Curated By You: Jessica Capalbo Makes the Tate Romper in Linen

Description

Tate Romper made with FS Royal Purple Heavyweight Linen

Tell us a bit about yourself and what you do.

My name is Jessica and Iâ??m 25 years old. I began sewing clothes in 2020 and sharing my makes on my Instagram account. What started as a hobby quickly and naturally turned into sewing custom made-to-order clothes! After a year of juggling my brand and my traditional job, I transitioned to sewing full time in 2021!

While I absolutely loved sewing clothes for others, I eventually decided to pivot my professional focus. As a one-woman show, I was only capable of making so many items and I didnâ??t want to limit the long-term growth of my business. So, in 2023, I took the Confident Pattern Making and Grading Course by Victoria, from Erbaccia Studios. The course taught me how to digitize my sewing patterns, grade them into an inclusive size range, and sell PDF patterns to the sewing community. Between pattern making, freelance grading, and creating YouTube content, I am fully enveloped by all things sewing and I absolutely love it!!

Why do you sew?

I found my love for sewing out of necessity. After being furloughed from my job at the beginning of the pandemic, I felt like I was being stripped of my identity and everyone that I cared for. Then, a few weeks in, I found out that one of the employees I managed at work had passed away in a tragic rock climbing accident. I was truly overwhelmed with sadness and needed an outlet that required all my attention so that I could stop focusing on all of lifeâ??s hardships.

So, I dove head first into learning how to use a sewing machine and sewing my own clothes. I had no idea that it would change my whole life for the better. It feels bittersweet to reflect on such a tragic time of life that ended up being so fruitful in the end. What was first just a distraction soon became the only thing I wanted to do. I was hooked on the entire creation process. I love

everything about it- from fabric and pattern shopping, to creating beautiful and wearable pieces. All the time and care thatâ??s involved in creating a well-made garment brings me a level of pride and satisfaction thatâ??s hard to compete with.

What do you like to listen to when youâ??re working (and why)?

I like listening to educational YouTube videos in the background! My favorite topics include personal finance, YouTube growth, entrepreneurship, fashion, and of courseâ?¦ sewing! For some reason, I always feel this intrinsic need to be productive, whether that means cleaning the house, sewing, working, or otherwise. I donâ??t know why Iâ??m this way and truthfully I wish it was easier for me to relax! Fortunately- sewing is that for me. If Iâ??m sewing and listening to educational content, then I feel like Iâ??m actually hitting three birds with one stone! Sewing, learning, and relaxing: extra extra productive!

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

When I was really little, I remember looking up at my dad and thinking he was the most handsome person in the whole world and that one day Iâ??d grow up and marry him. Of course thatâ??s not the way the world works, but I was young and didnâ??t know any better. My dad is kind, hard working, caring, and so easy to love. All of these attributes caught up in one moment is definitely my first memory of beauty.

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

There are a lot of factors that go into this idea of â??homeâ?•: community, relationships, the actual home that I live in, as well as the city itself.

I currently live in Southern California, about an hour away from where I grew up. Itâ??s funny because when I go visit my parentâ??s house, I call it home, and then when Iâ??m leaving their house, I also call my own house home. In some ways, my house feels more home than ever before. Itâ??s the largest space Iâ??ve lived in as an adult and Iâ??m even able to dedicate an entire room as my sewing studio!

My physical space really affects my ability to function and be productive. For example, if Iâ??m in my sewing studio and I find myself unable to focus, itâ??s probably because the dishes arenâ??t clean or the living room needs a tidy. It doesnâ??t matter if the room Iâ??m in is in perfect condition and the door is shut, the rest of the house weighs on me unless itâ??s all in order. So if I ever find myself questioning why Iâ??m feeling burnt out, itâ??s probably not because of the task at handâ?? Itâ??s just time for a deep clean to clear space in my mind for productivity and creativity.

