

I know I'm not alone in loving this period of history. Go in to any bookshop and the shelves are heaving with novels featuring women in lovely dresses (and heaving bosoms!). An adaptation of *Wolf Hall*, the novel by Hilary Mantell is currently on TV, so there's no shortage of visuals on our screens as well.

If I had to describe the clothing of the rich in this era I'd use the word "sumptuous", less was most definitely not more. Colours were as vibrant as possible, and you wore as much of your wealth attached to your clothes as you could. Gold thread was couched on to dresses. To make the thread you wrap gold leaf around a core, it's then too thick and inflexible to sew with, so instead it's fastened on to the surface of the fabric using a much finer thread.

Possibly the most notorious of Tudor women is the beguiling Anne Boleyn. Beautiful enough, and captivating enough to change the entire structure of a country. She was famously dark haired, and would also have had pale skin. We're still in the period where a tan was unfashionable as it meant you had to be outside working the land. In dramas she's nearly always pictured in red (a none-to-subtle scarlet woman reference perhaps?), and she would certainly have looked stunning in the shade I've used for this month.

However, keep your head about you, just because you're wearing the finest clothes money can buy doesn't mean you're safe from harm. In the Tudor court nobody was safe, no matter how well you dressed. In the end poor, clever, Anne lost her head due to her failure to give Henry VIII a son. Her daughter, however went on to be a great Queen. Poor Henry must have been spinning in his grave, after all the efforts he went to, and 6 wives, the most successful of his offspring was a lowly girl...

Happy Spinning,

Katie