

TEXTILE TOURISM

LEARN ABOUT GLOBAL TRADITIONS AND ELEVATE YOUR SKILLS

BY KRISTEN CHAMBROT

In recent years, people spent months or longer at home. Those of us with textile-based hobbies were often able to indulge in more time than usual perfecting or taking up sewing, knitting, weaving, and other arts. It's hard to complain about that. Now, though, many of us are feeling the urge to get out of the house and see the world—or at least cover a radius larger than our backyard or block. In the new year, why not combine your love of textiles with your wanderlust? Plan a vacation that deepens your understanding of fabric history or teaches you new techniques.

We've compiled a list of opportunities, far and wide, that will entice you. Whether you want to roam and observe, or take intensive or beginner hands-on classes, there are options. The programs that follow vary in price and location, so you can choose your own adventure.*

The best inspiration sometimes comes with a change of scenery, so cultivate creativity beyond the walls of your craft room, and meet fellow fabric lovers in the process.

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**Listed events and prices are subject to change.*

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Top to bottom: midcentury woven fabric at the Cooper Hewitt museum, Manhattan; quilter Heidi Parkes on one of her tours; weaving at the Sievers School, Washington Island, Wisconsin; a Youngmin Lee tour in South Korea; fabric shopping at the International Quilt Festival, Houston.



Workshops and Retreats

Develop new skills in a new environment with in-person classes. Some of these options are available through virtual instruction as well.

GARMENT SEWING

Travel back in time. Historical dress enthusiasts, hold onto your brimmed hats. Burnley & Trowbridge, a Williamsburg, Virginia, company focused on researching and reproducing authentic period garments, has a number of offerings to help refine your skills. Past in-person workshops have covered 18th-century gowns, research theory for historical dress, and tatting. Workshops range from \$85 to \$295. Online classes on constructing 18th-century stays, a support garment, are also available, as are free video-based sew-alongs for shifts, petticoats, dressing gowns, and more, should you prefer a more independent approach. BurnleyAndTrowbridge.com

Big Easy couture. Papermaple Studio, a sewing school and atelier in the French Quarter of New Orleans, has a range of classes and workshops designed to help sewers advance their skills. In the coming year, owner Leisa Stanton has booked classes on couture jackets and skirts; working with Marfy patterns; and a six-day personal tailoring project, taught by tailor and costumer Thomas von Nordheim, a visiting instructor (September 19 to 24, \$1,800). Classes are in a lush, chandeliered space. PapermapleStudio.com

East Sussex studio life. For those with more open-ended goals, Merchant & Mills, a company well known for its patterns and based in historic Rye, England, has four- and five-night retreats. You can work on your projects, whether a garment or piece for your home, under the guidance of expert sewists. You'll work above the atelier's shop in an open, light-filled studio, and sleep a two-minute walk away, in a cozy, well-appointed space just a couple of miles from the ocean. Retreats start at \$1,535 and run throughout 2024. MerchantAndMills.com

Off to school. Learn stencil work, patternmaking, and construction to create textured garments during three- and five-day workshops (\$1,998 and \$3,998) on the airy grounds of The Factory, part of Alabama Chanin's The School of Making in Florence, Alabama, or book your own event for a group of 12, in-person and online. Virtual instruction and workshops focused on hand sewing and embroidery are also available. AlabamaChanin.com

Back to Kansas. Linda Lee's Sew Kansas workshops (\$850 for three full days and an evening), hosted at her fully equipped studio in Topeka, include lessons on fitting and sewing techniques, with a trunk show of Linda's garments and opportunities to shop from her selection of fabrics. The small group setting allows for plenty of personalized attention. SewingWorkshop.com



At The Sewing Workshop, you'll get personalized design and technical advice, plus the camaraderie of like-minded fashion sewers.

Photos: (p. 63, top; p. 68, bottom grouping) Elliot Goldstein © Smithsonian Institution; (p. 63, second from top; p. 65, bottom grouping) courtesy of Heidi Parkes; (p. 63, third from top; p. 65, top grouping) courtesy of Siewers School; (p. 63, fourth from top; p. 66, top grouping) courtesy of Youngmin Lee; (p. 63, bottom; p. 67) Tony Kuppe for Quilt Festival; (p. 64) Courtesy of the Sewing Workshop; (p. 66, bottom left and bottom right) courtesy of Susan Khalje; (p. 68, top grouping) courtesy of the Textile Museum of Canada, Toronto, Ontario.

