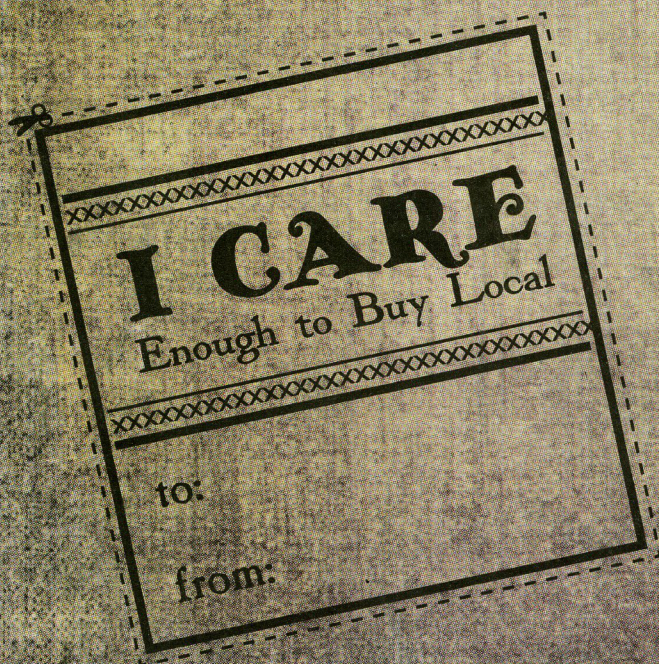




SBC's Buy Local Holiday Guide

Make the Season of Giving More
Sustainable & Meaningful



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Five Simple Ways to CHEER on your Sustainable Holidays!

By Kris Heitkamp

One of the best ways to CHEER on your holidays is to try something new. Fortunately, that's easy to do. Lights, decorations, and feasting come with Thanksgiving, Hanukkah, Winter Solstice, and of course with Christmas, which involves trees.

Choose a real tree. If you think buying an artificial tree is sustainable, think again. A Montreal environmental consulting firm discovered that a plastic pine would have to be used for 20-plus years to be considered a more sustainable choice than a real tree. Using resource depletion, greenhouse gas emissions and toxicity as some of the criteria, the firm found that it's healthier for you and the environment to cut down a fresh, live tree every year. Most fake trees are made with polyvinyl chloride (PVC), which can be toxic and is not recyclable. Natural trees can be recycled and ground into chips for mulch. Another option to consider is buying a live tree that is native to your area. After Santa has come and gone, plant it outside to enjoy and cherish year round.

Hang LED holiday lights. Using energy efficient lighting like LED holiday lights will green your way to a sustainable celebration. LED lights operate with a lower wattage than incandescent bulbs, have a longer life span (20-30 years) and you can connect several strands, warming a room with their energy-saving glow.

Entertain your tastebuds with edible holiday ornaments. Strings of popcorn and cranberries, frosted gingerbread people, dried orange slices and cinnamon sticks—all make for a picturesque and tasty tree. Creating the ornaments can be a fun family activity. The decorations can be eaten right off the tree, munched on after the holidays, or used to enrich your compost.

Eat local foods. Feasting on locally-produced foods is a healthy and sustainable way to support your local community. From farmers' markets to grocery stores, there are several opportunities to find local fares in Missoula. The Winter Market, Pattee Creek Market, Orange Street Food Farm, and Good Food Store all offer local produce and meats. Nothing tastes better than home-sourced foods and investing in your local economy.

Refuse plastic serveware. Serve your (local) holiday ham and pecan pie on real plates. Using reusable plates and silverware instead of paper and plastic will reduce your holiday waste significantly. Plus it will increase bonding opportunities in the kitchen while washing-up the dishes. Another sustainable option is to invite your guests to BYOP, bring your own plate and cup. The plate could double as a to-go container for leftovers. Americans waste 96 billion pounds of food each year, according to the USDA. Sharing is caring about your waste footprint and your friends and family.





Learn Furoshiki

By Kris Heitkamp

According to the EPA, from Thanksgiving to New Years Day, Americans throw away 25% more waste, and it ends up in landfills. Left over turkey, penguin wrapping paper, shiny red bows and holiday cards all add up to an additional one million tons a week. The cards alone are enough to fill a football field 10 stories high.

