

Simply Socks Yarn Co.

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website:

[www.simplysockyarn.com](http://www.simplysockyarn.com)

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e-mail:

[service@simplysockyarn.com](mailto:service@simplysockyarn.com)

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blog:

[www.simplysockyarn.typepad.com](http://www.simplysockyarn.typepad.com)

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What's in this issue?

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## Spring has sprung... And it brought new yarn!

There's never a month that something new doesn't arrive at Simply Socks Yarn Company- new yarn, special colorways, patterns, gadgets- take a look at what recently arrived, and then check out page 5 to see what's soon to come!

Fleece Artist is one of our favorite dyers, and it's obviously one of yours too! From Nova Scotia, the dyers of Fleece Artist sent us their brand new sock yarn, Sea Wool. This yarn combines superwash merino wool with Seacell (made from seaweed) into a soft fingering weight yarn with a beautiful sheen. This yarn, shown below, is almost sold out, but more will arrive in late May. Check the blog at [www.simplysockyarn.typepad.com](http://www.simplysockyarn.typepad.com) to see when it arrives.



Lots of new things arrived from Opal Yarn! Did you see the newest painted colorway, Herbstmeoldie (Autumn Melody)? This new colorway combines the natural hues of the fall season into a beautiful sock yarn. And don't forget the new Neon Collection, which arrived in April!



Finally, fans of modular knits know the name of well known author, Iris Schreier. But did you know that she has her own line of yarn? You'll now find her Ultramerino 4, a 4-ply fingering weight merino wool yarn, at SSYC. Available in a wide array of nearly solid and variegated colorways, you're sure to find something you must have!

**SSYC's owner, Allison, will be having a baby in early July! The store will be closing for 1-2 weeks during this time. While you can place orders, they will not be shipped until the store reopens. Since the exact arrival time of a baby can be unexpected, you'll see a BIG announcement on the store's website and the blog so that you know if there will be a delay in your order.**



## **Charmed Knits- a New Book from a New Author**

For those to adore Harry Potter, you know that the new book is on the horizon. But did you know that there is a new knitting book that pays homage to the fantastic designs featured in the movies and books? Alison Hansel, author of the Blue Blog (<http://alison.knitsmiths.us/>) and the book *Charmed Knits: Projects for Fans of Harry Potter* took time out of her busy schedule to talk with Simply Socks Yarn Company about her newest endeavors.

**SSYC:** Those of us who read your blog know there have been lots of changes in your life recently- a new baby and a new book! Do you have any secrets to managing it all?

**Alison:** Thanks, but to be honest, I don't feel like I'm actually managing it all. I try to do what I can each day, multi-tasking baby care and blogging and knitting when possible and doing household chores only when absolutely necessary. I get a lot of help from hubby and, luckily, all my children are good sleepers!

**SSYC:** You've been blogging about Harry Potter inspired knits for quite awhile now. How did you make the jump from blogging about it to writing an entire book?

**Alison:** I was nervous about taking my designs from a few free patterns on the blog to an actual book, but the idea of the book was so perfect that I couldn't say no. I love designing around a specific theme and what could be better than the magical world of Harry Potter with its many knitting references, movies chockfull of funky costumes, and an inspiring range of fantastical objects and creatures?! It was a blast coming up with all the different ideas for projects for the book.

**SSYC:** Do you have any words of wisdom for other knit bloggers who want to take their writing and designing more seriously?

**Alison:** I'd say to other knitbloggers that they should just start putting their work out there. Offer a free pattern or two on your blog and see how the response is. If your style and pattern-writing are well received, try your hand at designing for one of the online mags. And if you're just overflowing with ideas, why not try to put something together for print? With all the knitbloggers turned authors, I'm beginning to think that Andy Warhol may have been right, in the future everyone will get their own knitting book!



**SSYC:** Sockapalooza, your annual sock exchange/celebration, has grown to be a very popular blogging experience. Did you expect this when you conceived the idea?

**Alison:** Oh my goodness, no! I had participated in a similar sock swap amongst a very small group of friends and enjoyed it so much I thought I could do something like it through the blog. My knitalongs had been getting larger as the online knitting community grew, but none of them were even remotely as large as sockapalooza – 150 participants in its first iteration, growing to over 350 for the second, then 600, and now 1000 knitters! But knitters are such generous people - knitting for others is just what they do - so I guess I shouldn't be surprised that there are so many folks who want to sock and swap along!

