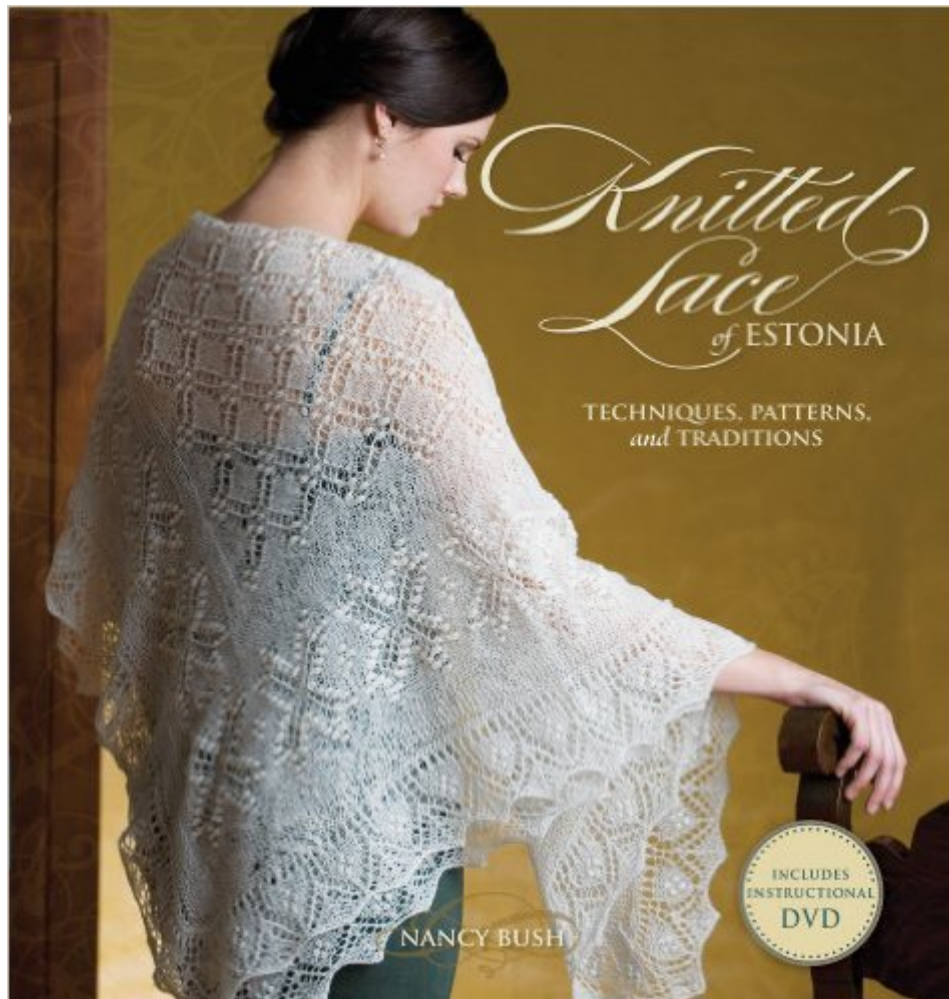


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Knitted Lace Of Estonia: Techniques, Patterns And Traditions (Book & DVD)



Synopsis

Deepen your knowledge of lace knitting with 14 Estonian, heirloom quality lace patterns from Nancy Bush in a new edition of her bestselling book *Knitted Lace of Estonia*. Now with a bonus 1-hour DVD, *Knitted Lace of Estonia* will teach you about traditional lace-knitting techniques, such as: Traditional twig, peacock, and lily of the valley patterns and their variations. Different ways to make the distinctive nupp, or subdued bobble. Modern adaptations of the classic ways of constructing shawls and scarves and adding lace edges. On the new bonus DVD, Nancy explores the knitting traditions of Estonia, as well as offers in-depth instructions for the book's patterns and techniques, as well as designing an Estonian-style shawl, stole or scarf from beginning to end.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

