

December 2nd, 2012



101 Knits (and Gifts!) of Christmas Week One

Hello, friends!

I know many of you have noticed the "radio silence" from Wool & Honey lately....life has been busy at this hive! Several of you have asked about the **12 Knits of Christmas 2012**--I've had a few things keeping me from our regular email correspondence this year.

In early September, I accepted a new job in Traverse City as the office manager for a consulting firm--I'm there Monday-Friday from 8:30 to 5. That's the main reason the shop hours changed this fall--we're open on Thursdays and Fridays from 11 to 5, where Cindy and Tracie are running the place like champs. I fill in on Saturdays from 9 to 5 and do behind-the-scenes work at night and on Sundays. **We'll be keeping these hours into the New Year, so look for long weekends at Wool & Honey this winter.**

There is a little something else that's been keeping me away from these emails and the holiday preparation this season...the day after our 8-year wedding anniversary, Curt and I found out **we are expecting our first baby!** Our baby bee is due to join our hive sometime around April 29th and we are thrilled. I've had a few doctor's appointments so far and everything looks right on track. My 20-week ultrasound is scheduled for December 12th (Curt's birthday) and we're going to (try!) to glimpse into the future. We're planning on asking the tech write our baby's sex on a piece of paper, tuck it into an envelope and we'll open it together on Christmas morning--maybe the best present we could give each other. I feel very strong and healthy, although September and early October were a little rough--there was not a lot of eating going on around here! And man, was I tired. Keeping my eyes open through a normal work day was about the effort it took to climb Mt. Kilimanjaro, and so the 12 Knits just weren't possible for me this year. Thanks for your understanding--sometimes the best-laid plans don't quite work out in the way we want them to!

However. It's only the first weekend of December. You know as well as I do that there's still

plenty of time for small, meaningful gifts this season.

Which is why we've come up with a new tradition-- -101 Knits (and Gifts!) of Christmas.

We've selected some of our very favorite knits, kits and gift ideas from Wool & Honey (and beyond) and we'll be sending an email every weekend between now and Christmas. Some are free patterns, some are yarns, some are kits and more still are ready-to-give gifts for knitters and non-knitters alike for those of you who, like me, might need an extra boost this holiday season. We hope you enjoy this list we've curated especially for you--you're bound to find something you'll love.

We ship Priority Mail right to your home--or to someone you love--every day of the week. We can include a special note or card--let us know how we can make your holidays shine. **And don't forget: shipping is ALWAYS free for orders over \$75.**

Read below for more...

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Wool & Honey Holiday Hours

Thursdays & Fridays: 11 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Saturdays: 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

www.woolandhoney.com

www.woolandhoney.typepad.com (blog)

I'm looking forward to catching up with many of you over the weeks to come--I hope your holidays are filled with the season's best and brightest moments.

Melissa

101 Knits (and Gifts!) of Christmas

Week One



1. Very, Merry and Bright.

We thought we might suggest this one first--it just takes a few hours to knit a miniature sweater! These are great for last-minute gifts, IOUs and friends who are so difficult to shop for (postmasters, dog-walkers and house-sitters, too!) Think office swaps, holiday hostess gifts and white elephant exchanges--it only takes a little bit of yarn and an evening or two to make a set. One of my craftiest friends knit 25 mini mittens last year in red, white and green and embroidered numbers on each of them for her own special Advent calendar. (An idea for next year, perhaps.) These mini knits also make super cute embellishments for year-round packages, wine bottles and greeting cards.



2. Lavender Lotion Bar

. Why do customers adore Honeybee Lotion Bars? It's an ecological moisturizer--no plastic bottle. A beauty balm. An everyday luxury. Artwork for the body. A foot balm, cuticle cream, healing salve and lip balm all in one. An innovative, luscious beeswax-based bar made from simple, natural farm ingredients. As you massage the bar between your hands, your body temperature will melt and soften the oils and wax, allowing your skin to be deeply replenished and moisturized--great for overtired hands!



3, 4, 5 & 6. Great Lakes Ranch Suri Alpaca.

You know how much we believe in small businesses. We love having all kinds of local talent here in Northern Michigan to choose from. Blended with a little bit of Michigan wool, this gorgeous, silky-soft yarn is grown right down the road. As in, eight miles from the shop. And we're proud to say that, like many of our hand-selected yarns, **Great Lakes Ranch yarns are exclusively sold at Wool & Honey.**



7. Aran Ornaments.

Stuffed with wool roving, a bit of lavender and hanging by an ecru satin ribbon secured with a tiny button, these ornaments double as fragrant sachets when you take the tree down in January. (These would be exquisite knit from the Great Lakes Alpaca Suri in Beige!)



8. Canopy Fingering Yarn.

Canopy Fingering is a specialty yarn that consistently elicits ecstatic responses from knitters everywhere. (*The sheen! The drape! The halo!*) Soft and lustrous, this fingering weight yarn creates a beautiful fabric for mittens, baby knits, lightweight sweaters and of course, socks. We especially recommend it for the three following patterns, The Littlest Elf, Delft Fingerless Mitts and Purple Muscari--one skein will make a pair of booties OR a pair of fingerless mitts.



9. The Littlest Elf Bootie Pattern.

This project is for the tiniest of toes. One of my favorite things to do (when I can!) is knit for the new babies in my life--and this year, I'm knitting for *my* little bee! This pattern is one that I created to showcase the exquisite, one-of-a-kind sock yarns that are available everywhere. (We think it works perfectly with the gorgeous pastel shades of **Canopy Fingering.**) Knit a pair of these for your niece's baby shower and you'll be the highlight of the party--babies are on their way all year long!



