard black evening trousers. The bad news is that there are a great number of options to be considered before you pull the trigger. These include whether to go for a single or double-breasted jacket, shawl, peak or notch lapels, which of the various buttoning styles to choose, and the ever-thorny question of vents.

For what it's worth (quite a lot, at least in my mind) Humphrey Bogart wore a double-breasted jacket with a shawl collar in Casablanca, although if yours is going to be worn in the heat a single-breasted jacket will feel cooler. Just as important Sean Connery wore a peak-lapel version in Goldfinger, meaning that Bond's blessing extends to cream dinner jackets. But even more special is a low-buttoning double-breasted jacket that appeared in an old Apparel Arts illustration, in which the model is stepping from a gondola into a palazzo in Venice. And you can be damn sure that once inside he isn't going to spend the evening selling gelati.

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