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Alabama Studio Sewing Patterns: A Guide To Customizing A Hand-Stitched Alabama Chanin Wardrobe



Synopsis

Alabama Studio Sewing Patterns: A Guide to Customizing a Hand-Stitched Alabama Chanin Wardrobe by Natalie Chanin is a companion to the Alabama Studio Series: Alabama Stitch Book, Alabama Studio Style, and Alabama Studio Sewing + Design. In this final volume of the four-book series, Chanin offers, by popular demand, three new core patterns—“the A-Line Dress/Tunic/Top, the Long and Short Wrap Skirt, and the Classic Coat/Jacket/Cardigan”—and a guide to customizing garments to fit and flatter. For ease, convenience, and to ease its ecological footprint, this book comes with a CD rather than paper patterns. The disc contains patterns for all of the garments from the previous books in the Alabama Studio series with additional sizing for XXL, the three new patterns, plus five Alabama Chanin stencil designs, including the Polka Dot in three sizes, the popular New Leaves, and the classic Magdalena (all for readers to print as needed for their individual sewing purposes). Printed and bound in the USA. This installment highlights:• 9 core garment patterns with up to 34 standard variations, plus 3 bonus pocket patterns• Patterns from the entire Alabama Studio book series with the additional XXL size• 5 full-scale stencil designs, plus a free bonus download available from Alabama Chanin™s website (<http://alabamachanin.com/resources/large-scallops-stencil-artwork>)• Useful, convenient CD that minimizes its ecological footprint by conserving paper• Printed in the USA

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Customer Reviews

I have to say, this is one of my favorite sewing books I own, which is saying a lot, since I don't

generally enjoy hand sewing. I grew up sewing clothing with a machine, and then took up quilting, and while I enjoy both of those pursuits, I was never interested in hand sewing anything until I read this book, and Natalie Chanin's take on clothing. I love the idea that clothing should flatter, feel comfortable, and be well made so that it lasts. I think the biggest reason I love this book is that the idea behind making a handmade wardrobe resonates with where I am in life right now; creating a wardrobe I love and that fits well means a lot more to me than chasing after the latest style fads. Not only that, but as a mom of 3 little girls, I want them to understand that we are each unique, and our worth is intrinsic, and not based on what we look like; as a result, it makes sense to dress our bodies in a way that flatters and makes us feel good about ourselves, and that celebrates who we are, instead of chasing fashion ideals that aren't realistic. That being said, I was initially disappointed when I popped the cd into my computer, only to discover that the pattern sheets were sized for a copy shop printer, and not my home printer. I have a home computer and printer, and I'm familiar with printing out pdf sewing patterns and taping them together, so I wasn't interested in going to a copy shop, and after playing around with it a little, I discovered how to print out the parts of the pattern individually (on 8 1/2 by 11 sheets of paper).

After checking Natalie Chanin's last book out of the library and stitching one of the tops I pre-ordered this book and I received it in the mail yesterday afternoon. I have to say that I am not disappointed. The patterns it contains are worth the price alone, but the book is filled with great info on adjusting patterns to fit your individual body that will be useable way beyond adjusting and constructing any one of the admittedly lovely patterns contained here. That is really what the bulk of the book is about. The rest is a basic techniques section and stitch guide for processes that are used to make the garments, and instructions for garments -but don't expect a hand holding highly detailed step by step instruction guide to each project- there is enough instruction for folks who can work independently and refer to the techniques in the back, but construction photos are not included, just finished garments and diagrams. (If you want to see it in action or need more instruction, I suggest taking Ms. Chanin's class on craftsy.) This book has a great section in the back that names the techniques used in the garments that are photographed in the book-including fabric weight, thread color, which stencil was used, seam style, etc. That you can use to recreate the examples. I haven't popped the CD into my computer yet to print off patterns, but I'm excited to do so. I'll update once I do. ***UPDATE*** so I have now printed the patterns from the CD, and they pop up as PDFs in adobe as single large pages- They are not automatically tiled like some you find nowadays. For those folks who think you need to head to the copy shop to print out a large sheet, you don't, its just

a matter of changing your printer settings.

I'll get to the review in a bit, but let me say this- there are no paper patterns included, unlike the previous three books, and unless you have a tiling program and know how to use it, you can't print the patterns out yourself. You have to find a print shop, which is why I'm giving this book 3.5 stars...more on this later. First up, let me say that this is another fine book by Natalie Chanin. Her company, Alabama Chanin, designs and creates lovely garments, beautifully hand sewn and embellished. I have all of her previous books. Where Natalie really excels is in her ability to design simple, easily constructed garments that anyone, even a novice sewer, would feel comfortable in making by hand. The real art comes in the embellishing- paint, stencils, beads and embroidery- all of it simple but with stunning results. This book is divided into 3 sections. The first section includes directions for (and plenty of pictures of) all the patterns published in the previous Alabama Chanin (A.C.) books. This includes the new patterns- an A-line dress in 4 lengths (top, tunic, knee-ish length dress, and maxi length dress), a coat pattern in 3 lengths (cardigan, jacket and classic coat length), and a wrap skirt in 3 lengths (short, classic and maxi skirt length). It then has photos, drawings and instructions for other garments from previous A.C. books. These include a fitted dress, a t-shirt, a bolero, a fitted skirt, a poncho, a camisole (princess seamed) dress/top/skirt, the corset top (my favorite), and a swing skirt. All are shown in various lengths/versions and all are easily adaptable. The second section is on fit and customizing their patterns and purchased paper patterns (i.e., McCall, Simplicity, etc.).

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