

## Gutskin Rain Jacket — Kanaglluk

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### KANAGLLUN ASINGIA'ARTUQ. – YOUR GUTSKIN JACKET IS REALLY NICE.

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Photo: Child's gutskin rain coat. Made on Kodiak between 1905 and 1910 by Mary Demedov Sargent for Estern Sargent. AM77.

Good outdoor clothing is essential on Kodiak, where cold wet weather or sea spray can easily cause hypothermia. Before the introduction of rubberized clothing, Alutiiq people fashioned waterproof jackets from gutskin. They sewed the intestines and esophagi of sea mammals and bears into flexible, lightweight garments with special waterproof stitches. The typical garment was knee-length, although longer jackets were created for kayakers. These garments were tied around the boat's cockpit to keep rain and sea spray out.

Also known by the Russian term *kamleika*, these garments were so valued by western colonists that they commissioned Native people to produce them in European styles like cloaks. Gut rain jackets were popular gifts and souvenirs in the historic era.

Alutiiq people share the gutskin jacket with their northern neighbors. From Prince William Sound to the Aleutians and from the Gulf of Alaska to arctic Canada, Native people stitched similar garments to protect themselves from wet weather. Archaeological data suggest that this type of gear is very ancient. The delicate needles needed to work gut occur in some of Kodiak's oldest sites, suggesting that coastal hunters wore protective gutskin clothing more than 6,000 years ago.