



# Cocktails, Darling?

Vince Nowell  
creates a chic  
sheath for your  
new Gene

PHOTOGRAPHY OF 2006  
"HEAVENLY" GENE  
BY PAT HENRY

#### Materials needed:

- 1/3 yard of silk dupioni, satin or other dressy fabric that doesn't have a heavy weight
- 1/3 yard of lining fabric in a light color (to prevent staining)
- small piece of ultrasuede
- small piece of lightweight stretch knit fabric
- 1/4" satin ribbon
- small bead, rhinestone or button
- any ribbons, trims, beads, rhinestones, etc. you may wish to embellish your dress with.
- thread to match
- size 4/0 snaps

#### Abbreviations

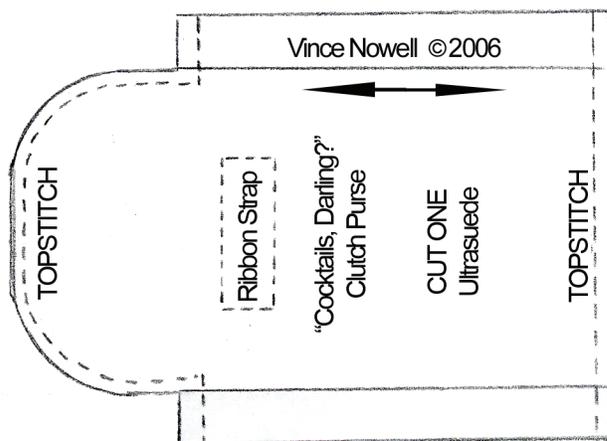
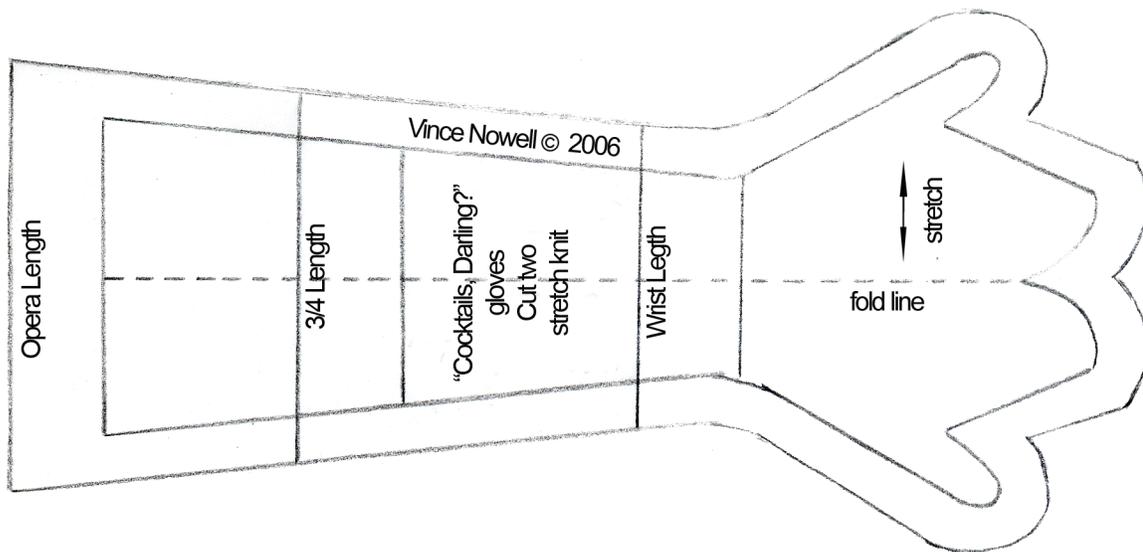
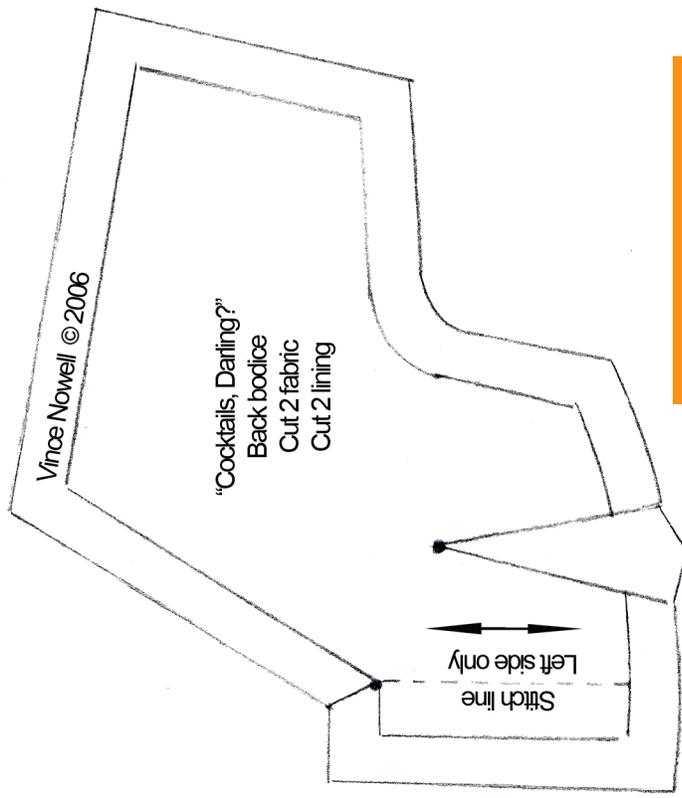
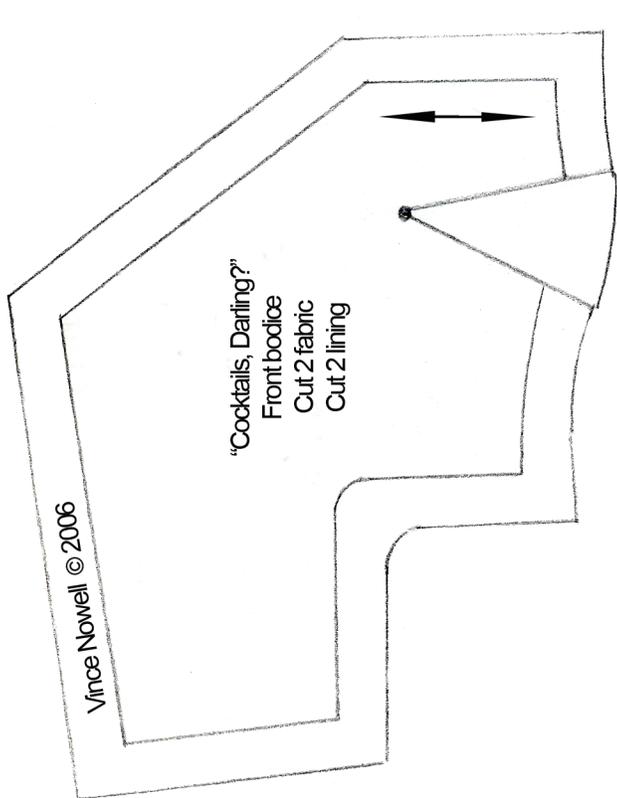
RST = right sides together

