

Christmas Shopping Guide



2020

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Sensible solutions for gifting

Practically every year there's at least one person on your holiday gift list that seems to have it all. One way to think outside the box is to sift through wants and needs to find something that can truly be put to use on an almost daily basis. For example, tools, binoculars, vacuum cleaners, knife sharpeners and security solutions can serve as practical gifts that give your recipient a functional piece of equipment for daily life. Find additional holiday gift ideas for everyone on your list at eLivingtoday.com.

■ **An Eye-Catching Gift:** If you've got someone on your holiday gift list that enjoys pursuits such as sports, concerts, nature viewing or stargazing, help bring the action closer with a gift like the Bushnell Powerview 2 binocular. An evolution from the popular line, the versatile, general-use binoculars deliver clear views in multiple sizes and magnifications. For more information, visit bushnell.com.



■ **A Cut Above the Rest:** This holiday season, get the chef or outdoorsman in your life a gift that keeps on giving, such as the Wicked Edge Go knife sharpener. Made from high-quality materials, it's easy to use for both new and experienced knife sharpeners. Find more at wickededgeusa.com.



■ **Cleanliness on the Go:** Give the gift of cleaner living spaces anywhere and everywhere with the ultra-portable Raycop GO vacuum, which uses UVC light technology to eliminate 99.9% of bacteria and viruses along with dust mites. It can even sanitize phones, handbags or luggage, and the battery lasts 30 minutes. Visit raycop.com for more information.



■ **The Gift That Protects:** If you're looking to secure connected toys and devices received this holiday season, consider internet security products that allow you to protect your family. With advanced protection for all your devices, ESET's Smart Security Premium solution helps protect against identity theft with the latest malware detection, online banking, password security and smart home support. Find more security solutions at eset.com/us.



■ **Get the Job Done:** Help the handyman in your life finish the job quicker with the Milwaukee M12 Drill and Driver Kit from Ace Hardware, the only tool in its class with an all-metal locking chuck. Its compact, lightweight and durable design delivers comfort and efficiency along with an onboard LED light and fuel gauge to help increase productivity and avoid interruptions. Find more information and holiday gift ideas at acehardware.com. (Family Features)



Stocking stuffers for everyone on your list

Before you can hang the stockings by the chimney with care, you have to figure out how you're going to stuff them. Nearly every family



has a different approach, but practical presents that match the personality of the recipient is almost always

a winning strategy for filling out your loved ones' stockings. For example, Zebra Pen's wide variety of writing instruments offers useful, stylish and creative stocking stuffers for anyone on your shopping list. Consider these thoughtful and fun ideas for filling stockings and get a head start on your holiday shopping at zebrapen.com.

■ For Little Learners

Easy for smaller hands to hold and control with triangular barrels, Zensations Mechanical Colored Pencils provide smooth, rich, vibrant color. Available in 24 blend-able, non-toxic colors, the durable lead is built for beginning writers and never needs sharpening. Ideal for coloring books, journals, notebooks and other paper surfaces, they're made to last as long as



your youngsters' love of coloring and doodling. **■ For Bullet Journal Hobbyists** Whether your recipient is organized or could use some help in that department, an option like the Mildliner Double Ended Highlighter and Creative Tool can help organize bullet journals, planners or notes in a unique way. With 25 pastel shades, the Japanese-inspired highlighter's broad and fine point tips aid in hand lettering and allow for multiple line thicknesses.

■ For Fashionistas

Ideal for those looking for a fashionable pen that makes a statement, the Sarasa Grand Retractable Gel Pen features a sophisticated barrel that can be coordinated to match other office essentials. Available in six barrel colors - navy, gold, rose gold, black, white and turquoise - with Rapid Dry Ink Technology, this refillable writing product doesn't smear or smudge, leaving hands and

paper free from blemishes.

