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3 Tips For Giving A Great Gift

By Rena D. Robertson

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I know that trying to find just the right gift for somebody can be like going to the dentist at times. Ok, maybe that's a little bit dramatic. But when people ask me about what they should get someone for whatever the occasion, they are sometimes in a panic. This is what I tell them.

1. Be Original

If you can imagine, you can be "original" . It really isn't that hard.

You know how teachers are always getting those stereotypical apple and school related gifts? (You people know who you are.) Ok, enough. Teachers have feelings too. No, really. (I'm not a teacher but I have friends and family who are and this is what they tell me.)

This is a prime example of "un-originality". (Can you imagine getting 24 primarily identical gifts at Christmas time?) What's a teacher to do?

Want to win some brownie points? Get he or she something that they can use and enjoy.

Let me help to stir those creative juices.

a. Gift cards or certificates for – Pedicure, Manicure, Movie Theater, Ice Cream Shop, Movie Rental Store, Book Store, Gourmet Foods, Golf Course, Restaurant....

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- b. A great throw blanket
- c. Tickets to a game
- d. Awesome gourmet chocolate and foods

Are you starting to get the picture?

2. Homemade Is Good

When I say homemade, people usually think of food. But homemade can also relate to sewing, knitting, building, painting,

crafting or whatever it is you make with your own two hands. I love to get stuff from people who put their time into a gift. If you have a talent for baking, cooking or making things, you really ought to give of yourself in that way to others. If you don't feel that you can make anything yourself, find someone who can. It's just as good.

3. Attention Getting Packaging

Try to find objects that can be used as containers for presenting your gifts. Turn them into gift baskets. Let me give you some examples:

- a. Ceramics– Bowls, mugs, tea cup and saucer, plates, trays, planters...
- b. Any kind of basket
- c. Hats turned upside down
- d. Boxes lined with decorative paper on the inside and out

After deciding on a container, fill it with some sort of tissue paper or shred.

Organize the contents of your basket and use clear or colored gift basket wrap to seal it.

Attach ribbon, a bow, maybe a card, flowers, greenery, or candy to it at the top. You could even attach an object that ties in to the theme of the gift.

You know what people really like? It's to know that someone cared enough about them to put some thought into their gift.

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So, I guess it really is the "thought" that counts.

Rena D. Robertson is the founder of Rena's Recipes "Gourmet The Texas Way". She has been baking for 30 years and has developed quite a reputation for creating exceptional, mouth-watering recipes. She says that having a passion in life is important. Her passion is making people feel good. Her gourmet foods seem to do just that. You can find some of her creations at <http://www.renasrecipes.com>

Practical Guide To Gift Giving

By Melanie Mendelson

Many people find special occasions and holidays to be stressful. Trying to get the right gift for everyone is no easy task. To make your life easier during those times, follow these simple tips:

Start looking for a gift in advance. Trying to find something the day before the occasion is extremely stressful and is nearly impossible. If you do find yourself in a situation where you need to come up with a gift right away, get the person a gift certificate to their favorite store. Gift certificates also make the best gift for someone who is very picky.

When buying clothes or jewelry, look at what the person wears to get an idea of their style. When in doubt, choose the classic style items that are "safe" – not something along the lines of "love it or hate it".

Include a gift receipt whenever you can. If the recipient does not like the gift, he or she will really appreciate the opportunity to return or exchange it for something they like.

Avoid buying perfumes and cosmetics for people whose taste you don't know. Most people are very picky about the personal care brands, fragrances and colors. Those items are embarrassing to return since many stores don't accept them back or frown upon the return of "personal care" items.

Avoid giving bulky items for the home such as paintings or furniture. It puts the recipient in a really bad position if they don't like your gift. If you visit this person's home, they will face the dilemma of either having to tell you that they got rid of your gift, or having to put the unwanted item on display at their home.

Indulgence items make great gifts. Some people feel guilty buying things that are "nice to have", but not absolutely necessary. By giving that item as a gift, you will allow such person to enjoy it without the guilt.

Don't go overboard in trying to find the most perfect gift - be reasonable. If you try way too hard, it creates resentment and extreme disappointment if the recipient's reaction is not what you have hoped. Keep it simple.

Presentation and packaging are very important (yes, people do judge the book by its cover). To create

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a good impression, gift-wrap the gift and include a beautiful card.

How you give is as important as what you give. Present the gift with an easy-going attitude – simply smile and say "This is for you". And please don't bug the person about whether they liked your gift or not! Give gracefully, and feel secure about your gift. People will surely appreciate your skillful gift giving.

Melanie Mendelson is the owner of Silver Jewelry Creations online store. It carries a huge selection of sterling silver jewelry – rings, earrings, bracelets, body jewelry, watches, chains and more. Gorgeous jewelry, very low prices! Visit



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