

H O L I D A Y  
G I F T G U I D E



# The Aspiring Photographer

**D**oes your grandpa spend every family get-together with a camera around his neck? Is your sister constantly sending out e-mails full of great photos of her children?

This Christmas, give that amateur photographer in your life a gift they will put to great use as they snap away those lasting family memories. From extra gear to helpful accessories, the field of photography is an exciting one with many options for enhancing skills and furthering love of the art.

## EXTRA STORAGE

What's worse than snapping some shots of a memorable moment when the "out of storage space" message appears on your camera? Photographers of all skill sets are always in need of extra space for photos, which you can give them with a high-storage memory card.

For an extra touch, load up the memory card with special photographs that your recipient can transfer to another device. This meaningful gift can serve as a great add-on to a new camera or as a perfect stocking stuffer.

## GIFT CARDS

If you're thinking of giving your photographer friend a gift card this Christmas, get creative. Put some money toward a photo book that they could fill with their best shots. An assortment of online portfolio-builders are on the



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market, and most are easy to use and result in a polished, professional finished product.

You can also give a gift card to the mobile application store of their choice. Both the Apple and Google app markets feature a wide array of photography-related apps for purchase. From convenient

editing tools to how-to guides, your recipient will surely find something of high value through the use of your card.

## EDITING SOFTWARE

If your photo-snapping pal has turned from novice to

serious, maybe it's time they start editing and enhancing their own work. Many programs allow for just that, offering tips, tricks and tutorials for turning the standard photograph into a work of art.

You can start with basic packages within the Adobe

Creative Cloud – such as Photoshop or Illustrator – and let them build their skill levels.

These programs have many add-on features available for advanced users that can absolutely transform the photography experience.

# The Dog Lover

If your friend or family member spends more time speaking puppy than English, then it's official – you know a dog lover. This also means that you should probably consider giving this person at least one dog-related gift this Christmas.

Your friend will light up at your thoughtfulness, and their dog will thank you, too.

## TREATS

If a survey could be conducted asking dogs their favorite holiday gift, food would undoubtedly top the list. From the chewy shop-bought nuggets to the larger-than-life rawhide bones, there is a seemingly unlimited variety of special snacks for the pooch in your life.

For a more unique option, your area is probably home to a chef who has perfected the art of the homemade, all-natural dog treat. These masters of canine culinary creations are pumping out special bacon, peanut butter and even vegetable snacks for all doggie tastes.

## DOG CLOTHES

What's cuter than seeing a dog dressed up in a turtleneck? How about a dog dressed up in pajamas. Many specialty shops and local pet stores will have these options and more for styling your puppy in an adorable ensemble.

Fleece sleepers, fashionable sweaters and plush throws for comfortable couch lounging are also available at many stores. Go with a holiday theme on the pajamas so Fido can be dressed up like the family on Christmas morning.

## A CHECK-UP

Trips to the veterinarian can add up in a hurry, so why not surprise the dog-lover in your life with a voucher for a free flea bath or grooming service for their pet? Most veterinarian clinics offer gift cards or coupons for their services, helping save your friend or family member some serious money for their dog's care.

For a little extra, you could even set up the appointment and offer to take the pup in for its treatment. This will save your friend both money and time – a double gift.



# The Golfer

**G**olf is a sport that many take very seriously. Others not so much. No matter the skill level of that special someone on your Christmas list this year, plenty of options for gifts are available.



New balls, golf bags and clubs will be flying off the shelves this holiday season. Why not set your gift apart from the rest?

## GPS UNITS

Sometimes even the most high-level golfers need a hand. If they don't have a caddy to help them measure distance or identify course challenges, the next best thing may be a portable GPS unit that gives them laser-accurate information on these factors.

These units provide accurate yardages to both the green and layup locations. They display information on high-resolution screens and function similarly to a GPS device you may rely on in your car.