■ For Teens

Perfect for journaling, note-taking and studying, the Sarasa Clip Retractable Gel Pen can help the students on your list stay organized. Available in a wide variety of colors and finishes, including milky and shimmering metallic options, the non-smearing, gel ink is water-resistant to make a long-lasting impression. Plus, an alligator clip makes it easy to attach to notebooks, clipboards or artwork.

■ For Adventurers

With a pressurized stainless steel barrel and the ability to write at extreme angles, the Steel X-701 Ballpoint Retractable Pen is made for those who need something sturdier than



everyday plastic pens. Built to withstand temperatures ranging from -30 F to 250 F, this lightweight, matte black writing product is also

an attractive option as a go-to daily writing utensil. (Family Features)

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4 Simple tips for a safe and healthy holiday season

Traditionally, the holiday season is a time to gather with family and friends to reminisce and celebrate all that has happened throughout the year. But with an ongoing pandemic, many are left looking for new and unique ways to enjoy those time-honored traditions in a way that keeps everyone safe and healthy.

So while things will likely look different than we are accustomed to, that doesn't mean you and your loved ones have to miss out on those most important and cherished traditions. Instead, consider trying these tips and tricks for safe, socially distant holiday fun.

■ **Host safely**

If you plan to host, there are a number of precautions you can take to keep guests safe. If possible, take your gatherings outside where you can increase physical distance and airflow. Choose outdoor activities, such as a bonfire or an active game. If you live in a colder climate, bring out the hats, coats and gloves - and try using a patio or porch heater to warm up.

To limit travel, it is best to only invite people from your local area and limit the number of attendees. Provide information to



guests about your local safety guidelines and take steps to prevent spread by providing masks and hand sanitizer.

■ **Get help from the experts**

With everything to consider this year, there is nothing better than receiving a helping hand in the kitchen - especially one that can be delivered right to your doorstep. Boston Market, known this time of year as the Holiday Experts, has fully prepared, precooked holiday meal spreads, as well as a la carte sides and desserts that can be delivered to your home, preordered or picked up at any location

nationwide. This helpful solution is also perfect for those taking extra precautions during this unusual holiday season.

■ **Go virtual**

Since you may not be able to see family and friends in-person, consider spending time with your loved ones from afar by using one of the many apps and programs that allow them to gather virtually. To keep the conversation flowing, prepare a list of fun topics, questions to ask or games to play while you are digitally celebrating the season together.

■ **Shop conveniently**

Online shopping has never been easier - or safer. Instead of heading out to crowded malls or stores, do as much online shopping as possible. Be sure to start early, as shipping times will likely be delayed and stocking of the season's most popular gifts may be limited. If you do plan to shop in person, be sure to follow your local guidelines to ensure you stay safe. Don't let the pandemic steal your joy and ruin those time-honored holiday traditions. Instead, try following these helpful tips to ensure a safe and healthy season. You might even discover a new tradition to add to the list! (BPT)



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Toast the season with festive twists on favorite drinks

Despite a holiday season that's practically guaranteed to feel different than any other, one constant will remain for many: enjoying the tastes of favorite foods and beverages while cozied up at home. Enhance the holiday spirit and complement the meal at your table with adult beverages that call for seasonal flavors to add to the festive vibe.

Whether you prefer your drinks with a fruity twist and plenty of mix-ins or would rather opt for a simpler combination, the options are vast. Many traditional holiday drinks require a small handful of ingredients that blend, mix or shake together to create a wintry flavor that's worth the wait.

Regardless of personal preferences, one ingredient you can rely on when creating an at-home concoction is a mixer like those from Zevia, which are naturally sweetened with stevia and include no artificial ingredients, colors or preservatives. These non-alcoholic, zero-sugar, zero-calorie mixers for cocktails (or mocktails) are available in three different flavors: Lemon Lime with Bitters, Tonic and Ginger Beer to provide a simple yet delicious complement to the ingredients of your choosing. For a fruit-flavored solution, this Cranberry Smash Moscow Mule offers a sweet spin on



the classic cocktail. Break out your favorite copper mug and let the cranberries and cinnamon sticks add festive flair to your fusion of vodka and ginger beer.

