



Holiday GIFT GUIDE

The Artist

Art comes in many different forms. It's about expressing our imagination, emotions and skill.

If you are shopping for an artist, appeal to his creative side.

Remember that all artists are poets at heart, and gifts that inspire them are just as meaningful and loved as more practical ones.

THE HANDMADE

Think about gifts that will be useful and beautiful. If you are handy with a thread and needle, make your artist an apron with multiple, deep pockets in a fun print, or a pencil roll for storing their favorite pencils while traveling.

If the artist in your life creates a lot of work on a regular basis, consider helping her turn her hobby into a small business by taking the work of "set-up" off their plate.

Create an Etsy shop for her, photograph examples of her work, and if you feel inspired, create a business proposal on how she could grow her hobby into a lucrative business. Just don't get your feelings hurt if she doesn't follow your advice.

SURE TO PLEASE

Artists always need supplies. This is one of the eternal problems of being an artist. You can't go wrong with new brushes, pencils, paints or clay.

Don't forget about supply storage. This includes a supple leather camera bag or a tartan wool laptop case.

IF YOU'RE PREPARED TO SPLURGE

Because they are in the business of making beautiful things, artists tend to appreciate beautiful things. Purchase your artist an annual museum pass so he can admire the work of others and gain inspiration.

Gifting art also is fun because you can look for prints, paintings or sculptures to inspire your loved one. Purchase a print or piece of art and have it matted and framed. For a special touch, write a personal note on the matting. Even if you choose to pen your note on the back of the matting, the two of you will know it's there.

The Athlete

Choosing to be active is more than a hobby for some. It's a lifestyle. Support the athlete in your life by gifting him athletic essentials he can use during practice, competition or just for fun.

Here are just a few ideas for any fitness enthusiast:

THE HANDMADE

Every athlete needs a great playlist. Take this as a personal challenge and put together a motivating playlist that will keep your athlete focused and inspired. Don't forget "cool down" music, as well as instrumentals and nature sounds for the yoga enthusiast.

If the person you care about loves being in nature, consider purchasing inexpensive trail maps and highlight great walks. This includes markers for where to stop and enjoy a great view.

This gift takes considerable time to put together but will be worth it when you see the look on your loved one's face.

SURE TO PLEASE

If you are a bit unsure of what direction to go, never underestimate the thrill of new gear. This could be a new gym bag, an eco-friendly no-spill water bottle, a yoga mat or clothing.

If you go the clothing route, consider what the item will be used for, as this will dictate fit and fabric. If you are buying for a runner, tight-fitting moisture-wicking fabrics are best, whereas you will want to find looser clothing for yoga to allow for movement.

If you are more of an "expe-



rience" giver, gift the athlete in your life a trial membership to a hot gym. If she already belongs to a gym, consider gifting classes that generally don't come with a membership, such as spinning classes.

Remind your athlete to take care of his body by gifting a massage. Fitness buffs thoroughly work their muscles, so help them unwind and relax with a massage. Most clinics and spas offer deep-tissue massages, which help relieve

chronic muscle tension.

IF YOU'RE PREPARED TO SPLURGE

A wearable hi-definition sports camera is perfect for the hyper-active. Not only can these cameras create awe-

some videos that your athlete will want to watch over and over again, but they can be invaluable for training.

This type of action-capturing camera can help her learn which mistakes she's making and how to correct them.

The Baker

People who love to bake can be the most fun to shop for — or the most difficult because they tend to invest heavily in their hobby. This means they already have so much dedicated to the craft.

Follow this guide and your baker will be humming tunes as they whip up their “chef-d’oeuvre.” They might even treat you with the results.

THE “HANDMADE”

Some of the best ingredients can be made by hand. Think vanilla-infused sugar, lavender simple syrup or rosemary olive oil — all items that are made by simply mixing a few ingredients and letting time take care of the rest. These gifts often inspire a baker to try something new.

You also can think outside of consumable items and go the sentimental route, such as putting together a recipe book of the family’s famous treats. Think grandma’s strawberry rhubarb pie, mom’s peanut brittle or Uncle Bob’s jalapeno chocolate sauce.

