YARN SUBSTITUTION GUIDE

A companion to the Winter in Spain crochet collection by MJ's Off The Hook Designs, featuring Katia yarns.

If the featured yarn is unavailable where you live, use this guide to choose an alternative to swatch. It covers the three yarns used across all eight of my designs, including options from Crochet.com for UK readers.

Find your project

Original yarn	Patterns
Katia Basic Merino (EU Site)	Flora Granny Square Cardigan
Katia Merino Aran Best Basics (EU Site)	Viña Cable Cardigan and Zahara Poncho
Katia Azteca (EU Site)	Mariposa Granny Square Sweater; Brisa Herringbone Poncho, Scarf, Hat and Fingerless Gloves

Before choosing a substitute

All alternatives are untested in these patterns. Match the pattern gauge after washing or blocking, and check that the fabric has the drape, stretch and stitch definition your project needs. A similar yarn weight or yardage per gram is a starting point, not a guarantee of fit.

Shopping from the UK

Crochet.com ships to the UK and displays VAT inclusive pricing. Its current shipping table lists GBP 12.99 below GBP 85 and free shipping at GBP 85 or more, excluding downloads. The free shipping offer is temporary. Estimated delivery is 6 to 14 business days; check the current terms and final checkout total before ordering.

Check Crochet.com UK shipping

Start with Swish DK or Brava Baby DK for Flora, the worsted options on page 3 for Viña and Zahara, and Chroma Worsted for the Azteca projects. Suitability still depends on your swatch. Compare the delivered cost of the full project rather than the price of one ball.

Retailer specifications and shipping information checked November 3, 2026. Product names throughout this guide link to retailer or manufacturer information. Stock, prices and delivery terms can change. This guide contains affiliate links. I may earn a commission on qualifying purchases, at no extra cost to you.

KATIA BASIC MERINO

Used for the Flora Granny Square Cardigan.

Original yarn: light DK weight #3; 52% superwash merino and 48% acrylic; 131 yds / 50 g, approximately 120 m / 50 g; 2.62 yds per gram.

Alternatives listed in the pattern

Yarn and shopping link	Fibre	Per ball	Yds/g
Premier Everyday Anti Pilling DK	100% acrylic	273 yds / 100 g 250 m	2.73
Swish DK	100% superwash merino	123 yds / 50 g 112 m	2.46
Caron Simply Me Merino	50% acrylic, 50% merino	215 yds / 100 g 197 m	2.15
Mary Maxim Mellowspun DK	100% acrylic	284 yds / 100 g 260 m	2.84

More DK options to swatch

Yarn and shopping link	Fibre	Per ball	Yds/g
MJ's Timeless Tones	100% anti pill acrylic	273 yds / 100 g 250 m	2.73
Brava Baby DK	100% anti pill acrylic	273 yds / 100 g 250 m	2.73

Choosing for Flora

Timeless Tones is my signature yarn line in collaboration with Mary Maxim, available exclusively through Mary Maxim US and Canada. Swatch this acrylic DK for Flora, checking gauge and blocking response. #TimelessTones

Shop Timeless Tones US Shop Timeless Tones Canada

For the UK: Swish DK for merino or Brava Baby DK for acrylic, both from Crochet.com. Premier Everyday DK and Mellowspun links go to Mary Maxim Canada.

Check both the blocked floral square and granny stitch gauge. Keep all four colours in the same substitute yarn line where possible. Acrylic may respond differently to blocking than the original wool blend.

KATIA MERINO ARAN BEST BASICS

Used for the Viña Cable Cardigan and Zahara Poncho.

Original yarn: worsted or Aran weight #4; 52% superwash merino and 48% acrylic; 169 yds / 100 g, approximately 155 m / 100 g; 1.69 yds per gram.

Alternatives listed in the Zahara pattern

Yarn and shopping link	Fibre	Per ball	Yds/g
Mary Maxim Starlette (Canada)	100% acrylic	180 yds / 100 g 165 m	1.80
Premier Anti Pilling Everyday Worsted (Canada)	100% anti pill acrylic	180 yds / 100 g 165 m	1.80
Herrschners Supreme Worsted	100% acrylic	169 yds / 100 g 155 m	1.69
Swish Worsted	100% superwash merino	110 yds / 50 g 101 m	2.20

Additional Crochet.com options

Yarn and shopping link	Fibre	Per ball	Yds/g
Mighty Stitch Worsted	80% acrylic, 20% superwash wool	208 yds / 100 g 190 m	2.08
Brava Worsted	100% acrylic	218 yds / 100 g 199 m	2.18

Choosing for Viña and Zahara

These are untested candidates for Merino Aran. For Viña, match 13 stitches and 11 rows per 4 inches in extended single crochet, then check the cable panel and ribbing. For Zahara, block one complete motif to about 16 inches and check that it relaxes to about 15 inches square with comfortable drape.

