

Naomi's amigurumi creatures are each a clever combination of a tasty food and a cute animal!

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Take a seat at Naomi Fox's *Crochet Buffet*! The amigurumi designer's menu of pun-based plushies is sure to satisfy your most delicious crochet cravings

Toronto-based Naomi Fox describes herself as "the least artsy person", but anyone looking at the crochet creations on her amigurumi-filled Instagram, YouTube and Tiktok accounts, all @croutonscrochet, would find that statement very difficult to believe! "I have terrible hand-eye coordination," she says, "and can't even write my name neatly, let alone draw or paint." But the first time Naomi picked up a crochet hook, she was taken by surprise. "I stumbled upon some Instagram videos and just fell in love."

Naomi was particularly inspired by amigurumi artists, including Allison of @thewondercrochet and Charlise of @charliseyscrochetcloset (Charlise sadly passed away in 2025). "I thought that crocheting would be impossible for me to learn," Naomi continues, "but I was very determined. It took a few near-meltdowns and some tears to get the hang of things, but eventually, with some time and persistence, crochet stuck!"

Like many young adults, Naomi is inspired by the things that brought her comfort as a child. "I especially love stuffed animals. After I began designing my own creations, I discovered that amigurumi allowed me to express myself in ways I never could before, and that's when I really fell in love." Fast forward to 2026 and she's publishing her first pattern book, *Crochet Buffet*, a delectable menu of part-animal and part-snack plushies.

COME TO LIFE

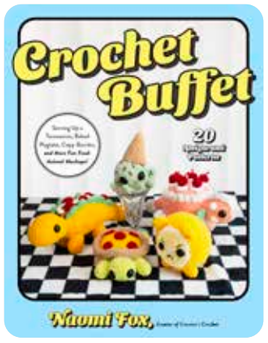
Step inside Naomi's world and her love for crochet is evident. But you won't find any scarves or baby blankets here. Naomi designs food-inspired amigurumi, each bursting with character and with a clever pun for a name. Honourable mentions include the Baked Pugtato, the Everything Beagle – a canine twist on the Everything Bagel – and the adorable Sharkcuterie Board. *Crochet Buffet* builds upon Naomi's original food-based designs to bring 20 pun-tastic plushies to the table. But where does she get her ideas?

"I am one of those people who can't really visualise things in my head," Naomi tells us. "If I close my eyes and try to picture an apple, I know the concept, but I can't actually see it. This makes pattern design a lot more challenging. A huge part of my process is just experimenting and hoping for the best." We asked how she goes about naming her creations. "Sometimes a really











Photos: Naomi Fox; Page Street Publishing Co

good pun comes into my head, and then I figure out how I could create that food-animal combination. That was the case for the BLT-Rex and Hippopietamus. Other times, I just think a food and animal would work so well, and then brainstorm a name afterwards."

Of course, we had to ask: does Naomi base her creations on foods she enjoys herself? "I'm actually vegan," she explains, "which a lot of people find surprising, based on my designs. I believe I've eaten a vegan version of virtually every food animal I've made. I actually tried [plant-based] pho and meatball subs for the first time while writing this book!"

Naomi's vegan lifestyle is in keeping with her genuine love of animals. For example, while writing *Crochet Buffet*, Naomi took in four stray cats, one of which gave birth. "I went from having zero cats at the start of the book to having six by the end! Talk about the ultimate 'speedrun' to becoming a crazy cat lady!" she says.

A BALANCED DIET

Many of us can relate to Naomi's enthusiasm, but non-stop crochet isn't always the luxury lifestyle we imagine it to be. "I struggle with chronic hand pain," she explains, "which makes things more challenging. Luckily, I have it mostly under control now, as long as I take some medications and never overwork myself." But that's easier said than done when amigurumi means so much to her. "I sadly have to crochet a lot less than most crocheters, especially compared to others who do it full-time. It can be frustrating to have so many ideas while having to limit how much I crochet." These limitations occasionally cause Naomi to suffer from impostor syndrome – "It makes me worry

> "AMIGURUMI ALLOWED ME TO EXPRESS MYSELF IN WAYS I NEVER COULD BEFORE"

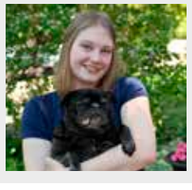
if I'm 'good enough'," she says – but she learned the hard way that suffering through discomfort only makes things worse. "If you're reading this, take care of your hands and wrists! Take breaks, do stretches and never try to crochet through the pain," she advises. "It's not worth it!"

Despite this setback, Naomi is rarely at a loss for ideas, as a brief glance at her Instagram page reveals. When the physical act of crocheting gets put on the back burner, the subject still takes centre stage on her Instagram account, with 229,000 followers and counting. Her online success has seen her specialise in social media and small business advice, with written guides and prompts available on her website and a 4-8 week waitlist for her popular social media audit.

Her reels, available on both Instagram and TikTok, cover everything from crocheting with ADHD to why AI sucks ("No self-respecting crocheter has ever had this thought process," she says wryly on a reel about fake AI-generated photos.)

Bite-sized and oh-so moreish, there's a hunger for Naomi's signature brand of wholesome, down-to-earth content, which makes it no surprise that it's landed her a book deal. The only question is: which yummy, yarny make is Naomi's favourite? "The obvious answer would be my Tacosaurus," she says fondly. "It's my most iconic pattern and a crowd favourite, so it had to be included in the book!"

Written by Tricia Fairburn



A few of her favourite things

If you can get Naomi away from her hooks…

"It's no surprise I make food animals, because two of my favourite things are cooking and taking care of animals! I have my family dog, Crouton (whom my business is named after), snails and a snake!"

Crochet Buffet *is available from January 2027. Follow Naomi on social media at @croutonscrochet or visit www.croutonscrochet.com*