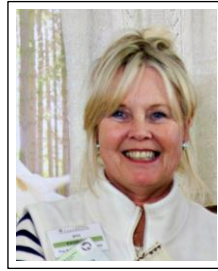


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### How I started my Alpaca Farm

My alpaca adventure started when I acquired my beautiful ostentatious alpacas, Nadine, Sana and Cherié in November 2007. Eight months later my first cria, Milo was born and the next year Gino and Mischka followed.

As a general rule alpacas are very placid and social animals and each has a distinct personality. They are gentle and non-aggressive and will halter train to make wonderful pets. They do spit occasionally, usually when their food or young are threatened. Alpacas are both grazers and browsers. They are very tidy animals and normally defecate in one place. The waste can be collected and placed in a compost pile where it makes excellent garden fertilizer or alternatively spread onto the pastures as a natural fertiliser.

Shearing is done once a year. Alpaca fibre is an incredible fibre. It is soft like cashmere and strong like mohair. It's very warm and is an exceptional insulator, because the fibre is hollow. The products have a very soft feel and are comfortable to wear.

I had seen a TV programme about the alpacas Gavin imported from Chile. I was so fascinated and then as fate would have it I read an article in some magazine/newspaper about alpacas.

I recall our first visit to Alison and Chris Notley who told us so much about these endearing animals. During a visit to African Alpacas we saw a newly born cria (Spanish for baby) and I held it – and that was me – sold.

I have bred over 23 alpacas now. It has been an amazing walk for me and I have done everything with passion. I have learnt to shear my alpacas, and their fibre has been spun and made-up into various products, scarves, gloves, beanies and pashminas.

They have all birth normally except one which decided to come on a public holiday and I had to pull the baby. They both well and her baby is now a ready to be covered.

I went on courses to learn to shear, how to inject and clip nails. There have been some challenging moments. Once I needed milk for a baby who would not suckle her mom and had to bottle feed her.

I can truly say that all the breeders have been there for me whenever I have needed assistance. I have kept up with having my fibre processed each year and have always had it spun. Now I have learnt to weave, it's wonderful.

This is such a rewarding adventure and a daily learning curve and these creatures are quite a soulful experience. ONCE AN ALPACA BREEDER – ALWAYS ONE!

Janina Bodington