Acrylic and wool respond differently to blocking. Match gauge and fabric feel, calculate quantities by yardage, and allow extra for swatching, fringe or changes in size.

KATIA AZTECA

Used for Mariposa and all four Brisa Herringbone designs.

Original yarn: bulky weight #5 in these patterns; 53% wool and 47% acrylic; 197 yds / 100 g, approximately 180 m / 100 g; 1.97 yds per gram.

Alternatives listed in the patterns

Yarn and shopping link	Fibre	Per ball	Yds/g
Herrschners Be Whirly	100% acrylic	171 yds / 100 g 156 m	1.71
Premier Puzzle	100% acrylic	328 yds / 200 g 300 m	1.64
Mary Maxim Marvelous Chunky (Canada)	100% acrylic	270 yds / 200 g 247 m	1.35
Knit Picks Chroma Worsted	70% superwash wool, 30% nylon	198 yds / 100 g 181 m	1.98
Bernat Harmony (CDN)	100% acrylic	431 yds / 250 g 194 m	1.72

An option for UK readers

Chroma Worsted is sold through Crochet.com and combines wool with changing colours. Its yardage per gram is very close to Azteca, making it a useful candidate to swatch. It is labelled worsted rather than bulky and has a single ply construction with varying thickness. Match your project gauge and check the finished fabric before buying the full quantity.

Other shopping options

Be Whirly and Puzzle offer acrylic colour effects. Marvelous Chunky is linked to Mary Maxim Canada. Each has a different yardage per gram from Azteca, so check fabric weight and drape rather than replacing ball for ball.

Colour changes will differ between yarns and between ball lots. A substitute will not reproduce the exact stripes shown in the pattern photographs. For hats and gloves, check the ribbed band and fit as well as the herringbone fabric.

GAUGE AND YARN QUANTITIES

Work the gauge swatch in the stitch used by your chosen pattern. Retailer gauges are usually in plain single crochet or knitting and cannot replace the pattern gauge. US crochet terms are used below.

Pattern	Gauge to match
Flora Cardigan	5 granny clusters and 9 rows = 4 in; completed 4 round square = 4 × 4 in after blocking.
Viña Cardigan	Body: 13 sts and 11 rows = 4 in in extended single crochet. Ribbing: 9 sts and 8 rows = 2 in in sc blo.
Zahara Poncho	Complete motif through Round 12. Block to about 16 in square; relaxed measurement about 15 in square.
Mariposa Sweater	Approx. 3⅓ granny clusters and 6 rounds = 4 in in sleeve pattern. Small square: 12 rounds = 17 × 17 in blocked, excluding shoulder rows.
Brisa Poncho	8.5 sts and 7 rows = 4 in in herringbone double crochet.
Brisa Scarf	8.5 sts and 6 rows = 4 in in herringbone double crochet.
Brisa Hat	Body: 9.5 sts and 6 rows = 4 in. Band: 7 sts and 6 rows = 2 in in alternating hdc and sl st rows.
Brisa Gloves	Body: 5 sts and 4 rows = 2 in. Band: 8 sts and 6 rows = 2 in in alternating hdc and sl st rows.

Calculate by length

Divide the yardage required for your chosen size by the yards in one ball of your substitute, then round up. Use metres throughout if you prefer. Calculate each colour separately, and allow extra for swatching or changes to length and fit.

Example: the Brisa Scarf uses about 483 yds. With Chroma Worsted at 198 yds per ball, 483 ÷ 198 = 2.44, so buy at least 3 balls before allowing for changes. With Be Whirly at 171 yds per ball, 483 ÷ 171 = 2.83, also rounding up to 3 balls. These are length calculations, not tested usage guarantees.

Wash or block the swatch as you will care for the finished item, let it dry and relax, then measure. Adjust your hook if needed. If matching gauge produces fabric you would not want to wear, choose a different yarn.