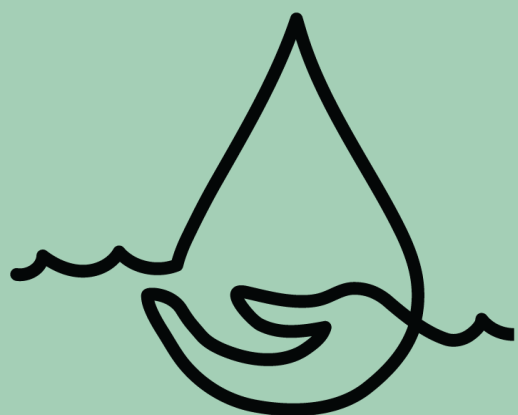# OCEAN FRIENDLY HOLIDAYS

GUIDELINE

GIFTING
GIVE THE GIFT OF SUSTAINABILITY THIS HOLIDAY SEASON

The holidays are a time to connect with loved ones through kindness and generosity. This year, give back by choosing to celebrate sustainably through eco-friendly and waste-free choices that will benefit you, your loved ones, and the earth.

Shop local. You won't just be shopping unique, thoughtful items and saving on shipping, you will also be supporting your local businesses and economy.

Reusable items make great gifts, while also encouraging others to start making switches to a plastic-free lifestyle. Items like a reusable mug or water bottle, reusable produce bags or utensils, fun reusable to-go containers or lunch bags. There are so many great options now a days, you can even find reusable products that have some sparkle, for a little Christmas flair.

Purchase **quality made items** that will last a lifetime or **sustainable, eco-friendly** products.

Nothing says "I love you" more than a **homemade gift** made with love. Some homemade gift ideas include chocolates, candles, beeswax wraps, ornaments, or artwork.

Who said a gift can't be an **experience**? Plan a day outdoors. Take your loved one hiking, kayaking, or skiing, or on an excursion like whale watching or a tour to hot springs cove. Sign them up for a workshop, or a course they've been thinking of taking. Plan a staycation, booking a night or two at a hotel with an ocean view to escape the kids for a night, have a romantic getaway, or a friends weekend with your besties. The possibilities are endless, be creative and make it personalized!

Get a **seasons pass** for places like your local aquarium, and create the next generation of ocean lovers, or a local museum to develop/promote a connection with art, culture, and history.

Gift cards, for a gift that keeps on giving. Purchase a gift card for spending at local shops, like their favourite local cafe so that every time they get a treat or hot beverage they will think of you. Or who won't love a spa treatment, I'm thinking hot stone massage, wouldn't that be the best gift ever?

Donate to a charity on behalf of your friend, partner, sibling, and/or parents.

WRAPPING
THINK OUTSIDE THE BOX

So you're done your Christmas shopping and you're feeling pretty good about yourself. You made sure every gift you bought is thoughtful and waste-free, and you're smiling knowing they are just going to love it! Now it's time to wrap them up nicely. Here's a few fun ideas to present your present (no pun intended) in a sustainable manner.

Wrap your gifts with anything you can get your hands on around the house. Old magazines, newspapers, comics, maps, fabric, calendars, sheets, pillowcase, artwork...get creative!

Consider **100% recyclable wrapping paper**. These are becoming more and more accessible.

Wrap your presents in a new t-shirt, or stuff them in a new pair of socks, and **make the wrapping part of the gift**.

Decorate the brown cardboard box the gift was shipped or packaged in. Draw, paint, or add a bit of foraged greenery to the outside, you might surprise yourself with your art skills when you're finished.

Reuse gift wrapping and bags from previous years, where possible. Gift bags are such an easy way to wrap, they help avoid having to use tape, and bags can also save you time and maybe even some stress because you won't have to worry about folding any paper corners. Another option is to get crafty and reuse your brown paper grocery bags, add a bow or draw something christmasy on the outside for a little extra holiday cheer.

If your gift isn't going under the tree, **why not ditch the wrapping entirely**?

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DECORATING
DECORATE YOUR HOME, THE SUSTAINABLE WAY

Decorating is a great way to get into the festive spirit. Here are some sustainable ways to create holiday cheer in your home. Turn on the Christmas tunes, it's time to decorate!

If purchasing decorations for your home think about investing in **locally made decorations** to support local artisans and select ornaments that are made of **natural materials** like glass, wood, and/or metal, instead of plastic.

Reusing old ornaments and garland year after year is a great way to be eco-friendly with your decorations.

If you're feeling crafty, you can **make your own decorations**. String together dried oranges or popcorn. Forage fallen pine cones and dip them in white paint to make them look like they are covered in snow. Make paper, clay, or glass ornaments. Paint a Christmas scene on a piece of driftwood, west coast style! Crafting with a friend, your partner, or family not only adds to your holiday collection, but it can also become a new yearly Christmas tradition.

Bring nature inside by making a greenery wreath or fireplace mantel piece.

Shop antique and secondhand stores for holiday ornament treasures, and give something new life.

I'm sure we can all remember that one house on the block that always had a fully decorated yard with Christmas lights. Over the holidays, the whole earth turns into one big ornament that can be seen from outer space. This season, **opt** for LED string lights for your Christmas tree. **Ditch** outdoor lights or **switch** to solar-powered ones. And most importantly, remember to switch everything off before going to sleep!

This year, consider the concept that **simple is better**. Less set up and take down, less waste, and more time to enjoy the holiday season with loved ones and being out in nature. Sounds like a win, win all around!

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TREES
GO NATURAL

Should you purchase an artificial tree or natural tree for Christmas, which is more sustainable? Go Natural.

Although artificial trees are reusable, they eventually end up in landfills, typically because a piece breaks or goes missing. Artificial trees are primarily made of plastic-based materials, that do not readily breakdown, therefore, leaving a lasting footprint years after the tree was used to bring holiday cheer.

On the other hand, **natural trees** can be composted and used as mulch because well, they're natural! Natural trees can be grown sustainably and provide a carbon sink (which is a good thing). By purchasing a natural tree, you'll also be **supporting your local Christmas tree farmers.**

Alternatively, instead of getting a cut Christmas tree, get one that still has its roots attached to it, then you can **replant the tree in your garden**, preferably in a large pot, and watch it grow. This way next year, your Christmas tree will be ready to bring inside your home, over the holidays, from your backyard! A trick to keeping your **container-grown Christmas tree** happy year after year, is to make sure when you bring the tree inside it stays well hydrated so that the soil does not dry out.

If your tree does not have its roots, or if you simply want to get rid of it, make sure to check out your local council's **Christmas tree recycling program**. You can even cut your tree into small pieces to use for decorating or firewood.

Who said the tree has to be living? You can **make a Christmas tree** out of driftwood or wooden dowels, or out of fabric that can be hung up against a wall, and then reused year after year.

Or skip the Christmas tree all together and **decorate your house plants.**