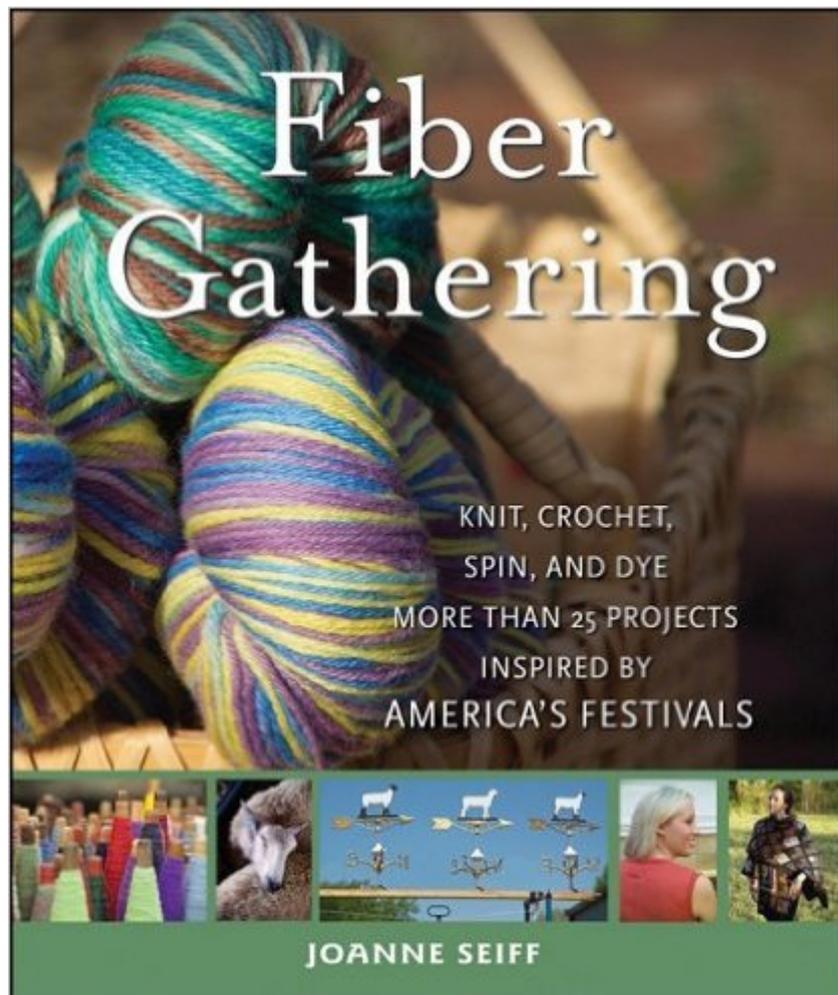


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# Fiber Gathering: Knit, Crochet, Spin, And Dye More Than 25 Projects Inspired By America's Festivals



## Synopsis

Meet the people, sample the flavor, and experience the kinship through 11 unique events and more than 25 inspiring projects Throughout history, we've gathered together in the market square. We're there to buy and sell, to get good deals on fibers, fabrics, fruits, vegetables, and bread, but we're also there to see friends, gossip, trade recipes, and admire new clothes. We've got an eye on each other's animals, and we're going to keep them from getting into any trouble. It's our chance to hold someone else's baby or to congratulate a new grandmother. It's a chance to connect, to touch, and to bond with others. These days, it's easy to feel like we live in scary times, and sometimes we're less neighborly than we used to be. Our lives are filled with long distances and technology. We're more likely to make cyberfriends than visit with someone down the street. Our lives are full of work, school, and caretaking, but how many of us still live near our families? Our hometowns? How do we reach out to one another? -From the Introduction

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## Customer Reviews

I really love this book, because it has wonderful photos of sheep and people and booths taken at the nation's major fiber festivals (e.g., Maryland Sheep and Wool), many great projects (for example, the Evergreen lace shawl, which I plan to knit), and lots of useful information (like how to wash a fleece, or start your own fiber gathering). A preview of most of the projects is available on Ravelry (for the link, see Joanne's 3/2/09 blog post below on What I Did This Weekend). Be warned,

the preview will make you want to buy the book!

