

An Orenburg Warm Shawl to Knit

GALINA A. KHMELEVA



Photos by Joe Coca

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Spin Off
e PATTERNS

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For a Russian woman of middle age, perhaps the most coveted luxury gift would be an Orenburg warm shawl, often referred to in Russia as a “Russian mink coat.” The unique thermal properties of Orenburg down not only keep its wearer warm and cozy during harsh winter weather but may, some believe, have distinct therapeutic value as well.



Caption

LEFT: The woman on the right is wearing an Orenburg warm shawl. Diveevo, Russia. 2012.

Photograph by Nadezda Denisova and courtesy of the designer.

RIGHT: The brown Orenburg warm shawl Galina A. Khmeleva purchased for her mother in 1991. This became one of her mother's prized possessions.

Photograph by Joe Coca.



Caption

Wrap yourself or someone you love in this stunning Orenburg warm shawl. Galina A. Khmeleva chose luxurious cashmere yarn for this project, a fitting choice for what will surely become a family heirloom.
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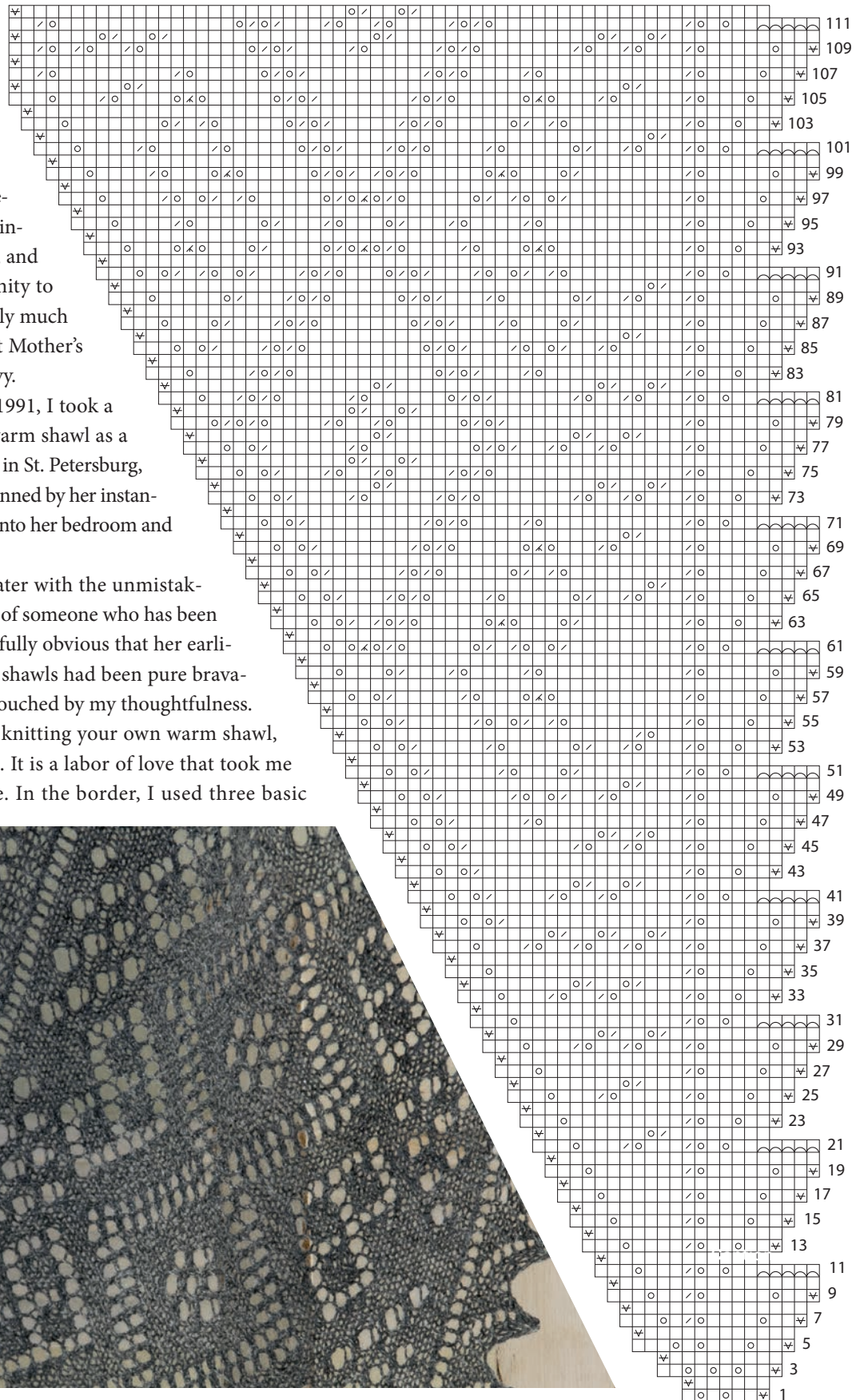
Border Increase

