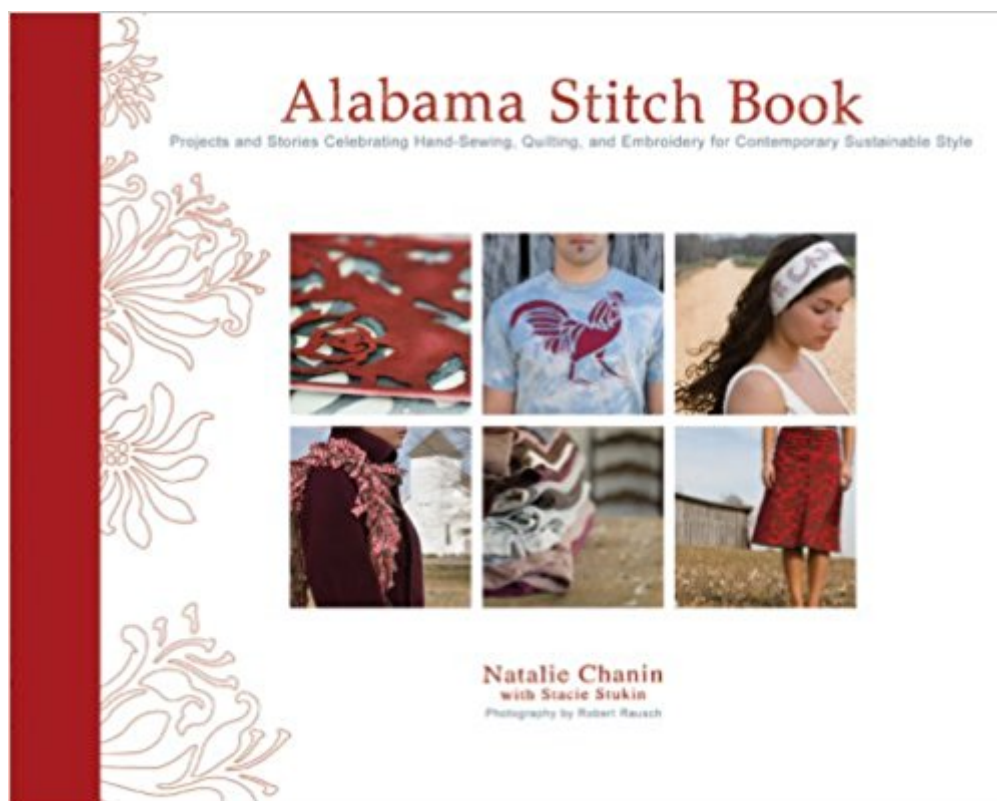




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Alabama Stitch Book: Projects And Stories Celebrating Hand-Sewing, Quilting, And Embroidery For Contemporary Sustainable Style (Alabama Studio)



Synopsis

Haute homespun out of the Deep South. • That's how Vogue magazine has described the fashion of Natalie Chanin. Alabama Stitch Book brings us a collection of projects and stories from her clothing and lifestyle company, Alabama Chanin, known for the cutting-edge twist it puts on tried-and-true sewing, quilting, and embroidery techniques, applied mostly by hand to recycled cotton jersey. This long-awaited book from Chanin begins with her story. After living in New York and Vienna for over 20 years, she began to transform cotton T-shirts into high fashion using the needlework skills she learned as a child in Florence, Alabama. When she moved home, Chanin hired local women (many of whom had worked in the state's now defunct textile factories) to stitch her couture collections with her. What follows is a step-by-step guide to the stitching, stenciling, and beading techniques used in the 20 projects showcased in the book: T-shirts, skirts, and corsets that are sold at chic shops around the world, plus a journal cover, sampler quilt, and tablecloth, among others. Also included are a pullout stencil, perforated postcard for bead-embroidery, and reusable patterns. Throughout are Robert Rausch's beautiful photographs set against the back roads, farms, and homesteads of the rural South.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Natalie Chanin, a former costume designer and fashion stylist, is the founder and head designer of Alabama Chanin. She has been featured in Vogue, Time, The New York Times, and on CBS News,

and her work has been recognized by CFDA/Vogue Fashion Fund, the Cooper-Hewitt National Design Awards, the Alabama Council for the Arts, and Aid to Artisans, among others. In 2006 she was selected for membership by the Council of Fashion Designers of America. Robert Rausch is an award-winning photographer and creative director whose client list includes Anthropologie, Whole Foods, Saks Fifth Avenue, Elton John, and Paloma Picasso.