T&P = turn and press

staystitch = staystitch around designated edge, 1/8" from edge

trim allowance = trim seam allowances to 1/8"

1. RST, sew bodice darts. Trim allowance and press towards center.
2. RST, sew center seam of bodice front pieces. Press seam open, and staystitch along bottom edge of bodice front.
3. RST, sew side front pieces to center front skirt piece. Clip notches at curves and press seams open. Staystitch along top and bottom edges.
4. RST, sew front skirt piece to front bodice at waist seam, making sure to match dart seams with seamlines of skirt. Trim allowance and press seam towards bodice.



5. RST, sew bodice back darts. Trim allowances and press towards center back. Staystitch along bottom edges.

6. RST, sew side back skirt pieces to center back skirt pieces. Clip notches at curves and press seams open. Staystitch along top and bottom edges.

7. RST, sew back skirt pieces to back bodice pieces at waist seam, making sure to match darts with seamlines of skirt. Trim allowances and press seams towards bodice.

8. RST, sew shoulder seams. Press seams open. Staystitch along neck edge and sleeve hem edges.

9. Repeat steps 1-8 for dress lining.

10. RST, sew lining to dress along neckline edge. Trim allowance and clip notches at points. T&P.

11. RST, sew lining to dress at sleeve hem edges. Trim allowances. Turn right side out and press.

12. RST, sew side and sleeve seams of dress and lining. It is easiest to do this one side at a time, sewing up to the sleeve hem point each time. Clip notches at underarm, and waist and hip curves. Trim allowance between underarm points, and press all remaining seams open. Turn right side out, making sure sleeve linings are neatly within the sleeve and it is not twisted.

13. RST, sew center back and hemline seams. Remember, the seam allowance for the left back opening is 1/2", while the right back opening is 1/4". When the dress is on the doll, this will allow the left back to lap over the right back neatly for a clean line down the center back of the doll. Trim allowances, clip corners for ease. Press back 1/4" on the lining side at the opening to turn the dress. T&P all edges cleanly.

