

inspired cable knits

20 CREATIVE DESIGNS FOR MAKING
SWEATERS AND ACCESSORIES

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introduction

It is a powerful and intense moment when an artist realizes that she can strike a chord with another individual through her chosen form of expression. During the conception of *Inspired Cable Knits*, I discovered that I had the power not only to strike a chord, but to make the whole band play. But this would be no unplugged set; I would be tapping into the power and wisdom of Mother Nature herself. The four concepts I explore in this book are:

inspired by change-

THE ORGANIC EVOLUTION OF PATTERNS

inspired by nature-

THE BEAUTY IN TREE BARK

inspired by energy-

THE FORCES WITHIN OUR WORLD

inspired by time-

THE VALUE OF SLOWING DOWN

As in a traditional knitting book, *Inspired Cable Knits* contains a collection of patterns. The projects themselves are contemporary cable knits, modern classics. I also wanted to throw light on the creative process, so I have included written and visual material that reflects my design philosophy. To address the contemplative nature of knitting, you will find mindfulness pointers included with each pattern. These are suggestions to focus on or to ponder during the knitting process.

I have been in love with cable knits for as long as I can remember. I love their crunchy, nubby textures. Ever since I

began designing sweaters professionally, I have been experimenting with new and different ways to use traditional patterns. I wanted to retain their appeal while pushing the boundaries of interest in knitting them. Not to make them more complicated or demanding to knit, just more engaging. Each twist is a building block that contributes to something much more beautiful than the sum of its parts.

I love to knit; that's a given. I also love going to author readings, gallery openings, and film festivals, obviously for the material shown, but mostly for the question-and-answer sessions that follow—for these often reveal the artist's initial spark of inspiration. I have also discovered that when I give presentations, the audience invariably becomes most animated when the questions move toward how I came up with an idea for a design. We relish the opportunity to identify with the unique insights offered by artists, not only for enjoyment, but also for the purpose of educating ourselves. So with this in mind, it seemed a natural step to include this kind of peek behind the scenes at what inspires me.

One of my fundamental fascinations with knitting is its meditative nature, so I was thrilled to see books being published that address this. Although meditation is a highly personal experience, when we are just learning, we are usually directed by prompts from an instructor, to focus on each breath, for example. So I devised each

of the mindfulness pointers contained in the pattern instructions to mimic this process. In writing these, I drew upon comments made by my wonderful test knitters, as well as on my own personal experiences while working on projects contained here.

This book is not written for the brand-new knitter, but for those knitters who have acquired the basics and are now looking to build on these skills. It is also for the many "returning" knitters who have rekindled their love of the craft. Having the desire to take time to become more accomplished should be applauded! There can be joy in accepting a challenge and allowing yourself to reap the benefits of that journey. Without doing this, we cannot expect our craft to grow or evolve.

The inspirations behind the designs in this book are varied, and I have been open and honest about where they came from. My quirks are what give me my unique view of the world. Therefore, this book is a reflection of who I am right now, at this time, in this place.

In writing this book, I discovered that delving inward to observe, and then describe, how my designs develop has been a valuable tool on my path to self-discovery. I hope these patterns strike a chord with you, and that you enjoy hours of lovely con-

templation as you knit them. I encourage you to harness the power of knitting as a tool for relaxation. But be aware that as you ponder and daydream, you can sometimes wander too far down the path of dreams and lose track of the pattern, so remain mindful while you create.

things you need to know before you begin

Cable knitting produces a raised, textured pattern that resembles twisted ropes. To achieve this look, groups of stitches are worked in an order different from how they present themselves on the left-hand (LH) needle. Cables are usually set on a fabric of reverse stockinette stitch (but not always) to highlight them.

Cables produce a raised surface and also contract the piece, producing a denser fabric. Therefore, more stitches and yarn are required to produce a particular width of cabled fabric than a fabric made using stockinette stitch.

how to work a cable

To change the order in which the stitches present themselves, a short, double-pointed needle (dpn), called a cable needle (CN), is used. Stitches are slipped from the LH needle onto one

end of the cable needle and are worked off the other end.

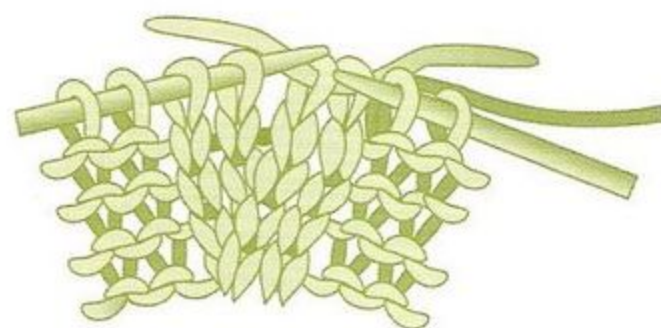
THERE ARE THREE STEPS TO WORKING A CABLE:

1. Stitches are slipped from the LH needle onto the CN and held either at the back or at the front of the knitted piece.
2. Stitches are worked from the LH needle.
3. The stitches held on the CN are worked.

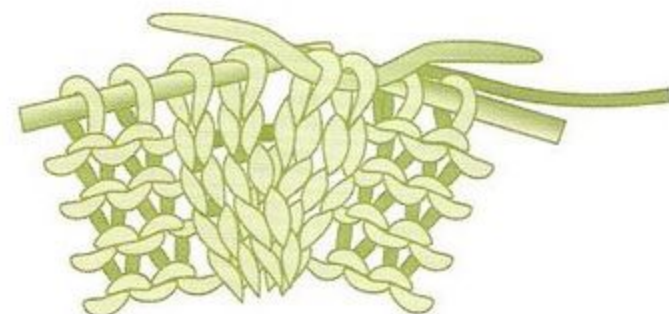
The result is stitches that appear to be crossed or twisted.

THERE ARE FOUR BASIC WAYS OF CROSSING OR TWISTING THE STITCHES:

1. Holding the stitches on the CN toward the back of the piece (away from you) as you work stitches from the LH needle; all stitches are knitted.



2. Holding the stitches on the CN toward the front of the piece (toward you) as you work stitches from the LH needle; all stitches are knitted.





3. Holding the stitches on the CN toward the back of the piece, knitting the stitches from the LH needle, then purling the stitches from the cable needle.

4. Holding the stitches on the CN toward the front of the piece, purling the stitches from the LH needle, then knitting the stitches from the cable needle.

In addition to the four basic ways of creating a cable or twist, there are many variations, each of which produces a particular effect. Different cable patterns are achieved by varying the following:

- The number of stitches placed on the CN.
- The number of stitches worked from the LH needle.

- The order of knitting or purling stitches from the LH needle or CN.
- How often the crossing takes place, which changes the number of "rest" rows between each cross or twist.
- The combination of crosses or twists used to produce a pattern.
- The space (or lack of space) between the cable placements across the row.

TIPS FOR FOLLOWING CABLE INSTRUCTIONS

When the instruction abbreviation begins with a *C*, you will know that this is a cable, and that all stitches involved will be knitted. Whereas, when the instruction abbreviation begins with a *T*,

you will know that this is a twist, and a combination of knit and purl stitches will be required.

When the instruction abbreviation ends with a *B*, you will know that the stitches slipped onto the CN will be held at the back while you work the stitches from the LH needle. When the instruction abbreviation ends with an *F*, you will know that the stitches slipped onto the CN will be held at the front while you are working the stitches from the LH needle.