

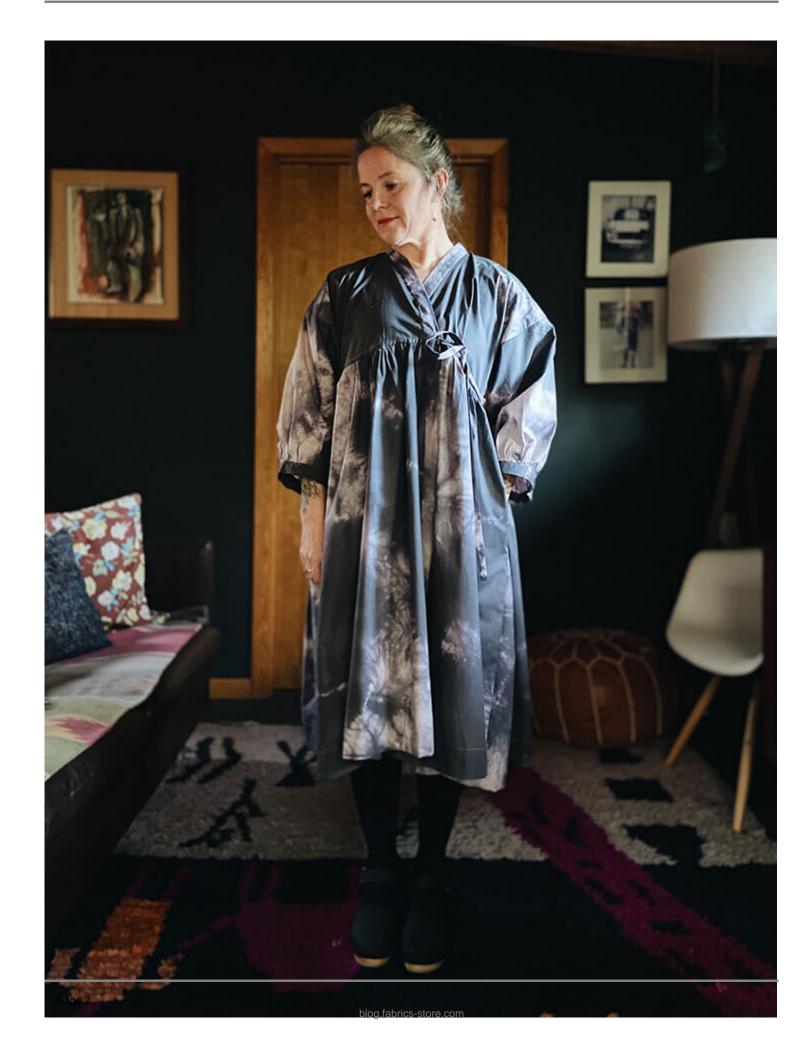


FABRIC REVIEW: Hand-Dyed Cloud Dress In Lightweight Percale

Description

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I'd saved avocado pits and skins in my freezer for about six months when Fabrics-Store.com approached me with a project idea. I jumped into boiling up my fruit scraps using their new, softened cotton. Typical of me, I dove head-first without much research, and my first batch of dye ended up being a brownish-pinkish-skin-tonish hue that wasnât at all what I wanted. Fortunately, lâd only dunked a few scrap cuts of fabric.

