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legs

Taschen's third in a series of body-part-focused tomes (the first two were *The Big Penis Book* and *The Big Book of Breasts*), *The Big Book of Legs* covers the limbs at length, from thigh to toe (the final chapter is all about feet). Available in June, the hefty book steps back into the prudish Victorian era, when they were considered the ultimate tools of sexual arousal, and moves along to the Roaring '20s, when inhibitions first plummeted and hemlines rose

revealing—gasp!—knees (which some flappers were said to rouge). One chapter is devoted to the cancan, the celebratory high-kicking dance (since the women rarely wore underwear beneath their copious petticoats, more than just legs were often on display) that debuted at a dancehall in Montparnasse in 1835. Another describes the slew of underground leg-worshipping magazines (*Silk Seams*, *Black Garter*, and *Nylon Jungle* to name a few) that emerged in the '50s and '60s, and Elmer Batters, the so-called "father of leg art photography." Besides a superb collection of evocative photographs, *Legs* is also loaded with fascinating facts, including that Lloyd's of London is the company that claims to have insured more legs than any other body part. (Betty Grable's were the first pair to be valued at a million, and Mariah Carey has a billion-dollar premium on hers.) It also covers the history of the painful leg-lengthening procedures performed in China, and notes that, in 1533, Catherine de Medici became the first woman to don high heels. At the end of *Legs*, you will likely be left with just one question: Is *The Big Book of Vaginas* next?

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