

Curated By You: Alisha Cooke Of Ma Ma Osa Makes A Linen Wrap Dress

Description



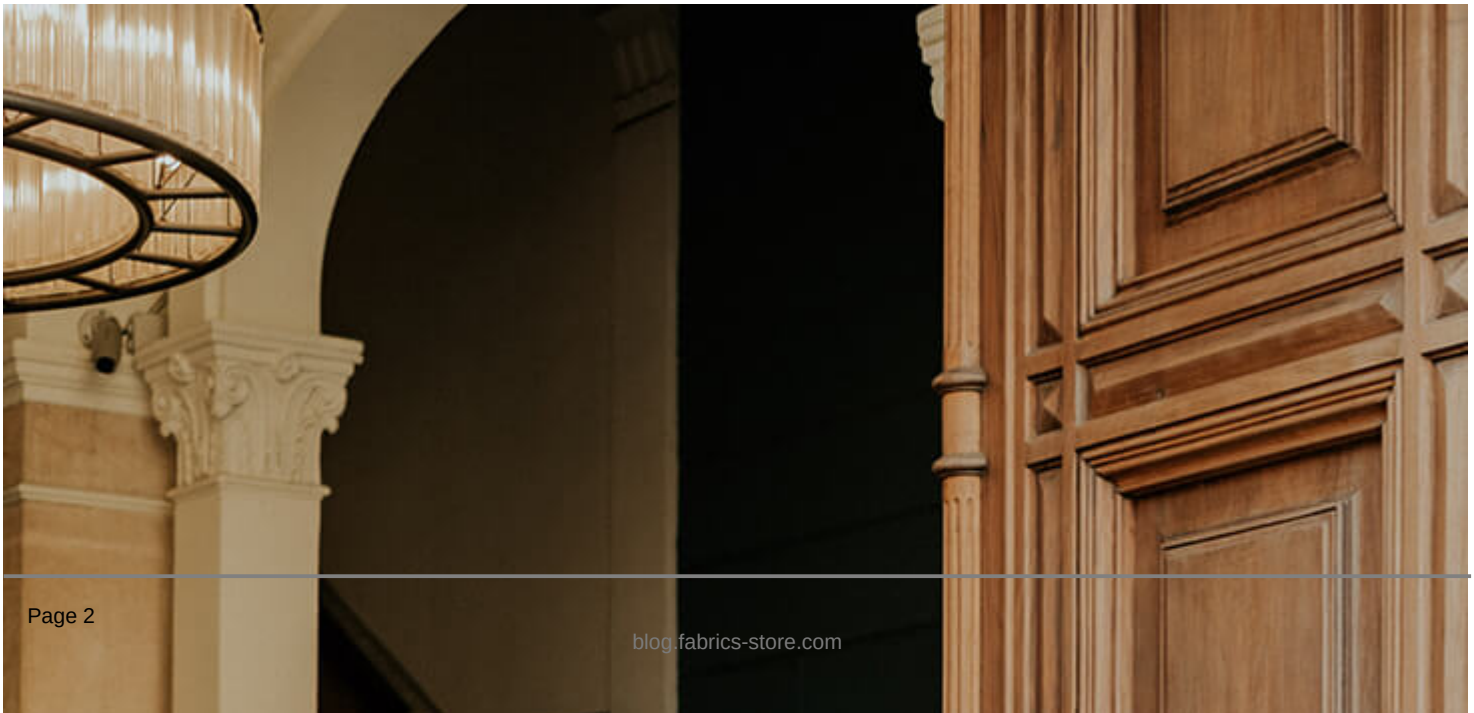
Alisha wearing Alisha Linen Wrap Dress made with FS DUSTY LOTUS Mid Weight Linen

Tell us a bit about yourself and what you do.

Ma Ma Osa is a handmade clothing brand that offers heirloom quality garments, made by a mother. We celebrate the cherished craft of sewing and seek to honor the art of slow fashion in all our practices as a brand. Each one of our garments are stitched together by myself, Alisha Cooke, in St. Petersburg, FL. Iâ??m inspired by classic silhouettes, natural fabrics of the highest quality, and the idea of embracing my clients with the same love and attention that I would offer my own children (who I have sewn for all their lives).

Tell us a little about the creation process- from idea to final product. How big is your team?