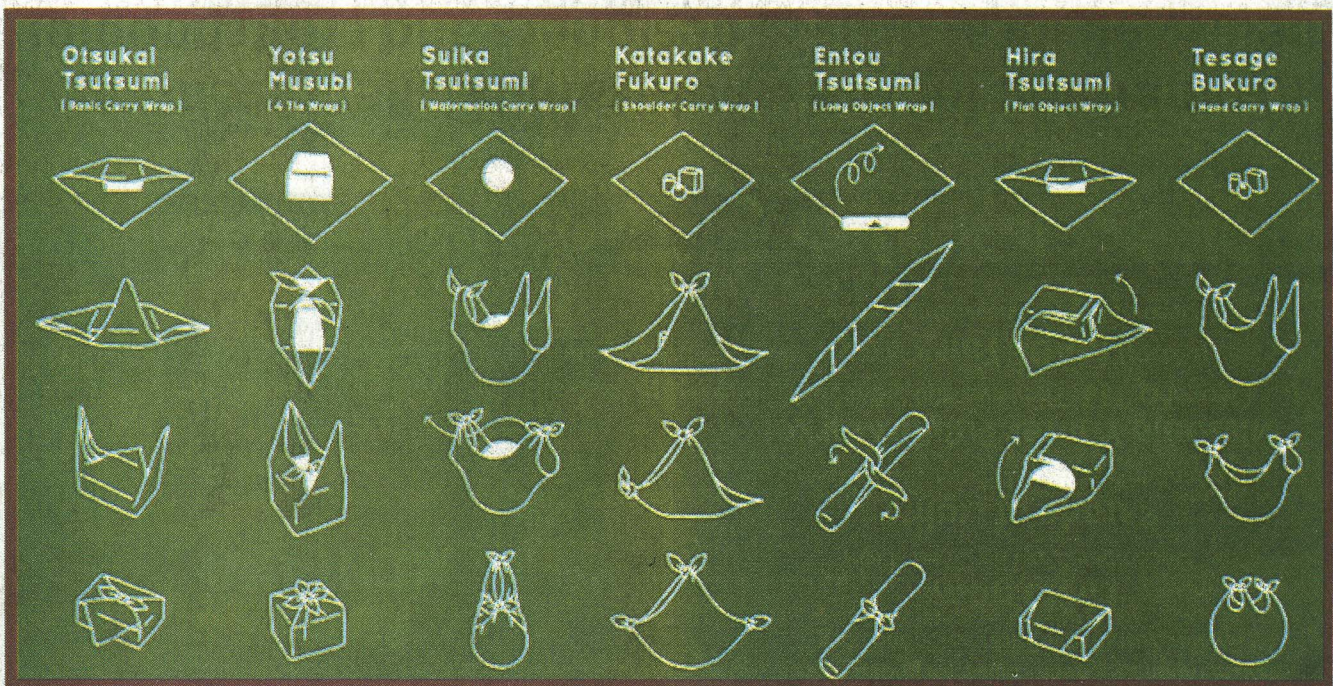
ADVICE? EAT YOUR (LOCAL) TURKEY, SKIP THE RIBBON, SEND AN ECARD, AND LEARN FUROSHIKI.

Furoshiki is the traditional Japanese art of wrapping cloth. More than 1,200 years old, furoshiki (furo means bath and shiki means spread) was first used for safekeeping of the Emperor's valuables. Later, during the Edo period (1603-1868—same period when Kabuki Theater, sushi and lyrical haikus were all the rage), furoshiki became popular for carrying satchels of personal belongings at public bathhouses. Spread out on the floor like a bath mat, the bather would undress, allowing the clothes to fall onto the cloth. After a few folds and twists, the mat would transform to carry the bather's belongings.

The square-shaped bundles became so popular that soon merchants used furoshiki to transport goods, claiming to be able to wrap and carry just about any shape or size. And a clever eco-friendly bag was born.

Furoshiki is a beautiful and reusable alternative to single-use wrapping paper. The single piece of cloth can be folded in a variety of ways to hold, carry, and wrap just about anything, from a basic gift box, to a wine bottle. It can even wrap a bouquet of flowers. This elegant and charming presentation is two gifts in one.

The Sustainable Business Council supports creative, reusable ideas and will be available at several Missoula events in November and December to teach you the art of furoshiki.



Sourced from Japan Ministry of the Environment

Meaningful Gift Giving

By Kris Heitkamp

According to a Gallup poll, Americans spent an average of \$704 on holiday gifts last year. That's enough money to buy a bag of White Chocolate-Lemon Baby Macaroons from Bernice's Bakery every Thursday and Sunday for a whole year. Or to buy a membership to the Montana Art Museum for yourself and 13 of your favorite friends. But you might just end up spending all \$704 on the typical holiday glam and glimmer.

