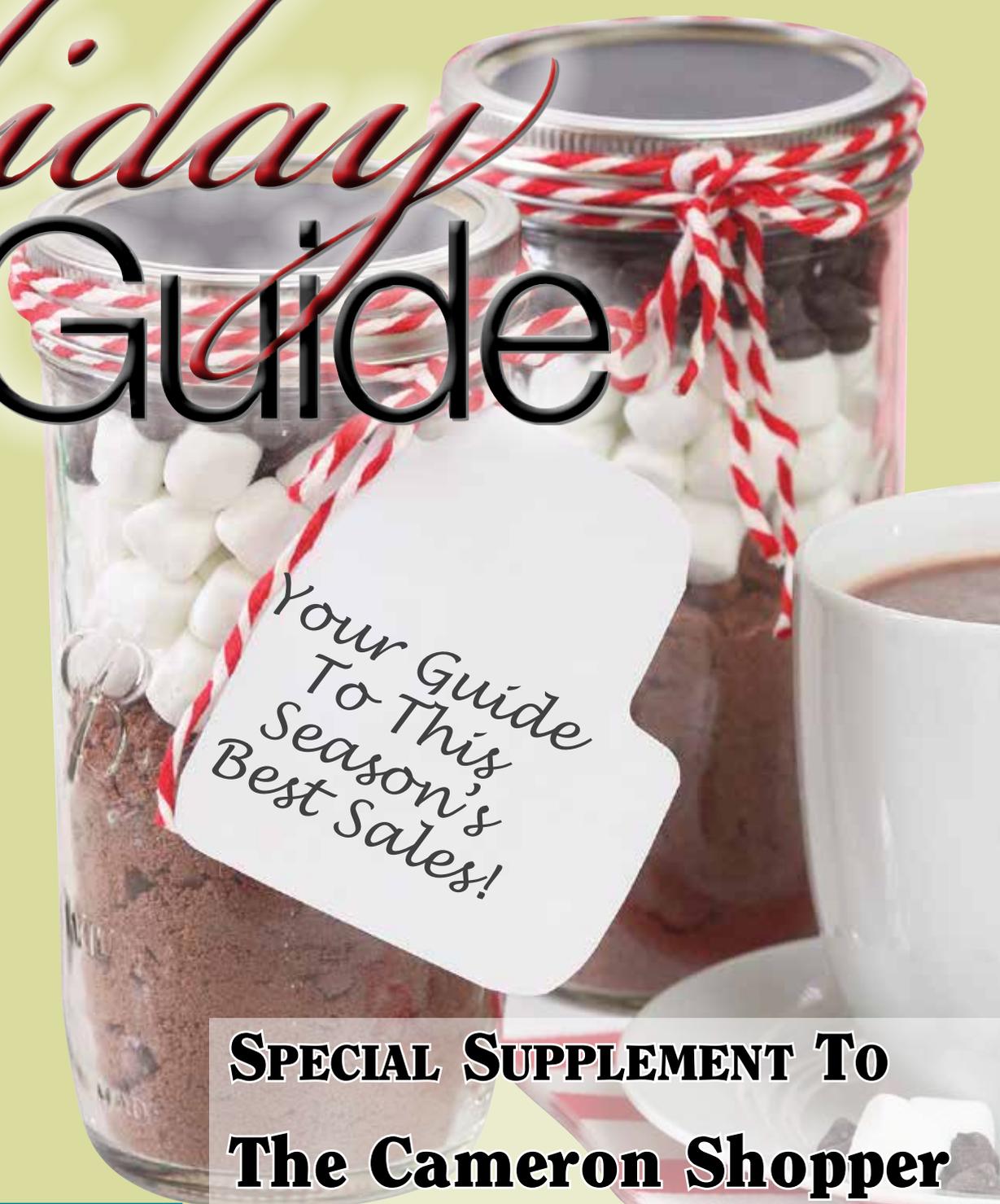


Holiday Gift Guide

- Gifts for 5 types of enthusiast
- Games to liven up your gift exchange
- Christmas without the cooking: how to hang your apron for the holidays
- How to enjoy the holidays without overindulging
- Gifts for the people who serve you all year long
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- 5 tips for maintaining kids' routines during the holidays
- Christmas markets: holiday shopping at its best!
- Hot spiced cider
- Coconut-cranberry blondies
- 5 tips for maintaining kids' routines during the holidays
- Christmas markets: holiday shopping at its best!



