

## Fabric Finds

The team at Raoul Textiles began hand-printing fabric in a hut by the beach in Santa Barbara, so it's no wonder so many of the company's punchy patterns have a coastal look. Raoul recently launched its In & Outdoor Collection, featuring fun fauna, fronds, and tribal geometrics woven from UV-resistant polyester that repels mildew. Colorways such as Aloe, Seagrass, Dune, Plantain, and Blossom were designed to complement tropical landscapes. The vibrant hues and playful prints have the panache to liven up a parlor or patio with a springy, seaside flourish. Get the fab fabrics at Raoul's eclectically decorated Santa Barbara shop, or in showrooms across the country. —Taylor Soppe



Dianthus in Aloe (back) and Java in Aloe (seat)



Dianthus in Dune (left) and Java in Blossom; raoultextiles.com for showrooms

## Insider's Guide to Outdoor Fabrics

### 1 The back can tell you more than the front.

While many textiles are billed as outdoor fabrics, the most durable are those that are dyed all the way through. "Any color applied just to the surface is ultimately temporary," says Gina Wicker, Sunbrella's design and creative director, who advises checking the back of fabric swatches to make sure patterns appear on both sides. "If it's white on the back but colored on the face, it's probably going to fade quickly."

### 2 You can use outdoor fabrics inside, too.

Though they may be über-resistant to harsh weather conditions and UV rays, the latest outdoor fabrics don't look industrial. They're perfect for high-traffic areas, such as window seats, and for people with kids or pets who are looking for an easy-to-clean material. Choose a no-VOC (volatile organic compound) fabric, which won't give off harmful fumes indoors.

### 3 They're low-maintenance, but not no-maintenance.

You can extend an outdoor fabric's life by applying a water-repelling treatment once every year or two. It's a good idea, because the original protective spray wears off, Gina says. But be warned: You can't turn an indoor fabric into an outdoor fabric just by treating it. "Applying the treatment reactivates the durable properties of outdoor fabrics, but it's not going to make a fabric high-performance that wasn't high-performance to begin with." —M.B.

## WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE?



### IKAT

#### THE LOOK

Known for bold color combos, it usually comes in geometric patterns with blurred edges.

#### HOW IT'S MADE

Threads are bundled and dyed before being loom-woven into patterned fabric.

#### ORIGIN

Ikat comes from all over the world, including Asia, South America, India, and Russia.

#### MATERIAL

True handwoven ikat is often silk; blends of cotton and silk are also typical.

#### COST

Handwoven ikat can be pricey, although machine-woven or screen-printed styles generally cost less.

### BATIK

It traditionally has natural tones, crisp borders, and organic designs.

Wax motifs are drawn onto fabric that is then dyed and boiled; the wax melts to reveal patterns.

Batik often hails from south-east Asian countries, such as Indonesia and Malaysia.

Cotton is most common, but any material that can be dyed can be patterned with batik.

Batik fabrics tend to be less expensive than ikat because the process is not as labor-intensive. —Megan Baker

Pictured: Mor ikat fabric, Madeline Weinrib Atelier for ABC Carpet & Home. Sawah batik fabric, Katherine Rally Textiles