

The Guy Sweater

The Guy Sweater. Few projects are more likely to strike fear into the heart of a knitter. You can take a knitter who is unafraid of a myriad of technical challenges, be it intarsia, or steeling, or even every row lace, and then simply say, "Knit for a guy, and let it be a sweater." Watch them blanch.

Well, last Christmas I promised to make my cousin Dennis (actually my cousin Marie's husband) a sweater. I knit him socks, but I think they were too warm and thick. But he did like a scarf I made for him a couple of years ago. So I voluntarily offered to knit him a sweater last Christmas.

But there had to be a strategy. I refuse to knit a sweater that someone will not wear - way too much work. So, I knew that I needed a way forward, and I happened to hear a podcast where the dude who wrote Knits Men Love was interviewed, and he sagely provided the way forward.

1. Ask the recipient to show you his favorite sweaters.
2. Make something in a very similar style, fiber, and color.

From here I can hear the plaintive cries and laughter. What? Knit something that he already owns? Why would you do that? And then I remind us all that many, many women will buy the same top in a variety of colors - because we know it looks good on us and we like to wear it. Well, this is the guy version of that.

So, a few weeks ago while I was visiting them, I asked Dennis to bring out his favorite sweaters, and I measured them, took note of the fiber content. And here's what I found:

- he likes his sweaters loose - 4-6 inches of ease
 - blue, gray or oatmeal color - nothing else
 - cotton and cotton-blends for fiber
 - crew neck.
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- Really, it was that easy.

So, I ordered a few different yarns from Knitpicks (not my usual mo, because I like to support my local LYS) who had a bunch of yarns in cotton blends. I'm using the Cotlin blend in the lovely colorway Rocket.

I even swatched. I kit some garter for fun, and then some stockinette, and then I did a bit of a stitch pattern. After machine washing and drying, I showed him the Swatch and got approval.

And now I'm off to the races. Deadline is finishing by his birthday, in late November. Two for one!

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