Alternately, if the sour notes of a margarita better fit your style, go for a holiday twist with this Winter White Margarita by blending in coconut milk and garnishing with cranberries and rosemary sprigs. By rimming

your glasses with granulated stevia, you can add a sweet touch to each gulp. To find more holiday cocktail ideas, visit Zevia.com/recipes/cocktails.

CRANBERRY SMASH MOSCOW MULE

- Servings: 1
- 1 cup cranberries, plus additional for garnish (optional), divided
 - 3/4-1 cup water, divided
 - 2 ounces vodka
 - 1-2 ounces fresh squeezed lime juice
 - 4 ounces Zevia Ginger Beer Mixer
 - ice
 - rosemary, for garnish (optional)
 - lime slices, for garnish (optional)
 - cinnamon sticks, for garnish (optional)

In saucepan, boil cranberries in 1/2 cup water until they burst.

Use fork to smash cranberries. Boil 3-4 minutes. Keep mixture moist by adding water 1/4 cup at a time. Let mixture cool to room temperature.

In copper mug, combine vodka, lime juice, ginger beer and smashed cranberries over ice.

Garnish with additional cranberries, rosemary, lime slices and cinnamon sticks, if desired. (Family Features)



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Holiday presents loved ones can put to work

Giving the perfect holiday gift to a loved one can add unnecessary stress and pressure, but you don't have to drive far and wide to find presents your friends and family members will love. Some of the best gifts are practical, everyday options that you know will be put to good use.

Look no further than your local hardware store. With 72% of United States households within 15 minutes of an Ace Hardware, you can find a wide variety of gifts to put smiles on loved ones' faces whether you shop conveniently online or in person. As a one-stop shop for grills, power tools, home decor and more, knowledgeable associates are ready to help you find the perfect gifts for those on your list whether you're looking for big ticket items or one-of-a-kind stocking stuffers.

For example, a new pellet grill may be the solution for the home chef who seems to have everything already, providing a simple way to prepare delicious meals any day of the week. Or, if you're looking to help make outdoor cleanup a cinch, consider an option like a cordless, battery-powered blower to keep the yard, driveway and other spaces neat and tidy.

Find more gift-giving inspiration at



acehardware.com.

■ Cook Up a Crave-Worthy Gift

If you're looking for a unique gift for the grill master in your life, look no further than the Traeger Pro 575 Wood Pellet Grill, a pellet grill that helps make achieving wood-fired flavor easier. The enhanced WiFi technology allows you to monitor and adjust your grill anytime, anywhere directly from an app. Getting that perfect flavor is easier with this grill that starts quicker, heats up faster and puts out better smoke quality with its D2 drivetrain.

■ Make Gift-Giving a Breeze

For the person in your life who loves taking care of the yard and other outdoor spaces,



give the gift that keeps on giving by making cleanup a breeze with the EGO Power+ 530 CFM Blower, a step up in power and convenience for the line of cordless blowers.

Inspired by advanced aeronautics technology and equipped with turbine fan engineering, this compact and lightweight blower can run for 75 minutes on a single charge. (Family Features)

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Creative, colorful Christmas ideas for kids

Picking out the perfect presents for kids this holiday doesn't limit your search to simply including gifts with screens or the hottest tech gadgets.

Although the amount of options in store and on virtual shelves for kids can be somewhat overwhelming, gifts fostering imaginative play and creativity never go out of style. Even if it seems your children already have pretty much everything, getting back to the basics with crafty gifts like paint and art sets, color and wash collectibles, science kits or customizable DIY projects encourage children to express their creativity and explore their inner-artists.

Consider these activities that can spark imagination and allow kids of all ages to create colorful memories this holiday season. Find more at Crayola.com.