14. RST, sew center back seam of dress only, taking care to leave the lining free. Press seam open. Slipstitch the opening of the lining for closure.

15. Sew on snaps for closure, and embellish dress as you like.

Purse:

1. Topstitch along edges designated on pattern piece.
2. Cut a 1 1/4" piece of 1/4" satin ribbon, folding under 1/4" on each edge. Sew to purse at designated point.
3. Right sides together, sew side seams. Trim allowances and clip ends of seams at an angle. Turn and finger press.
4. Sew on snap for closure, and bead, rhinestone or button for closure.

Gloves:

1. Fold hem allowance under (1/2" allowance) and press.
2. RST, sew seam. Trim allowance and clip notch at the point between the thumb and hand portions, for ease.
3. Turn and press.

### *Town & Country Sophisticates*

<http://thesophisticates.homestead.com/TCSophisticates.html>

### ABOUT VINCE NOWELL

"When I was four, I spotted a doll in the Sears store that would change my life, even though my little brain couldn't comprehend that at the time. There on a display shelf was a brunette swirl ponytail Barbie® doll, and I had to have her! Needless to say, she did come home with us that day, and the minute I got home, I realized she couldn't wear that red swimsuit forever, so I told my mother she had to have a dress. I still remember that dress well, a yellow flannel with purple rick-rack trim. Not the most fashionable ensemble mind you, but the best my mother could do in a short amount of time with trimmings from her fabric scrap box. I grew up over the next few years adding more Barbie® dolls to my collection, and watching my mother sew more and more Barbie clothes, not only for myself, but for the little girls in our family. It never occurred to that some people might find it strange that a little boy like myself would want a doll. When I was twelve years old, I had watched my Mom sew so much that I wanted to learn how as well, and it seemed only natural that she would start me off sewing clothing for my Barbie® doll."

Flash forward years later. I'm a grown man in 1996, shopping around a local doll show in Southern California where I had relocated in 1990 to go to fashion design school. I'm still collecting Barbie® dolls, and couldn't envision another doll coming into my life. But there in front of me stands another brunette stunner, this time she's much taller than Barbie.

Again, I'm like that four year old boy, mesmerized, and I had to have her. She was a "Monaco" Gene® doll, designed by Mel Odom, a graphic artist whose work I had been familiar with. It wasn't much longer till I had one of these dolls, and brought her home with me. She would become the next doll to change my life, and soon I was drafting patterns for her, and sewing a wardrobe that not only captured my love for sewing, but my love for old movies, and an era that had long since past us. I was working at FAO Schwarz toy store at the time, and soon began to rally for us to carry the Gene® doll, which the company did indeed start to do soon after (and have had several very successful exclusive Gene® dolls since). Not long after, in February of 1997, I attended the first meeting of the Hollywood Gene Club at Annette & Friends doll shop in Westminster, CA. At this meeting I not only met Annette, who would two months later introduce me to Mel Odom and Joan Greene (to this day Annette remains a supporter of my design work), but would also meet a group of people who would become very good friends.

In 1998 we would invite Joan Greene to a dinner while she was visiting Los Angeles. At this dinner, we all brought show and tell, and let her see how much fun we were having with our Gene® collecting. I brought several of my handmade ensembles. It took me as a huge surprise a month later when Joan contacted me to purchase one of the designs, which would later become "Bridge Club" in the 1999 Gene® collection. This would lead to four years of helping Ashton Drake create one of the most exciting doll wardrobes any fashion doll could wish for.

I ended up working for Joan and Ashton Drake for several years: 1999: Bridge Club, Poolside, and Sunset Celebration. 2000: Don't Fence Me In, Shorts Story, Heart of Hollywood, Meet Me in Paris. 2001: Mad About Mitzi, Little Blessings, Tennis, Anyone? 2002: Midnight Blossoms.

Today, my business is called The Sophisticates, and features designs from myself, and another friend here in Southern California, Terri Patterson. We create fashions and jewelry for Tyler Wentworth®, and soon we will be adding Kitty Collier®, and Cissy® to our fashion lineup. Have I turned my back on Gene®? Not at all! Now, thanks to Marsha Olson, I'm also working with Marsha Olsen's Perfect Patterns starting a whole new phase of designing for Gene®, by contributing to the ever growing selection of Perfect Patterns designed in the size range for Gene®. I've been a fan of Perfect Patterns from the beginning, and it's a pleasure and an honour to now be able to contribute to this wonderful company!

