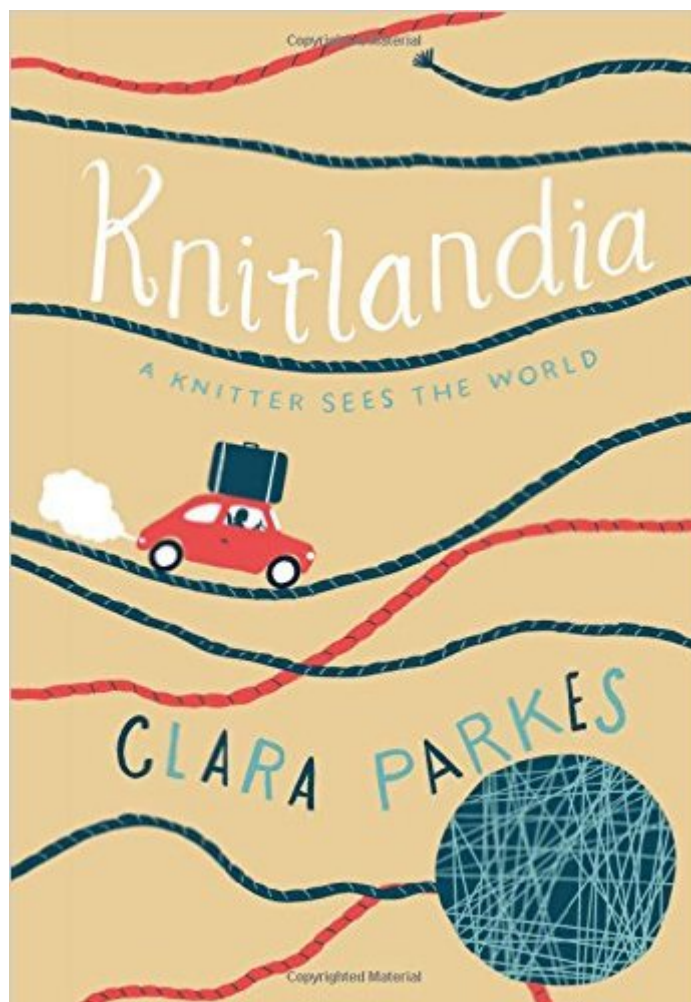


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Knitlandia: A Knitter Sees The World



Synopsis

NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLER * * * Knitting aficionado and notable artisan Clara Parkes delves into her storied travels with this inspiring and witty memoir on a creative life enriched by her adventures around the world. Building on the success of *The Yarn Whisperer*, Parkes's rich personal essays invite readers and devoted crafters on excursions to be savored, from a guide who quickly comes to feel like a trusted confidante. In *Knitlandia*, she takes readers along on 17 of her most memorable journeys across the globe over the last 15 years, with stories spanning from the fjords of Iceland to a cozy yarn shop in Paris's 13th arrondissement. Also known for her PBS television appearances and hugely popular line of small-batch handcrafted yarns, Parkes weaves her personal blend of wisdom and humor into this eloquently down-to-earth guide that is part personal travel narrative and part cultural history, touching the heart of what it means to live creatively. Join Parkes as she ventures to locales both foreign and familiar in chapters like: *Chasing a Legend in Taos*, *Glass, Grass, and the Power of Place: Tacoma, Washington*, *A Thing for Socks and a Very Big Plan: Portland, Oregon*, *Autumn on the Hudson: The New York Sheep & Wool Festival*, *Cashmere Dreams and British Breeds: A Last-Minute Visit to Edinburgh, Scotland*. Fans of travel writing, as well as knitters, crocheters, designers, and fiber artists alike, will enjoy the masterful narrative in these intimate tales from a life well crafted. Whether you've committed to exploring your own wanderlust or are an armchair traveler curled up in your coziest slippers, *Knitlandia* is sure to inspire laughter, tears, and maybe some travel plans of your own.

