

# THINKING DIFFERENTLY ABOUT CHRISTMAS GIFTS

AMANDA LECAUDE, ORGANISING YOU

**Christmas continues to be one of my favourite times of the year despite the fact it seems to approach quicker with each passing year.**

Since becoming an organising expert, over 5 years ago now, I continue to rethink the type of gifts I give at Christmas and throughout the year. Rather than give family and friends material items that add to the things they already have in their homes I try to come up with different ideas. I think most people would agree that we all tend to have enough items and who really needs to receive more?

In my role as an organiser I often find clients are holding onto items they were given just because they were gifts. Often these gifts aren't something that is needed, liked or will even be used, therefore taking up valuable space in their home. As part of the decluttering process I work with these clients in getting them to give themselves permission to let go of these unwanted gifts/items. I regularly use the phrase 'Once a gift has been given to you it is then yours to do what you like with'. I understand we tend to have a sense of obligation and I too have felt like this at times and have displayed items that I don't even like. However I can report that these items have made it out of my house and I now only have items that I really like, enjoy or use these days.

What about you? Think about it how often do you get gifts that you do not really like, would not wear, display in your home or use in your day-to-day lives?

So this year before buying Christmas gifts why not start with a bit of planning. Start with putting together a list of those people you will be giving gifts to and why not think about giving intangible gifts or experiences. No one seems to have enough time these days so why not

give people permission to enjoy an activity. I am sure those of us who have been given experiences have fond memories of those gifts and the experiences and memories that can come with them.

Some ideas to consider as gifts could be:

- a massage or beauty treatment voucher (how often do we actually buy one of these for ourselves?)
- a movie voucher (how about an outdoor cinema or gold class experience?)
- a restaurant voucher
- a house cleaning voucher
- a voucher for ten pin bowling, paintball, trampoline, swimming pool or something similar
- a round of golf at their local course
- coaching lessons in a sport they enjoy
- book vouchers
- sport store vouchers
- a lesson in something else they enjoy - cake decorating, chocolate making, woodwork - the list for this is endless
- cooked meals for a week - there are many people out there providing such a service these days to busy and time poor people and families
- a babysitting voucher to have a night out
- tickets to the theatre or a sporting event ie Australian Open tennis
- a handyman voucher to complete all those jobs around the home that haven't quite been finished
- putting together a photo book for a friend or family member - or giving a voucher for the recipient to do themselves
- tickets to an upcoming exhibition or museum
- an experience to do something different - drive a racing car, go up in a hot air balloon or even to jump out of a plane
- I-Tunes voucher





Amanda Lecaude is professional organiser who loves being able to help people – her clients – get organised. She sees the difference it makes in their everyday lives, particularly families, just to have a way to create some TIME, SPACE and BALANCE! She is also very passionate about equipping school students with organising skills for life to maximise greater results primarily in secondary school and limit the overwhelm and frustration for both them and their parents.

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- an offer to assist for a weekend around someone's home
- a membership to the zoo, gym or their favourite sporting club
- or even make a donation to a favourite charity on their behalf.

Other items to consider as presents could include consumables like wine, baked or homemade goods, jams, a plant or what about a nice pot of mixed herbs. Over the past few years my family has received some lovely home made gifts including a homemade iced fruit cake, a jar with the ingredients and recipe to make chocolate chip cookies and a gingerbread tree.

Last year I gave my girlfriends home made salted caramel sauce, and useful items like a t-towel and a potatoe peeler that I'd found to be the best on the market. This year I have a similar idea around food and champagne (can't tell you more in case they read this article and is spoils the surprise)!

If you put your mind to it the ideas really are endless! So this year why not think about giving experiences and creating memories rather than material things that can add to clutter.

What do you think you can come up with for your friends and family? Do you think you can think differently about Christmas Gifts this year?

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