Sewing Outside the Comfort Lines: The Perfect Linen Shirt in Gauze Bleached Linen

Description

Vikisews Cynthia Shirt made with FS Gauze Bleached Linen

Exactly a year ago I posted my first Instagram video about anxiety. I was finishing a summer in Greece and I wanted to tell the truth behind the bright, happy pictures and my â??super funâ?? sewathon to get my capsule wardrobe ready.

I hadnâ??t shown the sloppy insides of rushed makes or the struggle with everything from perfectionism to self-consciousness as I took photos in public. I hated the thought that someone else might look at the false picture I was presenting and compare themselves to it. Turns out I wasnâ??t the only one.

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Anxiety is a paralyser. For my first Curated by You collaboration I took six months to choose my fabric and ended up picking, of all things, black linen. I felt embarrassed for being so basic. But then I sewed up a classic LBD and forced myself to add a little white piping around the edges, and there it was, some creative flair. Iâ??d coloured, even just a tiny bit, outside of the lines.

Because for any of you following those instructions to the letter every single time, ask yourself why that is. Maybe thereâ??s a voice warning against the dangers of unchartered (read: creative) waters too?

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When the folks at Fabric Store offered me the chance to start a series, I jumped (anxiously) at the chance to share more of that journey, to try more of their delicious fabric and see if I could use this as an opportunity to push myself out of my comfort zone.

For my first project I picked this lightweight gauzey linen with ideas about a breezy beach coverup using a new sewing technique Iâ??d seen. Or a shirt with appliquÃ©d linen butterflies on the arms. I was fully ready to challenge the classic clean lines and safe sews my wardrobe is full of.

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After a pre-wash, I had a sinking suspicion that I was destined to make an ironic start to the series. But, what do you do when you have the perfect summer shirt fabric in your hand and a holiday coming up?

I pulled out my trusty Vikisews Cynthia pattern and started cutting, promising myself Iâ??d do something interesting once Iâ??d made the foundational shirt.

Spoiler: I didnâ??t.

Once Iâ??d finished and laid it over the shoulders of my mannequin which was wearing another one of my summer makes â?? a burnt orange silk bias two-piece set â?? I knew I wasnâ??t going to be able to mess with it. I experimentally tacked shells on, I pinned those linen butterflies on the arms. I did Instagram polls and pretended to feel sad when people voted to keep it simple.

This shirt, in all its simple glory, was the summer MVP. The fabric is lightweight enough to work even on the hottest of days and the style goes with, well, everything. I wore it on the beach, on a surprise boat trip, at fancy restaurants, on ferries, for car journeys and for covering up when I felt a bit self conscious in a bikini at lunch.

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Anxiety tells you that itâ??s all or nothing. Youâ??re either in your comfort zone, or youâ??re completely out of it. But actually, beating anxiety is about being able to check in with that authentic part of yourself not sitting in its shadow and not worrying about what people will think or of failure or whatever else, and making the choice that feels good. Sometimes what feels good needs to be challenged, of course. But there are times you realise that a beautiful, go-with-everything addition to a capsule wardrobe is exactly what you need. And you know what, zero regrets.

CATEGORY

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2. FABRIC REVIEWS
3. SEWING OUTSIDE THE LINES

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