



Elaine Stark's Merino garments

Elaine: OK, Elaine, when did you set up your business here and why?

Elaine S.: I did my stage in the August of 2016 so started my business then, but I had done it in the UK for a lot of years, so had an established business in the UK and did it over here really thinking that it would just, it would just be a little business just to stop me from not getting bored but I always knit so it was just an outlet really sell on what I made but it sort of took off very quickly and became a full-time job before I'd even realised it had happened sort of thing.

Elaine: And so you make, I mean apart from the scarves, what else do you make?

Elaine S.: So anything really. I make dresses in the merino in the 2-ply, cardigans, jumpers, um if a customer comes to me and says 'oh I like this, can you copy this' I can copy garments, or, you know, if they have an idea of what they want I can make things. I do children's wear, so everything really. The majority of things are made on the machine and I make those from the Italian merino and then do a lot of smaller things that are hand-knit basically because they are quick to turn around and I can produce a lot of them.

Elaine: Now, where do you get your merino wool from, because I didn't notice a flock of little merino woolly sheep out there?

Elaine S.: No, I wish. Um, I buy it from a company called Zegna Baruffa in Italy. Um, I'm assuming that the yarn comes from maybe Australia or New Zealand but they do all the processing and the dyeing and their colour choices, I think they probably have over 100 colours.

Elaine: So once you've ordered it how long does it take to get back to base here?

Elaine Stark: Probably about 10 days from I, you have to go through an agent in Paris so I have an agent, Alexandra in Paris, um and then she places the order with Zegna and then the yarn comes direct from Zegna but probably about 10 days which isn't too bad really. I mean I can work, work round that. I tend to order maybe 20, 25 colours so now within the next couple of weeks I will order all my colours to start me off for the year. For the last 2 months I've been using up the colours I have so that come 31st of March for the first fair I'll have a nice selection and then I'll try and choose new colours so that I'll probably do that 2, 3 times throughout the year.

Elaine: So where can people actually buy these lovely scarves and garments from?

Elaine S.: So, from the 31st of March through to the end of October on a Sunday morning I'm at the artisan market at the Abbey Bon Repos in Gouarec or, Marion at Dandelion, er Dandelion, in Gouarec at the gare shop on the Route National in Gouarec, um she has usually 1 of each colour of shawls and most of my garments actually are in Marion's and the ...



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Elaine: And do you do other markets as well? I know you

Elaine S.: I always do the AIKB, the Easter and the Christmas are 2 staples for me because they're brilliant and they are so well organised, um it's a pleasure to do them.

Elaine: I'll pass it onto Maggie

Elaine S.: She knows, she knows

Elaine: I know

Elaine .: Thank you very much