## ANIMAL HEAD COVERS

If you've watched any professional golf, you know that many of the sport's superstars cover their club heads with stuffed animal heads like lions, Koala bears and tigers. The fluffy features may seem a bit zany, but they actually do serve a purpose – protecting the club heads from the elements while also giving many otherwise serious golfers a reason to relax and smile every once in a while.

Some online companies have every breed of dog, farm animal and even sea creature imaginable on their head cover line. From monkeys to wild boars, you can find a product that fits the personality of the golfer in your life.

## RAIN GEAR

You're in the middle of walking a long hole with minimum tree cover, and the skies open up. Rain showers down on you and you have no choice but to laugh it off and walk a little faster. If you play golf regularly, this has likely happened to you.

Rain gear can be an invaluable tool to golfers who choose to play through inclement weather – even in downpour conditions. Many companies make waterproof rain hoods that snap on a golf bag, allowing for easy access to clubs in adverse conditions.

You could also check your recipient's bag sometime to see if the golfer is properly prepared for the rain. A golf umbrella and rain slicker can go a long way in the wet weather.

# The Hostess

**D**oes your shopping list include someone who loves to throw a great party? Odds are you have enjoyed many a meal and drink at their home. It's time to give back.

Luckily, buying gifts for the perfect hostess is a rather painless process. They generally throw parties throughout the year, meaning you aren't limited to only choosing gifts for specific seasons.

Think practical with a creative twist – just like your hostess does when throwing a great shindig.

## DINNER TABLEWARE

Even the hostess with an overstuffed cabinet of tableware could use more. Plates, glasses, serving spoons or condiment containers are great gifts that will add extra options for the perpetual party planner.

Stick with a specific design theme or color across all of the items and you may see your items incorporated into the next big party. And it's OK to go with a summer or springtime assortment in the dead of winter – your hostess-minded friend or family member is probably already setting her sights on the 2015 season.

## PIZZA STONES

Homemade pizza can be a bit of a messy endeavor, but is usually worth the effort. Many kitchen stores sell a variety of pizza stones that will help guarantee an easy cooking experience and the perfectly crispy crust.

You can also find stones in various colors and shapes that will fit your recipient's personality or kitchen scheme. Complement the stone with a basket of homemade pizza ingredients like fresh vegetables, dry yeast, flour and pepperoni for an all-in-one gift that will be put to good use.

## CANDLEHOLDERS

A scented candle is a good gift, but a candleholder is a perfect one! Why? Because your idea of a great-smelling candle may not mesh with that of your hostess. Going with a decorative candleholder will give your recipient free reign over what to fill it with, ensuring your gift gets put to good use.

Do a little scouting before settling on that holder, though. Check out your friend's home décor and which candleholders are already in use. Choose a set that would fit well in a specific nook or on a certain table.

Be sure to match your gift with the size, color and design theme appropriate for your hostess' needs.



# The Youngsters



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Children can actually be one of the easiest groups to please because they will often tell you exactly what they hope to receive on Christmas morning.

Whether it's the next big video game or the new talking animal fad, you have likely been given an extensive list of potential presents this holiday season. But how do you filter through it to make sure every gift returns a smile for your investment?

## TODDLERS

For 2- to 3-year-olds, it is often quantity over quality when it comes to Christmas gifts. These are the years you don't necessarily have to break the bank for your holiday spending. A puzzle set with blocks or new toy instruments can be relatively inexpensive gifts that keep your toddler busy and entertained.

Consider your child's walking stage when choosing a gift. If they are able to sit upright with no problem, then a collection of toy zoo animals may

be the perfect gift. Toddlers who have discovered the art of walking will enjoy a drag-along toy animal or vehicle.

If you're buying for another family, be sure to check with the parents first to avoid unwanted or duplicate toys.

## YOUNG CHILDREN

Finding the perfect gift for children between the toddler and teenage years requires knowledge of what they're interested in. This can be the most difficult age group to please. Generally, an outdoor activity of some type – water guns or yard games – can be a hit for those in this age group.

