

Curated By You: Kelsey White Makes a Striking Summer Linen Set

Description



Tapioca Trousers from Jessilouâ??s Closet and a matching bra top from Sewin

Tell us a bit about yourself and what you do.

My name is Kelsey, and I live in Tampa FL with my husband and our two little girls. Previous to staying home with them, I worked in the world of professional makeup artistry. I feel like my life has been marked with many instances and passions that are aesthetically focused, which is probably what drew me into the world of sewing. I also work in lactation care and education; I host local breastfeeding support groups and educational classes for expected parents. Both birth work/lactation and sewing are passions that came about after becoming a mother, and go hand-in-hand when it comes to how I dress.

Why do you sew?

Iâ??m a person who has always really needed a creative outlet for my mental health. I had my first daughter just before COVID, so as soon as I started to catch my breath after birth and adjusted to life with a newborn, the world shut down. Once I had my daughter, it was just like something in my creative brain clicked, and sewing filled a need in me that I didnâ??t know I had. Itâ??s brought me so much mental peace and clarity, given me so many new friends I otherwise wouldâ??ve never crossed paths with, and helped me find purpose and meaning in a stage of life where most of my energy is given away to others.



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Whatâ??s the greatest advice youâ??ve been given?

There was a time when I was really struggling with anxiety and how life can feel so easily dependent on small moments that create a domino effect on big decisions. I remember talking to a friend of mine about it all, and she said to me, â??Long ago, God drew a circle around you in the sand exactly where you stand now. You were always meant to be where you are, and nothing you couldâ??ve done, better or worse, wouldâ??ve led you anywhere but here. What is for you will always find you.â?• Any time Iâ??m feeling unsure or stuck, I remind myself of that. I am exactly where I should be, and I can rest in that.

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

I am part native Hawaiian, and my mom has really thick, beautiful dark brown hair. I remember being a little girl and watching her curl in and being mesmerized by it. To this day, she still has the most beautiful hair Iâ??ve ever seen.

Where is home and how does it affect what you do?

I live in sunny Tampa, Florida! Itâ??s hot about 10 out of 12 months here, so winter really only exists for a very short time every year. For this reason, youâ??ll usually find me making some sort of matching shorts and top set, flowy dresses, or functional knit pieces that allow me to breastfeed.



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

Iâ??m reading â??The Whole Brain Childâ?• right now and really enjoying it. I love reading but am usually not available for long periods of time to focus on reading alone, so Iâ??m a huge podcast girl. Lately, Iâ??ve been loving Australian Birth Stories, Ratz, and pretty much anything by Gimlet or Wondery. Iâ??m also a massive fan of Love To Sew, and itâ??s definitely the best resource I found when I started building my beginner sewing skills.

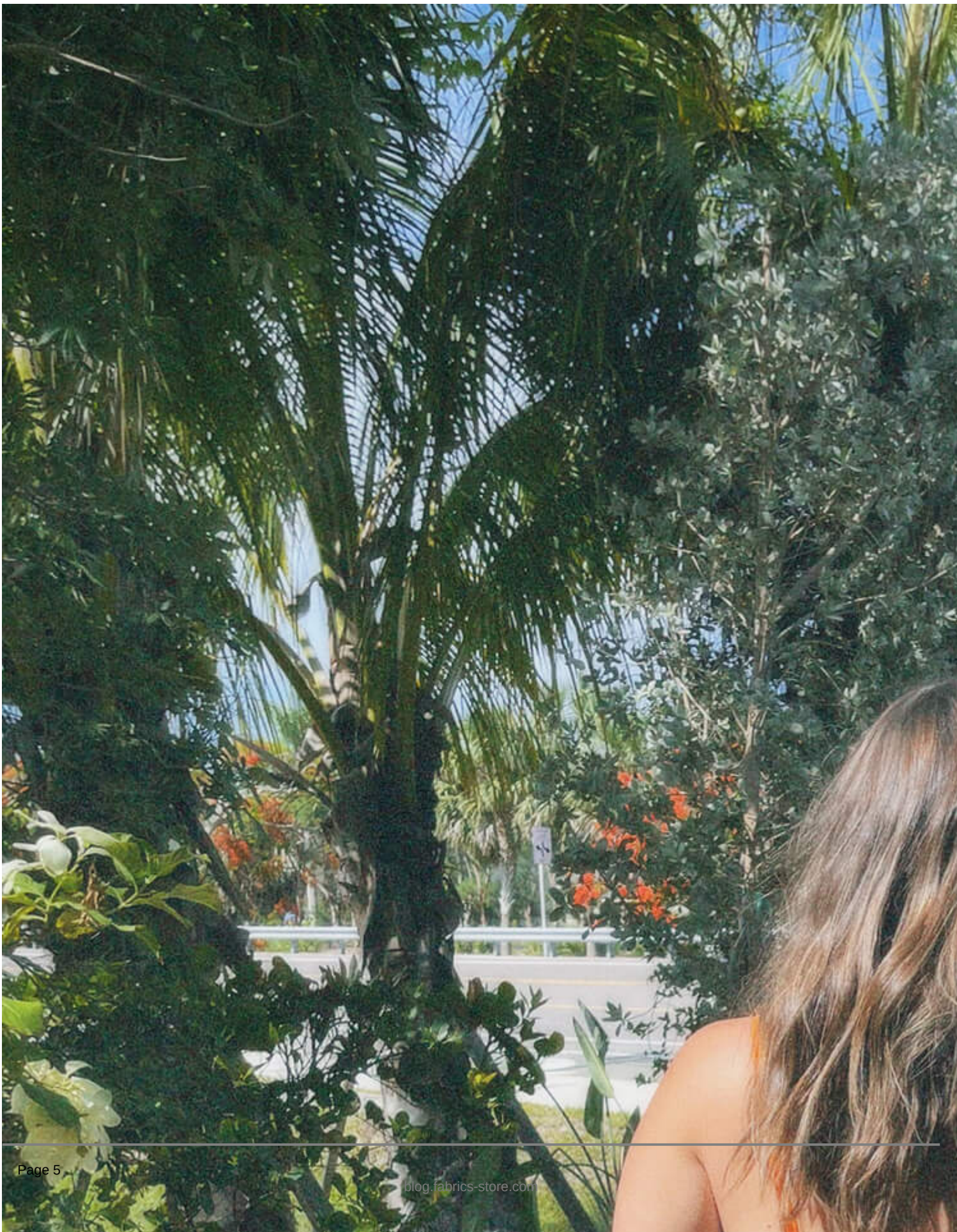
What was the first thing you ever remember making on your own? Tell us about this memory.

