



FIGURE 1.
Vetelin kukka
finished design, side
1 and 2. Photograph:
Marika Korkeasaari,
2025.

Traditions from a small place

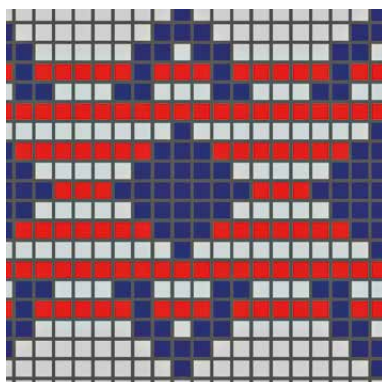
Marika Korkeasaari

I started designing my pattern by thinking about my home and its traditions. Throughout this process, my grandmother and her knitting were the greatest help. She both told me about my home's traditions and helped me learn how to knit with multiple colours. The design is inspired by the national costume of Central Ostrobothnia, Veteli. The embroidery on the headdress was the main inspiration. Unfortunately, I do not have a dress of my own, but I was able to use my grandmother's dress as an example. Most of the national costumes can be found at The National Costume Center of Finland.

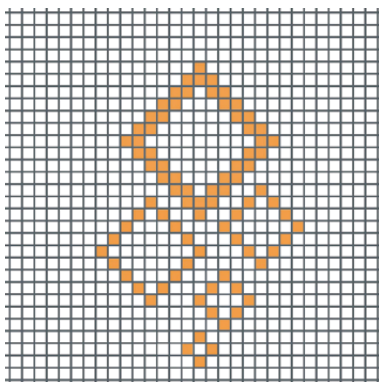
I made multiple designs before choosing my favourite. The first design was a repeating pattern with seven lines for the strings and an echo chamber made from a different colour. The design was based on a *kantele* (a traditional Finnish and Karelian plucked string instrument) depicted on the Vetelis seal (Figure 2). The next knitting pattern was based on a *himmeli*, a decoration made from dried straw (Figure 3). The rest of my patterns were all inspired by the national costume of Veteli or Central Ostrobothnia. One of them took inspiration from its lace (Figure 4) and the other from its headdress (Figures 5–7). All my patterns have been influenced by my grandmother.

Finnish national costumes are well documented on multiple sites, such as kansallispuvut.fi and vuorelma.net, both of which have good pictures and

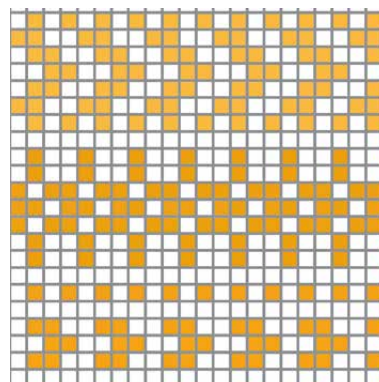
▼ **FIGURE 2.** *Kantele* pattern. Photograph: Marika Korkeasaari, 2025.



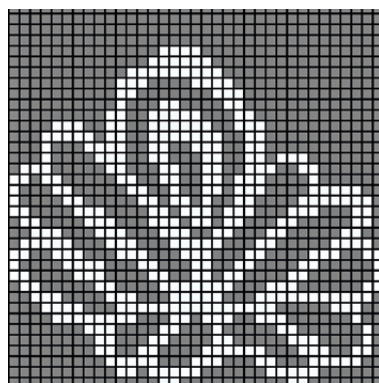
▼ **FIGURE 3.** *Himmeli* pattern. Photograph: Marika Korkeasaari, 2025.



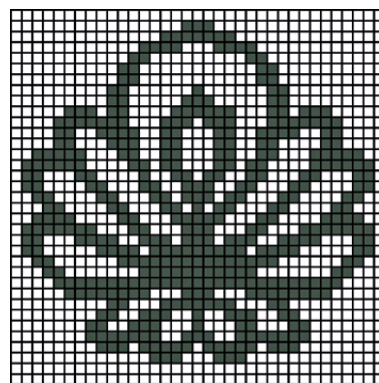
▼ **FIGURE 4.** *Nyörit* 1, 2 and 3. Photograph: Marika Korkeasaari, 2025.



▲ **FIGURE 5.** *Vetelin kukka* design original colour. Photograph: Marika Korkeasaari, 2025.



▲ **FIGURE 6.** *Vetelin kukka* design black and white. Photograph: Marika Korkeasaari, 2025.



