



# CAST OFF

n e w s l e t t e r

The Arctic Explorer cruise with Holland America is starting from \$3,989 per person including cruise, taxes, shore excursions, all entertainment, and fees.

July 25 - August 15, 2011  
(21 days)

[www.craftcruises.com](http://www.craftcruises.com)

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## FEATURED CRUISE

### Arctic Explorer

**July 25, 2011 ( 21 days)**

The dream cruise for all knitters, especially anyone who aspires to be, or is, a lace knitter. Visit Northern Europe this summer with Myrna Stahman on a voyage including some of the most sought after ports of call for knitters. Shetland, Faroe, Iceland, Norway, England and Denmark are all places where knitting has been a way of life for centuries and is still very popular today. This region is known for some of the finest lace in the world and there is no better way to visit than with a leading lace knitting instructor.

You will meet with local knitters and visit fiber-related places along the way. Some of which will include visiting I Knit London, De Afstap Amsterdam, Dale of Norway in Bergen, Jamieson & Smith Shetland Wool Brokers, the Shetland Museum, Storkurinn Yarn Iceland are some of the fascinating fiber related places of interest you will visit.

When Myrna Stahman first read about this itinerary she knew immediately this is the cruise of a lifetime, especially for a lace knitter. So pack your bags, grab your knitting and join us for a trip of your lifetime!

Visit [www.craftcruises.com](http://www.craftcruises.com) for more info.



Myrna very much enjoys teaching lace knitting, sharing with knitters what seems to have been the best-kept secret in the knitting world - lace knitting is not difficult. If you know how to knit, purl and decrease you can knit lace. Knitting lace is simply using two sticks and some string to connect a series of holes in a pleasing fashion. Because knitted lace it is so beautiful, too many knitters have been hesitant to try knitting lace, thinking that it is difficult. Take Myrna's 15-hour lace knitting class and you will learn the basics of lace knitting, be introduced to the delights of knitting lace from a chart, and apply your skills while beginning a lace Shetland-style scarf and a lace Faroese-shaped shawl. On this cruise you will have many hours at sea, during which you can get a great start on your scarf and shawl, get assistance with difficulties you may encounter, and knit and chat with other knitters.



Myrna will be accompanied by her husband, Bob. Since their retirements, Myrna and Bob are enjoying their traveling adventures, including the Craft Cruises Holland America Baltic Cruise, the Craft Cruises Viking China Yangtze River cruise, and the Craft Cruises Viking River Christmas Craft Markets Cruise. Myrna now limits her teaching engagements, focusing on areas that offer interesting travel adventures. Between travel adventures Myrna works on two knitting books and enjoys spending time with her granddaughter..

For more information please visit [www.myrnaastahman.com](http://www.myrnaastahman.com)

#### PRIVATE SHORE EVENTS

## Shetland, Faroe, Iceland, Norway...

This cruise offers so much for knitters it is impossible to list everything in this newsletter or on our website. Craft Cruises has visited many of these ports before and knows that no matter how you spend your time you will be inspired, meet local knitters and shop for some of the best souvenir yarn in Europe. Here is a sampling of events to expect along the way.

### The Shetland Museum

The Shetland Museum is home to a large Textiles Collection, two-thirds of which comprises objects and information related to knitting in Shetland. Here you will find a wide variety of knitwear such as lace shawls, stoles, veils, color-patterned or 'Fair Isle' jumpers, caps, scarves, socks, mittens and plain knitted garments such as haps, spencers, socks, scarves, and blankets. Advertisements and published knitting patterns related to Shetland knitting, a large library of historical photographs showing knitwear in Shetland from the second half of the nineteenth century and tools related to knitting,



including belts, sheaths, and needles, are included in the collection.

### **Jamieson & Smith**

Jamieson & Smith, the Shetland Wool Brokers, also known as J & S, is the company that purchases and has processed the majority of the fleeces from the flocks in the Shetland Islands. We will meet Oliver Henry, the manager of J & S and the world's expert on classing Shetland fleeces, learn about Shetland fleeces and yarns, and have the opportunity to purchase yarns, including the wonderful Shetland Supreme lace weight and cobweb weight yarns recently developed by J & S.

### **St. Olav Day**

On our visit to Torshavn, Faroe Islands, on July 29, we will experience the city in celebration of St. Olav day, one of the most important holidays celebrated in the Faroe Islands.

### **Traditional Faroese Shawl**

A Faroese shawl is a traditional piece of clothing from the Faroe Islands. The most distinguishing characteristic of Faroese shawls is the center back gusset shaping. Each shawl consists of two triangular side panels, a trapezoid-shaped back gusset, an edge treatment, and shoulder shaping. The shoulder shaping allows these shawls to drape over the shoulders and remain in place as the wearer moves; no shawl pin required.

Instead of a more familiar triangular, rectangular or circular shape, Faroese shawls are shaped like butterfly wings. Some have very long ends so they can be tied around the wearer's waist for extra warmth.