■ Custom Craft Creations

Give the kids creative freedom with an option like Crayola's Maker series, which allows them to create custom paper and markers for arts and crafts time at home or school projects. The Marker Maker comes with 16 makeable markers along with a color mixing guide and customizable labels for each one. The Paper Maker includes an instruction book-



let, paper-making pulp to make 20 sheets of 5-by-8-inch paper, a stir and smoothing tool and a pressure plate. Both kits make it fun and easy to craft DIY cards, decor, notes and other projects.

■ Colorful Pets

Kids can take imaginative, creative play to new places this holiday season with the Scribble Scrubbie Pets Grooming Truck. This life-like environment includes a grooming

truck with moving wheels and features a real working spray pump and scrub tub that allow kids to wash and clean the two included pets just like real groomers do. The truck also doubles as an easy-to-pack storage solution for taking the customizable pets on-the-go for later use. After creating a colorful look for their pets using washable markers, kids can simply scrub them clean for a fresh blank canvas to create over and over. (Family Features)



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Popping up festive Christmas fun

During a holiday season that may not quite feel the same for many families, you can add a magic touch to at-home festivities with activities and treats that get everyone involved. Creating decorative holiday sweets allows little ones and grown-ups alike to take part in the fun, and the end result is delicious desserts for all to enjoy.

Start with a main ingredient like whole-grain, freshly popped popcorn. At 30 calories a cup, it's naturally low in fat, non-GMO and gluten-free for a nutritious alternative to traditional holiday indulgences. It's a clever way to create artsy representations of the season at hand that celebrate festive flavors like peppermint, coconut, chocolate and other sweet eats.

For example, Coconut Popcorn Snowballs add fun and flavor to wintertime with a coat of sweetened coconut "snow" and candy cane handle while easy-to-construct Holiday Popcorn Snowmen are sure to be a hit with your children. Add to the holiday spirit throughout your home with wintery Jingle Balls that call for colored sugars to create a magical sparkling effect then take the creativity to the next level by encouraging kids to make their own



red-nosed, sleigh-pulling team of Chocolate Popcorn Reindeer.

Discover more decorative dessert recipes at popcorn.org.

COCONUT POPCORN SNOWBALLS

Yield: 8 balls (4 inches)

- 2 cups shredded or flaked sweetened coconut
- nonstick cooking spray
- 3 quarts popped popcorn
- 4 tablespoons (1/2 stick) butter or margarine
- 3 cups miniature marshmallows
- 1 teaspoon coconut or vanilla extract
- 8 candy canes or candy cane sticks



(about 3-4 inches)

Place large sheet wax or parchment paper over work surface. Spread coconut on paper.

Spray large mixing bowl lightly with non-stick cooking spray and place popcorn inside.

In medium saucepan, melt butter over low heat. Stir in marshmallows until melted and mixture is smooth. Pour over popcorn and mix well until coated.

Spray hands with cooking spray and press mixture firmly to form into balls. Place balls on coconut; roll and press coconut to coat. While holding popcorn balls, gently press candy cane into each ball.

Serve immediately or wrap individually ▶

The Toadstool Bookshops

"Iron Roads of the Monadnock Region. Vols I and II: Railroads of Southwestern New Hampshire and North-Central Massachusetts" by Bradford Blodget and Richard Richards brings



to life the story of now largely forgotten railroads that once operated in the area, shining new light on the roads' stories from their beginnings to the present. The authors detail how and why the roads were built in the first place, where they went and what they did, their roles in the economy of the Monadnock Region, and what became of them.

"Becoming a Good Creature" by Sy Montgomery School is not the only place to find a teacher. In this picture book adaptation of Sy Montgomery and Rebecca Green's New York Times best-selling *How to Be a Good Creature*, learn the many surprising lessons animals have to teach us about friendship, compassion, and how to be a better creature in the world.