**SSYC:** If you had to choose three of your favorite sock yarns to knit for one year, which would you choose and why?

**Alison:** Desert island sock yarns, huh? Well, first Regia because it knits up and wears so well. You just can't beat it! Next, I loves me the handpainted Knitpicks Dye-Your-Own (or "Bare") sock yarn. It dyes up so beautifully, has such a nice squoosh to it and isn't too thin ('cause I don't loves me the US0 and US1 needles!). Finally, I gotta go with Koigu, which has the loveliest twist and colors and is, by no means, just for socks.

**SSYC:** So how did you learn to knit?

**Alison:** I learned to knit six years ago when I was about four months pregnant with my twin boys. I had anticipated needing to be on bedrest for some part of the pregnancy and a friend said I should learn how to knit. She took to me to a local store, helped me pick out baby blanket patterns and showed me all the stitches I needed to know to make them. (The boys' baby blankets were my very first projects and were so loved that I just recently had to knit them new blankets to replace them!) I did end up on bedrest and that was really when I learned How to Knit. I couldn't go out for help (and trust me, like every beginner, I needed lots of help!), so I just had to study the few reference books I had, stare at my knitting, and fix all my problems myself. What an education!



**SSYC: Where do you find your designing and knitting inspiration?**

**Alison:** I enjoy patterns by Louisa Harding and Debbie Bliss a lot because they're usually classic, clean styles that are fashionable without being too trendy or detailed. That's exactly the type of design I like to make and wear and the type of pattern I endeavor to write. I also tremendously admire the work of Stefanie Japel (from Glampyre Knits and "Fitted Knits") because she always manages to make stunning, glamorous patterns that are still somehow simple to knit! I am inspired by her ingenuity in combining fashion with facility. Frankly, I don't want to read a complicated pattern full of complex charts or difficult techniques and I don't really want to write one either.

**SSYC: What is your favorite pattern from your new book, Charmed Knits?**

**Alison:** Oooh, hard question! There's a special place in my heart for the Weasley sweater pattern of course, but I think I had the most fun designing Dobby's Socks. They are two mismatched pairs of socks: the first pair is based on the very first socks Dobby receives (a black sock from Harry and a pink and orange striped sock of unknown origin) and the second pair are based on those he knits for Harry for Christmas in book four (one with broomsticks and one with snitches). I love the idea of socks that don't match, but of course knitters can use the pattern to make matching pairs of any of the four styles. And Dobby is such a wonderful, quirky character. He's a fellow sock lover after all!

**You can always catch Alison blogging at <http://alison.knitsmiths.us/> . There you can keep updated on new patterns available in Kerrie Allman's upcoming book, or her future book project with Lark Publishing.**

**\*\*A big THANK YOU to Alison Hansel for taking time out of her busting-at-the-seams schedule to talk about her life and her new book!\*\***

Join the Charmed Knits knitalong by visiting  
<http://charmedknits.blogspot.com/>

There you can find a free hat pattern, and share your "charmed" projects with other knitters!



## Look What's Coming to SSYC!

Looking for new ideas for your sock knitting? Then check out what's on the way to Simply Socks Yarn Company later this spring! Check the blog at [www.simplysockyarn.typepad.com](http://www.simplysockyarn.typepad.com) to see when these arrive.

### SSYC SOCK YARN CLUB

Simply Socks Yarn Co. has heard your demands and we will be releasing information about our sock yarn club in late spring!

### **Crystal Palace Panda Cotton**

Keeping this yarn in stock is hard work! Because of its great popularity, we have been out of most colors of the wool-free Panda Cotton for months. But we're expecting a wide array of solid and variegated colors mid-May. If you prefer socks that are wool free, considering trying this popular cotton, bamboo and elastic blend.

### **Seacoast Handpainted Yarns**

Looking for something slightly different than 100% merino wool? Try one of the two new handpainted collections SSYC will soon receive from Holly at Seacoast Handpainted Yarns. Panda Sock yarn combines merino wool, bamboo and nylon into a generous 400 yard skein of hand painted yarn. Merino/Tencel sock combines merino wool with the durability and sheen of Tencel into a 400 yard skein.



Seacoast Yarn

### **SoMoko by Fleece Artist**

Right on the heel's of the new Fleece Artist Sea Wool comes this newest sock yarn, Somoko. Somoko combines wool, kid, nylon and silk into a luxurious fingering weight sock yarn with a slight fuzzy halo. This yarn is definitely not to be missed! Expect this in June.

### **Sleeping Dragon**

Dyed in small quantities of three each by an indie dyer in Utah, this hand painted sock yarn combines gorgeous colors with soft 100% merino wool. All of Karen's 16 hand painted colorways will soon be available.