Christmas Homemade Gifts

Whether or not you're on a budget this year, you can make some really nice Christmas homemade gifts to make yours the most special gift anyone would love to receive.

As I'm sure you are aware, the commercial side of Christmas starts earlier each year. I've noticed that this year, Christmas decorations were being displayed before Halloween, and retailers are barely letting you gulp down your turkey before pressuring you to head to the stores, which will be open on Thanksgiving night.

The thing is that you don't have to spend a lot of money to give really nice gifts. If money is going to be tight this year, and it probably will be for a lot of us, then consider instead making some heartfelt, simple and just downright nice homemade gifts.

Remember when you were a kid and you made a card for your mom or dad? It probably wasn't as fancy as a store-bought card, but guess what? It probably brought a tear to your mom's eye because it was so sweet, thoughtful and meant more to her than all the finest and most expensive cards in the store.

When you put the effort and thought behind a gift, especially if you make or customize it for that special someone, it still means just as much to that person as that hand-made card did to your mother.

If you have a talent such as painting, knitting, flower arranging or photography, by all means use your gifts to give to others. Trust me; those types of homemade gifts are always going to be treasured.

The opportunities are endless and really don't have to cost a lot of money. For instance, at work every year, I like to give my friends a little something, but don't have tons of extra money to buy gifts for them all. Instead, I bake some chocolate chip cookies and arrange them on a pretty, but inexpensive platter, decorated with inexpensive ornaments and brightly-colored Christmas candy. I wrap it up and tie it all together with a big, festive red bow.

My friends love getting these platters! They can either eat all the cookies themselves or bust out the platter at a holiday gathering to save them the time of baking or running to the store for a dessert.

My niece has a real eye for photography and takes the most awesome pictures of family members throughout the year at various picnics and get-togethers. She takes these black and white photos, buys an inexpensive frame but decorates it, and gives each of us a framed photograph of their family enjoying a day together earlier that year.

You can also go to a local printing shop and have your own photos made into customized calendars, t-shirts, mouse pads, etc. for a fairly inexpensive price.

Another option is to buy inexpensive pre-packaged items, disassemble them and create your own customized gift basket. You might take a packet of tea or cocoa from one package, add a mug from another, some candy, small Christmas ornaments and put together a really cool handmade basket from scratch.

You can also customize gift bags, boxes or baskets with a theme geared towards the interests of the person to whom the gift is intended. You can put together nice packages for movie lovers, a lotion/spa theme, puzzles, travel games, or literally anything else.

If you do your own canning or make preserves, who wouldn't love to sample the fruits of your labor? If you write poetry, put together a small book featuring some of your best poems. There is no limit to what you can put together for your loved ones, and without question, they will love these types of gifts.

Another huge bonus with making Christmas homemade gifts is the less stressful idea of not having to run around to ten different stores, fight for a parking space and deal with the large crowds of people everywhere you go. Put on a little Christmas music, pour yourself a glass of wine and start baking, knitting or assembling some very nice homemade gifts for your friends and family. This is a great way to slow down and get yourself into the holiday spirit.

So this year, keep your sanity intact and extra money in your wallet by creating some lovely Christmas homemade gifts.

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