



# Alabama Studio Sewing + Design: A Guide to Hand-Sewing an Alabama Chanin Wardrobe

*Natalie Chanin, Sun Young Park (Illustrations)*

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*Alabama Studio Sewing + Design* is an invaluable reference for any woman who has dreamed of creating her own gorgeous handmade wardrobe. In this follow-up to *Alabama Stitch Book* and *Alabama Studio Style*, author Natalie Chanin presents all of the stenciling, hand-stitching, and bead-ing techniques her company uses to create the award-winning Alabama Chanin line of organic cotton clothing, plus more than 50 variations that lead to infinite design possibilities. Included in this encyclopedic compilation of Alabama Chanin skill and style are patterns and instructions for dresses, skirts, tops, a wrap, a poncho, a bolero, fingerless gloves, and a hat. Each piece is featured in both its basic form and with varying embellishment combinations. By mixing, matching, and layering, a stunning, unique, and versatile wardrobe can be built.

Praise for Alabama Studio Sewing + Design:

“Transform organic or recycled materials into clothing or home décor items with haute homespun flair.”  
—*Better Homes and Gardens Quilts and More* magazine

“Natalie is beautifully simple, yet elegant, just like her clothing. Her signature look is intricate stitching, beading and applique on basic organic cotton jersey which together make a show stopping casual look.”  
—*SF Unzipped*

“I’m a longtime fan of Natalie’s clothing designs . . . Her sewing patterns do not disappoint. These are the same dresses, tops, skirts, and accessories that carry four-figure price tags and are coveted by ec-groovy lady rock stars. The same ones. But in her books, Natalie teaches you how to make them yourself . . . Natalie’s pieces are so simple to sew together . . . They go together in a single evening, and when you pull them on they don’t just make you look better than you did in whatever you were wearing before, they make you feel better.” —Heather Ross, [HeatherRoss.Squarespace.com](http://HeatherRoss.Squarespace.com)

“The photographs in this volume are exceptional . . . I think if quilters get this book for both technique and inspiration, it will be more than worth the money.” —Meg Cox, quilter and author of *The Book of New Family Traditions*

“I just love that Natalie has the guts to share the tricks of her trade. The reason I say guts is that you would think that sharing how your garments are made might hurt your business—but in Natalie’s case it’s proved to be actually quite the opposite . . . The interest in her couture line grew once she started to write books.”  
—Cathy Callahan, Cathy of California blogger and author of *Vintage Craft Workshop*

## Alabama Studio Sewing + Design: A Guide to Hand-Sewing an Alabama Chanin Wardrobe Details

Date : Published March 1st 2012 by Harry N. Abrams

ISBN : 9781584799207

Author : Natalie Chanin , Sun Young Park (Illustrations)

Format : Hardcover 176 pages

Genre : Crafts, Sewing, Nonfiction, Art, Couture, Fashion

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## **From Reader Review Alabama Studio Sewing + Design: A Guide to Hand-Sewing an Alabama Chanin Wardrobe for online ebook**

### **Laura says**

So cool.

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### **Mary says**

I have two of her books and they are both full of inspiration. I've used three of her patterns from this book and they've turned out well with minimal tweaking and found the hand sewing aspect surprisingly enjoyable. It's good to slow down!

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### **Betty Howls says**

I talked about this book on September 22 2012, on the Betty howls show.

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### **Rosemary Bagley says**

This book is interesting. Recycling taken to new and beautiful standards/

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### **Mary says**

I love everything about the Alabama Chanin business model, philosophy and clothes. I have made one pattern thus far and very happy with the results. Included are patterns and all of the sewing techniques to create your own handsewn piece. There are lots of images of finished pieces including all the techniques used to make them. I find that this is couture that I can really relate to, couture out of organic cotton jersey.

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### **Charlou says**

This has to be the best Alabama Studio book yet. I actually truly can't wear their styles, and still they are inspiring. The stenciling, the stitching, the beading - those have to be transferable to other things.

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### **Louise Silk says**

I enjoyed this book the most of all of her books. She repeats much of the information from her other books

but takes each idea a step further and allows more room for variation and imagination.

Wonderful ideas and execution.

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### **Tammy V says**

I discovered Natalie Chanin about 3 months ago through friends who create their own clothes. I was appalled at her prices until I started reading about her ethic of living wage for all her people, and how her work has engaged a whole community from farmers of organic cotton to makers of these fantastic clothes (her home community - the one she grew up in! Alabama of course).

The book is beautifully illustrated. I have played with embroidery and applique and reverse applique and beads over 60 years but I \*never\* put it all together like she does. And then she shares \*all\* of her techniques, as well as patterns for her line.

In the Introduction she says, "I have been asked many times why I choose to write books and, in the process, open source (that is freely share) instructions for making Alabama Chanin's couture collections. The answer is not as straightforward as you might think. It is based on my belief that good design should be available to all and my desire to build a company that is sustainable in all of its practices. By sharing out skills in these books, I hope to shed light on not only how we can preserve precious natural resources but also how we can preserve and protect techniques that were once understood as essential survival skills."

I greatly admire this approach and her devotion to it. I found the book a total inspiration (even to the point of deciding I can probably make some of my own patterns for things like the fingerless gloves instead of trying to upsize the ones in the book...not many as most of the patterns you need for the clothing line is in the detachable patterns in the back that you can use or trace and use). She even gives her stencil patterns.

I am inspired not to have an Alabama Chanin but to return to my own closet and look at it with new eyes. Chasing her on Pinterest I have been introduced to natural dying (I'm trying my first batch now), Japanese Boro stitching (go look it up), and sashiko embroidery to name only a few rabbit holes I've been down recently.

If you like hand-work (any kind of needlework) or if you just like seeing beautiful things and knowing that there are people out there \*making it\* with a large side of generosity and openness, then you'll love this read.

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### **Momma says**

Absolutely outstanding, full of great tips and tricks, projects, ideas, and information. If you can only have one of the three Alabama Chanin books, make it this inspiring volume.

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### **Kricket says**

a great book to just look at for inspiration. not all of the garments are things i would actually wear, but i've tried a few of the hand-stitching techniques and have lofty ambitions of trying some of the more complicated

reverse applique stuff. lovely lovely stuff.

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**gail says**

Loaded with techniques and simple, full-sized patterns. A perfect intro to handsewing

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**Evilincarknit says**

I picked up and put down this book a great deal over two years. Then, finally, I jumped in with both feet. I now have six Chanin style tops, three dresses, and the list of sturdily hand stitched items keeps growing. The esthetic definitely grows on you - perhaps a direct correlation to the embroidery becoming easier? The patterns are flattering, feminine, and easy to alter. The photos are luminous and inspiring.

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**Holly says**

I love Alabama Studio however despite excellent directions this book has moved beyond my rudimentary stitching abilities. Its beautiful- couture if you will for the hand-sewer!

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**Beverly says**

Valuable addition to my sewing shelf!

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**Brenda Brewer says**

ABSOLUTELY STUNNING. I couldn't put it down. Will startling for materials and plan to tart with the previous book in January.

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