For most of her life, my mother, Olimpiada Khmeleva, considered these claims as just a fairy tale for peasant women. She prided herself on being a city girl whose perception of elegance and haute couture didn't include heavy Orenburg shawls, and she never missed an opportunity to criticize the owner of one. Only much later did I come to realize that Mother's attitude was born of simple envy.

On a visit to Orenburg in 1991, I took a risk and purchased a lovely warm shawl as a gift for my mother. Back home in St. Petersburg, I presented it to her and was stunned by her instantaneous reaction: She stormed into her bedroom and slammed the door.

She emerged a half hour later with the unmistakable red cheeks and puffy eyes of someone who has been crying. It became almost painfully obvious that her earlier apparent disdain for warm shawls had been pure bravado. In reality, she was deeply touched by my thoughtfulness.

I hope that you will enjoy knitting your own warm shawl, whoever will be the recipient. It is a labor of love that took me about 230 hours to complete. In the border, I used three basic



Photos by Matt Graves

5 in'c'd to 60 sts

Orenburg elements: diagonals (*kosoryadki* in Russian), peas (*gorokh*), and honeycomb (*sotki*). In the second segment in the connection between the border and the body of the shawl, I used diagonals and peas. On the center section of the body, I used diagonals with a single pea element in the center.

INSTRUCTIONS

Notes: All four borders are two-segment borders. The first segment is worked as a straight piece. The second segment is picked up perpendicular along the first segment. Slip the first stitch of each row (unless binding off) purlwise with yarn in front. Join all four borders together with right side facing you so that all teeth will face in the same direction.

Shawl

Border Section 1 (make 4),

Using the long-tail method and 2 needles held tog, CO 5 sts. Remove 1 needle. Work Rows 1–112 of Border Increase Chart—61 sts. Work Rows 1–36 of Border Section 1 Chart 11 times as foll: On 56 Main Border sts, work Rows 1–36 of chart 11 times, on 5–9 Teeth sts, work Rows 1–10 of chart 37 times then work Rows 11–36. Work Rows 1–113 of Border Decrease Chart—8 sts rem; 62 total teeth on RS of border. BO all rem sts.

