

SEW N TELL

It's Baby Month!

Lisa-Anne's Monthly Blog

Lisa shares some exciting news with us all and reminisces about the projects she used to make for her kids when they were babies.

Guest Article

Sara from Slinglings.com shares her inspirational story about her thriving sewing business making baby slings – don't miss it!

Sewing Tips

Recipes of the Month

Shepherd's Pie and Pecan Peach Cobbler courtesy of www.breastfeeding.com

Solution to Last Months Puzzle

Coming up in Part Two – Sept 15

Guest Author #2

Sewing Projects of the Month

Puzzle of the Month

Inspirational Story of the Month

September is National Sewing Month but it's also the most popular month for having a baby!





lisa-anne's monthly blog

It's such a hectic month for celebrations!

It's time to celebrate once again. It's back to school time (so more free time to sew – yeah!), National Sewing Month, and we've declared it Baby Month at Sewing.com. You may ask, why Baby Month? That's because one of our own, Melanie, is having a baby girl this month. With a bit of research we also found out that September is a big month for births!



Last month's project was for a fabric baby diaper stacker. This was by request of Melanie, she wanted us to come up with a pattern and instructions for a hanging diaper bag that could be tied with ribbons to the changing table instead of the typical coat hanger diaper bag, and we did it. Melanie is now the proud owner of the bag that you saw in last's month's projects page.

Melanie chose all of the fabrics and ribbon for the bag, so it is exactly what she wanted. If you know of someone who is having a baby and they need a diaper bag, why not let them pick out the fabric then make it up as a special gift? What could be better than that? Remember the instructions were in part two of the August Sew 'n Tell publication!

As well as a diaper bag there are many things that you can make for a new baby. There are many beautiful patterns available for making up the babies room, as well as making clothing and other things for the baby. You'll find that the major pattern companies have patterns for baby blankets, crib bumpers, crib sheets and even wall decorations. So with all of the scrumptious fabrics out there, a babies room can be made up just the way the mom envisions it to be.

For the baby you can find patterns for swaddling blankets, hats, sleepwear, and everyday wear. I had the best time ever making clothing for my daughter when she was a baby. My favorite sewing projects for her were making her shirts and little leggings out of coordination fabrics.

Recently I took a run through our local second hand shop. I love to take a look at the furniture, bedding and sewing machines to see if there is anything that I just have to have. One time I picked up a pair of antique reception hotel lamps. This time I saw an old White Sewing machine for \$14. It was a duplicate to the one I used for the last 18 years (until it finally broke this last winter). I would have picked it up, but I got a brand new Pfaff for Christmas. So always keep your eyes open, it is possible to find wonderful old machines for next to nothing. Now that I'm thinking about it I'm going to kick myself for not picking it up, it would have been a good find for my daughter.

In the next Sew 'n Tell there will be 3 different projects instead of 1, so be sure to watch for them. We stay one month ahead for projects so that you have time to complete them by the time you'll need them. You'll find instructions for Halloween ghosts, a child's cape, & child's fairy wings. Have fun!

For those of you who missed some of our previous free sewing projects for the new baby in the family, here are some download links for you to use:-

[Baby Blanket with Satin Trim](#)



www.sewing.com/downloads/projects/bb4147.pdf

[Baby Diaper Stacker](#)



www.sewing.com/downloads/projects/bds6645.pdf



guest author – Sara from Slingings.com

We'd love to introduce you to Sara, who is the founding owner of www.slingings.com - one of the most popular online retailers of baby slings. We couldn't miss the opportunity to interview her about her sewing and business history...

How long have you been sewing and what were your first experiences with it?

I started sewing with a machine around age 7. I remember the first thing that I made was a pillow for girl scouts with my mother, and clothes for my Barbie dolls. I had found the Barbie doll clothes in my great grandma's attic, already cut out and ready to sew. My great aunt helped me make them. I made some small patch work quilts on my mom's sewing machine out of my great grandma's old fabric scraps. Then I took home economics every year in middle school, and clothing sewing classes every year in high school.



[Caribbean Blue Asian Stretch Twill](#)

What got you interested in making baby products?

Having a baby! I started making carriers when my first baby was born in April 2001.

How long have you been in business?

