

# Greening the Holidays: Green Gifts

- **Give gifts made out of recycled or sustainable material.**
  - These items have become easier to find as environmental awareness has increased. Homebody, Eats, and Annie Kay's are local stores that sell green gifts. Larger companies such as Viva Terra and even Target, Staples, and Home Depot now sell some green gift items as well.
  - Examples: cleaning supplies, clothes, housewares, trinkets, beauty supplies, candles, furniture.
- **Give reused gifts.**
  - Reuse comes before recycle on the 3 R's hierarchy. The YMCA Thrift Store sells only reused items. Antique and consignment stores such as Once Upon a Child and The Upscale Attic also sell reused items. Look for electronics, clothing, housewares, and furniture.
  - Give something that you don't use any more—re-gifting is green!
  - Gently used items can be just as nice as new items, and they are certainly more economically and environmentally friendly.
- **Give things that can be consumed.**
  - Instead of giving "stuff" that piles up and we often don't need, give local, organic, and/or fair trade food and drinks.
  - Visit the Farmer's Market, Eats, Annie Kay's, and the Vintage Cellar for local and organic options. Even larger grocery stores have organic options now.
  - Examples that make great gifts: fair trade coffee and chocolate, local or organic wine, pumpkin butter, baked goods.
  - Make your own food gifts with sustainable ingredients such as herb infused oils and vinegars, preserves, and holiday baked goods.
  - Membership to a natural food store such as Annie Kay's or Eats.
  - Go straight to the farm, and give a CSA membership. Local examples include Good Food Good People fruit share, Seven Springs vegetable share, and Weathertop Farm egg share.
- **Give "active" gifts.**
  - Do something instead of giving physical things. Giving your time is a very thoughtful and personalized gift.
  - Examples: movie passes to The Lyric, an IOU/coupon book ("One backrub"; "A house cleaning"; "Get out of one argument free", etc.), dinner at a local restaurant, an art gallery visit, a hiking trip, teach a skill (cooking, knitting, dancing, etc.).
- **Give to others.**
  - We've always heard that giving to others is part of the holiday spirit; it's also environmentally friendly!
  - Donate in someone's name to a charitable/non-profit organization with an environmentally related focus such as Heifer International, the World Wildlife Fund (you can "adopt" wildlife), or the Natural Resource Defense Council.
  - Volunteer your time as a family at local organizations such as The Humane Society or the Second Harvest Food Bank.
- **Give less stuff.**
  - Simpler living is in style! The ultimate way to green your gift-giving is by consuming less. Take some tips from "Reverend Billy"!
  - Downsize your life. Clean out your closets and bookshelves. Give old decorations to others who would appreciate them.
  - Focus on the most important things by spending time with your family and friends.