

New Year, New Sock Yarn!

Simply Socks Yarn Co. has received several new sock yarn collections already in 2007! Have you seen Opal's new Feelings Collection yet? This collection self stripes in substantial blocks of color. 6 colors in all!



Another new self-pattern collection arrived as well: Online Sierra color! After a 6 month wait, this yarn has arrived in 8 colors!



If solid-colored sock yarns are more your taste, check out all of Cherry Tree Hill's Supersock solid colors, now available at SSYC! These hand dyed yarns are 100% merino, super soft, and machine washable. If you are looking for the perfect solid colored yarn for that intricate lace pattern, or simple rib, look no further.

Koigu Now at SSYC!

Many of you have already found the Koigu selection at Simply Socks Yarn Company, but did you know that it will continue to increase over the next several months? So far, SSYC has received 2 large shipments, and we are expecting several more throughout the first half of 2007. This includes KPM, the solid colors, and KPPPM, the variegated colors.



Simply Socks Yarn Co.

website:

www.simplysockyarn.com

e-mail:

service@simplysockyarn.com

blog:

www.simplysockyarn.typepad.com

What's in this issue?

Page 1.... What's new?

Page 2.... Interview with Clara from Knitter's Review

Pages 3&4... Interview cont.

Page 5 10 Picks for FREE Sock Patterns from 2006



Clara Parkes, Offering Knitting Help to Thousands

Simply Socks picked the brain of Clara Parkes, the founder and creative force behind *Knitter's Review*, the oldest weekly knitting magazine on the web, or anywhere else, for that matter. Her yarn reviews, fiber festival reports, and the famous *Knitter's Review* forums are required reading for knitters and fiber enthusiasts around the globe, and we hope you enjoy reading her insights and thoughts on publishing and fiber pursuits.

SSYC: When did you first begin writing *Knitter's Review*? What made you start? Is it a full-time job? That is, does it cut into your knitting time?

Clara: What prompted me to start was the increasing number of online yarn stores selling yarn that *sounded* tantalizing but that I couldn't see or touch for myself. And many times I'd order, and what I'd get wasn't at all what they'd described. I looked around and there was no reliable, unbiased, professional source of information.

When I started thinking about this, I was producing a major comparison-shopping Web site, and before that I'd been a writer and magazine editor, and I'd also managed product reviews for a technology magazine. So all the skills and experience were there, only this time I could aim them all directly at my lifelong passion of knitting.

Knitter's Review has been my full-time job for several years now. Actually if you counted the hats I wear and the hours I work, it's probably two or three full-time jobs. But I love it.

SSYC: How large is your readership?

Clara: As of this writing, the *KR* email newsletter goes out to over 30,000 people. This doesn't include site visitors and forum members (of which we have over 60,000 now).

You'll find
Knitter's Review at:
www.knittersreview.com

Go straight to the
forum at:
[www.knittersreview.com/
forum](http://www.knittersreview.com/forum)



SSYC: We seldom see bad yarn reviews in the magazine. Surely the yarns you review don't all pass muster! Are you being kind in deciding which yarns to review?

Clara: There are plenty of things out there that I don't like—and some things that I *really* don't like. I won't even consider a product for review unless it speaks to me and I sense that it'd speak to my readers. I can only review so many yarns per year, why waste that rare opportunity on something that is lackluster or uninspiring when I can focus, instead, on something of merit and intrigue? I have occasionally crossed the line, but only in cases when I feel that—by *not* doing so—I'd be doing my readers a disservice or putting them at risk. Otherwise, life's too short to focus on lousy yarns.

SSYC: The *Knitter's Review* forum members frequently discuss stash size and management of said stash. Do you think it's possible to have too much yarn?

Clara: I used to think not, but after all these years I've decided that it actually *is* possible to have too much yarn. At the KR Retreat every year we have a huge area dedicated to stash swapping, and I've grown very fond of this yearly purge. You know it's going to someone good, you're clearing out old hopes and pans that never materialized. It's good.

Mind you, my stash is enormous. A lot of it is an archival stash for KR, since I'm incapable of getting rid of any yarn I've reviewed or may possibly review or may need to reference in relation to another review. You just never know. So I have a huge, huge stash of single skeins from all sorts of companies. Not to mention the personal stash, which...ahem...we won't discuss here.

SSYC: When did you first learn to knit? Spin?

Clara: My maternal grandmother taught me to knit when I was about 12 years old. I didn't learn to spin until six years ago.

Find out more about Clara in the SSYC Blog interview!
Check the Jan. 24 entry at www.simplysockyarn.typepad.com



SSYC: What is your favorite sock pattern to knit?

Clara: In spite of all the amazing patterns out there, I still tend to make up each sock as I go along. I swatch until I figure out a ribbing I like, and then I follow the standard routine of measuring the width of the leg, reducing some for a snug fit, casting off, and knitting away. Most of the time I work from the top down with DPNs.

SSYC: Do you have a favorite yarn for knitting socks?

Clara: Not really, although I do enjoy any of the tightly plied worsted-spun merinos out there—Koigu, Socks That Rock, etc. But I think any yarn is a candidate for socks as long as you wear it properly. Right now I'm finishing up a pair of anklets in a gorgeous multiple-ply cashmere. Sure, I won't be able to wear them hiking, but for sitting at the computer all day, why not?

SSYC: If you had to knit one type of item for the rest of your life, what would you choose? Why? And don't worry, we won't be giving out your home address, so us sock-knitting addicts can't come after you!!

Clara: Probably the shawl, simply because it has so much variation and yet is so useful. Look at Cheryl Oberle's Folk Shawls and you'll see what I mean.

SSYC: What's your favorite non-fiber related pastime?

Clara: I adore gardening. In the summer, my knitting takes a bit of a back seat to my flower, vegetable, and fruit gardens. I think you could say both passions involve working with natural elements to create items of beauty and utility. In the summer, I grow beans so I can stash them away for the winter. In the winter, I spin and knit so I can be warm and comfortable the next winter. It works well!

SSYC: Do you have any words of wisdom for fiber artists?

Clara: No matter what you think you know, there's always more to be learned. Knitting really can be a lifelong journey.

****Thanks so much to Clara for taking time out of her busy schedule to share her fiber experience with SSYC and our newsletter readers.****



10 Great, FREE Sock Patterns from 2006

This past year brought sock knitters lots of free resources on the internet. Below are 10 of 2006's popular free sock patterns.

Hedera, from Knitty

<http://knitty.com/ISSUEspring06/PATThedera.html>

Cablenet, from Knitty

<http://knitty.com/ISSUEfall06/PATTcablenet.html>

Lombard Street Socks, from MAGknits

<http://magknits.com/Sept06/patterns/lombardstreet.htm>

Feather and Fan Socks, from Wendy Johnson

<http://wendyknits.net/knit/featherandfansock.pdf>

Monkey, from Knitty

<http://knitty.com/ISSUEwinter06/PATMonkey.html>

Tropicana, from MAGknits

<http://magknits.com/June06/patterns/tropicana.htm>

TechGuy Socks, from MAGknits

<http://www.magknits.com/feb06/patterns/tech.htm>

Spindle Socks, from Anna at My Fashionable Life

http://autoscopia.com/amelia/archives/fashion_for_free/index.html

Bayerische, from Eunny Jang

http://www.eunnyjang.com/knit/2006/09/bayerische_sock_part_ii.html

Basketcase, from Dave at Criminy Jickets

<http://criminyjickets.blogspot.com/2006/04/basketcase-socks-revisited.html>



Hedera Sock, knit by SSSYC owner,
Allison Van Zandt
Yarn: Fleece Artist Merino in Ruby Red