

fiesta flamenco

PASSIONATE ~ PROUD ~ EXCITING ~ LOUD



DIANE PICKARD

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- I started dancing at the age of 6 in my local dance school and like many little girls, dreamed of becoming a ballerina. I think it was the tutus that did it!
- At the age of 11, I auditioned and was offered place to study professionally at Elmhurst Ballet School in Surrey, where I took exams in classical ballet, tap, modern and Spanish Dance. The school has now relocated to Birmingham and is closely associated with the Birmingham Royal Ballet and benefits from having Ana Garcia (Alma AGM Flamenco) on its faculty.
- By the time I was 13 it was decided that I did not have the physique to be a ballet dancer (too many curves) and, therefore, concentrated my efforts on performing arts including jazz, choreography, tap, contemporary, singing and drama.
- It was at this stage that I discovered a passion for Spanish dance and consider myself to be very fortunate to have been taught by Sherrill Wexler; Artistic Director, Executive Administrator and international examiner for the Spanish Dance Society.
- When I reached 16, I once again auditioned and was accepted at London Studio Centre where I studied for a further two years and also obtained my teaching qualifications.
- During this time I also began to attend regular classes at the famous Pineapple Studios in Covent Garden, and upon graduation from London Studio Centre began to work as a professional dancer.
- Unfortunately, I injured my back and I had to stop dancing but chose to remain in the industry by working for the Arts Council of Great Britain and in various London theatres and a wide variety of UK stage tours, such as The Sound of Music, The Rocky Horror Picture Show and Rowan Atkinson's One Man Show.
- I continue to attend the Spanish Dance Society's summer school each year and this has given me the opportunity to study with international teachers and dancers including Gemma de la Cruz (currently teaches in London and Madrid and is a performer with Flamenco Express), Carolina Rosa (currently teaches in South Africa and founder of La Rosa Spanish Dance Theatre), Angel Munoz (internationally renowned dancer and teacher) and many more.
- I also attend the Spanish Dance Society's annual teachers course and continue regular lessons with Theo Dantes, Deputy Artistic Director, senior examiner and Profesor de Baile with the Spanish Dance Society and Felipe de Algeciras, a formidable teacher and performer, whose powerful footwork can be heard throughout the soundtrack for the film The Mask of Zorro starring Antonio Banderas.