Alabama Stitch Book was my initial introduction to Natalie Chanin and her fabulous clothing line Alabama Chanin. I've been making clothes, quilts, and home dec items for years, but there was just something about this book that felt a bit like falling down a rabbit hole. I kept this book on my bedside table for several weeks after I bought it and dipped into it night after night for my bedtime reading before drifting off to dream of the beautiful, hand stitched clothing I planned to make. It is rather astounding that a fashion designer would open source her work, but this is just what Natalie Chanin has done. The Alabama Corset pattern alone is worth the cost of the book, but there is also a skirt pattern as well as several smaller projects for those who wish to try out this slow approach to sewing before plunging into a larger, more time-consuming project. I've made the corset and Swing Skirt several times each and have plans for many more. Both patterns are extremely well-drafted and a pleasure to work with.

I bought this book after seeing it mentioned on Pinterest, while I was saving pins for hand sewing and embroidery. I can appreciate the directions and attention to details, because while I was growing up I hand sewed many things. My mother had a sewing machine, but it was always jamming and she chose not to have it looked after. I also like that t-shirt material is used. What a comfortable fabric. I enjoy the ideas and inspirations, and appreciate the stencils! And... our author assumes that items are meant to last through generations and she encourages use of quality products that would ensure the possibility. I like the explanations of the why's for items used. Sewing is more than just fabric, pattern and thread. It is an art that anyone can learn and refine. I still mend clothes that are worth mending. I spent time teaching my children what to look for in worthy articles of clothing, despite the price. Whether or not you choose to hand sew, an appreciation for the instruction and essence of generations of quality of craft can be found in the Alabama Chanin books. And why not try the recipes, too!

This was on my wish list for DH to purchase for me for xmas, but then I couldn't wait and I purchased it myself (yes, the patience of a flea here). So I got it yesterday, drooled over and

marveled at the book for a few hours, and then today ransacked my closet for 2 tee shirts and went to work. And 2.5 hours later, I completed my first reverse applique tee shirt! I just love it. I am already planning to cut the sleeves of my teeshirt and shape the body a bit, since this was a boxy red tee shirt I appliqued. When I'm finished I'll post it on my neglected blog. Also, I am NOT a sewer (although I may become one). Haven't used my sewing machine in decades. And, I do have tons of arts & crafts project books. Most of them I look at and admire, but for whatever reason, I just don't get started on anything. This book is different. It totally motivated and inspired me to start stitching. I love the projects because they are so outside the box - the tee shirt mums are so gorgeous, and the skirts are amazing -- I'll be checking out thrift stores this weekend to buy them up by the dozen. It is so liberating to work with old tee shirts! No worries about messing anything up, because hey, it's just an old tee shirt, and it's like elementary art teachers tell you - no such thing as a mistake, you can incorporate everything into your project. Oh, and the book actually includes recipes too! I plan to make the crackers in the next day or two - we need wheat germ. The only ever so slight criticism I would make is that I wish there were more stencil patterns! But I'll just go ahead and make some of my own and just run with it. I can't wait to start beading embellishments too...oh the plans I have....

This was the first of the Alabama books that I ever read- got it from the local library, and eventually had to have a copy of my own. There is a reason that there are entire communities online dedicated to *just* the "Alabama" way of crafting and sewing- the techniques are simple, yet look amazing, and the finished products are absolutely lovely! (Check out the Flickr group- people do incredible stuff with these techniques!) The beauty of Natalie's way of doing things is that you can start a project, put it down, do other things, and come back to it- all without having to worry about how much equipment (like, say, a serger, sewing machine, all of the accoutrements) you have to have laying around during the interim. I'd recommend this book to anyone who's looking to start sewing, or learn a new set of skills. Great books!

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