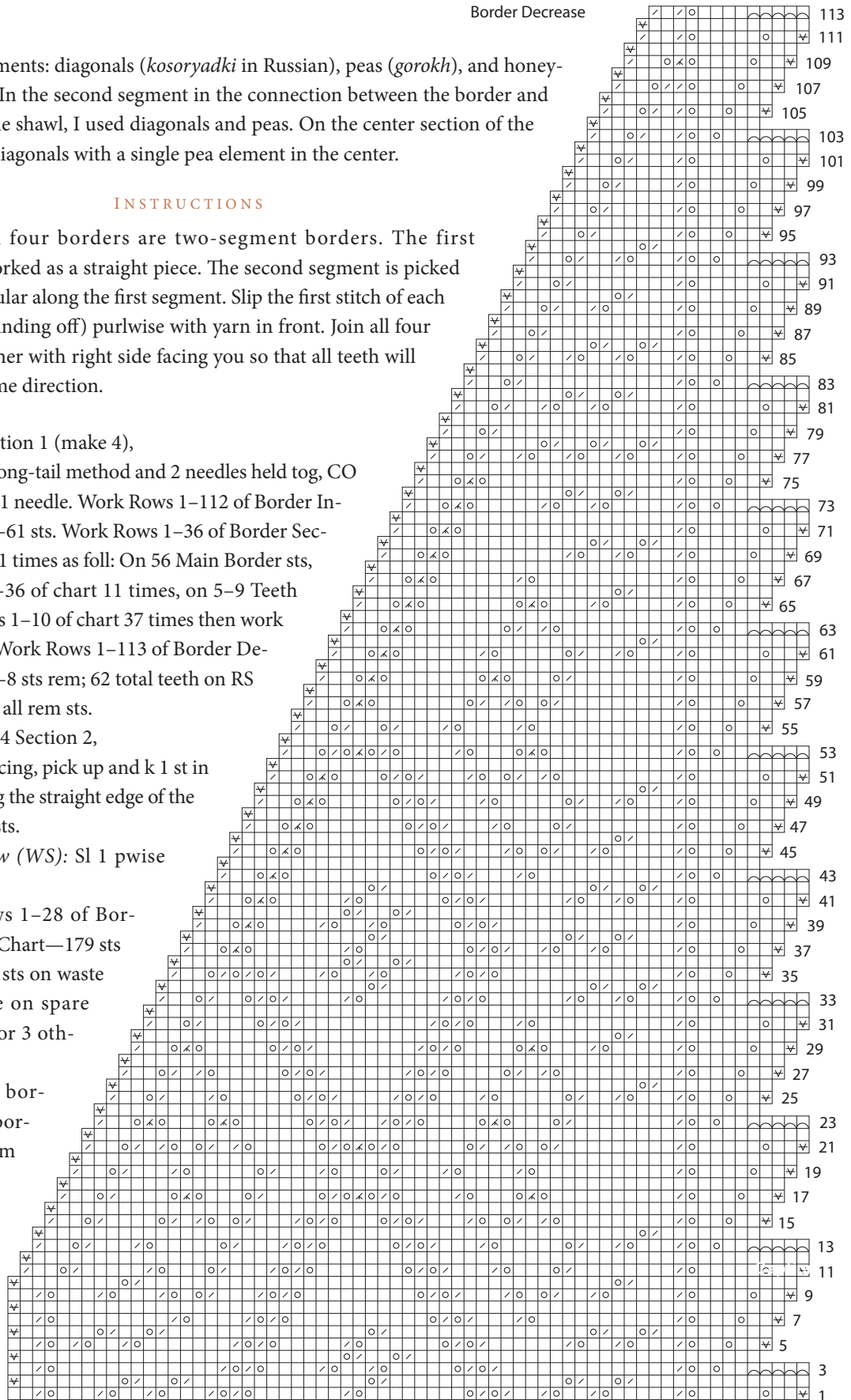
Borders 1–4 Section 2,

With RS facing, pick up and k 1 st in each sl st along the straight edge of the border—207 sts.

Set-up Row (WS): Sl 1 pwise wyf, k to end.

Work Rows 1–28 of Border Section 2 Chart—179 sts rem. Place all sts on waste yarn or leave on spare needle. Rep for 3 other borders.

