

## **Fisherman's Pants**

**Satoko PORTEOUS (Thailand)**

On the Thai island of Koh Samui, there is no dress code. People dress freely most likely because it is an island, warm temperatures and many foreign tourists. People walking in swimsuits or barefoot or working bare-chested are common sights everyday. When a foreigner such as myself wears Thai clothes as a fashion statement, no matter what the ethnic apparel one has on, it looks like a uniform that someone working at a resort hotel would wear. The first point about island fashion is to dress down. With a simple style that -- for example—just wraps a sarong (scarf with a boutique design, etc.) around the waist on top of T-shirt, you can spend the entire day, regardless of the weather, anywhere from the beach to restaurants. Even the women of a slightly older age that work at food stalls or in restaurants often dress in that style. Though seemingly unfashionable to some degree, the old maid look is the style even at chic resorts.

The type of wear that I like are fisherman's pants. When laid out flat, the pant legs are as wide as the waist, so they look square and baggy to the eye. They are worn by tightening the excess at the waist to the size of one's gut with a cord, then folding it over twice from the top and hanging the pants slightly low at the base of the back. The first time I wore them, they felt like a hakama or kimono, but once I became used to them, I could find nothing more comfortable. As the name suggests, they are worn on a daily basis by the local fishermen. Their origin is unknown, but they have been around for several centuries.

The work pants worn by the farmers of Chiang Mai in northern Thailand are of a similar design, but the fisherman's pants are of a lighter material and suited as summertime wear. Nowadays, the fisherman's pants are not reserved just for fishermen as they are worn widely amongst foreigners. When worn for yoga or martial arts, they not only provide mobility but are a perfect match for the spirituality image. The fact that you can loosen the cord if you eat too much is not good for dieting. However, they are worn by men and women alike and are very popular amongst pregnant women. The pants are made of cotton, rayon, silk and other materials, each of

which has its own feel and fit. These pants, whose colors, patterns and designs are diverse, come in children's sizes, too. Price-wise, they are not that expensive either, so you can try out various kinds. And, above all, by wearing Thai products in Thailand, the Thai people, who love their country very much, will be happy.



Photo1: Unisex fisherman's pants



Photo 2: Colorful fisherman's pants are my daughters' favorites.



Photo 3: Long boat with friends in fisherman's pants