"A Cry from the Far Middle: Dispatches from a Divided Land" by P.J. O'Rourke This uproarious look at the current state of these



United States includes essays like "Woke to the Sound of Laughter," about the upside of being "woke" (and unable to get back to sleep); "Sympathy vs. Empathy," which considers whether it's better to hold people's hands or bust into their heads; a brief digression "On the Additional Hell of the Internet of Things" because your juicer is sending fake news to your FitBit about what's in your refrigerator; and many more.



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JINGLE BALLS

Yield: 12 cups

Nonstick cooking spray

12 cups popped popcorn

6 tablespoons butter or margarine

3 cups mini marshmallows

1/2 teaspoon peppermint extract

assorted colored sugars

Spray large mixing bowl lightly with nonstick cooking spray. Add popcorn.

Spread plastic wrap on cookie sheet; set aside.

In medium saucepan, melt butter and marshmallows; stir until mixture is smooth. Stir in peppermint extract. Pour over popcorn, mixing until well coated. Let cool 2 minutes.

Spray hands with nonstick cooking spray



and form popcorn mixture into 3-inch balls. Gently press colored sugar onto balls. Let sit on prepared cookie sheet until cool and set.

CHOCOLATE POPCORN REINDEER

Servings: 8

8 cups unsalted, unbuttered, popped popcorn

2 1/2 cups mini marshmallows

1/2 cup chopped dark chocolate or dark chocolate chips

2 tablespoons butter or light olive oil

1/4 teaspoon salt

16 pretzel sticks

16 eyeball candies

8 red candy-coated

chocolate candies

Place popcorn in large mixing bowl.

In saucepan over medium heat, heat marshmallows, chocolate, butter and salt, stirring often, until smooth. Toss marshmallow mixture with popcorn until well combined.

Scoop 3/4 cup popcorn mixture into ball. Repeat with remaining mixture to make eight balls. Place each ball in paper muffin cup liner.

Insert one pretzel stick on each side of ball to resemble antlers, attach two eyeball candies for "eyes" and one red chocolate candy for "nose." Repeat with remaining balls. Let cool completely.

HOLIDAY POPCORN SNOWMEN

Yield: 5 snowmen

1 package (1 pound) large marshmallows

1/4 cup (1/2 stick) butter or margarine,

plus additional for greasing hands

1 teaspoon vanilla

10 cups popped popcorn

In large saucepan, melt marshmallows and 1/4 cup butter. Remove from heat and stir in vanilla. Let stand 5 minutes.

Pour marshmallow mixture over popcorn and stir. Butter hands well and form into balls.

Decorate with sprinkles, licorice, gum drops and cinnamon candies, if desired. (Family Features)

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Get crafty this year and spread holiday cheer

Holiday decorations bring a smile to everyone's face, and this year, we could all use that now more than ever. Crafting seasonal décor instead of shopping for it gives you and your family something to occupy your extra time at home and helps you avoid big crowds and shopping stress. Perhaps you'll make wooden signs with jolly messages or metal snowflakes covered in lights? Or maybe you'll craft ornaments for the tree or engrave life-lasting messages into the menorah? No matter the craft, a homemade holiday novelty will bring a sense of pride and happiness to all. Ready to get crafty and holiday savvy? Here's what to do:

■ Make a plan

Visualize your project in your space and measure the location so you know how many supplies you need. Take a look around to notice what areas have the most room. Get a view from the outside to see what your neighbors will see when passing by. Browse social media/decoration sites for inspiration. Save pictures of your favorites and then picture it fitting in your space. You could even sketch out your design on paper to get a clearer vision of what you're going to create. Locate your sources of electricity if you want to incorporate lights, music or even snow machines (hey, we can dream!). Be sure you have extension cords if you'll need them.

■ Shop for your materials

Shop for and select the items that are eye-catching and fun. Consider bright, festive colors and pretty patterns. Research the items you need, and what stores near you carry them before you leave to save some time. Price check between stores to ensure you don't overspend. If possible, you can even order online supplies ahead of time to avoid the crowds.

