



**Boudoir & Fine Art Photography:  
The Intersection of Fun & Seduction**

**A Guide for First Time Clients  
and Veteran Boudies**

**Monumental Arts  
Professional Fine Art Photography**

## **Boudoir & Fine Art Photography: Introduction**

So you are thinking about a Boudoir & Fine Art photography session – how exciting! But what is a boudoir & Fine Art session? Sounds simple – it’s just a sexy portrait session, right? Yes, no, and maybe, all at once! Boudoir is a unique and intimate style of photography – and whether you're looking for a romantic, glamour, pin-up, or fantasy session, it takes a big step to jump right in.

Boudoir photography is a broad genre of photography that involves female subjects in sensual and suggestive poses. It is distinct from erotic photography in its emphasis on the aesthetic qualities of the subject and the craftsmanship of the photographic process over the sexually stimulating nature of the image.

So, whether you are a veteran in front of the camera or brand new to the role, there are some things you should know about Boudoir & Fine Art photography.

### **Tasteful, Private, and Confidential Sessions**

One of the top questions I’m asked regarding boudoir is “will these be online”?

I have photographed over 300 boudoir sessions since I started in 2012 – most are completely private and are never seen online. In other words, if you don’t want your images shown on my website as examples, they never will be!

I guarantee “Tasteful, Private, and Confidential Sessions!”

### **Boudoir & Fine Art Styles**

**Boudoir:** Boudoir, as mentioned above, typically involves female subjects in sensual and suggestive poses. Boudoir refers to the privacy of a woman’s bedroom, and often sessions in a studio bedroom setup or a boutique hotel. However, this shouldn’t limit you to your choice of locations – outdoors, bathtubs, waterside, even your own home – all make great locations for a boudoir session. Boudoir style sessions can be “sexy-with-a-twist,” romantic, sensual, and seductive.

**Fine Art:** Fine Art style sessions often involve implied, partial, or full nudity, tastefully photographed with light and shadow to heighten the sensual nature of the subject.

**Bridal Boudoir:** Traditionally, Bridal Boudoir has the aspects of the wedding dress and the undergarments worn under the dress, usually the “bridal-wear” for the first night together. That’s traditional. Just like any other session, wear what you like. However, one important aspect of bridal boudoir is the Engagement Ring – it is often prominently displayed in various poses. Make sure yours is cleaned prior to the session to see it sparkle!

**Pin-Up:** These sessions often involve a “throwback” look to the 1940s, when “Pin-up” Girls sold War Bonds and sent their photos for the GIs “over there”. These are fun sessions, playing off the nose art of WWII era airplanes, calendar pin-ups, and the “WE CAN DO IT” posters. The face is heavy with

makeup, wet, glossy mouths and full lips, often combined with luxurious, full hair styles and up-dos, or large curls, as well as 1940s era clothing and accessories.

**Burlesque:** Burlesque is an elaborate form a dance and costume, often seen in Westerns and pre-Great War. Burlesque has seen a resurgence in recent years in places like Sax and other burlesque halls in the DC area (Sax also has a great brunch and show too).

**Costume or Cosplay:** Another up-and-coming style of photography is costume or cosplay – though it is much less “boudoir” in the traditional sense, with the recent rise in super hero movies, cosplay can make an interesting photo-session.

**Glamour, Beauty, or Fashion:** These sessions usually do not invite the viewer into the photo. Similar to a Theatrical looks, they mostly show the eccentric, the beautiful, and the unobtainable. Fashion and Beauty sessions show strong attitudes and often tend to be detached from the viewer of the photo. There is frequently an arrogant, bored look, almost of disdain for the viewer of the image, and what sometimes appear to be for life itself. Eye contact is limited, and then often the model is looking down to the camera adding to the illusion of superiority. They are usually heavily styled, heavily retouched, and mostly reserved to those with, slender faces, large eyes, full mouths, and angular features – traditional “pretty” is not a requirement. It is more how all the features work together. Smokey eyes, false lashes, stronger contouring, wet, glossy, mouths, full lips, combined with luxurious, full hair styles, often made fuller with clip-in extensions, or dramatic shorter styles all work to complete the looks. If you are looking for a modeling career, then these sessions are great ways to start.

