

10 Ways to Monetize Suri Alpaca Fiber



There are many creative ways to monetize Suri alpaca fiber. I have tutorials on some of these ideas already on my website (www.wisteriasuriranch.com). I will be creating more resources, so stay in touch through my newsletter :) Enjoy the list and as always, feel free to contact me!

#1: Sell Washed Fleece

Handspinners and other crafters enjoy purchasing washed fleece. Learn to remove second cuts (short fibers) and hay bits from your fleeces (video tutorials on www.wisteriasuriranch.com). Separate prime fleece from the rest. Then gently wash, dry, and package for sale. Measure the staple length of your locks and take great pictures. You can sell them by the ounce, pound, or whole fleece of one alpaca.

#2: Create Dyed Suri Locks

Dyed locks are beautiful and great for handspinners and crafters. After your fleeces are washed, separate in batches and dye them for a colorful product. There are various options for dyeing fiber. I like to use environmentally friendly dyes for professional grade products. I've used and like Greener Shades Dyes by Still River Mill. You can also use the Kool-Aid packets without the sugar for fun colorful locks.

#3: Handspin Your Yarn

Learning to spin is great for monetizing Suri alpaca fiber. It will also help you understand each alpaca's fleece characteristics better. Suri alpaca is very smooth and enjoyable to spin. If you want to create handspun yarn for sale, you will need a spinning wheel. I use a Lendrum wheel since it is very easy to adjust the tension. There are many types of spinning wheels and used ones can be found for a reasonable price. Handspun art yarns are quite popular and incredibly fun to spin.

#4: Have a Mill Create Yarn and Fiber Products

If you're not into handspinning, you can send your skirted fleeces to the a custom mill to get them made into roving, batts, and yarn. Some mills will create finished products for you. There is usually a long turnaround time (as well as money that needs to be paid upfront), so research various mills before shipping your fleeces. Some mills also do not process Suri alpacas or will

insist they add other fibers. There isn't anything wrong with adding other fibers but there are mills that can process 100% Suri.

#5: Create Knifty Knitter Loom Hats

Alpaca hats and beanies are very popular. You do not need any knitting skills to create beautiful sellable hats using the knifty knitter looms. Find one online or at your local craft store and start practicing! I have taught kids and adults who did not know how to knit to use the Knifty Knitter. It is easy to make good looking hats that sell. Use your handspun or mill spun yarn to monetize your fiber by making great alpaca hats.

#6: Create Rigid Heddle Loom Scarves

Since Suri alpaca fiber drapes, it is absolutely gorgeous in scarves. Rigid heddle looms are the easiest looms to use for weaving and are not very expensive. I learned using one, and made my first scarf from the booklet that came with the loom! You'll get best results using millspun yarn which accentuates Suri luster and drape. You can also make rugs with this loom if you purchase a wider loom but rugs are harder to monetize.

#7: Make Wet Felted Hats

Wet felted hats are one of the more challenging things to make on this list, but there are very few people making them. Check out the video on my website- but be patient as it takes a lot of practice. The basics aren't hard but working with Suri fiber requires a little extra patience. 100% Suri alpaca fiber felts but I have found blending wool up to 20% can speed up the felting process.

#8: Needle Felted Figures

Needle felting has gained a lot of popularity. You can create some amazing art pieces! Suri alpaca fiber will not work as core fiber to create base shapes, but it is beautiful for the outer surface of your figures. It also makes amazing doll hair/angel hair when you utilize the natural lock structure. Due to its fineness, using a finer gauge needle like 40 gauge works better when using Suri fibers. I have many video tutorials on how to needle felt all sorts of figures at www.wisteriasuriranch.com.