Officially I have been in business since my second baby was a baby, July of 2005. Before that while my son was a toddler I sold a few slings locally and on eBay, but I wasn't really in business yet.

Did you start up on your own?

My husband encouraged me and did much to help me. He named the company. He is a computer programmer so he did our website, with the help of a designer. He did some of the sewing, and he did a lot to help us become more efficient and more productive.

What was the process in starting up your business ie. selling to friends, family, selling at craft stalls or sewing shows etc.?

We started online & have always sold mainly through our website. We have never sold to friends or at shows. We really enjoy being at home and being in control of our time. We love working around our children's schedules & needs.



Blue/Green Stripe Stretch Sateen

Do you make the baby slings yourself, or do you outsource the work? Has this changed since you originally started your business?

My husband and I used to make every sling to order, but we quickly found out that wouldn't work for long. We would spend every night sewing until midnight or 1am. The first year we took it really slowly, advertising to get only as many sales as we could handle making the slings for. The best thing that we ever did was hiring seamstresses to make slings in advance, and only selling slings that we actually had made! It was such a novel idea to switch our website over to "inventory only" as we called it then.

Our inventory slowly built up, we started out with 50 slings. The next year we had about 1500 slings in stock. For a long time we had around 5000 slings in stock, and we now have close to 10,000 (which is too many!). I hope to get our inventory down to a manageable level this year.

Can you tell us about the benefits of using a sling to carry your baby?

Baby-wearing (the use of any carrier to hold a baby close to your body) is an age old technique that soothes babies, aids in bonding, and increases the wearer's productivity. I think that baby-wearing began as a survival mechanism. The use of a sling is one of the greatest tools developed that helped lead to modern human evolution. Mothers that could tend to their babies while still being productive (hunting for food, for example) were much more valuable parts of society, & the babies were more likely to survive when cared for this way.



4 1/2 year old being carried



'Logan' Paisley Stretch Sateen

Babies that are carried close to their mother (or father, sibling, etc) are safer, happier, and feed more frequently. Babies that are carried more, cry less. There is a direct correlation between the amount of time spent crying and fussing versus the time spent close to another body.

Babies carried in a sling tend to sleep more deeply and for longer stretches of time. Everyone wants their baby to sleep more! "Sleep begets sleep"--so if your baby sleeps better during the day in a carrier, then he will most likely sleep better and longer at night whether close to you or not.

Can you tell us about your products ie what sort of fabrics you use, and why? Our slings are fitted "pouch style" baby carriers. A good fit is extremely important, so they are available in 10 sizes, the largest in-stock size selection of any sling company that I know of.

We use stretch cotton bottom weight fabrics such as stretch sateen and twill. They are woven fabrics with just a bit of widthwise stretch. The stretch helps the sling conform to the baby's shape and to the wearer's shoulder to avoid pressure points and to provide a snug swaddled feeling for the baby.

We started to design and print our own fabrics in 2007, which really helps our products stand out from our competitors. Many sling companies use the same or similar prints and fabrics; we really wanted to have our own designs.

Our current best selling fabrics are Apollo/Athena and Azul/Rosa, both of which were designed by my husband. We put many designs and prints up on a poll on our website and had customers, distributors and visitors vote on fabric designs. We had poll after poll for a few months, and finally picked the best fabrics to have printed.



'Apollo' Stretch Sateen and 'Rosa' Stretch Sateen



Organic Hemp Blend Stretch Twill

This was a huge scary investment for us, but all of the fabrics we had printed have done very well!

What sort of testing did you do to find the right shape for the slings?

The pouch sling is a basic design that has been around since the 70's. I tried various widths of sling, different shapes for the curve, different fabrics until I fell upon our current design when my son was about 2 years old.

Slingings have remained largely unchanged since then. We made leg padding available in 2006.

What other changes have occurred in your business and products since you first began?

The biggest changes we made were going from all "made to order" to in-stock only, offering both padded and unpadded slings, and printing our own fabrics. The sling itself has remained basically the same.

Do you have any ideas about selling other baby products?

Not right now. We have considered reversible slings, fleece slings and ring slings, but for right now we are busy enough with our one product. We have been working from our home until recently, and space has been a huge issue lately. We just don't have room for any more products.