**“Dude-oir”:** Dude-oir, or male boudoir, is the same as boudoir, focusing on the sensual and seductive nature of a man’s body.

### **Couple’s Boudoir**

Yes, I shoot couples boudoir; no, this is not pornography – and if that’s what you are looking for, please move along. If you are interested in learning more about a couple’s boudoir or seeing past sessions, please contact me for additional details.

### **Boudoir Parties**

Whether it’s for 3 or 30, a boudoir party is a great way to plan a fun and unique gathering, and we can have the session wherever you’d like – a home, hotel, or my studio, please contact me for more details.

### **Meet the Photographer in Person (if possible)**

Meet with your photographer ahead of time – consultations are ALWAYS FREE with Monumental Arts. Discuss your needs and find out if this is a photographer with whom you would feel comfortable. A boudoir session can be a very revealing process in which you might feel vulnerable. If you aren’t comfortable while having a cup of coffee with a prospective photographer, keep looking. When meeting with your photographer, be sure to let him or her know what your style is for a boudoir session.

## Boudoir & Fine Art Photography: Session Location

I want you to be comfortable and confident in your session, so the choice of session locations is extremely important. Monumental Arts offers both On-Site and Studio sessions – our unique specialty boudoir studio is located near National Harbor, just 2 miles south of the Beltway. The Studio has everything you need for a boudoir session – various studio backdrops, boudoir bedroom with silk sheets, silhouettes, and other unique spaces to capture your attention. Plus, there's a secluded seasonal outdoor area should you decide you'd like to have a session along the Potomac River.

However, you may decide you'd like a session elsewhere. There are many options for you to choose from regarding session locations. For all on-site sessions, I bring a portable studio setup with me to ensure we get the best lighting possible. However, on-site sessions may require additional costs, so please discuss early regarding your location expectations.

**Your Home:** An in-home session may be best for you – with “all the comforts of home” you may decide you'd like to stay close for your session. Your own bedroom may work, or a guest room – depending on how adventurous you'd like to be, the kitchen or your significant other's office or study may be an option too. If you have an in-home session and have a family, please make sure your significant other and children are gone for the entire session time

**Boutique Hotel:** A great getaway for a boudoir session – and then you have the hotel room for the night too! Boutique hotels offer small luxuries that show up great in photos!

**Bed & Breakfasts and Cabins:** Another great getaway for a boudoir session – B&Bs or cabins offer an exclusive quaintness to your session, often with themed rooms and big bathtubs. Often they also have private grounds with some unique outdoor photography options too.

**Outdoors:** If you know of a secluded spot you'd like for your session, I'm happy to come to anywhere you'd like! I also have suggestions for outdoor locations if this is something that interests you to learn more about.

Still not sure? The beach, the mountains – the choice is yours!

### Should I bring a friend?

I always recommend you bring a friend to your session – not only will your friend make you more comfortable during your session, but because they know you best, they may see a great pose for you that my eye may miss and help you open up further during a session – think of them as encouragement.

*However, I do not recommend you bring your significant other to the session, and anyone under 18 is a big no-no.*

But beware, I will put your friend to work!

## **Boudoir & Fine Art Photography: What to Wear During Your Boudoir Session?**

Your boudoir session should reflect you, with the fantasy added. Choose outfits you love! Think of those special pieces you might not wear often because they're impractical for day-to-day use, or the go-to blouse you always wear when you're going somewhere nice.

I always recommend bringing five or six outfits. Fitted clothing that shows your shape work best for photographs. Skip that billowy, blouson top, or anything with dolman or batwing sleeves. While they might be flattering in person, they will not be slimming in camera. This applies to any body type. Choose outfits that will hug your curves, especially your waist, hips, arms, and chest. The more variety the more choices you will have!

ALWAYS show up in loose-fitting clothes – you don't want red marks or indentions on your body from tight fitting straps or waistbands!