For the tweens in your life, a paid ticket to the science center or children's museum in your closest city may fit the bill. For the more outdoorsy

recipients, you can find exploration or nature kits that will put their natural curiosity to good use.

## TEENAGERS

Hopefully the teenager in your life has discovered a hobby or sport about which they are passionate. Whether it be piano, football or model-making, there is a gift out there to match their creative skills.

If they've just started picking up a new endeavor, maybe professional lessons or a digital how-to book may be the perfect gift to sharpen their skill set.

The teenage years are also about curiosity, so finding a coffee-table photo book on their favorite recording artist or history subject will help them learn more while also enjoying bright, vibrant photos.

# The Homeless

**T**he homeless are often overlooked around the holidays as we gather with friends and family. People who are down on their luck and out of their homes this Christmas are likely scrounging for food and shelter, let alone gifts under the tree.

They are in great need this season and can use a helping hand to boost their spirits.

## GIVE RECYCLABLES

Do you save bottles, cans and newspapers for recycling? Why not donate them to a homeless shelter in your area? The shelter can use the cash collected from the recycling process for more services, food or blankets for its inventories.

It may also choose to give the recyclable materials to a local homeless person for their uses. Many homeless people rely on collecting and converting recyclable materials into income. You can do your part by giving up a bit of extra pocket change every month.

## DONATE TOYS

Think of someone who is homeless. What vision pops up in your mind? The type we see in the movies, bearded with a gravelly voice? What about a sweet young girl whose parents recently lost their jobs and home?

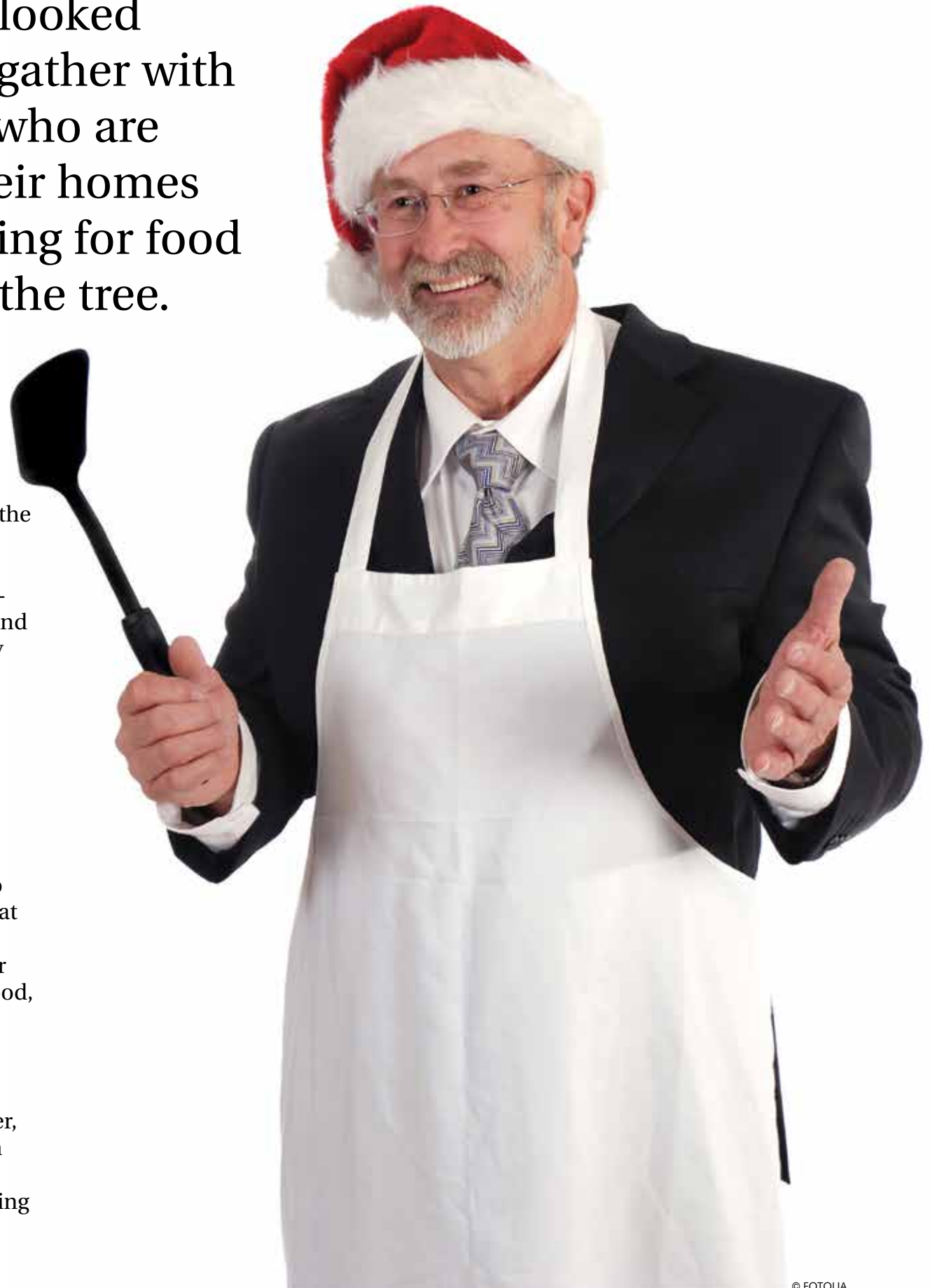
That is the face of many homeless people in the United States who will not have the luxury of receiving Christmas presents this year. That is, unless you step up.