Did you ever open a store front or did you start up selling online from the beginning?

We have always been online only, and I occasionally meet with customers by appointment at home. We recently moved into a warehouse about a mile from our home and I may have some open house type events there. We share the warehouse space with our new company, Attached to Baby LLC (<http://www.attachedtobaby.com>)

Do you sell your products anywhere else, apart from online?

We are carried in some hospital gift stores, breastfeeding boutiques, and baby stores. We have a few resellers who do home party shows and in person consultations.

We have also worked with several health departments/WIC type organizations, to provide discounted slings to low income and breastfeeding women.

Was Slingings.com your first sewing business?

Yes. My husband and I owned previous online businesses, but this is our first sewing business.

Can you tell us about your new business, [Attachedtobaby.com](http://www.attachedtobaby.com) ?

Attached to Baby (<http://www.attachedtobaby.com>) is a vendor of all types and brands of baby carriers and related merchandise. ATB does not manufacture anything, but instead sells carriers manufactured by other companies. It was established in 2005 around the same time that we started Slingings, and we just took over in mid August. We hope to be able to make Attached to Baby as much of a success as Slingings. My husband has had the same computer programming job for 7 years; it is ending at the end of September and then he will be working full time for us!

Congratulations Sara on such a great business. It goes to show that with a bit of hard work a mother can create a wonderful sewing business of her own at home! If you'd like to see some more of Sara's fabulous baby slings just visit www.slingings.com or view her new business at www.attachedtobaby.com

sewing tips

What color of thread to use?

Select thread that is slightly darker than the fabric to get the most invisible stitch. If you have a multi-colored pattern, or you can't find the right color, taupe or medium gray is usually a good choice.

Choosing Buttons

If you are making a garment with buttonholes, use a swatch of the fabric from your garment and a scrap of interfacing and make an extra buttonhole exactly like the ones in your garment. Take the extra buttonhole swatch with you when choosing buttons and you can leave the garment at home!

Keep Your Snips About You

Attach a small tassel or a colored ribbon to your scissors and pinking shears. That way, you won't lose them when they go with you to classes or workshops.

These tips were kindly provided by Ray Smith, from Quality Sewing and Vacuum
– www.qualitysewing.com - look out next month for more of Ray's sewing tips!