The shawls often feature elaborate lace work. Lace knitting is a traditional handcraft of peoples of the Faroe Islands.

These shawls are traditionally knit from domestic wool of native sheep grown primarily for meat. Natural colors of brown, black, grey and creamy white are most often used. These yarns are now commercially available. Some shawls may have color features in place of lace, or combinations of color panels or stripes and lace panels.

### **Icelandic Wool**

The sheer isolation and brutal weather have molded the Iceland Sheep's coat into a durable multi-functioning asset that repels water and keeps the sheep warm. Garments made from Icelandic wool are highly wind resistant, water repellent, and breathable. This is because they are knitted from twin-fiber wool. The inner fiber is fine, soft, and highly insulating, while the long and glossy outer fiber has strong wind-resistant and water-repellent characteristics. Together, these two distinctive fibers create lightweight and comfortable knitwear that provides quality protection against the elements.





In Iceland, wool productions, is environmentally friendly through the entire process. Sheep graze freely on virgin lands, the wool is bought directly from farmers, and the process of washing and spinning uses little to no detergent while being powered by geothermal and hydroelectric power.

### Design Corner

In Iceland as well as throughout Europe you will find great design houses featuring locally designed and locally made items. In Reykjavik there is one right on the main shopping street called Designer's Corner. This store features many local artists including hand-knit and machine knit items, leather goods, etc....

The Designer's Corner, or DIZA by Alprjon, is known for its locally designed and produced knitwear that is comfortable, simplistic, and very stylish made from pure Icelandic wool.



### Istex - Making Lopi Icelandic Wool Since 1896

Lopi Wool has a long history and since the very first factory was built a town grew up around it. Alafoss started spinning Lopi over a hundred years ago and operates today as Istex. Istex produces and sells the famous Alafoss-lopi yarns used for hand knitting. Lopi is available in these three ideal weights - Lett-Lopi, Alafoss Lopi and Bulky Lopi. Group size permitting we'll visit the mill to learn more about the processing and history of one of the world's highest quality wools.

For more information visit <http://www.istex.is>

### Storkurinn Yarn Shop Reykjavik

Visit Reykjavik's largest yarn store which is within easy walking distance of where the ship docks. In addition to selling locally produced yarns including Istex, Létt-Lopi, Einband, Kambgarn, Plötulopi Storkurinn also carries yarn from all over the world including Rowan (12 or more different kinds), Debbie Bliss (12 or more different kinds), Noro, Araucania, Louisa Harding, Malabrigo, Canard (special mohair from Denmark), Dale Baby, Elsebeth Lavold, Schoppel Wolle, Schachenmayr, Regia, Wilferts, Marks & Kattens plus more are carried. A wide selection of books, buttons, knitting needles from ADDI and Knit Pro, notions and fabrics from Rowan and Oakshott for quilting, sewing thread from Gütermann and needlepoint from Ehrmans are available.

Here you will not only shop for yarn and meet local knitters but the owner will share the Lopapeysa knitting culture with the group. The Icelandic sweater, known as Lopapeysa, is one of the main knitting projects for local knitters. There will be special group discounts and refreshments will be served.

### Dale of Norway

You will have many opportunities to shop for Dale of Norway yarn and sweaters on this cruise. Dale of Norway has been

producing the finest quality yarns and knitwear in the world since it was founded in 1879. While our group is visiting during their summer holiday many stores in and around Bergen feature this yarn and their garments are available throughout Norway at a variety of outlets. Dale of Norway takes much pride in being the the world's largest manufacturer of classic and innovative Norwegian knitwear and technical outerwear.

For more information visit <http://dale.no/us/>

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## HOLLAND AMERICA LINE

### **ms Prinsendam**

The Prinsendam is the smallest ship in the HAL fleet and is the ship used for their Grand and World Voyages. It is an intimate ship with all the contemporary amenities found onboard all of HAL's ships. In addition to featuring their own enrichment programs onboard you will find the service and shipboard activities on this voyage to be superb. This ship is known as the "Elegant Explorer" or "Pathfinder" since she sails on exotic voyages of 14-73 day itineraries.

The Prinsendam is unique in the HAL fleet since it is the only ship HAL purchased rather than being built from scratch. This ship originally sailed as the Royal Viking Sun and then as the Seabourn Sun before being renamed the Prinsendam and upgraded to meet all of HAL's requirements. The bottom line is that this is a delightful ship catering to more mature travelers who want traditional style cruising with all of the contemporary conveniences.

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## BOOKING INCENTIVE

### **Free Lace Book & Yarn**

Every knitter booking this cruise within 2 weeks of receiving this newsletter will receive FREE goody bag including Shetland yarn from Jamieson & Smith and one of four lace knitting books written by Sharon Miller - "Heirloom Knitting", "The Lerwick Lace Shawl", "Shetland Hap Shawls" or "Love Darg Shetland Shawls".