



Fiber Garden
LLC

2017 Alaska Hand Spinners Cruise

Cruise Spinning Workshop Descriptions “Handspinner’s Sampler”

Your cruise fee includes three days of spinning workshops, including the fibers and other materials used in class, instruction, and use of equipment and supplies (excluding spinning wheels which will be available for rent if needed). Please bring several bobbins for your spinning wheel, a niddy noddly, and hand cards if you have them to all workshops.

Workshops will focus on becoming familiar with a wide variety of fibers. Each fiber has its own “feel” and knowing how best to prepare, spin, and finish each fiber will bring out the best qualities in each. More important is discovering the qualities that various fibers can bring to your finished yarn when blending. By the end of the cruise, you will be able to identify qualities you want in a finished yarn and select, prepare, and spin various fiber blends! And even if you never use any fibers other than wool after our workshops, you will still find yourself a more confident and skilled spinner that will benefit you as you return to spinning wool.

Day 1 at Sea: Animal Fibers...Moving Beyond Wool. Those first visions we have of learning to spin have us picturing the sheep grazing out in the pasture, growing the wool that will pass through our hands to become yarn and eventually being made into a warm, cozy creation. Most of us learn to spin using wool because of the way the fibers grip each other to make a secure yarn. But once we venture out beyond wool, we discover a wide variety of other animal fibers that also have their own uniqueness. Be it angora, mohair, alpaca, silk or something else...each will lend wonderful qualities to a yarn. And if you get really lucky you might even find a bit of qiviut in your fiber sample bag! We are, after all, traveling to Alaska! 😊

Day 2 at Sea: Plant Fibers. Once you move beyond working only with animal fibers, you discover a whole other world when you start exploring plant-based fibers including bamboo, tencel, cotton, ramie, flax, soy. Plant fibers have characteristics that are very different from wool and other animal fibers, so their addition to a fiber blend can really expand the range of yarns you can spin. If you are primarily a spinner of wool or other animal fibers, your spinning skills and confidence will take big leaps once you start working with plant fibers.

Day 3 at Sea: Putting it all together. Once we have explored the many varied characteristics of each fiber, we will have a great repertoire to choose from that will expand our capacity to design yarns. Today you will design your own yarns, first determining the qualities you want in your finished yarn, selecting the fibers to blend to achieve the desired qualities, blending the fibers, and spinning the blends.

Here are a few more details...

- The prerequisite for the workshops is beginning spinning. This simply means that you can spin a continuous strand of wool. You don't need to feel confident with your spinning; just understand the very basics. The workshops will help build the confidence of "early career" spinners as well as those who have a bit more experience.
- If you do not have a portable spinning wheel that you can travel with, you will be able to rent a wheel for use during the cruise at a cost of \$100. While on board, you will be responsible for keeping the wheel in your stateroom and bringing it to and from the workshop locations. On the final night of the cruise, wheels will be collected. Should you fall in love with the wheel, you will have the option to purchase it at the end of the cruise with your full rental fee being applied to the purchase price. If you'd prefer to order a wheel for purchase prior to the cruise, it can be shipped to you at no charge to arrive at your home prior to your trip OR it can be ordered for you to pick-up when you arrive on board the ship.
- If there is anything specific you would like Deb to have available for your use or purchase on the cruise (e.g. spinning wheel bobbins, etc), please let her know well in advance in case she needs to order. The Fiber Garden is a dealer for Kromski, Louet, Ashford, and Schacht spinning equipment.
- There will be no refunds issued for workshop sessions or spinning activities that you do not attend. If you have other interests onboard the ship that you would rather pursue on a workshop day, you are free to do so. This is your retreat...spend it in any way that will make the vacation most enjoyable and memorable for you.