recipes of the month

shepherd's pie

<p><u>Ingredients</u></p> <p>1 lb ground beef 1 15 oz can corn 1 15 oz can green beans 30 oz tomato juice 8 oz water 8-10 large potatoes ½ cup milk 3 tbs butter cheddar cheese salt and pepper to taste</p>	<p>Make the mash potatoes as you like (bake, boil, or microwave, with or without skins.) Place cooked potatoes in a bowl, add butter and milk. Mash till creamy.</p> <p>Brown ground beef in a pan, season and drain. In a casserole dish of your choosing, add corn, green beans and ground beef. Pour tomato juice and ½ can of water over the contents of the casserole dish.</p> <p>Spoon mashed potatoes over the mixture (as thick or thin as you like). Sprinkle top with cheese. Cover with foil. Bake in 350° oven till cheese is melted and juices are bubbly (about 30-45 min)</p>
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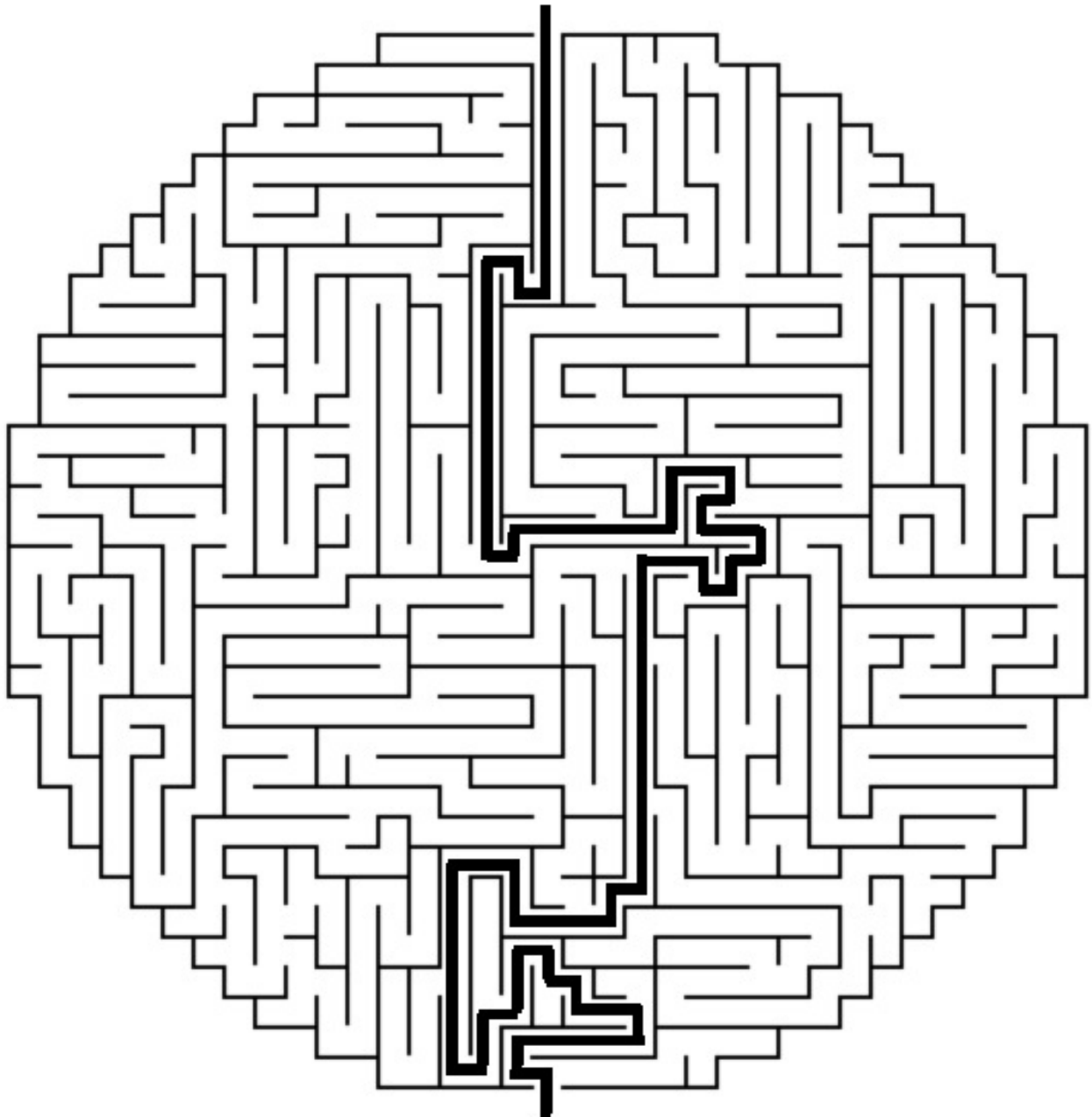
pecan peach cobbler

<p><u>Ingredients</u></p> <p>6 cups peaches, peeled & sliced 1 tsp lemon juice 2 tbsp firmly packed light brown sugar ¾ cup chopped pecans 1 stick butter 1 cup flour 1 cup sugar 1 cup milk 2 tsp baking powder ¼ tsp cinnamon 1/8 tsp nutmeg</p>	<p>In a large bowl, combine peaches, lemon juice, brown sugar and pecans. Set aside.</p> <p>Spray a 13 x 9 baking dish with Pam. Place the butter in the pan, set on cold oven rack and preheat oven to 350°. While butter is melting, mix together flour, sugar, milk, baking powder and spices.</p> <p>Remove pan from oven & pour batter over melted butter. Spoon peach mixture evenly onto the batter (do NOT stir) and bake for about 50 minutes, or until golden brown.</p> <p>Serve warm & top with either freshly whipped cream or a scoop of butter pecan ice cream.</p>
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Recipes above are courtesy of http://www.breastfeeding.com/for_moms/recipes.html - this is a great resource for easy recipes for dad to make whilst mom is nursing a child!



solution to last months puzzle



That wasn't too difficult was it ☺

[Keep your eye out for Part Two of September's Sew 'n Tell – arriving at your email inbox on September 15!](#)