■ Have the best tools in your tool belt

Equip yourself with tools that are lightweight, versatile, portable, user friendly and the very best to get the job done. The new MakerX line of tools from Worx will elevate your home-crafter game, giving you a range of creative options, allowing you to create from anywhere and perfecting the small details that make all the difference. The tool set revolves around a 20V Power Hub battery that powers five versatile tools, including an air brush, angle grinder, mini heat gun, rotary tool and wood and metal grinder, so the possibilities are limitless. Be sure to test out your tools on some scraps first before diving into your perfect materials and always follow safety measures.

■ Set the mood

You've got everything you need so now it's time to start feeling festive. Light an apple cinnamon, vanilla cookie, fir and firewood or whatever spiced-snow-scent-tickles-your-fancy candle, turn on the cold weather carols and get your groove on. Pour a cup of cocoa - or a glass of spiked cider for mom and dad - and get to work!

■ Kick back and admire your work

Enjoy the company of those around you as you work together to make your holiday crafts and see the beauty in creating something with your hands, regardless of the imperfections. Work any mistakes into your final design. After all, the experience is half the fun, and you're making memories that will last forever. Proudly display your holiday decorations in and out of your home for yourself, your family and your neighbors to enjoy. Take lots of pictures for friends and family who can't be there in person and share your work on social media. A little joy goes a long way. (BPT)



Christmas presents for every person (and pet) on your list

With a variety of personalities and interests likely on your holiday shopping list, finding the perfect gift for everyone can



any before it.

With more people spending time at home, gifts that can keep the house clean, showcase team spirit or provide a simple way to pass the time can be hits. Of course, you can also ship a tasty meal directly to a loved one's door or give that four-legged family member an extra special treat. Find more holiday gift-giving inspiration at eLivingtoday.com.

■ A Tasteful Holiday Gift

Give the gift of flavor this holiday season with a full spread



of Omaha Steaks favorites in one collection. Loaded with double-trimmed, famously fork-tender Butcher's Cut filet mignons, tender and crispy bacon-wrapped filet mignons, flavor-packed burgers, classic boneless pork chops, juicy boneless chicken breasts,

gourmet jumbo franks, all-beef meatballs, a savory side and dessert, it's a memorable and delicious gift everyone can enjoy. Find more flavorful holiday gift ideas at omahasteaks.com.

■ The No. 1 Gift Pick

Give the sports fan in your life an authentic piece of collectible memorabilia to showcase his or her team spirit, such as this Patrick Mahomes Super Bowl LIV MVP Dynasty Banner from Winning Streak Sports - The #1 Premium Licensed Product in Sports. Created to commemorate some of the greatest teams, schools and players, these limited-edition high stitch count banners, which are available framed or unframed, are made from 100% wool blend felt with iron-safe backing and include a hanging cord for easy display. Find more upscale, gift-worthy

be a daunting task. Rather than spending countless hours browsing online or walking up and down store aisles, consider this array of gift ideas that can put you on the path toward successful shopping during a holiday season sure to be unlike



he didn't count on uncovering a deadly conspiracy. In over his head, Pilate risks it all to get to the truth in this tale exploding with action, crisp dialogue and quirky twists. Visit amazon.com to find the book.

■ Count Down to the Holidays with Your Pet

Add more happiness to your pet's holiday season with an option like this Merry & Bright Holiday Deck The Howls with Cookies Advent Calendar Dog Treat, which is available at PetSmart. Your dog has been good all year, so don't forget to include him or her in the holiday countdown with an advent calendar of his or her own. Find more holiday gift ideas for your pets at petsmart.com.