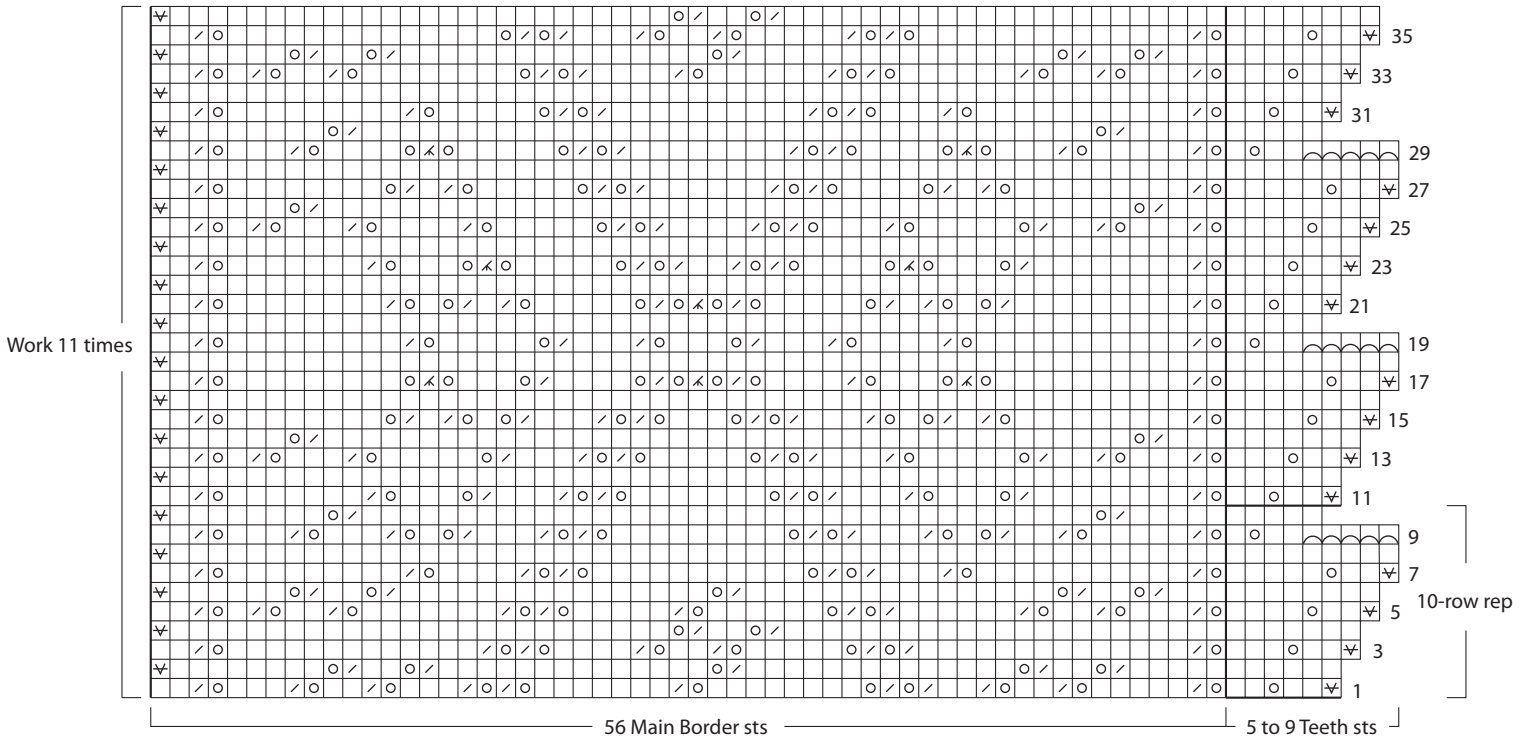
Join right border and left border with bottom border,



65 dec'd to 7 sts

Charts may be photocopied for personal use.

Border Section 1



MATERIALS

Belisa-Fine Australian Cashmere, 100% cashmere yarn, laceweight, 1,000 yards (914.4 m)/100 gram (3.5 oz) cone, 3 cones of Gray; www.skaska.com

Addi Turbo Lace Needles, 3 circular 32 inches (81.3 cm), size 2½ (3.0 mm) or size needed to obtain gauge; www.skacelknitting.com; set of 2 double pointed, size 2½ (3.0 mm) for border sections, optional

Tapestry needle

Crochet hook

Safety pins

Waste yarn or extra circular needles for stitch holders
Nylon cord and T-pins or blocking wires

Finished size: About 60 inches (152 cm) wide and 60 inches (152 cm) tall

Gauge: 22 sts and 44 rows = 4 inches (10.2 cm) in body patt

Visit pieceworkmagazine.com/abbreviations/ for terms you don't know.

The charts for this project are available in PDF format at pieceworkmagazine.com/Charts-Illustrations

SPECIAL TECHNIQUES

Russian Bind-Off: *P2tog and sl new st to left-hand needle; rep from * to end.

Russian Grafting Method: Sl 1st st on left-hand needle to right-hand needle, pass 2nd st on right-hand needle over 1st st and drop off needle, *sl 1st st on right-hand needle to left-hand needle, insert tip of right-hand needle through 1st st pwise and then through 2nd st kwise, drawing the 2nd st through 1st, then drop 1st st off needle, sl 1st st on left-hand needle to right-hand needle, insert tip of left-hand needle through 1st st pwise and through 2nd st kwise, drawing 2nd st through 1st st, then drop 1st st off needle; rep from * until 1 st rem.

With separate needles and RS facing, pick up 66 sts total (51 sts along Section 1 and 15 sts along Section 2) along diagonal edges of each border. Graft sts tog using Russian grafting method, beg at Section 2 and working toward the outer (CO and BO) edge of Section 1. Secure last st with safety pin. Tie tog the ends of the CO and BO and sew tog gap that is created. Use same ends to secure last grafting st that is on the safety pin.

