

By: Donna Ransdell

Quest Outfitters

Anyone interested in sewing outdoor clothing might be interested in a catalog that I've had hanging around here for awhile.

This place, Quest Outfitters, carries a multitude of outdoor patterns and fabric. Looking over the catalog, there are patterns (Kwik Sew, Daisy Kingdom, Green Pepper) for windwear, jackets, pullovers, anoraks, parkas, rainwear, ski wear, sports vest, long coats ("range rider duster"), and baby stuff. The patterns are for everyone from babies through large sized adults. The patterns are shown in black line drawings, described very well, and with the pattern back information in another part of the catalog for reference. This allows you to choose a pattern and order everything to make it at the same time. There are also size charts and washing instructions.

They have a good selection of fabric, from waterproof to windproof to thermal stuff. Included are cordura, packcloth, coated and uncoated taffeta and ripstop. In the breathables, there are GoreTex, Ultrex, and Entrant (stretchable). In warm fabrics, there's PolarTec, Polartuff. There's liners (breathable and non-breathable), mesh, noseum (for repairing or making your own tents). There's ribbing, cotton canvas, foam, thinsulate, quallofil, and down (yeah, pretty expensive...\$48 for a pound!).

Then there's notions...webbing, drawcord, tape, thread, gliders, buckles, snaphooks, grommets, heavy duty snaps, and lots of different kinds of zippers.

Prices are very, very good, especially on notions. I compared zippers, grommets and snaps with my local House of Fabrics regular prices, and I'll get a decent deal by mail. Most of their fabrics are not readily available in a regular fabric store. From experience, most fabric stores don't know the difference between coated and uncoated taffeta and ripstop nylons. (One store said "Yes, we have lots of coated ripstop!" that turned out to be uncoated. For rainwear that makes a *lot* of difference!!!)

Shipping and handling seems to be pretty reasonable...anywhere from \$1.75 to \$6 for ground UPS. A bit high for Canadians...starts at \$4.50 and goes to about \$16. (ouch) (They said payment must be in US funds and customer will pay duty charges and insurance.)

I called today for information concerning Ultrex. Even though the catalog didn't mention any Saturday hours, I got a very pleasant young woman who answered *all* of my questions and offered alternative suggestions. She was an experienced seamstress and even offered a suggestion on the pattern I'd chosen. I didn't place the order today because I'm going to pay by check (vice credit card), and also because she offered to send me swatches of Ultrex and lining materials, and photocopies of the front and back of the two patterns I've got my eye on (to ensure that I order everything I need!).

So, if you need to make outerwear, ensure you order this catalog: Quest Outfitters, 1-800-359-6931, 2590 17th Street Box B, Sarasota, FL 34234.