

Sari Silk Bag by Clair Louise Coult

I bought this wonderful sari silk yarn from eBay. Being craft grade it was too rough to knit into any kind of clothing so I decided to make myself a shoulder bag. It's small enough to look neat but big enough for the essentials. The tight knit of the fabric means you don't need to line it with fabric but you could if you wanted to.

I was impatient to finish the bag and I didn't have any toggles or buttons that looked right so I made a toggle out of a bamboo garden cane. I cut a short length of cane using a small saw, I sanded the rough ends and I put a groove around the middle to hold the thread when I stitched it on. I think it looks quite effective, but of course you can use a normal button or toggle if you want.

You will need:

Approximately 2 x 100g hanks Sari Silk yarn
4 1/2mm needles
4mm crochet hook
Oddments of contrasting yarn for sewing up
Toggle or button

Front

Using 4 1/2mm needles cast on 30 stitches.

Row 1: Knit to end
Row 2: Knit to end
Row 3: Knit to end
Row 4: K3, purl to last 3 stitches, K3

Rows 3 and 4 form the pattern. Work 24 rows in pattern.

Row 5: K3, K2tog, knit to last 5 stitches, K2tog, K3
Row 6: K3, purl to last 3 stitches, K3
Row 7: Knit to end
Row 8: K3, purl to last 3 stitches, K3

Repeat rows 5 - 8 twice more. Repeat rows 5 and 6 once more.
Cast off.

Back

Work as for Front but do not cast off. Continue as follows:

Keeping in pattern work 4 rows without shaping.
Repeat rows 5 and 6, 7 times.

Next row: K2, K2tog, K2tog, K2
Next row: K2, K2tog, K2
Next row: K2tog, K1, K2tog
Cast off.

Strap

Using 4 1/2mm needles cast on 8 stitches. Work in garter stitch until strap measures 60 inches (150 cm). Cast off.

Make up

The strap goes around under the bag forming the base and the sides and is joined at the bottom.

Join the ends of the strap together, making sure that it isn't twisted. Place the join in the centre of the bottom edge of the front of the bag and pin around the bottom and side edges. Using a contrasting yarn (I used black ribbon yarn) sew the strap to the front of the bag using blanket stitch. Stitch the back of the bag to the strap in the same way, stitching up the sides to match the front.

Using the crochet hook and the contrast yarn make a short chain to form a loop to fasten your bag. Stitch the toggle or button to the front of the bag.