■ Give the Gift of Time

Gift your family a vacuum-and-mop-in-one like the DEEBOT T8 allows you to enjoy the holidays and leave the cleaning to the robot. It provides hands-free cleaning and removes 99.26% of bacteria with its patented OZMO Mopping System. With no pre-cleaning needed and a runtime of more than three hours, it also detects obstacles with accuracy to avoid collisions and getting stuck. Learn more at ecovacs.com/us. (Family Features)



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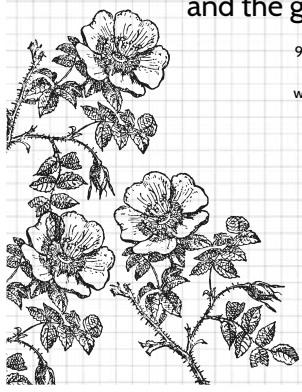
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Gingerbread Cookie Shake

- 1 1/2 cups vanilla protein shake
 - 1 tbsp. molasses
 - 1/2 tsp. ground cinnamon
 - 1/4 tsp. ground ginger
 - 1 frozen banana
 - 1 tbsp. chia seeds
 - 1/2 cup ice
1. Add all ingredients into a blender and blend until smooth. Serve.





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How to spread joy to everyone from anywhere this Christmas

COVID-19 restrictions mean the 2020 holiday season will be different this year, but that doesn't mean you have to become a Grinch. Although extensive travel, large group gatherings and many traditional activities can't happen, you can find imaginative ways to be just as joyful with a dash of creativity.

■ **Alternative approaches to work holiday parties**

With the pandemic causing many offices to go remote as well as restrictions for restaurants and group gatherings, this year will have to be a celebration of a different kind. Fortunately, technology is making many things possible. Employers want to show employees they care and are expected to shake things up in creative ways. This could include sending meals to everyone through home delivery and then meeting online to enjoy them together. This might be a video gathering for an ugly sweater contest paired with fun games that can be played digitally such as bingo and holiday trivia. Maybe it's hiring a live musician to play and everyone can sign in for a virtual happy hour while enjoying the customized tunes. Might someone suggest karaoke?!

■ **Online shopping expected to soar**

Last year, 56% of consumers reported they would make their holiday purchases online vs. at retail stores, according to the National Retail Federation. The experts at Purchasing Power - an employee purchase program - have witnessed this trend growing exponentially since March and expect at-home shopping to soar over the upcoming holidays. With so many people continuing to work or attend school at home, Purchasing Power anticipates the most popular (and practical) gifts to be purchased and delivered right to people's doors include new



laptops and home electronics, personal health and fitness equipment and ergonomic office furniture. Of course, toys, video games - there are many new products and gaming systems this year for kid and adult gamers - and small luxury items will still bring smiles to those longing for unexpected surprises during the 2020 holidays.

■ **Travel less, make more memories at home**

With airline travel at a minimum and health top of mind, many people won't be traveling to bake holiday treats and celebrate good tidings in person. Consider alternatives this year and plan a family video chat time to bake cookies together. Select and share a recipe ahead of time and then sign on to your digital device to talk with each other as you each prepare dough, bake and enjoy treats.

For younger children with shorter attention spans, you may just want to plan a virtual cookie or cupcake decorating party. Or perhaps you get crafty and make some hand-cut snowflakes or colorful paper garlands. As you add the perfect touches to holiday treats, exchange memories of holidays past and even pull out old family photo albums or videos to reminisce.

The 2020 holiday season is sure to be unique, but "different" can still be good. With an optimistic mindset and clever ideas, you'll put a new spin on family and workplace traditions and make some lasting memories. Learn more at www.purchasingpower.com. (BPT)

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Help families struggling this Christmas due to COVID-19

Nearly half of low-income Americans reported that they or someone in their household experienced some type of income loss during the pandemic, according to information published by Pew Research Center. Because more people are facing hardship this year due to the impacts of COVID-19, more families in your community will likely be in need of assistance this holiday season and into 2021. Organizations like The Salvation Army estimate they could serve up to 155% more people with Christmas assistance this year, assuming the resources are available, based on increased services already provided during the pandemic. In order to aid those most vulnerable, nonprofit organizations across the nation need your help. Explore ways to make an impact and serve as a beacon of hope for those in need:

▪ **Donate Food** - Gathering around a table filled with homemade food is a treasured tradition for many families, but for others it's a luxury beyond reach. Donating food to your local food pantry or other community organizations can help give the gift of Christmas, ensuring

more families are able to come together to enjoy a meal as part of their holiday celebrations.