I had been tempted to buy this book after reading the buzz by a couple of popular bloggers, but delayed because of previous unsuccessful attempts at lace knitting. I'm definitely not a beginning knitter, just new to lace knitting. I also couldn't see myself ever going anywhere that a lace shawl would fit in (I'm a blue-jeans type of girl). However, when one other reviewer on said that the patterns were relatively easy, I jumped off the fence and ordered. I also figured that if/when I did knit one of these beautiful shawls, it could be a present to a niece to wear at her wedding. After looking at all the patterns and reading Nancy's tips on making nupps, I started with the Peacock Tail and Leaf pattern scarf. It looked to be small enough to allow finishing in a reasonable length of time. It also had enough nupps to make it interesting but not so many that it was scary. After completing the

bottom edging and 4 repeats of the center pattern, I'd like to pass along my own tip for knitting the nupps. When I get to those, I use a double pointed needle that's several sizes larger than the one I'm using to knit the 7 nupp stitches. (For instance, I'm using a US 5 circular needle to knit the scarf, but use a US 10 dpn to knit the nupp stitches.) After knitting the nupp stitches on the big needle, I slide those stitches to the other end of the dpn, put a marker on the smaller right hand needle and then slip the nupp stitches to the right hand needle. I knit the next couple of stitches in the pattern loosely to make sure I don't tighten up the big nupp stitches. On the return purl row, the start of the big nupp stitches is very evident, and the marker stops me from purling through any additional stitches. One other caution - when purling through the nupp stitches, be sure you get all seven. The next to last stitch (which was a yarnover) especially tends to hug the left hand needle making it hard to get the point of the right hand needle under it. If this happens, your nupp will have a loose stitch that looks bad. This is a good reason to use sharp pointed lace needles instead of the blunt bamboo ones I'm using.

Update: If you have been craving more information about Estonian lace knitting, it is now available in English: see *Haapsalu Shawl*, and *The Haapsalu Scarf*. Original Review: This book is a great addition to Interweave's series of "approachable" knitting technique books, but it is not an exhaustive compendium of advanced techniques. It contains 14 projects and a number of knitting stitch charts for lace shawls and scarves which are typical of Estonian lace knitting, and which span the range from introductory (the Raha scarf) to advanced. Estonian lace is characterized by a few unique stitch components, such as nupps (knobs of yarn) and nature patterns, including lily of the valley (a graceful arc of nupps). The author seems to have spent much time in Estonia collecting stitch patterns and shawl designs from knitters, decades of magazines, and museums. (I wish this book contained much more of what she found!) The book begins with a brief history of knitting in Estonia, then describes traditional shawl design and techniques that the knitter will need to know. Next is the pattern section of 5 lacy scarfs and 9 shawls. Each of the designs is based on an actual Estonian shawl (purchased by the author or in a museum collection), or taken from Estonian magazines, or utilizing a documented traditional stitch or pattern, though there have been some reworkings. Only two patterns have been previously published by Interweave: Madli's shawl, from Interweave Knits Summer 2004, and Triangular Summer Shawl, in Piecework July/Aug 2008. Each pattern includes information about where it is from and its history, such as a design created in honor of the Swedish Crown Prince and Greta Garbo. Finally there is a small stitch dictionary, in charts, of 25 complex body patterns, 11 lacy edgings (none simple, and some complex), and 2

diamond borders. Some of these stitches are variations related to patterns that lace knitting fans already know, but some are completely new (at least to me). Additionally, in most cases, the project patterns themselves have their own charts for (usually) the body and the edging, and these patterns are usually similar to, but not exactly the same as the stitch patterns in the stitch dictionary, so that there are even more stitch pattern charts scattered throughout the text. I am delighted with what is here, but disappointed that it is not an exhaustive compendium and stitch dictionary (hence 4 stars instead of 5). Nevertheless, there is a lot here, carefully described and presented, and to my eye, all the projects look appealing (except maybe the simple Raha scarf). I found the interspersed accounts of Estonian knitters interesting, and greatly appreciate that the author was careful to credit the sources of her patterns and included a bibliography.

I will preface this review with the fact that I got to take a class with Nancy Bush on Estonian Lace at SOAR 2008, and what a great preview to the book it was! I got to see these shawls, and shawls like these first hand, so I can say they really are as beautiful in real life, if not more so. This book really has everything I enjoy in a knitting book, especially one that is based on a particular area or tradition. The front of the book is full of information on the knitted lace traditions of Estonia, informative without being boring or tedious. The tutorials are well designed to make some of the more "advanced" techniques like nupps something to enjoy rather than dread. The patterns themselves are just gorgeous, ranging in difficulty from easy to quite challenging. My favorites have to be the Queen Sylvia, Madli, and Crown Prince shawls. There are a range of shapes, whether you like stoles, scarves, squares or triangles you'll find something that suits your style and adventure level. As an added bonus the stitch dictionary and information in the back make designing your own shawl yet another option. The book is worth every penny, both the wow factor and how much knowledge it packs. Tip from class: If you want a dark colored shawl, try knitting it in white to give your eyes a break and then dyeing it when you're done!

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