Body,

Note: To join side stitches to body, knit the last body stitch together with the next side stitch and return stitch to left-hand needle, turn.

There are 179 sts each on bottom borders and each side border. Transfer bottom border sts to cir needle and each side border sts to separate cir needles. With RS facing, join yarn to right edge of bottom border sts. Work Rows 1–34 of Body Chart, then rep Rows 11–34 thirteen more times, then work Rows 35–46, joining body to sides with k2tog at end of every row—179 sts rem; all side sts joined to body.

Join top border with live sts from body,

Transfer 179 top border sts to new cir needle. Each needle now has 179 sts. With RS facing, graft sts tog as foll: *Sl

next st from right-hand needle to left-hand needle, k2tog loosely and place resulting st on left-hand needle, sl next st from right-hand needle to left-hand needle and k3tog; rep from * to end. This will create a more elastic join.

Join diagonal sides of top border with diagonal sides of right and left borders,

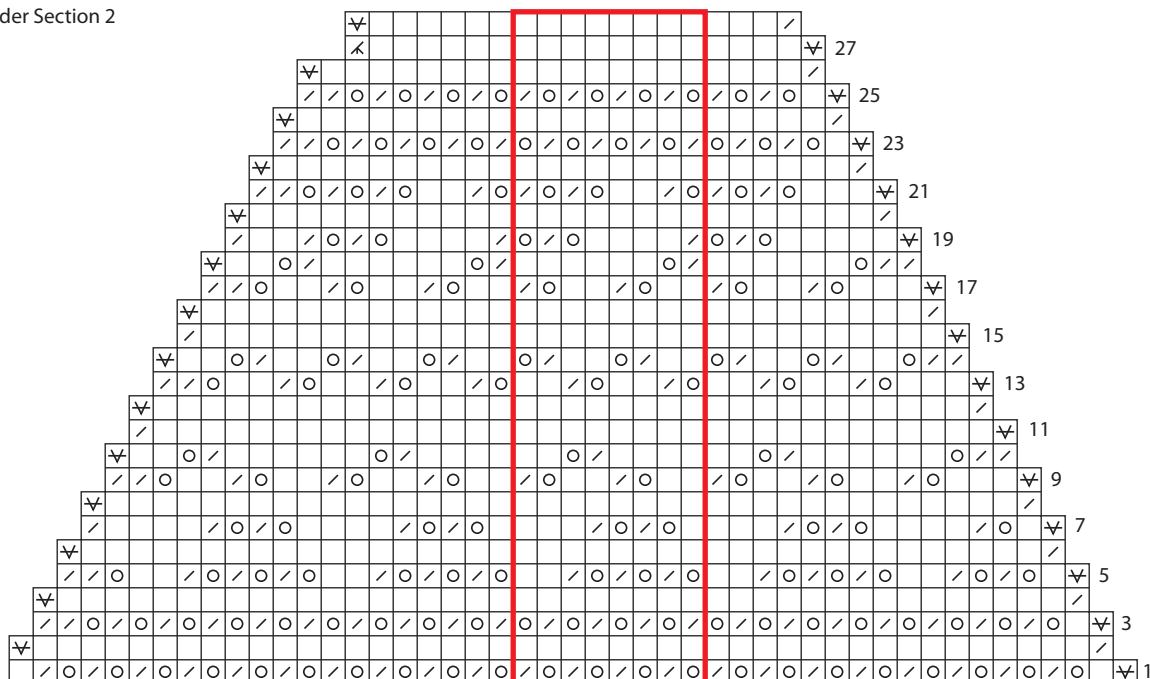
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Finishing

Weave in ends using the crochet hook or tapestry needle. Use nylon cord and t-pins or alternative blocking wires to block. The shawl does not need to be stretched as tightly as a gossamer shawl during blocking method.

ABOUT THE DESIGNER. Galina A. Khmeleva of Fort Collins, Colorado, is the owner of Skaska Designs and a frequent contributor to PieceWork. She has been teaching the art of Orenburg lacemaking to U.S. knitters since 1996. Visit her website at www.skaska.com.

Border Section 2



8-st rep

Key

 k on RS and WS


 yo

 k2tog

 sl 1 pwise wyf

 k3tog

 BO 1 st

 k last body st tog with next side st and return st to left needle

 patt rep

Body

