



ANNE FONTENOY

Hand Sewn Frocks and Gowns

Anne Fontenoy designs hand sewn frocks and gowns from fine quality materials, especially silks and natural fibres but also fabrics made from quality synthetic and artificial fibres. She makes the dresses to order in a small home studio environment.

Anne designs wedding suits and short wedding dresses, silk wedding dresses & lace bridal gowns; elaborate silk bridal gowns, ball gowns & dresses for bridesmaids, mother of the bride and the trousseau.

She has a particular interest in designing bias cut bridal gowns and evening dresses, soft fluid clothes, and dresses that are not specifically “fashionable” but which are classic dresses and gowns sometimes inspired by bygone eras, although she often designs in contemporary style. The clothes can be based on designs from her collections of sample dresses, photos and sketches of her designs or she can design one-offs based on her design and pattern cutting techniques. Unique embroidery and beadwork are a speciality.



Accessories from stock or made to order include hand painted silk scarves, hand beaded bridal and evening bags, wedding headdresses, veils, handmade silk rosette headdresses.

Art & Craft

Pencil and pastel

drawings

Digital Art

Botanical Art

Fine Art Prints & Cards

Christmas Cards

Hand cut stencil designs Hand painted silk scarves



MORE ABOUT THE CLOTHES

SILK AND NATURAL FABRICS

Anne specialises in working with silks and other natural fibres such as cotton, linen and wool although she also designs using quality synthetics and artificial fibre fabrics and of course laces some of which are silk or cotton although most are artificial and synthetic mixes, including the best quality French, Italian and English lace.

She has swatches of several ranges of fabrics from which she orders the fabric for her designs. Some of these can also be dyed or woven to order subject to minimum order quantities and most of her suppliers will provide a stock cutting and sometimes they can hold fabric on reserve before an order is confirmed. She can also source many fabrics for her designs that she does not hold swatches for. Most of these fabrics are from manufacturers and wholesalers who supply the trade so she only orders these fabrics for her designs and not to re-sell them as cut lengths to the public. Anne also does not work with very heavy fabrics because all her sewing is done by hand.

EMBROIDERY, BEADWORK AND HAND PAINTING Anne designs unique decorations for her designs for clothes, scarves and accessories.

WEDDING VEILS

Synthetic tulle veils cost from about £100 to £1,000, silk tulle veils from about £300 to £2,000; hand embroidered or beaded veils may cost more depending on the amount of work involved. Veils may also be made from chiffon, lace or other suitable fabrics.

TOILE

If you are unsure of the style for your dress, then a toile can be made. This is a “mock up” of the design made in an economically priced fabric, although Anne will try to use fabric that has a similar weight and drape to the fabric that the design will be made in. A toile will incur extra charges of between £50 and £500. She always recommends a toile for complex garments, as this gives an idea of how the design will look and fit, before cutting the fabric for the finished garment. The design can be refined during the making process.

FITTINGS

Between 2 and 10 fittings may be needed, depending on the style



NOTES ABOUT HAVING A DRESS DESIGNED AND MADE

If you have never had a dress made, then you will need a little patience during the making process. At first the garment is usually sewn with tacking stitches which are also known as basting stitches. These large stitches hold the garment together temporarily because the first fitting is to give you an idea of what the dress will look like and also to check the overall fit of the garment. This is in case the seams need adjusting before they are sewn properly with back stitch because this would add to the overall cost to undo the proper sewing rather than just light tacking stitches.

NOTICE

A minimum of several weeks' notice is required for simple dresses, but several months' notice is usually needed for evening and wedding dresses, ranging from 2 months to 1 year, depending on the style of the dress and the volume of work in hand.

BUDGET

The prices in the rough guide just give an indication of costs to make a dress. Each dress is individually priced and within reason, Anne will try to work to your budget, bearing in mind her hourly rate is £22.50 per hour and the cost of the type of materials used for a design. If you have a limited budget this may mean scaling down a design but it is not usually worth cutting corners if it cheapens the overall finish of her product. However, always feel free to ask if she can make something within your price range.

APPOINTMENTS

All consultations are by appointment at Anne's base in Tunbridge Wells, Kent. You can have a look through her design collection of hand sewn samples and if you like you may try on some of these dresses. You can discuss how these designs and the designs in her photo and sketch books can be made up for you, using the quality fabrics from her collection of trade fabrics. She will provide you with a sketch and a written estimate. Appointments may be made during the week in the daytime, and if time permits in the early evening (up to 7.30 p.m.) or on a Saturday.

TERMS A deposit to confirm the order. The balance is due on completion.

All prices are estimated and are valid for 1 month from the date they are given to the Customer. Any changes or additions to the design will be charged @ £22.50 per hour in addition to the original price plus additional material costs.

Full terms and conditions can be found on the Placing Orders page at www.annefontenoy.co.uk or ask for a printed copy.

THERE ARE A FEW THINGS ANNE DOES NOT DO

She does not design or make trousers because she is a "dress lady". She does not work from readymade paper dress patterns, neither does she copy dresses from photos, pictures, sketches or actual garments designed by other designers; and she does not use a sewing machine. What she does do, is create unique, elegant hand-made ladies clothes: wedding dresses, evening dresses and other special occasion dresses as well as classic day wear for ladies. These quality, original dresses are hand crafted giving the clothes a soft, couture finish.



- Camisoles from £150
- Blouses from £200
- Lined straight skirts from £180
- Lined pleated skirts from £300
- Straight Unlined Day Dress from £250
- Straight Lined Day Dress from £400
- Lined Jackets from £400
- Lined Suits (straight skirt and jacket) from £580
- Simple straight unlined evening dress from £400
- Simple straight lined evening dress from £550
- Simple ball gowns from £800
- Simple Short Wedding Dress from £700
- Bridal and Evening Gowns from £1,500
- Single layer veil trimmed with 100% silk ribbon from £300
- Silk rosette half circlet from £300, full circlet from £500
- Rosette silk bouquet from £400
- Hand drawn pencil or pastel pictures of bouquets from £500

Realistically, including the cost of materials evening dresses and adult bridesmaid dresses cost from about £475 to £2,500, bridal dresses and gowns, from about £800 to £5,000. Very elaborate gowns will cost more. Embroidery and beadwork designs start from around £400 but can cost several thousand pounds for intricate designs. Veils generally cost between £300 and £2,000.

These prices are for clothes based on designs in Anne's portfolio. **BESPOKE designs** cost a minimum of £1,000 for simple straight evening dresses plus materials and a minimum of £2,000 for evening and wedding gowns plus materials because of the time required to make sketches, patterns and toiles.