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A Fine Fleece: Knitting With Handspun Yarns



Synopsis

The pleasure of knitting can be that much greater when you know you're using the perfect yarn. In *A Fine Fleece*, designer, knitter, and spinner Lisa Lloyd explores the different qualities of handspun yarn and presents projects that show them to their best advantage. There is valuable information here for every knitter, even if you've never considered learning to spin (though you may find inspiration in this book to do just that). While educating you on the differences in fibers (like Alpaca, Merino, Cormo, Rambouillet, and Suffolk) and the characteristics you can achieve in a handspun yarn by combining fibers according to certain recipes, Lisa Lloyd also shares the three important concepts that enlighten her designs: the use of contrasting color and fiber; scale and perspective (chunky yarns with chunky cable stitches versus chunky yarns with delicate ones); and the creation of "poetic" sweaters that try to capture an emotion. Each of the 26 projects in *A Fine Fleece* shows the finished project knitted in both a handspun yarn and a commercial yarn so that you can train your eye to understand how fiber and texture can truly transform a piece.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

This book might be geared towards spinners who are looking for beyond-the-basics use for his or her handspun (and provides tons of great information for those that do), but even if you've never spun a foot of yarn in your life, you can get something out of this book. The patterns included are "fabulous". Beyond fabulous. They're rich and intricate and have a nice mix between smaller things and to-die-for sweaters. The photography is amazing and inspiring, and for a closer look at each

garment, there are diagrams and stitch charts provided for every wearable. (One of the previous reviewers commented that the photos weren't clear -- not all of them, no. But the charts make up for that, plus some. And the photos are inspirational, so it's all good with me.) Each pattern gives you not just the required amount/wpi of the handspun yarn needed, but also gives a commercially-spun equivalent AND shows the knitted item in BOTH variations (hand/commercially-spun), so you can see how the handspun aspect changes the nature of the fabric (if it does)...it's an amazing extra that the author gives us. Speaking of extras -- the sizing on these patterns ROCK. Being one of the Large Chest Brigade, it's often hard to find books that go beyond the 32 - 34 - 38 sizing for miniature people and get into the sizes more realistic for my...uh...front additions. Not a problem here. I think the smallest size I've seen has been 48", and that RULES. I loved the author just a little bit more than I did before after noticing that little (big?) detail. I've been paring down my Stuff lately. Getting rid of a lot of the extraneous possessions I've been hoarding. Knitting books are included in that.

I'm a huge Lisa Lloyd fan and have been for a long time, so this book is never going to make it to the shelf, it's going to stay in the pile next to my knitting chair. I want to make every pattern in this book. The patterns are classic, this book will be just as valuable in your knitting library in 30 years as it is today. Everyone always wants The Perfect Sweater, the one to wear on your autumn walk to go kick leaves, and there are a dozen of them in this collection. There are patterns for a variety of yarn grists, and patterns typically go up to about 52". The beginning section on spinning and wool characteristics is a good intro to new spinners, or wannabe spinners. It was good information to get new spinners thinking about spinning for a big project. I've been spinning for years and it didn't have any new information for me, but reading it got me whipped up to start spinning with one of these projects in mind. However. The photographs, while beautiful and artsy and fun to look at, leave a lot to the imagination - not a great thing in a knitting pattern book. They're teaser photos - look good in the picture, but if you come to a question in your knitting you won't be able to figure out what you're doing by looking at the picture. I don't think there are more than a couple of patterns with good photos you can really tell what the pattern looks like. I'd expect this would be a struggle for a person who hasn't had a lot of experience knitting cables. I've been knitting them for years and I still need to refer to pictures, it's really a shame they aren't more available. "Harriet" has a diamond lace pattern, but you would never know that the bottom third of the sweater has an entirely different lace pattern.

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