Conquer the shiny object temptation and challenge yourself to think outside the big box store offerings. Instead of buying cheap, mass-produced stuff, take back the holiday with gifts that offer more than plastic wrap—gifts that are meaningful, fun and last a lifetime.

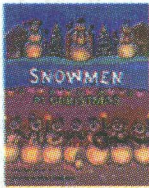
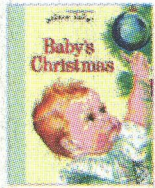
Give the gift of experience. Concert tickets, salsa lessons, or a weekend getaway at a local dude ranch—all offer an adventure. The gift of experience will last long after the tree and tinsel come down. The experience becomes a memory, then into a story that is shared with family and friends—a gift that keeps on giving.

If you're looking to save and not spend big bucks this holiday season, there are a variety of fun and creative gift ideas that won't break the bank. The gift of skill is priceless and generous. Coupons now stretch farther than the Sunday paper. Give a coupon book filled with lessons that highlight skills, like teaching how to knit an ugly Christmas sweater or showing how to bake a perfect pumpkin pie. Or steer your kid away from the consumer train and stuff his stocking with a coupon book full of stay up late coupons and pizza nights.

Get creative this holiday season and stretch your dollar to more meaningful and memorable gift giving. Think outside the big box store.

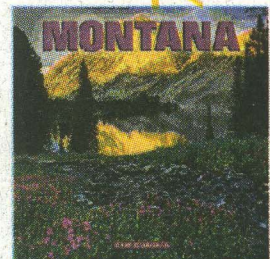
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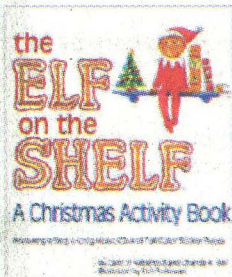
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Why Buy Local?

People, Profit, Planet



By Kris Heitkamp

In the season of wish lists, gift-wrap and stocking stuffers, where to spend holiday dollars is on the forefront of everyone's mind. The convenience of online shopping encourages easy browsing and one-click purchasing. But don't get sucked into couch commerce. Open the curtains, step outside and visit local businesses. Investing in your local community is putting your money towards people, profit, and planet. Buy local and here is why.

People Make the World Go Round

Keeping money local promotes a sense of community and pride of place. By shopping at locally owned businesses you help preserve Missoula's uniqueness that makes it one of the "last best places to live."

Scott Sproull has owned downtown Missoula shoe store Hide & Sole since 1975. His unique footwear is made with sustainable materials like recycled rubber, cork, natural latex, jute and organic wool. Sproull buys local himself and understands the need for grooming entrepreneurship. "I like the idea that the majority of local businesses are more responsive to local culture, local conditions, local needs and the individual," he said. Locally owned stores, boutiques and galleries bring to life the spirit of Missoula and the community.

Profit Sustains a Healthy Local Economy

According to the Institute for Local Self-Reliance, for every \$100 you spend locally, \$68 of it stays in the local economy, while if you shop at box stores only \$43 stays in your community. Compared to big box stores, independent businesses invest more of their revenue back into the local economy. They are also more likely to hire locally and procure locally produced goods.

Locally owned bookstore The Book Exchange has been swapping and selling new and used books in Missoula for over 30 years. Along with providing shoppers with a variety of over 400,000 books, Book Exchange also donates thousands of books to Montana schools, libraries, and city and state prisons.

By keeping your dollars local, you keep more tax dollars in the community, dollars that go to our schools, parks, police, and other services – improving the quality of life for everyone in Missoula.

Planet that Thrives Instead of Barely Survives

The cost of e-commerce and big box store shopping comes with a hefty price tag for the planet. To follow the emission trail of mass-produced, imported goods, you have to do some detective work. Trucks and trains are responsible for 25% of smog-causing pollution, and a lot of these emissions are wrapped up in packaging. According to an EPA estimate, the U.S. produces 11.9 million tons of single-use plastic packaging, and over 90% of that waste finds its way to the landfill.

Locally owned Posh Chocolat is an award-winning artisan chocolate company focused on local sustainability. They are huge on reusing shipping materials to keep them out of the landfill. "A lot of our products come to us in Styro boxes with ice packs. Those will then get sanitized and reused to ship our chocolates all over the country," said owner and chocolatier Jason Willenbrock.

Buying local builds a resourceful community, creates a vibrant economy and maintains a healthy environment.