Contact your local shelters to see if they have children among their populations and donate anything you can to help them, including food, toys and clothing.

## YOUR TIME

Volunteer your time around the holidays at a local homeless shelter, and you will understand the true meaning of “It is better to give than receive.” Do you have an extra couple of hours during the weekends this December? Shelter staff need help in preparing meals and cleaning facilities.

Your voluntary contribution will cost you nothing financially, and you will gain a new appreciation for your home and life. Your time is one of the greatest gifts you can give a local shelter this holiday season.



# The Super-Mom

**F**or every diaper change or grocery list that goes unnoticed, the super-mom behind it deserves more than your standard Christmas gift.

She deserves to be pampered, treated or blown away by this year's gift – no pressure. Luckily, it usually doesn't take much for the selfless moms in our lives to feel loved. A hug from a child or thank-you from a spouse will get the job done.

But this year, kick your gift-giving efforts up a notch by finding that perfect gift that rewards her daily efforts that keep the household running.

## A 'ME' TRIP

What is a better gift than some "me time?" Send your sweetie away for a day to the spa center and let her soak in the massages, pedicures and facials. A little pampering can easily wipe away the stress that comes with housework and children, helping rejuvenate and re-energize Mom.

If you think she'd enjoy a night away, choose a center that has lodging and put her up for a night. Doing so will ensure she gets a solid night's sleep without the potential of being awakened by a crying baby or a midnight request from an older child.

## A ROOM RE-DO

Is there a specific room in your home that drives the super-mom in your life crazy? Maybe it is cluttered or just plain unappealing to look at?



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Put your handy skills – or those of a trained professional – to good use and renovate the problem area for her gift.

You can either offer her the gift as an IOU, telling her you have successfully saved money for the project and are ready to start. Or, have it completed while she is away one weekend with her friends. The

latter will take some assurance that you know exactly what color, layout and design scheme she will enjoy to make sure your gift doesn't fall flat.

## PERSONALIZED JEWELRY

Diamond rings and silver pendants will surely do the

trick here, but personalize a piece of jewelry to really speak to Mom's heart.

Most jewelers will engrave short messages or phrases on a piece of jewelry, whether it be a child's name, a special quote or maybe a saying that epitomizes your life together.

Charm bracelets also fall under this category and allow for the super-mom to customize it for years to come. You can choose the bracelet and a few personalized charms now and watch her fill it up with relics symbolizing her children, hobbies and passions.