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Customer Reviews

First a bit of background on Clara Parkes, who I'm personally quite fond of and impressed by: she's the host of "Knitters Review," which has really taken off and become quite important. She also runs "Clara Yarn" which is a pop-up retail venture where she sells custom blends that are truly innovative. Parkes makes some innovative combinations of wool types at "Clara Yarn," then discusses how the different fibers behave. Parkes has a Craftsy class that is about \$24 on sale and I've never learned so much from any other class: it's called "Know Your Yarn" that really gets into the intricacies of yarn construction. "Knitlandia" follows on her other book, "The Yarn Whisperer," which is an utterly entertaining autobiography through knitting, yarn, and so much else. (I highly recommend that book!) In "Knitlandia," what she's doing is somewhat different: This is a compilation of about fifteen years of experiences that Parkes has had traveling the world and searching out various kinds of information and experiences about yarn and knitting. She tells of farms, knit shops, and all kinds of chance encounters that relate to what might be called "a knitting life." So it's travel writing with a purpose and a passion for yarn, in that Parkes is always seeking out things and people and places related to knitting. As someone who does some of what Parkes captures in this book -- we recently travelled to Scotland and scoured every knit and yarn shop we could find, and we also regularly visit sheep farms and mills -- this book is a very entertaining read. Parkes is both a clever story teller and an expert of the knitting world, and it's nice to see her writing in this wonderful genre of the retrospective travelogue. I probably don't need to tell you that knitting books are almost always pattern books. There is nothing wrong with pattern books, as it's how we learn new patterns and techniques, but this is Parkes celebrating the life of the passionate knits and yarn lover. It's quite simply a delicious, fun read.

Sometimes a book comes along which shouts like the old song, "she's got it". Clara's writing is like a sweet cup of tea with a lemon twist, soothing, warm and engaging even for those who have never lifted a knitting needle. I left it next to my pillow to read as a treat for my bed time cool down. But it did not stay there long...it was just too entertaining to leave until the evening....it ended up right on the sofa, prime time, read within two days. I already want more....she is a kindred spirit to all of us who would love to be the mouse in her pocket on her adventures. Don't just borrow the book, buy it. You will want to pass it on to friends or revisit chapters which might inspire you to hop a plane to Iceland or brave the crowds at a sheep festival. Clara's writing talent and humor is not to be missed!

Knitlandia is a beautiful journey that Clara Parkes let's you in on. It brings to mind Stephanie

Pearl-McPhee's books, which I adore, and the tone and chapter subjects are very similar (I wonder if they had the same editor). Each chapter is like an essay that speaks about specific locations/events around the world that are of interest to a knitter (or not). In the chapter on Paris, France, Clara promises to not buy any yarn or even to go into any yarn stores. She succeeds in the first, not the second. The journey is familiar to me, as I have traveled to Myrtle Beach and have learned the joys of marking a road trip with yarn from the destination. I have also begun to venture (as funds allow) to yarn festivals, such as Rhinebeck. Clara is often a teacher, and most of her chapters are from that perspective, which is heartwarming, not overly critical. I have always hesitated to take classes at festivals, because even though many think my knitting is expert, I have trouble with criticism. This book helped me with that a little, because as a sometime teacher, it shows how similar we are no matter what hat we are wearing. Knitters really do have a wonderful club that has been cemented with Ravelry.com, craftsy.com, Interweave and VogueKnitting. There is nothing more relaxing than to go to Rhinebeck and be surrounded with people of all religions, heritage, and ages that are all yarn-crafters. The consideration that is generally there, the kindness, the camaraderie is wonderful. Even knitting/crocheting on a bus, a fellow crafter can, and will, acknowledge you with a nod and smile at least, just as if they were standing beside you at a yarn vendor at Rhinebeck and you reach for the same yarn. The Iceland chapter was hilarious. As someplace I have daydreamed of going to, the chapter started out as an affirmation, to a "I am NEVER going there!", to a daydream again haha. But all in good fun with general information and kindness, so I'm still good with my daydreams of Iceland. When I was doing video podcasting on youtube.com, I was aware of the birth of the Edinburgh yarn festival and as an American Scot, I hope to return there one day and visit. That chapter is more about the people than the festival, though. Can you imagine having a meal with Stephen West!?! Even Clara is awed by who she meets there and that makes her all the more endearing. You never know who you will run into at a festival. This book is worth the purchase or wait through the local library. It is endearing, funny, relatable and interesting. It has a little bit of something for everyone. If you enjoyed the books by Stephanie Pearl-McPhee (all hail the Yarn Harlot!) you will enjoy this book, so check it out, check yourself in and sit back with your favorite beverage when you need to rest your hands from your yarncrafting. You will not be sorry.

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