### **What to Wear**

- 1) **Something Understated Sexy**: You can be an understated sexy in a backless formal dress, or more sexy in a pinup-style swimsuit. A beautiful robe or silk pajamas are a great addition, too. Surprisingly, fleece pajamas are a great look too! Trench coat with sexy high heels can be "oh so mysterious". If you have a form fitting sexy coat bring it along. You know he fantasizes about you showing up to his office in nothing but a coat and heels!
- 2) **Something of His**: An oversized plain white T-shirt or oxford shirt and tie are amazing for a boudoir session, especially with French cuffs. If you or your guy are sports fans wear a sports jersey with some knee high socks. You could even take it a step further and order his favorite team jersey with your name on it or the words "sexy". Be creative. The more you put into it, the more he will be blown away.
- 3) **Something Overly Sexy**: Beautiful lingerie is lovely and empowering. Reds, blues, blacks, and whites are best, as well as two-tone lingerie, but lots of prints and colors can be distracting. Always include that "special" matching bra and panties set. Semi-sheer Teddies are great to have a conservative look without showing too much. Even though the concept is over 800 years old, corsets are amazing for a boudoir session. Almost every woman brings fishnets and/or thigh highs to her session. My number one suggestion is if you plan to wear them with a garter belt, buy the kind without the plastic stay ups. If you plan to not wear garters then the plastic stay-ups are a must.
- 4) **Something Light**: For a light outfit, think angelic. Soft, gauzy, sheer. It doesn't have to be white, you could go with cream, nude, light pink – whatever.
- 5) **Something Fun/Funky/Whimsical**: This outfit is your chance to really show your personal style. I've had a female restaurateur wear just an apron and chef's hat for her session. Another wore her very sexy Halloween costume! Think outside the box.

You may be wondering why I ask you to bring your clothing – it is impossible to carry all the sizes, styles, and colors that are needed for a boudoir session, and by you bringing your own clothing, it also ensure you have a completely sanitary experience as well. I do have a limited number of one-size-fits-most

items available – robes, an oxford shirt, tie, silky wraps, silk and satin scarves, gloves and stockings, and some costume jewelry. There is also a lighted makeup table for your use as well, but I recommend you bring any additional makeup you may need – foundation, eyeliner, lipstick, mascara, etc.

### **What Else to Bring**

- 1) **Jewelry:** Jewelry should be an accessory, not the center of the session (unless it's an engagement ring or wedding bands). Think a long string of pearls, or a single pendant jewel. If you are married, get your engagement ring and wedding band cleaned to see it sparkle. Bring a few choices in earrings and rings as well. Long necklaces make for great props and short colorful pieces can add drama. However, leave the bangles and big bracelets at home (apologies to Alex and Ani). Finally, there is nothing wrong with costume jewelry either, so stop by Charming Charlie's and get some that match too!
- 2) **Forget Shoes:** Unless you have a special pair you're dying to photograph, there's really no need to worry about the shoes you'll wear. Most images won't show your feet at all. BUT...if you want to bring them, nude heels can go with many outfit choices. Black heels are a staple. However, the higher the heel the better! But, try to stay away from platform and wedges for your shoot.
- 3) **Props:** If there are any "props" you want, bring them along! Yes, I've had people bring rope and fuzzy handcuffs for a fun part of their session. I've also had a librarian bring in a book that her husband loved. This is the time to think "outside the box" and be adventurous!

### **Bra or Bustier tip**

If you are a B or smaller, find a bra that has lace around the top of the cup. It will make you look a whole size bigger in photos. Bustiers are a great way to create curves and enhance cleavage. If you are smaller than a C cup, be sure to bring the kind of bustier that has built in cups (usually a corset does not have cups but I have seen a few bustiers without cups too). The bustiers without caps make you look flat-chested and we don't want that!

### **Where to buy:**

Here are some online resources for outfits, props, and other interesting ideas for your boudoir session:

Lotus Blooms – in Old Town Alexandria – shop local!