I elicited my mother in lawâ??s help about 8 years ago when I wanted to make something for my niece before she was born. She taught me the basics, which at the time felt near impossible, though invigorating. I chose a reversible, tulip style top with coordinating bloomers. We used a paper pattern with scant instruction at best and I barely made it through it, but Iâ??ll never forget how proud I felt when it was done. Thankfully, I discovered indie pattern makers when I returned to sewing a few years later which I really accredit to my desire to continue trying to build my sewing skills.

How do you balance creativity and motherhood?

To be honest, I donâ??t! I think that one of the most beautiful things about this craft is that it is ready and eager to serve you whenever and however it can, regardless of time apart. Children really need so much and their needs arenâ??t confined to a schedule, so there are periods of time where my ability to love and care for my children takes all the energy I have to give and leaves nothing for my creative passions. On the flip side, my girls get a lot of handmade clothing, and they love to be involved when Iâ??m making something. My 3 year old likes to sit on my lap and put her hand on top of mine when Iâ??m guiding fabrics, and I often wonder (and hope) she remembers those moments. I do the majority of my sewing at night after bed time, and I love that I end most of my days with a little creative â??me timeâ?

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

Iâ??ve seen a huge shift in our me-made community in Tampa Bay since I committed to sewing a little over 3 years ago, which has been so exciting for me! Iâ??m a huge extrovert, so I dream of hosting sewing nights with friends. We have a few different sewing clubs/groups near me, and I attended my first fabric swap at Tampa Bay Sewcial Club a few months ago and was so happy to connect with some other folks with the same love I have for textiles!

How important is it to make something with your hands?

I think making is part of who I am, and almost all of my wardrobe is made by me or thrifted. Sustainability, thoughtfulness in garments, and knowing where my fabrics are from is really important to me.

What has been the most rewarding sewing project youâ??ve completed so far and why?

Thatâ??s a really hard question! I am emotionally bonded with everything I make, but I have a special love for gifts Iâ??ve made. I made a quilt for a dear friend of mine a few months ago as a gift for her daughter that she was about to have, and that may be my favorite thing Iâ??ve made so far because of the meaning behind it. This friend was present for the home birth of my second daughter, and my relationship with her feels very sacred, so making that little quilt was really meaningful.



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What is more important to you â?? the process or the final product (ie your garment)?

I think that this depends, but in this season of life, usually the final product. Because my time behind the machine is limited during the day, Iâ??m usually working to finish my garments. However, I occasionally will get an idea in my head for something slower and more thoughtful, like a quilted jacket with bias bound seams, and getting to spend time on a garment instead of focusing on a deadline is really fun too.

What does success mean to you?

Health and happiness. So long as my family has those two things, then I am successful.

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

I made a pair of Tapioca Trousers from Jessilouâ??s Closet and a matching bra style top from Sewing Experiments. I recently went on a long weekend vacation with my family and knew I was going to be spending a lot of time outside and at the beach, and thought it was the perfect outfit to wear! The trousers are such a tried and true pattern, and are so comfortable and flattering. The bra top brings a summery sexy flare that I felt so cute in!

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