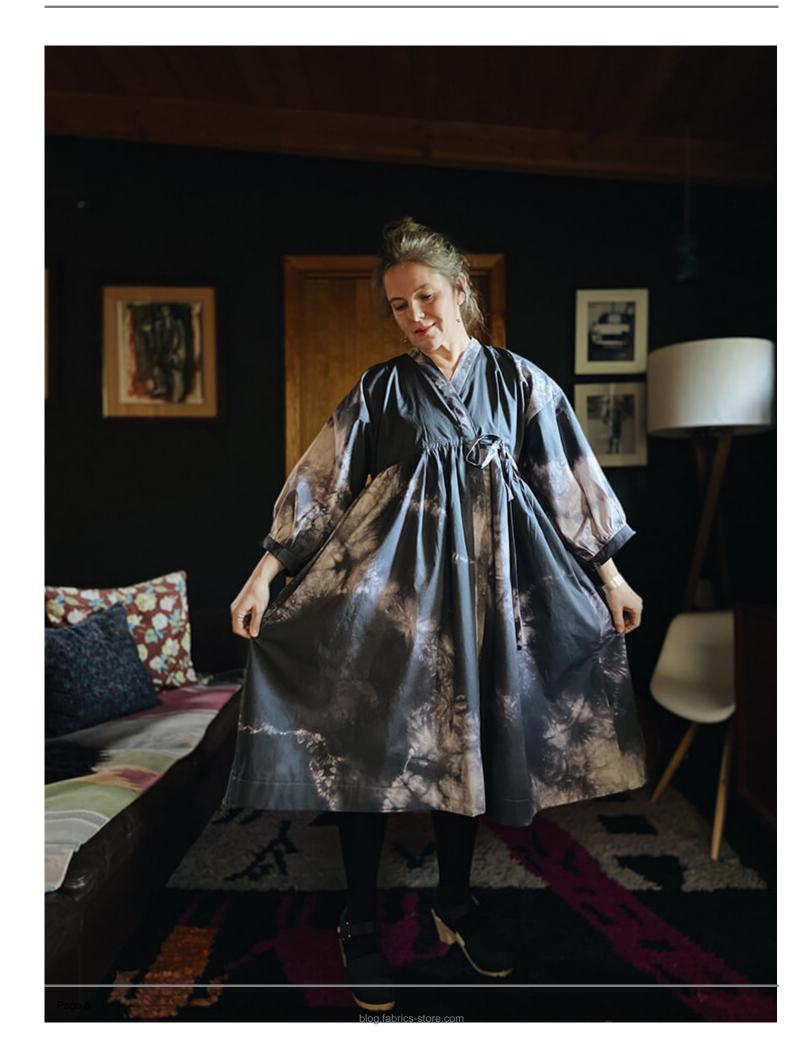
With a little more patience and research, I learned that the pits and skins need to be really clean â *like really clean* â to get a color more on the pink scale. I gave it another shot with a pile of unsellable black avocados generously donated by Rinella Produce.



I planned to make the Birgitta Helmersson "Zero-Waste" Gather Dress. I also wanted some leftovers for future patching and piecework projects. Using over three yards of fabric, I first soaked the damp cloth in an unscientific blend of Trader Joe's plain soymilk and water for about 24 hours. I hung the material to dry while concocting my avocado dye.

I simmered the dye batch on and off for a couple of days using the (very clean!) pits and skins of about 20 avocados and a large piece of tin foil. The pink color was intense!





The soy-treated fabric then went into the dye to soak for another day. I brought it to a simmer at least once and kept it moving, hoping for an even color.

I achieved a gorgeous pink! The only problem is: I look terrible in pink. My second step was transforming the fabric into a color I could feel and look good wearing. I gently scrunched my material into a ball and tightly tied off random sections. I wanted a large-scale, random tie-dye, not a pattern reminiscent of a Grateful Dead concert.

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Using black Rit Dye, I followed the box instructions and submerged my fabric bundle for about 10 minutes. I got very nervous that I would cover all the beautiful pink â it looked so black!

I had envisioned a strong contrast between black and pink, but I got a beautiful, softer mix of greys and lavender. It's like a stormy sky with some pink breaking through at sunset. I love it!

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I made the Zero Waste Gather Dress because I had made it previously in too heavy linen. There is so much volume in this dress it requires a lightweight fabric to be comfortable. With some of my extra fabric, I made some adjustments. I used some to add pockets back to the puff sleeve cutting option. I also made some long ties to wear in a cross-over style rather than a button closure. Finally, I inserted a section of a vintage Japanese obi I'd saved in my stash for the right project. I'd done an insert like this before on a jacket. I've also been inspired by Spanish designer Louis Rubi, who makes these oversized shapes with a signature orange stripe down the back.



I plan to wear this like a duster coat, which is a light, loose-fitting coat. It will fit right in with my #dressesoverjeansforever manifesto.

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