Ma Ma Osa is a woman owned business but a family process. I make all the designs, patterns and hand make every clothing piece myself but I am blessed to have a super talented family to form my team. My husband and son are very skilled with computer needs, my son in law has video recording and editing experience from his work in the music industry, my youngest daughter models and advertises for me, and my oldest daughter not only models my pieces, but also does all my branding, marketing, and helps me present everything in a beautiful way overall.



Ma Ma Osa Elizabeth Linen Flutter Sleeve Top

What do you love most about having your own business?

I have always loved the freedom. I have been self employed most of my life and the freedom of schedule to focus on what I truly value has been a treasure that I do not take for granted. I am very aware and thankful.

As a child, what was your first encounter and memory of beauty?

Beautiful things or the beauty of love? The idea that I (and everyone else) was created with unique gifts and talents and loved by our Creator is a beautiful thing. I feel like I connected with that idea at a very young age, which is beautiful. If we are referring to beautiful things, I have always appreciated pretty details. Ruffles on little white socks (I grew up in the early 80â??s), satin ribbon in my hair, doll clothes that I could try to make myself, flowers, leaves, cloud watching for shapes and creative inspirationâ?¦ beauty.



Ma Ma Osa Elinor Flare Dress in Lightweight Linen

Can you talk us through a failure or a setback in your business that you learned from or an experience that helped improve your business.

When I had an etsy shop, I was featured in Martha Stewart Living and Parenting Magazine. My items were then sold on Gilt.com and I sewed thousands of items by hand but I didnâ??t know when to scale â?? when to expand, hire or outsource. This really helped me evaluate what I wanted to do with Ma Ma Osa. I discovered I wanted to show my beautiful clean lines and staple pieces, make them in small batch ethically and sustainably and then teach! I developed a digital sewing course that launches March 11th to empower people with the skills to make their own quality pieces. This is a very natural way to multiply myself instead of outsourcing. I can actually put the tools in peopleâ??s hands to make their own clothing items where they can write the story of where their supplies are sourced and how they are made. I am also very excited to share in the course that Fabric-store as one of the best sources for fabric for their projects.



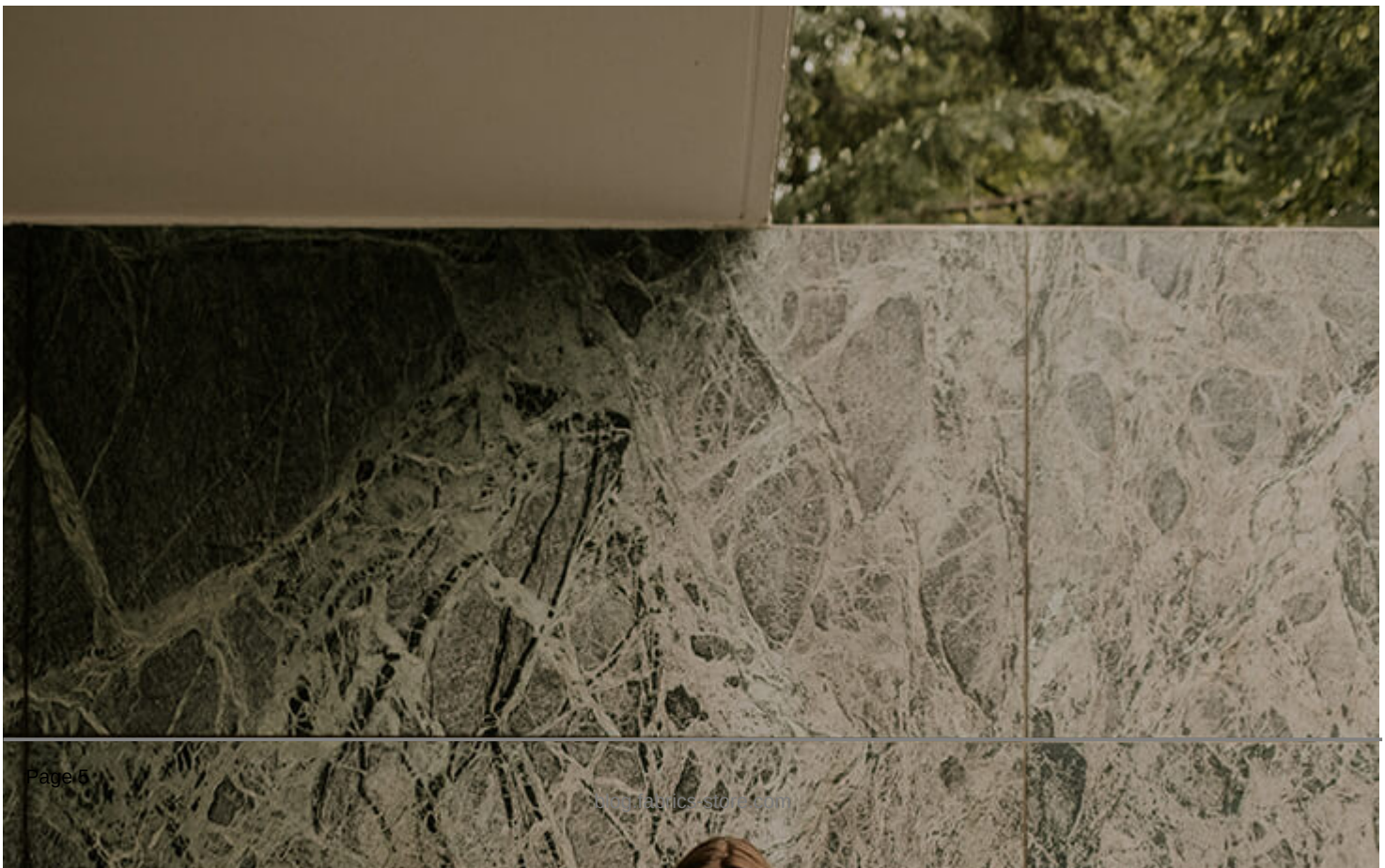
Alisha wearing Alisha Linen Wrap Dress made with FS DUSTY LOTUS Mid Weight Linen

