

# BALMAIN

PARIS

## BALMAIN KIDS SPRING SUMMER 2023 COLLECTION

From the very beginning, Balmain Creative Director Olivier Rousteing has stressed the need for a strong coherence and continuity between the house's main collections and his Balmain Kids offerings. And that explains why it's so very easy to spot the many ways that the Spring 2023 Balmain Kids collection builds directly upon Olivier Rousteing's latest fashion-week runway. For that acclaimed presentation, the Balmain Creative Director's emotional message was theatrically presented, spread over three powerful acts. Beginning with a moving opening dance, the show then morphed into a runway that relied on the savoir-faire of the house's remarkable artisans to channel Pierre Balmain's legacy of boldly renewing and rejuvenating French fashion. The show's closing moment was as dramatic as its beginning, with a final ballet of powerfully lit couture offerings, making clear the singular level of artistry that today's Balmain can accomplish, as it melds together a rich heritage, unparalleled craftsmanship and a modern outlook for an entirely new type of luxury fashion.

Once fashion week had finished, Olivier Rousteing and his Balmain Kids design team immediately set to work to directly translate that runway's strongest designs and stirring messages into the house's latest styles for the youngest members of the Balmain Army. The season's unifying and very timely theme—stressing the power of solidarity, as we together rely on hope and truth to push back against lies and aggression—remains the key and unifying voice throughout this entire collection, helping to explain the many distinctive color, silhouette and textile codes that work their way across this very complete—and very Balmain—Balmain Kids offering.

### Institutional

Olivier Rousteing's most recent couture designs—which were immediately adopted by the designer's celebrity friends for their concert-stage and red-carpet appearances—have also been cleverly adapted for this season's Balmain Kids styles, with Rousteing transforming his dramatic conceptions into distinctive denim-accented tulle robes and asymmetric skirts. Denim is also relied upon for exciting new spins on scaled-down versions of signature Balmain blazers, shorts and skirts—with each style, of course, finished off with a set of the house's iconic golden lion-head button. Just as one would expect, the house logo gets major play in this collection, endlessly repeated to create a striking pattern for a host of different fabrics and silhouettes. Solitary bold Balmain logos, as well the house's historic coat of arms, are used to embellish a wide array of other items, including tees, socks, sliders and sweat tops—and every one of them can be perfectly paired with mini-me versions of Rousteing's signature relaxed-fit and biker-style jeans. For the very youngest Balmain customer, the Balmain Baby Lion logo makes a very welcome return, with its charming crowned head adorning sweaters, blazers, onesies and a complete range of baby accessories.

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### L.A.

For his latest house collections, Olivier Rousteing has returned to referencing fashion's ground-breaking grunge moment, noting that its forceful credo of "be true to yourself" perfectly complements his runway message that proclaims the liberating power of truth and hope. As Rousteing explained to the press, grunge's powerful blend of subversion and deconstruction has long captivated him, since it was quickly adopted by many of the designers and artists who most inspired him as a child—and he is impressed at how the style still manages to retain that original fresh, bold spirit today, decades later. Following the lead of the house's main collections, grunge's defiant mindset has been channeled into some of the strongest looks of this Balmain Kids season—with many of these styles being direct, scaled-down adaptations of the Balmain runway's most acclaimed offerings. Rebellious ruffles transform skirts, sleeves and shoulders, giving them an unexpected urban flair, while relaxed spins on hoodies, blazers and the signature Balmain marinière channel the chilled-out attitude of West-Coast rockers. Loyal house followers will already know that the collection's many whites, creams, light pastels and soft denims reflect Rousteing's conviction that, in his Balmain universe, these are never the tones of sweetness and vulnerability—instead, they remind us that there is a special type of affirmative clout that comes with the embrace of truth, empathy and transparency.

### Dune

During his leadership of the house over the past ten years, Olivier Rousteing has often returned to highlighting a preferred subset of earth tones—soft and natural tans, beiges, yellows and greens—which are often perfectly complemented with muted reds and blues. And several of Rousteing's latest Balmain Kids range highlight the unexpected power of those signature house shades, as can be seen in the collection's uniquely subtle tie-dye treatments, as well as the many plays on tone-on-tone leopard patterns. Just as one would expect, the colors prove the perfect match for the Balmain Kids safari jackets, pleated shorts and khaki pants. But, as always, Rousteing and his design team were determined to push it farther—and they did just that, by pairing the familiar palette with a selection of some of the most popular Balmain silhouettes, pulled directly from the house's most recent runways. Rousteing's signature strong-shouldered sweaters, cropped tweed jackets and relaxed flare pants have all been given a new spin, by incorporating this range's distinct tones (and, of course, perfectly scaling them down for the Balmain Kids customer). A striking knit gilet top and matching skirt, one of the most acclaimed looks of the latest Balmain presentation, has received the same treatment. By blending together a decade of traditional tones and the most powerful recent silhouettes, this collection makes clear the richness and possibilities inherent in Balmain's extensive archives.

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## Casual Tech

Among the strongest looks that made their way down the latest Balmain runway were the house's many trompe l'oeil (optical illusion) designs, which managed to deceive the eye for a moment via the unexpected placement of very realistic prints atop signature Balmain silhouettes. Olivier Rousteing has decided to expand on that visual trickery for his Balmain Kids designs, cleverly relying on two eye-tricking images to create two eye-catching looks. One print, that of an overalls bib and suspenders adorns a dress, while the other print—centered on the draped section of a Balmain couture robe—adorns a chicly cropped tee. Other pieces of this special range build upon the theme of surprising pairings. For example, Rousteing's sportiest silhouettes for Balmain Kids are set apart by the unexpected addition of clever netting insets, pockets and superimposed tees. A can't-be-missed shiny white teddy jacket, adorned with sharply contrasting black logo and ribbing, reflects the house's signature love for strong graphic juxtapositions—and when the jacket is paired with matching shorts and logoed socks, it creates a distinctive, and very Balmain, total look.

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