Even if your baker already has these recipes, he will appreciate how you’ve chosen to collect and display them.

SURE TO PLEASE

Those who love to bake genuinely appreciate consumable items. These include things they can put to good use in the kitchen. Look for delectable salts that are the perfect finishing touch on candies and caramels. Put together a basket of baking goodies — fun cupcake liners, maybe a set of new frosting tips — and add in a few consumables to complete

the gift.

If you’re still stuck, don’t forget the latest and greatest gadgetry to hit the culinary market. Silicone has hit the baking scene with gusto, appearing in the form of batter spatulas, measuring cups, baking mats

and cupcake pans. Silicone is non-stick and easy to clean, which makes it a baker’s dream material.

Marble cutting boards for rolling out dough, nesting bowls for easy storage or a new apron are also sure to please.

IF YOU’RE PREPARED TO SPLURGE

Depending on how long your baker has been practicing her craft, she may not have some kitchen essentials. A high-end stand mixer in her favorite color is guaranteed to

make her swoon, making it the perfect gift for someone just starting to outfit her kitchen.

Also don’t discount a great pastry cookbook. Great cookbooks are works of art. They also can be pricey.



The Minimalist

Decluttering is all the rage, and the minimalist lifestyle is in.

If this sounds like the mantra of one of your closest friends or family members, there are many gifts on the shelves this Christmas season to help them on their mission.

To purchase for a minimalist, you must first ask yourself a few questions: What is the purpose of this gift? Will this person find value in this gift? These questions will help guide you.

THE "HANDMADE"

Minimalists appreciate items that are useful. Homemade hand soaps are perfect for minimalists. They also completely customizable.

If you're unsure of their scent preferences, scents such as lavender, rosemary, mint and honey

vanilla are always popular.

Are you a whiz in the kitchen? Share your talents by gifting your famous spicy salsas, zesty tomato sauce or raspberry preserves. Anything that can be jarred and enjoyed over time is always a crowd-pleaser — and can also be arranged nicely in a gift basket.

SURE TO PLEASE

Subscription boxes make a great gift for those with a minimalist mindset. Not only are these the gifts that "keep on giving," but they are often filled with creative (and consumable) goodies.

Not to mention there is a subscription box for every taste and budget, from beauty products to wine to food. With enough research, you are sure to find the perfect fit. Many downtown businesses are getting in on the act of subscription boxes, so don't forget to check with

your local establishments.

The same goes for magazine subscriptions. Find a local publication that puts out information about which your gift recipient is passionate. The minimalist on your list can enjoy them when they come in and pop them in the recycling bin when they're done.

IF YOU'RE PREPARED TO SPLURGE

Why not gift an experience, such as tickets to a sporting event or a family pass to the city museum? Experiences help strengthen the bonds between people — and don't clutter up the cupboards.

Whether you intend to be part of the experience (concert tickets with your best friend) or not (a family zoo pass for your brother and his kids to enjoy), you'll be gifting memories that last for years to come.

The Reluctant Recipient

There are always hard-to-shop-for people on our holiday or birthday lists, but the most difficult are the people who want nothing.

Maybe all the kids are grown and it seems superfluous to exchange gifts. Maybe this person in your life is down-sizing and making a concerted effort to reduce their belongings.

What do you get someone who doesn't want anything? Consider the following suggestions.

THE "HANDMADE"

The people you care about mean more to you than any object, and it probably wouldn't be a stretch to say they feel the same about you. Help a friend clean out his gutters or offer to babysit your cousins for your aunt and uncle.

Your time can also be gifted outside of chores. Spend the day with your grandmother. Look through family albums. Go to the salon — whatever you both enjoy. Oftentimes, the best present is presence.

SURE TO PLEASE

Think of gifts that give back. With so many companies prioritizing sustainability and philanthropy, it is easier than ever to choose a gift that is both useful and beautiful, as well as offers a nod to social good.

Some items promise to donate a portion of the sale proceeds to a noteworthy cause, while others provide an outlet for artisans in struggling countries to have stability and an income through their craft. You also can make a donation to a cause the recipient cares about in their her. With these gifts, everybody wins.

