

SAUCY APRON

I love aprons, vintage and new, and some are too pretty to hide in the kitchen. My mother once mistakenly wore one to town for an outing with a group of toddlers. She must have been too busy to notice, until she looked down at her lap on the bus ride home. I always wear an apron when I'm cooking and, recently, I've seen them worn over jeans, like a half-skirt. Why not? My mother did! **M** TRACEY POINTS OUT: *Purely a fashion item. Wouldn't want to splash this adorable little number with hot fat or beet juice.*

FINISHED MEASUREMENTS
35" (88.9 cm) wide x 19" (48.3 cm) long

YARN

GGH Soft Kid (70% super kid mohair / 25% nylon / 5% wool; 151 yards (138 meters) / 25 grams): 3 balls #13 violet (A), 2 balls #74 peach (B), 1 ball #76 green (C)

NEEDLES

One 24" (60 cm) circular (circ) needle size US 5 (3.75 mm)

Change needle size if necessary to obtain correct gauge.

NOTIONS

Crochet hook size F/5 (3.75 mm) (optional)

Stitch markers; 2 pieces of cardboard, each 1½" square for Pompons

GAUGE

26 sts and 32 rows = 4" (10 cm) in 11x6 Rib, slightly stretched

NOTES

For an explanation of ribbing in different multiples of knit and purl stitches, see page 165.

APRON

Using B, cast on 227 sts; begin 11x6 Rib, as follows: P6, *k11, p6; repeat from * across.

Next row (WS): Knit the knit sts and purl the purl sts as they face you. Work even until piece measures 4" from beginning, ending with a WS row.

Shape Apron: Change to A.

Decrease Row 1 (RS): *P6, skp, k7, k2tog; repeat from * to last 6 sts, p6—201 sts remain.

Decrease Row 2: *K2, k2tog, k2, p9; repeat from * to last 6 sts, k2, k2tog, k2—187 sts remain.

Next Row (RS): *P5, k9; repeat from * to last 5 sts, p5.

Work even in 5x9 Rib as established until piece measures 9¼" from the beginning, ending with a WS row.

Decrease Row 3 (RS): *P5, skp, k5, k2tog; repeat from * to last 5 sts, p5—161 sts remain.

Decrease Row 4: *K2, k2tog, k1, p7; repeat from * to last 5 sts, k2, k2tog, k1—147 sts remain.

Next Row (RS): *P4, k7; repeat from * to last 4 sts, p4.

Work even in 4x7 Rib as established until piece measures 19" from the beginning, ending with a WS row.

Bind off all sts in pattern.



WAISTBAND

Using B, cast on 15 sts; begin 1x1 Rib, as follows: K1, *p1, k1; repeat from * across. Next row (WS): Knit the knit sts and purl the purl sts as they face you. Work even until piece measures 54" from the beginning.

Bind off all sts in pattern. Fold Waistband in half lengthwise. Place one marker 6" to either side of fold for finishing.

POCKET

Using B, cast on 40 sts; begin 7x4 Rib, as follows: K7, *p4, k7; repeat from * across. Next row (WS): Knit the knit sts and purl the purl sts as they face you. Work even until piece measures 2" from the beginning, ending with a WS row.

Decrease Row (RS): *Ssk, k3, k2tog, p4; repeat to last 7 sts, ssk, k3, k2tog—32 sts remain.

Next Row (WS): *P5, k4; repeat from * to last 5 sts, p5.

Work even in 5x4 Rib as established until piece measures 3 1/2" from the beginning, ending with a WS row.

Next Row (RS): Change to A. Knit 1 row.

(WS): Change to 5x4 Rib. Work even until piece measures 5" from the beginning, ending with a WS row. Pm each side for cuff.

(RS): Work even until piece measures 6 1/2" from beginning.

Bind off all sts in pattern.

FINISHING

Side Ruffle: RS facing, using C, pick up and knit 98 sts along side edge of Apron.

Row 1 (WS): *K3, p2; repeat from * to last 3 sts, k3.

Row 2: *P3, k1, m1, k1; repeat from * to last 3 sts, p3—117 sts.

Row 3: *K3, p3; repeat from * to last 3 sts, k3.

Row 4: *P3, k1, m1, k1, m1, k1; repeat from * to last 3 sts, p3—155 sts.

Row 5: *K3, p5; repeat from * to last 3 sts, k3.

Row 6: *P3, k1, m1, k3, m1, k1; repeat from * to last 3 sts, p3—193 sts.

Row 7: *K3, p7; repeat from * to last 3 sts, k3.

Row 8: *P3, k7; repeat from * to last 3 sts, p3.

Row 9: *K3, p7; repeat from * to last 3 sts, k3.

Bind off all sts in pattern.

Repeat for other side of Apron.

Sew Waistband to Apron, easing top of Apron between markers on Waistband. Fold cuff of Pocket to RS at markers and pin to Pocket. Sew Pocket to Apron 2 1/2" below Waistband and 3" from outer edge of Ruffle on right side of Apron, stitching edges of cuff to Apron.

Pompoms: Make one 1 1/2" Pompom (see page 164) in each color. Make one 1" crochet chain (see page 164) in each color, leaving 6" tail at beginning and end of chain. Attach chain to Pompom; attach opposite end of chain to bottom edge of contrasting Pocket trim.

I've Never Played Betty Crocker

No, I am not that kind of mother, and my children are very aware of this. I cannot cook, apart from boiling pasta. What's the point? Until the age of twelve most kids refuse to eat anything but yellow food anyway. When my children were younger I was useless at helping with school art projects. We were the family who made the pathetic last-minute dioramas that were laughed at on Monday mornings, the ones with Pilgrim Fathers with plasticine sausage arms that fell off as soon as the school bus hit the first bump. I never set up a cupboard full of glue sticks, poster board, crepe paper, and glitter. My daughter, Mabel, remembers going to a friend's house in the fourth grade and being amazed to see that her friend's mother kept cereal in Tupperware containers and Popsicle sticks in a designated "Crafts Drawer."

"Why can't you carve pumpkins and dip Easter eggs?" Mabel asked. "Why do you wear wigs, rubber chins, and chest hair?" Playing dress up—now that was the one area where other mothers couldn't even begin to compete with me. And nobody improvised Barbie scenarios like me. I could twitter on for hours about getting my new dune buggy, and how Ken was embarrassing me by wearing flared Lurex pants. I was able to give Malibu Barbie a totally different persona to that of Ballerina Barbie—no mean feat.

Then, suddenly, when Mabel started college and Johnny hit junior high I surprised everyone by picking up knitting needles and producing book bags, mittens, and socks. The kids were wary at first, and there was one ugly moment when I was accused of paying a professional costume designer to produce these items! But after a live demonstration of knit and purl stitches with a skein of cashmere

and some bamboo needles, they believed me and soon started requesting sweaters and enjoying saying things like, "Oh, my Mum made this. She does things like this all the time." I did have to warn them that knitting was probably the most "mumsy" thing I was ever going to do, that gingerbread houses, Jell-O molds, and Popsicle sticks wouldn't necessarily follow, and they seemed content with that. But recently I found myself experimenting with an apple pie recipe, my first since home-economics class in 1972. I don't know what's come over me (perimenopause, I suspect) but if this continues, I don't think I can rule out creating my very own Crafts Drawer for the grandchildren. **T**



Sew a long tail of yarn into the side seam of a sweater and you'll always have mending material.