EMBROIDERY, EMBELLISHMENT, AND WEAVING

British tradition. Explore just about any aspect of embroidery—metalwork, beadwork, shading, historical stitching, and more—at any skill level, through the Royal School of Needlework, based in southwest London, with courses elsewhere. Consider ancient or *nué* techniques in Bath, a course in canvaswork at the Hampton Court Palace location, or canvas shading in Bristol (each about £150). Many classes and spots are available. If a trip to Britain isn't in the cards, choose from courses available online. Royal-Needlework.org.uk

Enchanting adornment. Rae Cumbie and Carrie Emerson organize an annual retreat to a medieval village near Toulouse, France, where attendees can experiment with a range of surface design techniques. Plus there are visits to markets, shops, and museums in the area—all providing inspiration for the items you'll make in the studio. Next year's retreat (about \$3,000) will be July 17 to 24. FitForArtPatterns.com

Textile island. Started in 1979, the Sievers School of Fiber Arts allows you to get away from it all and delve into your craft on Washington Island, Wisconsin. Beginners can work on a floor loom or experiment with Navajo weaving techniques, while intermediate weavers can try Scandinavian styles, boundweave, or rag rugs. Classes are \$285 to \$680. Reasonably priced dormitory housing and scholarships are available. SieversSchool.com



Textile artists of all stripes congregate on Washington Island to take advantage of the Sievers School's many workshops.



Quilt around the world with Heidi Parkes. Choose from trips to Japan, France, and the American Southwest.

Tours and Travel

Discover the threads that tie us together as you explore new cultures through their textiles. Some of these tours double as working retreats, so you can try your hand at a range of inspiring techniques.

SEWING AND QUILTING

Global quilting. Heidi Parkes's 2023 tour of French textiles, centered on creating a travel diary quilt, may be sold out, but she has more planned for 2024. Join the waiting list to explore Tokyo, Niigata, and Kyoto in Japan from April 7 to 20, which includes stops at a thread factory, a silk weaving center, needle shop, and the Shibori Museum (\$7,959). From May 11 to 19, a London tour allows you to take embroidery courses, tour the sights—even see a West End show—and create a travel quilt. And from September 4 to 14, you can explore the French countryside and Paris, or remain exclusively in Paris from September 18 to 29. Both feature a workshop with an haute couture embroiderer, flea market and haberdashery visits, and museum and sightseeing tickets. For those who'd like something closer to home, retreats in Hawaii and the American Southwest are also being planned. Workshops online and in Wisconsin are available, too. HeidiParkes.com

Explore Vietnam. A six-day tour from TextileSeekers starts in Hanoi, the architecturally striking capital of Vietnam, where you'll visit antique stores and the studio of an artisan weaver. Then you'll head north, to Mai Chau, in the mountains, home to the Ban Lac people, to observe silk-making and the creation of natural dyes, dive

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deep into the weaving traditions of the Tay tribes, and try batik drawing. Dates for 2024 are still in the works, and the group has a trip to Guadalajara, Mexico, planned for November. Follow @textileseekers on Instagram for more announcements. TextileSeekers.com

Korean artistry. On textile artist Youngmin Lee's 10-day Korea Textile Tour (\$3,950), you will see museums and galleries, visit artist studios, partake in workshops, and have the opportunity to try on *hanbok*, traditional Korean clothing. Dates for 2024 are May 13 to 23 and October 7 to 17, though they may change depending on the number of participants. YoungminLee.com

Paris fashion and design. Spend seven days in the City of Light with ParisTilton Tours, where you'll hear lectures from fashion historians, visit studios and markets, and tour fabric stores, plus the city itself. This women-only trip focuses largely on design, but it's also a good fit for sewists (starts at \$7,850). Dates for a spring 2024 trip are to be announced soon. ParisTilton.com

Essence of Italy. Find out what makes Italian textiles and style so special. Couture specialist Helen Haughey leads an 11-day tour to Florence, Rome, and Milan, where an intimate group of participants will learn about Italian fashion, visit artisan studios, sample local cuisine and wines, and shop for fabrics. The 2024 tour is February 29 to March 10. HelenHaugheyDesigns.com

London and Paris. Trips to London and Paris by Susan Khalje, a *Threads* contributing editor, are legendary. Museum visits, couture shops and boutiques, expert lectures, entrée to designer ateliers, hands-on classes in embroidery and passementerie, and elegant teas are only some of the experiences offered in her ambitiously curated tours. Paris, 2024 (\$9,250), is March 17 to 25 and November 3 to 11. Check her website for updates on London opportunities. SusanKhalje.com



Youngmin Lee's tour is a unique opportunity to discover Korean textile traditions and artists.



Designer Julien Cristofoli, above, demonstrates couture draping methods on Susan Khalje's Paris tour. Right, a display at the Dior boutique, Paris.



web extra

Scan the QR code for more textile travel listings, or visit ThreadsMagazine.com.

Expos

Expos are like the tasting menu of travel. You'll find a full assortment of exhibitions, classes, trunk shows, and friendly textile mavens at any of these expos.