▪ **Volunteer Your Time** - Not all gifts require spending money. You can give back by volunteering your time to make the holiday season brighter for families and individuals who need assistance. Organizations in your area often need volunteers for projects like sorting food and necessities for care packages, serving food in soup kitchens or making holiday cards to send to nursing homes.

Another example of how to get involved is through The Salvation Army's iconic Red Kettle Campaign. Protocols are in place to ensure the safety of bell ringers, donors and partners, so enthusiastic bell ringers can join the effort and help raise money this holiday season.

▪ **Adopt a Child for the Holidays** - Some local organizations work directly with low-income families in the community to identify their children's specific needs. They gather information on each child in the family, including their special interests, clothing sizes and wishes for holiday gifts. When you adopt a child

or family, whether on your own or in partnership with others, you commit to purchasing items on the child's wish list to ensure they have everything he or she needs to celebrate the season, from food and gifts to clothing essentials.

To get involved or find more ways to help, visit rescuechristmas.org.

Most Needed Holiday Items

- * Baby necessities like bottles, blankets, diapers and wipes
- * Warm weather attire, like winter coats, mittens, hats and scarves
- * Books or board games
- * Dolls, action figures or other toys that inspire imaginative play
- * School and art supplies
- * Personal care items like shampoo, soap, deodorant or hair products
- * Cleaning supplies
- * Laundry detergent and fabric softener
- * Gift cards to retail stores
- * Pre-paid gas cards
- * Restaurant or grocery gift certificates (Family Features)



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SATURDAY DECEMBER 5 • 2020

— SCHEDULE OF EVENTS —

- 6AM-2PM: Hannah's Diner *Free Coffee or Hot Chocolate with the purchase of a meal*
- 7AM-4PM: Two Girls Bakery *Stop by to see our specials*
- 7:30AM-5PM: Tire Warehouse *10% Off Snow Tire Changeover*
- 9AM-6PM: Radio Shack *25% Off Toys 20% Off Batteries in stock*
- 10AM-5PM: Holiday Pop UP Shop- 497 W. Main St *Raffling a Stocking with an item from each vendor*
- 10AM-6PM: Tooky Mills Pub *10% Off Any Entree*
- 10AM-5PM: Agway *20% Off Bird Feeders & Pet Toys*
- 10AM-2PM: Sincal *5% Off Woodstoves*
- 10AM-2PM: Toppers Salon *10% Off All Products Plus Play & Save Game*
- 10AM-2PM: Morse Sporting Goods *10% Discount On Selected Items*
- 10AM-12PM: Fuller Library *Free Take-Home Crafts*
- 11AM-4PM: The Other Ark Take 2 *Free Coffee and Tea*
- 11AM-5PM: Hillsborough House of Pizza & Bar *10% Off a NY Pizza*
- 11AM-9PM: Yanni's Pizza *\$2.00 Off Any Pizza*
- 12Noon-9PM: Sampan *10% Off Meal (Dining In Only)*
- 1PM Butler Park Christmas Pet Parade Sponsored by the Hillsborough Chamber
- 3PM Butler Park Christmas Scarecrow Contest Sponsored by Hillsborough Pride
- 4PM Butler Park Free Hot Cider and Munchkins Courtesy of The Messenger
- 4:30 PM Butler Park Santa's Parade Arrives, Christmas Caroling with Santa and Pam Stohrer
- 5:00PM Butler Park Santa Lights The Tree