▲ **FIGURE 7.** *Vetelin kukka* last changes. Photograph: Marika Korkeasaari, 2025.

vocabulary related to the costumes, but the pictures do not compare to the actual dresses I was able to use as a reference, thanks to my grandmother. She also introduced me to an old craft book from the mid-70s called *Kauneimmat käsityöt 1*, translated into Finnish by Marja Nieminen (1976). This book was “saved” from my mother’s old school before it was closed, and it contains the basics of knitting and crocheting. While learning to make patterns, I also used the *Käsin neulonnan ABC* (Almay & Mäkinen, 1998).

When creating the final knitting patterns, I wanted to showcase the beautiful details of the Veteli dress. I wanted to bring attention to the details that are often overlooked or hidden, such as in the nyöri or headdress. I didn’t want to copy the designs or use as many colours.

When it came to the *nyöri* design, I made multiple adaptations that would work as a repeating pattern for socks, beanies, or a shirt sleeve. Working on my final design was different. The embroidery that inspired me was too complicated to use as a knitting pattern, so I simplified it and made it more symmetrical. I started by copying the embroidery as best I could, using the original colours. Afterwards, I turned everything black and white to simplify the palette. As someone who has not knitted much, I wanted this pattern to be symmetrical and added some colours back. I named this pattern *Vetelin Kukka* (*Flower of Veteli*) (Figure 1).

The yarns I used in my test pieces were provided by the Villainno project. I also mixed in some of my extra yarn. If I had the chance, I would have used unwound yarn. It has been a tradition to reuse yarn

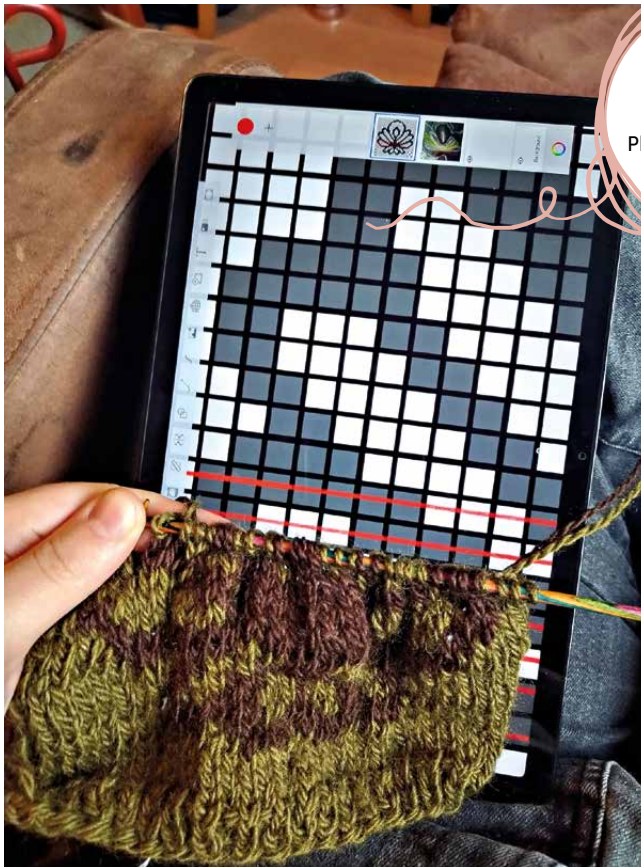


FIGURE 8.
Vetelin kukka
 knitting pattern
 in the making.
 Photograph: Marika
 Korkeasaari,
 2025.

from old projects. For example, if an old wool sweater has to be thrown away, any coloured yarn would be unwound and saved for use in socks, gloves, or other commonly used items that need to be replaced often. That way, you can use the more expensive dyed yarn again and get cheaper grey or uncoloured yarns. This is no longer as common now that you can buy more yarn from almost any store, but it is still a tradition practised to some degree.

The technique that I used was panel knitting, where you do one row of plain stitch and one row of pearl stitch until you have the pattern on one panel (Figure 8). The second technique I used was circular needles, where you knit plain stitches until you return to where you started. Circular needles were new to me, so it took me a while to learn to use them. I preferred panel knitting, even though it takes more work.

Conclusion

My final pattern is called *Vetelin kukka* (*Flower of Veteli*). I hope the pattern is still recognisable as the embroidery on the traditional headdress. I want more people to see it, especially since the headpiece is not always visible or worn. I used this pattern for a small bag, but I think it could be used in sweaters, socks, or other clothing. *Vetelin Kukka* can be used as a single pattern or as a repeating one. All I truly want is for it to be seen.

During this project, I learned how important clothing, traditional patterns, and stories can be to a community. Every iteration of my patterns has been seen by my grandmother, and every time she has had a new story or different example to show me. I have had the chance to learn more about the importance of traditional craft and the emotional connection it entails. Through learning to make these knitting patterns, I got the chance to make more connections with my community.

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