10. Delft Fingerless Mitts Pattern.

I've recently begun to collect blue and white serving ware for my home, specifically pretty little teapots and cups. I love sipping a hot cup of tea from my delicate china every day, whether it's in the morning, afternoon or evening. There's something striking about the pairing of blue and white--cheery, nautical and bit English country. These simple fingerless mitts remind me of this charming pottery--elegant, feminine and at the same time, practical enough for everyday use.



11. Purple Muscari Fingerless Mitts Pattern.

We've said it before and we'll say it again--fingerless mitts are one of our favorite accessories. Quick to knit and popular among all age groups, these mitts are lightweight enough for areas still experiencing a chill in the air. (Ahem, Northern Michigan!)

We've created shop patterns for mini mitts in the past--we've updated this version by knitting the "body" of the hand entirely in stockinette (which of course speeds things up a little!)



12. Wool & Honey signature bee soap.

Over the past few years, these guest soaps have become quite the staple at Wool & Honey. Lightly scented with a touch of sparkle, these decadent soaps are made with shea butter and royal jelly--perfect for special guests or the Queen Bee.



13. Great Lakes Ranch Yak.

Yak. Alpaca. Merino. Local. *Gorgeous.* (We'll be introducing a special pattern written exclusively for this yarn in the weeks to come.)

14. It's So Ewe Handspun.

With an inventory that changes on a weekly basis, Tracie's gorgeous handspun (and hand-dyed millspun yarn) is too hot to load on the website...this yarn can only be seen to be believed. Don't live close by? Call us and we'll pick out a skein just for you.



15. A Cup of Christmas Tea.

What's more cozy than curling up with a ball of yarn, some needles and a cup of tea? For those of you who know me pretty well, you'll know that over the past few years, I've become quite the tea lover. While I'd never turn down a really great cup of joe, I start every morning

(and follow up with several more throughout the day!) with a cup of green tea. Keeping my pot warm in its own sort of sweater is the natural next step



16. Classic Christmas Mittens.

According to my friend Marilyn, "there's just nothing that says Christmas quite as well as a pair of red mittens." We think so, too. Just like Grandma used to make, these mittens are knit with a tweedy wool/angora blend that will be sure to keep the wearer toasty warm.



17, 18, 19, 20 & 21. Fiber Christmas cards.

A beautiful collection of Christmas card for fiber lovers! These cards are prints of oil pastels done by local artist and llama farmer **Renee Hobbins**--this one features a sheep wearing a festive wreath around her neck. There are five cards in total, including several fiber animals--a set would make a fabulous gift for your knitting instructor. The inside of the card is blank so you can leave your own personal holiday message.



22. God Jul Stocking.

Quirky, whimsical and altogether classic, sometimes an over sized holiday sock says, "Merry Christmas" just right. Our version features a wide ribbed cuff, an extra long leg and a thick, supportive foot--one that will easily accomodate that traditional Christmas orange. **God Jul means "Merry Christmas" in both Swedish and Norwegian.**



(all images courtesy of Pinterest)

23. A DIY Christmas Wreath.

Um, I'm pretty sure all of you have a liiiiiittle bit of yarn hanging around that you're not sure just what to do with. How about a handsome alternative to the evergreen wreath? Hang this on your office door or the door to your craft room--all it takes is a foam wreath that you can pick up at your local hardware store, a little hot glue, some scrap yarn and an evening spent in front of the fire with some hot tea. Experiment with pom-poms, glitter, knitted flowers, I-cord....who knows where creativity might lead!

24. Drop off non-perishable items to your local food pantry.

For so many of us, all we seem to think about over the holidays is ourselves--how we're going to get it all done and look great doing it. The parties, the presents, the knitting, the cooking....Gifts and traditions and *fun* are important, yes--but so are our communities. There are people all around you, whether you realize it or not, who are having a difficult time keeping their heat on in their homes, making their monthly payments and providing food for their families. Take a bit of time to thin out your cupboards or add an extra \$25 to your weekly grocery bill--you'll never know who your kindness will touch.



25. Knit for someone in need.

Whether it's a baby in the neonatal unit at your local hospital or a friend in an elder care facility, think about keeping someone outside your circle warm this season. Kids on playgrounds often go without real warmth--several local schools gladly take donations of hats, mittens and scarves. Try spending two evenings this month knitting for your community--we've included a free shop pattern below to kickstart the process.

Two Tiny Hats

Size: preemie (newborn)

Yarn: 115 yds dk weight yarn

❖ *one skein will make two preemie hats or one newborn hat* ❖

Needles: Size 5 (3.75 mm) double-pointed needles

❖ *Adjust needle size if necessary to obtain the correct gauge* ❖

Gauge: 21 sts=4 inches in stockinette stitch

Cast on 60 (72) sts. Join, being careful not to twist sts. Working in stockinette stitch in the round (knitting every row), continue until piece measures 5" (6 ❖)" from cast-on edge.

Next round: *Knit 2, K2tog; repeat from * across round. (45 [54] sts)

Next round: Knit all sts.

Next round: *Knit 1, K2tog; repeat from * across round. (30 [36] sts)

Next round: Knit all sts.

Next round: *K2tog; repeat from * across round. (15 [18] sts)

Cut yarn and thread through remaining 15 (18) sts, gently cinching to close.
Weave in ends and enjoy!

Abbreviations

dpn-double pointed needles

k-knit

K2tog-knit two (2) stitches together

RS-right side

stockinette stitch-*in the round*: knitting every row; *on straight needles*: knit the right side, purl the wrong side

sts-stitches



Try it **FREE** today.