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

Iâ??m sad to report that I havenâ??t read anything recently. When I was young, I told my eye doctor that I had trouble reading. I would read half of one line and then half of the next line, which of course always made incoherent sentences. Then when I used a book marker to read each line individually, I had to focus so hard on getting the words from my eyes to my brain that I couldnâ??t focus on what the words were actually saying. To top it all off, Iâ??d feel an immediate need to fall asleep after reading about two pages! She told me that Iâ??m dyslexic, which essentially means that I have a hard time reading, and although I have 2020 vision, itâ??s straining on my eyes to see certain colors together. Apparently, black text against the color of paper is the perfect recipe for my eye muscles to work really hard, which is why I want to fall asleep when I read.

All that to say, I do love to learn! Instead of reading books, I opt to listen to podcasts and educational videos about interesting topics. Iâ??d love to get an Audible subscription someday so that I can listen to books as well!

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

When I was in kindergarten, we made paper snowflakes. I remember carefully folding the paper, cutting out the shapes, and thinking to myself, â??Wow, Iâ??m really good at this! Someday Iâ??m going to be a professional cutter.â?• Little did I know that using scissors wasnâ??t a profession. At the same time though, between all the paper and fabric I cut to make sewing patterns, maybe I am a professional cutter? Itâ??s really funny to reflect on that time and realize that little Jessica wasnâ??t too far off.

Who are your muses and inspiration?

Brittany Bathgate is forever my style muse. Her taste in fashion, attention to garment detail, and her eye for interior design have been inspiring me since I

discovered her YouTube channel 4 years ago. She plays with unique silhouettes and even her most simple garments have details and style lines that make them unique. Her content has taught me the value of garments that are thoughtfully designed and constructed, which is something I strive for in my sewing patterns.

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

I donâ??t meet up with any other makers regularly, but I live a little over an hour from LA and San Diego and try to attend every sewing meetup thatâ??s hosted. Iâ??ve made a few good friends this way, and have also made some great connections on Instagram. The Instagram sewing community is so welcoming and I feel like Iâ??m always learning from them!

How important is it to make something with your hands?

At this point, I feel that â??makingâ?• is woven into my being. Iâ??m not sure what my life would look like without it â?? itâ??s a really important part of who I am. I take pride in my makes and do my best to share them with others. I also make a lot of sewing related YouTube tutorials in hopes that I can encourage other sewists to try new, exciting, and potentially scary projects. Overcoming that kind of challenge can offer a level of joy and confidence that I hope everyone has the ability to experience.

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

My Sunrise Skort pattern is by far the most rewarding sewing project Iâ??ve ever completed! Designing sewing patterns is rewarding in a way thatâ??s hard to explain. Through them, I have this unique ability to create something thatâ??s more valuable than any garment Iâ??ll ever make for myself. I get to create a design thatâ??s interpreted by so many sewists in unique ways and itâ??s seriously so inspiring to see what this community comes up with. The Sunrise Skort is specifically special to me because it really felt like a positive turning point in my business. I received so much love and support when I launched the pattern and I couldnâ??t be more grateful.

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

I find almost all of my joy in the process of making. It doesnâ??t matter if Iâ??m making clothes for myself or someone else, I take a lot of pride in the ability to make beautiful, well-fitting, and long-lasting garments. From concept, to paper and toiling, making tweaks, figuring out construction, sewing the garment and everything else in between: itâ??s all a joy.

What does success mean to you?

I like to joke that Iâ??ll be successful when Iâ??m not mad at the price of beef jerky!! But honestly, I bet Iâ??ll always think beef jerky is too expensive, ha!

Really though, I think success can be found in a lot of aspects of life, and itâ??s important to celebrate all the small successes. Right now I feel successful for following my dreams of being a pattern maker and designer. The determination and sacrifice involved in making your dreams come true is something to be celebrated. I think that as long as Iâ??m actively chasing my dreams, even if I havenâ??t achieved all of them yet, Iâ??ll consider myself

successful for taking the hard road and not giving up.

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

I made the Tate Romper, which is a sewing pattern that I created in collaboration with Kara, from @smallmuseum_ on Instagram. Iâ??ve been following Kara for a long time and was overjoyed when she reached out about a collaboration! She predominantly sews made-to-order clothes for customers, but she wanted to venture into the sewing pattern world. Working on this pattern felt very special to me and I knew it deserved the perfect fabric.

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