Victoria's Secret – classic and always has cute items

Journelle – soft and romantic pieces

Fredrick's – naughty but surprisingly they have some really nice things too

Playful Promises – really nice vintage looking lingerie

Hot Topic and Spencer's – definitely for that naughty school girl look – and great vintage t shirts!

Your local danceware or "toy" store – yes, they have everything!

Agent Provocateur – Naughty and nice!

Laperla – Timeless and classic

## Boudoir & Fine Art Photography: Preparing for your Session

There are plenty of things you can do ahead of time to make sure your boudoir session goes well.

### Make Your Beauty Show

Seven Days Before: Take care of all your beauty treatments (haircut, color, eyebrows, tanning, etc.) so the treatments are fresh but look natural. Never ever get a haircut the day of!

3 Days Before: Drink lots of water; avoid caffeine, alcohol, cigarettes, and salty foods; stay out of the sun. Don't forget to moisturize!

The Night Before: Sleep. Lots and lots of sleep.

The Day Of: If you're using an on-site makeup artist, come to the shoot with your face clean and product-free except for moisturizer. Otherwise, arrive with yourself ready to shoot!

### Makeup

Don't underestimate the importance of makeup for your session. The makeup you wear in daily life is not the same as the makeup you'll wear for a shoot. So, unless you've studied makeup for photography, get your makeup done professionally. A professional makeup artist knows what makeup looks good on camera and will make you look your best.

### Hair

Unlike makeup, there's no magic to doing hair for photos. A hairstylist can make your hair look its best for the shoot. But if you hire one, don't get a hairstyle that's too fancy. And never ever get a haircut the day of!

### Body Care

If you go the waxing route, give yourself a few days to heal before your shoot. Shaving can be done the day before. Be sure to get your legs and underarms. If you'll be wearing lingerie or any other tight intimate clothing, go for the bikini area as well.

#### - The Day-Of Checklist -

Natural face - wash and apply your usual moisturizer

Clean, dry hair - very short hair should leave it wet

Wear a comfy outfit - NOTHING tight (including leggings, tight waistbands, or tight bras)

5-6 fitted outfits to wear in photos

Pretty nails - neutral fingers, fun toes

Touched up eye brows - and any other loose hairs too

Arrive on time and ready

## **Boudoir & Fine Art Photography: What to Expect After Your Session**

As a full service photographer, I don't ever want you to just get your images and "I'm done with you." My goal is to provide top-quality Client service at a price you can afford.

### **Your Viewing & Ordering Session**

Monumental Arts is extremely excited to provide you with a truly luxurious experience - your first opportunity to see your photos and a delightful time planning interior decor. I want to grace your walls with the most meaningful, brilliantly beautiful artwork you've ever seen.

I can't wait to share my passion with you for creating custom works of art telling your story! I'll keep notes on what you love, offer advice, and guide you through this process step-by-step.

There is no time limit for the Viewing Session. We will match any pace that is most comfortable for you. I'm happy to work with your schedule to make our time together convenient and relaxing. At the end, we'll review notes together and make decisions on what images to order and place in your little black book. Oh, it will be so fun!

Just like your photography session was "distraction-free," so should your Viewing Session! If you have young children, have a plan so you can focus entirely on the beautiful images. And although it might be hard, no need for your cell phone! Be empowered - make sure every "decision-maker" available for the Viewing Session. Finally, have your credit card or check book handy - the last thing you want to do is search!

### **Your Gallery:**

You'll receive an email with information and instructions for your secure online Gallery. This Gallery can be shared if you wish. For an additional charge, USB/CD/DVD options are available.

WAIT, I'M NOT LOCAL: Even if you're not local (or maybe you don't have time to schedule a Viewing Session), no problem! I'm used to working with Clients entirely over the internet. Your retouched images will go onto your secure, password-protected Gallery, and you'll receive instructions via email on choosing and downloading your images, and selecting prints and enlargements.

Finally, in the weeks and months after your session, you'll receive the occasional email with discounts and specials for prints and additional images. Plus, you'll always receive a 10% discount on future sessions!