Texas-sized quilting. The largest annual quilt show in the United States, the International Quilt Festival runs this year from November 2 to 5. Arrive a couple of days early and swing by the Texas Quilt Museum in La Grange, Texas, about an hour and a half from Houston. (Museum admission starts at \$8.) Choose from hundreds of festival classes and lectures, from \$12, plus a \$60 enrollment fee that includes show admission, pin, and program. Otherwise, daily festival admission is \$15 for adults. [Quilts.com/quilt-festival](https://quilts.com/quilt-festival)

Modern quilting. From February 22 to 25, Quiltcon, billed as the world's largest modern quilting event, will be in Raleigh, North Carolina. Explore the expo grounds, watch demos, or admire the artistry at the Quilt Show. (Better yet, enter your best work by October 31, the deadline.) A four-day pass is \$45, and a one-day ticket is \$15. Conquer wonky edges in a half-day session (\$120), learn traditional Korean techniques, or get started in Japanese sashiko stitching (\$240) in full-day sessions. Take in lectures (\$18) on Anna Williams, Rosie Lee Tompkins, and Yvonne Wells, prolific 20th-century African-American quilters, or on modern quilts from around the world. Members of the Modern Quilt Guild are eligible for discounts. QuiltCon.com

Stitching variety. It's never too early to start thinking about the Sewing & Stitchery Expo in Puyallup, Washington, February 29 to March 3. Shop discounted fabrics and notions, take classes, and enjoy light entertainment. Full details have not yet been announced, but 2023 courses covered Brazilian embroidery, boro (Japanese patching and stitching) and stitching mug rugs with Indian kantha hand-stitching techniques, among myriad topics. SewExpo.com

Traveling show. Let the Original Sewing and Quilt Expo come to you, or at least close. Events featuring classes, workshops, shopping, and shows will be in or near Atlanta (March 7 to 9), Lakeland, Florida (March 14 to 16) and Cleveland (April 18 to 20); check the website for more listings across the country in the summer and fall of 2024. Offerings vary by location, and admission starts at \$8. SewingExpo.com

Sheep and friends. Each October, you can go deep with the Oregon Flock and Fiber Festival (2024 location to be announced). Meant to show the entire breadth of natural fibers, this expo includes llama, goat, and sheep shows, and workshops on caring for livestock. Bring your spinning wheel and spin and sample wools of the Pacific Northwest, experiment with dyeing, learn pin loom weaving, try new knitting techniques, or even get started in rug hooking and punch needle. Admission is free. For those who love to rough it, tent and RV camping is available. OregonFlockAndFiberFestival.com



Plan to spend a few days at Houston's International Quilt Festival, where you can shop in the vendor hall, take classes, and admire the hundreds of quilts on display.

Museums and Galleries

Find your inspiration in exhibits of textiles and garments at museums worldwide. Before you travel, visit FashionAndTextileMuseums.com for listings near your destination.

Explore downtown Toronto. Swing by Chinatown, visit the Art Gallery of Ontario, and then pop by the Textile Museum of Canada, a modest museum that boasts a permanent collection of 15,000 items from around the world, going as far back as 100 CE. Current exhibitions look at migration and a collection of traditionally crafted pandemic masks. Admission is \$15 for adults, \$10 for seniors, in Canadian dollars. TextileMuseum.ca

Albers's experiments. Among the many legacies that Black Mountain College left in American art is the work of its weaving program, founded by Anni Albers. From September 29, 2023 to January 6, Black Mountain College Museum + Arts Center in Asheville, North Carolina, puts the program front and center, with *Weaving at Black Mountain College: Anni Albers, Trude Guermonprez, and Their Students*, the first exhibition focused on the experimental art college's textile arts. Admission is free, with a suggested donation. BlackMountainCollege.org/weaving



Toronto's Textile Museum of Canada presents thematic exhibitions as well as contemporary arts. Top, their Learning Hub is home to a textile reuse program.



Midcentury wovens. Dorothy Liebes collaborated with Frank Lloyd Wright. She earned the title of Mother of Modern Weaving. Her "Liebes look"—colorful, complex textiles speckled with metallics—helped define a midcentury era of textiles. And yet, Liebes is not a household name. Learn about her work at *A Dark, A Light, A Bright: The Designs of Dorothy Liebes*, at the Cooper Hewitt, Smithsonian Design Museum in New York, through February 4. Tickets are \$9 to \$15. CooperHewitt.org

Quilts in the Northeast. Lowell, Massachusetts, is home to the New England Quilt Museum, where you'll always find exhibitions worth lingering over. From historical quilts to modern examples, the museum draws from its own collection and loans to trace a wide range of themes and trends. Tickets cost \$9. NEQM.org

Dorothy Liebes collaborated with an impressive roster of artists and designers from the 1930s to the 1960s.