IF YOU'RE PREPARED TO SPLURGE

Give the gift of memory. Companies such as Ancestry and 23andMe offer new ways for people to experience their ancestry — DNA testing. These services will break down your global ancestry and create a complete report of your history.

Genealogy kits make a great gift for those who think they want nothing because you are bypassing physical objects and gifting them knowledge. Knowing where we come from is a quest many of us are constantly on — and help along the way is always welcome.

The Pets

Our pets deserve to feel some love in the form of a special treat, as well. These are often the members of our family that greet us first in the morning and when we come home for the day.

They pick us up when we feel down and provide us company and someone to care for when we need it most.

THE "HANDMADE"

Outfit your canine with the outwear they will need to brave your climate. This could be handmade sweaters, vests or thermal jackets — even little booties to protect paws from cold, sharp ice.

New toys are always a winner for keeping your pup entertained. Check in with your local pet shop to choose toys that are the appropriate size and material for your dog's age and (perhaps destructive) nature. New bedding is also sure to please your pup. Add a handmade touch by placing extra padding in their bed for maximum comfort.

SURE TO PLEASE

Consider upgrading your cat's pet carrier. Carriers that are made of soft nylon frequently have 360-degree mesh siding, allowing your cat to see out of all sides. This helps keep them calm when traveling to high-stress locations, including the vet.

If your cat's collar is looking a little too loved, check out the most modern styles and prints, including those made of reflective material and "anti-stink" material. That's right, anti-stink. Check it out.



© FOTOLIA

CAGED CREATURES

Don't forget to spread the love to your caged creatures, including hamsters, reptiles, birds or fish. New toys or accessories are sure to delight any bird or hamster and fish like to be stimulated by new tank decor.

Don't forget to pamper your reptile friends with new treats or an upgraded warming lamp.

IF YOU'RE PREPARED TO SPLURGE

We're not talking about splurging in terms of money,

rather in terms of your heart. There are thousands of animals that don't have owners to dote on them. Contact local shelters and see what they need.

Towels, treats and toys are often always needed. Or give your time! Shelters are always

looking for volunteers to clean kennels, take dogs for walks and give the animals baths. If you are prepared and have given considerable thought to the commitment a pet requires, consider adopting a pet and give them the best gift of all: their forever home.

The Relatives

Relatives can be tricky to shop for, especially if you're not that familiar with their tastes. Focusing on their home is a great opportunity to give a gift that doesn't feel generic while at the same time doesn't require deep knowledge of their tastes.

Show relatives that you care with a gift that will make their living space more comfortable and beautiful. This list is sure to work for the pickiest of relatives.

THE "HANDMADE"

Personalized stationery is thoughtful, gender neutral and easy to design yourself! You can take this in any direction — notecards with matching envelopes, full-size stationery paper or notepads for grocery lists.

If you feel ambitious, allow your DIY prowess to take the lead and create a piece of art, a tufted pin board for the kitchen or a sassy sign for the laundry room. Pinterest is a great social media tool for these types of projects and you are sure to find the perfect match for both your relatives home and your skill level!

SURE TO PLEASE

Items for entertaining are always appreciated and allow you to offer a bit of personality with your gift. Cheese stones are great for cheese, but are perfect for serving so many different things.

Create a smart little tag to tie around the end, reminding your relatives to pop the stone in the freezer before serving something cold, or get it nice and toasty in the oven for more savory snacks. Most stone are both incredibly durable and



dishwasher-safe.

IF YOU'RE PREPARED TO SPLURGE

While it may not seem like a splurge on the surface, candles

are a perfect gift for just about everyone. Candles make a room smell fresh and make a home feel cozy. They are also not an item people seem to splurge on often because it

feels either wasteful or too indulgent.

Paddywax Apothecary candles are downright decadent in their colored glass vessels and scents like blue sage and

lavender, and verbena and eucalyptus. So spoil your relatives with a luxury candle. Bonus? The jars are so beautiful, they will definitely get reused.