Name a book that youâ??ve recently read which inspired you and why?

Wabi-Sabi Welcome by Julie Pointer Adams because she reminds us of the beauty of simply welcoming people into your space. Itâ??s such a lovely book. I have started learning about natural fabric dying and found *Botanical Colour at your FIngertips* by Rebecca Desnos to be amazing. I really enjoy reading novels like *Where the Crawdads Sing* by Delia Owens and also find some childrenâ??s books to be deeply beautiful: *The Gardner* by Sarah Stewart makes me cry.

What was the first thing you ever remember making on your own? Tell us about this memory.

Doll clothes â?? I would twist them, pin them, make little outfits for the dolls in pretty prints and colors. Eventually my mother started showing me basic sewing techniques. This was followed closely by the bird feeder my father helped me make â?? he taught me to use power tools (which I still enjoy) and I won a ribbon at the county fair ;).



Ma Ma Osa Elizabeth Linen Flutter Sleeve Top

Do you have a mentor or a muse?

Definitely my daughters**.** They inspire new designs and I enjoy sewing for them so much, I have since they were babies. My son too but I find myself stumped with creativity for menâ??s wear so his childhood PJâ??s and Buzz Lightyear Costume years will have to do for now.

How important is social media to your business?

Social media has been a tremendous way to share my designs and teach through video.

Do you have a community of crafters/ makers around you or do you find you are on your own?

St Petersburg Florida and the Tampa Bay area is bursting with a creative community. I find that the level of encouragement and â??rising tideâ?• mentality is huge in our community.



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What is the best and the hardest part about being your own boss?

Deciding which things I should figure out how to do myself and which things to ask for help with.

What does sustainability mean to you?

Making something quality with my own hands (or your own hands) that will last. Fully knowing the story of whose hands have made it possible.

What does success mean to you?