Fiber Gathering is a beautifully written snapshot of the phenomena known as the fiber festival in the United States. The reader is taken on a tour of 11 of America's greatest fiber festivals. Organized by region, it's an insightful look at what makes each of these festivals unique and cause for celebration. Sensory images leap from the written descriptions. Ms. Seiff sets the scene so well that I felt I had traveled along to enjoy the unique vendor offerings, taste the food, listen to the performers, and smell the wool. I think what makes this book unique is the fact that not only did the author actually visit and experience each festival first hand (many for the first time), she is a passionate fiber enthusiast and it comes through joyously in her written words. Jeff Marcus, her husband, accompanied her to the festivals and contributes a compelling photographic record of the journey. Sidebar articles appear in each chapter detailing the processes and techniques often demonstrated at fiber festivals. The book also contains more than 25 actual projects ranging from simple fingerless gloves to an intricate shawl. The cover appears to focus on these projects (which are all wonderful) but I believe the festival overviews are the essence and true delight of the book. The rich tradition of regional fiber festivals is highlighted in her collection of narratives. She captures the spirit of why we gather and the layers of enjoyment one gets from attending such a festival: buying unique, one-of-a-kind materials, visiting with friends, and immersing oneself in the creative energy that only a gathering of fiber enthusiasts can create. I'm so impressed with the quality of this book and the story it tells. It captures and documents the state of the fiber festival in the first decade of the 21st century. I can't help but imagine fiber enthusiasts 50 or 100 years from now pouring over the pages and marveling at the rich history we currently live.

I have loved fiber (knitting and crochet) for a long time but have recently taken up handspinning as well. I am almost entirely self-taught, so good books are priceless for continuing my education. Fiber Gathering definitely fits the bill! This book provides everything I would expect from a pattern book, including beautiful but useful pictures for viewing the product and clear directions for making one for myself. It also includes directions for projects that can take fiber art to the next level...how to dye fiber and basic spinning instructions, for example. And to top it off, the basic premise of the book, combined with artfully arranged photos and a thoughtful narrative, provides ample inspiration for approaching fiber art from different directions, both geographically and culturally. I recently attended my first fiber festival, a small regional event, and took my copy of Fiber Gathering with me to read in the car. It provided the knowledge (and courage) needed to purchase and process my very first raw

fleece. I will surely use this book as reference and for inspiration for years.

When I moved to Nashville many years ago, I was excited to go to my first real state fair in the state capital. Somehow, I completely missed the fiber portion of it. Now I'm far away again, and will have to find another fiber show to attend, but this book certainly whetted my appetite. The book is well-photographed, and leads you through several shows in states all across the United States offering varieties of yarn I didn't know existed. It's a fun travelogue, and there are several nice patterns as well.

I love this book. As an avid traveler and a fiber fanatic, I enjoyed every bit of this book. The author takes you on a tour of fiber festivals around America, and provides a sampling of projects to make with the materials available at each festival. I wish I could visit all of the events featured in this book, but that's just impossible. I am glad to have this book to give me a taste of what's going on around the US. The projects have a down-home feeling that I found very appealing. Instead of trendy, high-fashion garments, the book is full of comfortable, relaxed, yet still fashionable pieces. There are home dec projects as well. Even if you don't intend to make any of the projects yourself, you will find inspiration for your own creations in these pages. A wonderful addition to any fiber-enthusiast's library.

Joanne Seiff has produced a very readable, colorful and knowledgeable introduction to the basics of fiber art from sheep shearing, to processing fleeces, to yarn dyeing, to how to start spinning your own yarn. This book inspired me to learn to spin. Spinning is not difficult, it saves money and it is as relaxing as knitting.

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