

# Beauty secrets

Snældan has been called “the best-kept yarn secret”. Helen Spedding finds out more about this Faroese brand

**FROM ITS** mill overlooking the fjord at Strendur in the Faroe Islands, Snældan has been spinning its heritage wool since 1949. Today, a new generation of designers and knitters is discovering the beauty of its yarns and colours.

One of these is Lisbet Clements, who designed the cabled top in this booklet. She first came across Snældan through her links with The Island Wool Company, which imports Faroese yarns to the UK. “I liked the idea of knitting with Faroese wool blended with Falklands wool, spun and dyed in the Faroes in the traditional way,” Lisbet recalls.

Available in a range of weights from laceweight to aran, Snældan yarn starts with lanolin-rich Faroese wool, which has been combed to remove all the hair – the Faroese term for this is *nappað tógv*. This is then blended with fine merino wool from the Falkland Islands, for added softness.

The incredible colour palette is another reason designers are getting excited about Snældan. “The deep colour of Sorrel is amazing; I also love the greys and browns, and Turf and Atlantic Blue,” says Lisbet.

Fellow designer Anna Maltz also enjoys using Snældan for colourwork projects. “It’s a dense yarn, which gives good stitch definition. I can use it in projects combining techniques such as lace, colourwork and texture without worrying that one or the other will get lost in the yarn,” she says. “I appreciate that the shade range has natural fleece colours and a careful selection of bright solids. I really love natural greys, and Snældan has five of them!”

Karie Westermann has created an entire collection of knitting patterns using Snældan, called *Doggerland*. “I discovered the range in a yarn shop in Copenhagen – I am one-quarter Faroese myself, so I had to buy a skein. It really felt like the best-kept yarn secret in the world at the time!

“The whole range has so much character and versatility that I could actually restrict myself to just one yarn brand for the entire *Doggerland* collection,” says Karie. “The 1ply looks so fragile in the skein, but once you knit with it, the yarn blooms and softens. My ‘Storegga’ shawl, for example, uses the 1ply on 5mm needles – very few laceweights could handle that without losing body or becoming flimsy, but the 1ply looks incredible. I used the 3ply (which is actually a DK weight) in my colourwork hat and gloves. Again, the yarn just bloomed, but kept the rustic charm which I think is key to Snældan.”

Lisbet Clements has been busy creating new designs for The Island Wool Company using Snældan: “At the moment I am working on a man’s steeked jumper in midnight blue; the main motif is a row of elk’s ambling across the chest and back.”

Anna Maltz, meanwhile, has been developing a pattern collection inspired by penguins, which ties in with Snældan’s Falklands wool content. “You can find five different species of penguins on the Falklands. I’m excited about the graphic shapes of their feathers and the variation of markings on the different species, which led me to a lot of experimentation in order to find ways to mimic these through lace, colourwork and construction.”

Karie is also keen to further explore the potentials of Faroese yarn. “Without giving too much away, plans are afoot for a very special project involving Faroese yarns, which will hopefully see the light of day in 2015. I am planning to use Snældan again, as well as playing around with Sirri and Navia yarns, also from the Faroe Islands. The three yarns are very different in nature, but they are all gorgeous.”

The full range of Snældan yarns is available from The Island Wool Company [www.islandwool.co.uk](http://www.islandwool.co.uk) 0845 200 1162



1 Snældan offers a range of intense colours 2 The mill is based on the Faroe Islands 3 A swatch of Lisbet Clements' new design 4 The palette of natural greys, creams and browns is beautiful



Karie Westermann's 'Storegga' shawl is worked in Snældan's 1ply laceweight

[HTTP://BIT.LY/DOGGERLAND](http://bit.ly/doggerland)