


# Why the Versalette is the Perfect Travel Companion

Wear this piece of fabric over 20 ways to keep your wardrobe minimalist.

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Two years ago when I was moving to Europe, my sister approached me with one final gift. As I peeled back the wrapping paper and unfolded the charcoal gray fabric, I was surprised to see just that – a plain, rectangular piece of fabric.

“So... what is it?” I asked her, tentatively.

“It’s the Versalette!” she exclaimed. “It’s stylish, practical and travels efficiently, just like you!”

My sister’s sentiment was sweet, so I decided to give it a shot. But first, I needed to figure out exactly what I was dealing with... Turns out, the Versalette originated as a Kickstarter campaign in November 2011 where it raked in nearly \$65,000 from almost 800 backpackers in just over one month. While it looks like an oversized tube top, the ge-

nus of the garment is in its design. Designed specifically for travelers, minimalists and adventurers, every Versalette is equipped with a series of drawstrings and hidden sleeves that enable you to wear it over 20 ways. Synch the drawstrings on your waist for a skirt, or around your neck for a halter top, or drape the fabric over your shoulders for a shall – and so much more.

Hours of video tutorials and several trips between Europe and the United States later, here are my thoughts on the Versalette.

# PROS:

## IT'S ACTUALLY VERSATILE

My sister told me she once survived a week-long vacation with her husband by packing only one pair of pants, one shirt and her Versalette. So I decided to try it for myself during a trip through Western Germany last spring – and it didn't disappoint. I used it as a hood during my breezy overnight bus ride, complimented the dress version with a sparkly necklace for a dinner with friends and was instantly able to switch it from a scarf to a purse during my daytime sightseeing in Cologne.

## YOU'RE SUPPORTING A SUSTAINABLE FASHION MOVEMENT

This was easily the biggest plus for me. Seamly, the company that now houses the Versalette, is committed to using deadstock and surplus fabric to create all of their apparel. The Versalette is no exception – each one is made from 100% recycled fabric and entirely produced in the United States, so you can have the confidence that your purchase supports locally-made products and sustainable practices.

## THE LOOKS YOU CREATE SPAN ACROSS CULTURAL BARRIERS

I used to live in Istanbul, so I've become acutely aware of how my body is perceived within another culture. Dressing with the Versalette is the best way to ensure you'll feel comfortable and appropriate in any environment – particularly with the long skirt and maxi dress options.

## AVOID BAGGAGE FEES BY PACKING LESS

Paying baggage fees is a nightmare for any traveler. Many airlines, especially those considered 'low-cost' like EasyJet or Ryanair, charge for checked baggage, but not for carry-on items. Packing the Versalette helps you eliminate extra baggage fees by being multiple outfits in one.

## IT FITS GREAT ON MOST BODY TYPES

Actually, I've never seen someone wear a Versalette variation that didn't look good. Plus, this is something Seamly is continually improving with future versions of the Versalette.





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# CONS:

## IT'S AN INVESTMENT

Mine was a gift, but the Versalette can run around \$110 USD – which isn't cheap. But in my opinion, it's well worth the investment. Think about it: How much would you pay for the 20+ other articles of clothing that the Versalette would be replacing?

## REQUIRES SOME CARE

Maybe it's me, but I have a tendency to be a bit rough with my personal belongings. The quality of the Versalette is impressive, but it still can become worn quickly if you don't give it the love it deserves. My tips are to be gentle when pulling the drawstrings to prevent fraying, and be aware of where the fabric rubs most often so you can watch for pilling.

## LONGER DRYING TIME

The company says you can put it in the dryer, but it's not recommended. However, if you plan on hang drying, make sure you have at least a day or so to devote to it because of the heavy fabric. For the most part, though, it's easy to wash – you just have to be mindful of the drawstrings.



## SPEAKING OF DRAWSTRINGS, THEY MADE ME NERVOUS

The last thing I want to worry about is my clothing coming undone – it's the same reason I don't like string bikinis. Fortunately, this has never been an issue with the Versalette. Well, once I wore it as a poncho on a bus in Malta and it slid a little too far off the shoulder, but that was because it got caught on my backpack straps.

## IT WOULD BE BETTER IN BLACK

This is just a personal preference, but I'll give some credit to charcoal and say that it doesn't show dirt at all.

# OVERALL:

## IT'S A SOLID ADDITION TO MY WARDROBE

Trust me, the benefits of owning a Versalette by far outweigh any of the care hassles. Mine is still at the top of my must-pack list – particularly because of how it bridges the gap between smart design and over-consumption. It allows me to pack less and stay stylish while traveling, no matter if I'm hiking through national parks in Croatia or sipping wine at a restaurant in Rome.



## WHAT'S NEXT FOR THE VERSALETTE

Back by popular demand, the Versalette is currently being redesigned with the hope of releasing new styles this winter. We caught up with Seamly's founder Kristin Glenn to learn how the garment will evolve with the rework:

"We're upgrading the Versalette in 2017 with a new quick-drying, crease-resistant fabric. We're simplifying the design, but keeping versatility, so it can still be worn 20+ ways," Kristin says. "We've added some clean lines that dress it up a bit, and it'll have more comfortable and conspicuous elastic drawstrings. But, the biggest news is — we'll be improving fit by offering more sizes!"

According to Kristin, there are over 1,000 people on the waitlist for the latest Versalette. You can get on that waitlist at Seamly's website or you can DIY your own Versalette by purchasing the sewing pattern at Indiesew.