

FABRIC REVIEW: Hand-Dyed Cloud Dress In Lightweight Percale

Description



Dress made with hand dyed Percale White Softened Lightweight Linen

Iâ??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 wasnâ??t at all what I wanted. Fortunately, Iâ??d 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.



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I planned to make the Birgitta Helmersson â??Zero-Wasteâ?• 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 Joeâ??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!



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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. Itâ??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 Iâ??d saved in my stash for the right project. Iâ??d done an insert like this before on a jacket. Iâ??ve also been inspired by Spanish designer Louis Rubi, who makes these oversized shapes with a signature orange stripe down the back.



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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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