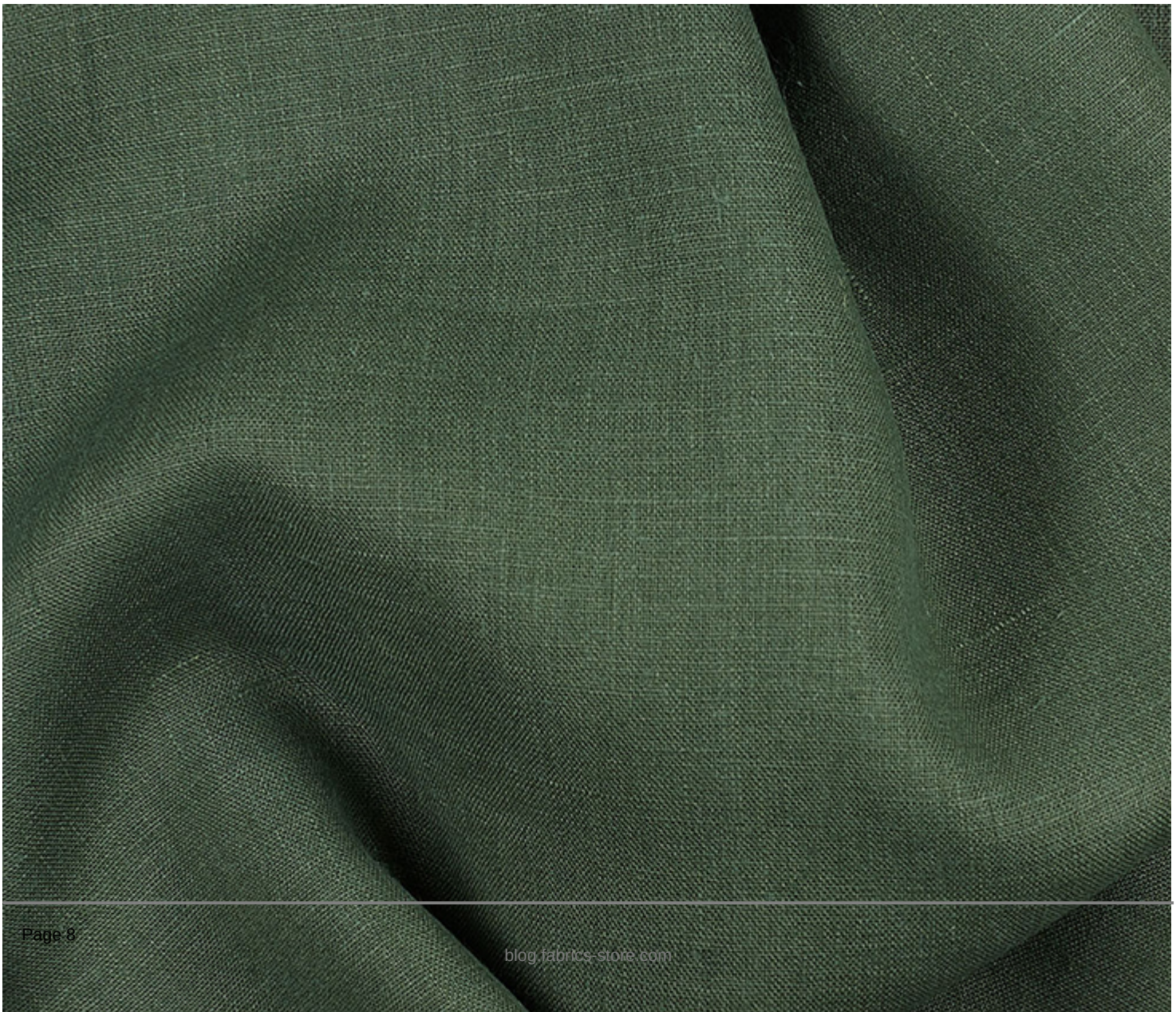
Making people around you feel important, beautiful and cared about. We all have something beautiful and unique to share with people around you.



Alisha wearing Alisha Linen Wrap Dress made with FS DUSTY LOTUS Mid Weight Linen

What have you chosen to make out of FS linen and why?

I used 3 yards of the amazing DUSTY LOTUS middle weight linen to make this wrap dress design with pockets because every great dress has pockets. The texture of linen is so lovely! The weight is perfect for movement and comfort. I shared the process in my story highlights on Ma.Ma.Osa instagram . I often encourage the Ma Ma Osa fans to mix designs â?? a sleeve from this pattern, a skirt from another, etc. â?? but with this design, I took inspiration for the bottom half of the dress from a pattern I had on hand and then I designed the ties and a thin strap top of the dress myself. I am delighted with the design.



FS DUSTY LOTUS Softened Mid Weight 100% Linen

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