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Gifts for 5 types of enthusiast

Finding the perfect gift isn't always easy, especially when the person you're shopping for is passionate about things you don't know much about. Here are some gift ideas for five types of enthusiast.

1. **COFFEE LOVERS.** An insulated travel mug, beans from a local roaster, an espresso maker, a conical burr grinder, coffee flavored chocolates, double-walled coffee glasses, travel coffee press or coffee-scented candles.
2. **YARN CRAFTERS.** Books or magazines with knitting and crocheting patterns, a row counter, a yarn bowl, a set of needles or hooks, a project bag, a tool case, personalized stitch markers, high quality yarn or a gift certificate to a yarn store.
3. **ASPIRING WRITERS.** A mechanical keyboard, a laptop tray, noise-cancelling headphones, a fountain pen, personalized notebooks, a Bluetooth keyboard for their tablet, an external hard drive, books about writing or a printer.
4. **TABLETOP GAMERS.** A dice bag, a wooden card holder, plastic card protectors, a board game bag, custom game organizers, a play mat, a component organizer, new dice, a custom character figurine or an expansion pack for their favorite game.
5. **ENVIRONMENTALISTS.** Reusable stainless steel or silicone straws, reusable produce bags, silicone snack and sandwich bags, a reusable water bottle, jewelry made from recycled materials, beeswax food wraps for leftovers or a vegan cookbook.



Buying a gift that speaks to your loved one's interests will show them that you care.

Games to liven up your gift exchange

Are you tired of the same old holiday gift exchange? If so, here are some fun games to enliven this year's gift giving.

- **DICE.** Every number on the dice comes with an instruction (pass to the left or steal a gift). Take turns rolling the dice until everyone has a present.
- **HOT POTATO.** This childhood favorite is just as fun to play as an adult. Turn on a holiday song and pass a present from person to person until the music stops. The person left holding the gift is out of the game but keeps the gift.
- **PERSONAL TRIVIA.** Everyone writes a little-known fact about themselves on the gift they contributed. The others must guess who the information is about in

order to win the right to open the present.

- **CARDS.** Cut some regular playing cards in half and distribute card halves to all participants. Draw the other card halves from a bowl or hat to determine who gets to choose or steal a gift next.
- **STORY.** Rewrite a well-known Christmas story to include the words right, left and across numerous times. To start the game, everyone holds the gift they brought as someone reads the story aloud. Every time an instruction word is said, the presents get passed in that direction.

To make sure that everyone receives a gift they'll enjoy, be sure to decide on a budget and theme beforehand.



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Christmas without the cooking: how to hang your apron for the holidays

If the thought of creating a holiday spread from scratch doesn't excite you, then give yourself the gift of not cooking this year. Here's where you can get meals made by someone else.

RESTAURANTS

There are plenty of eateries that remain open over the holidays. Book a table at one nearby for your holiday feast. Or better yet, order some takeout and eat in the comfort of your own home.

CATERERS

If you're hosting a party, consider hiring a caterer. Not only will this professional work with you to come up with the perfect menu, but they'll also do all the work.

GROCERS

Many businesses, including grocery stores, butcher shops and local restaurants, offer pre-made meals that are perfect for

nights you want to eat in.

PERSONAL CHEFS

For a real treat, hire a personal chef to come to your home and create an intimate meal for you and your loved ones. It's the perfect no-cook solution for a small gathering with friends or even a New Year's Eve party.

This year, simplify your holiday season by letting someone else do the cooking. Don't be surprised if you love this hands-off approach to the holidays so much that you do it again next Christmas.



How to enjoy the holidays without overindulging

Food plays an integral part in many holiday celebrations. But when you have many social obligations in a short period of time, it can feel like all you're doing is eating. Here's how to enjoy the season's festivities without overindulging.

DON'T SKIP MEALS

Eat regular meals throughout the holidays as this will make you less likely to overindulge at parties.

For breakfast, make some eggs or avocado on toast. These foods are full of protein and healthy fats that will keep you going all day.

At lunch, try a salad topped with a healthy protein like salmon, grilled chicken or legumes.

Have a light snack before heading out to the party to make sure you don't arrive hungry. Focus on protein-rich foods like nuts or plain yogurt with fruit.

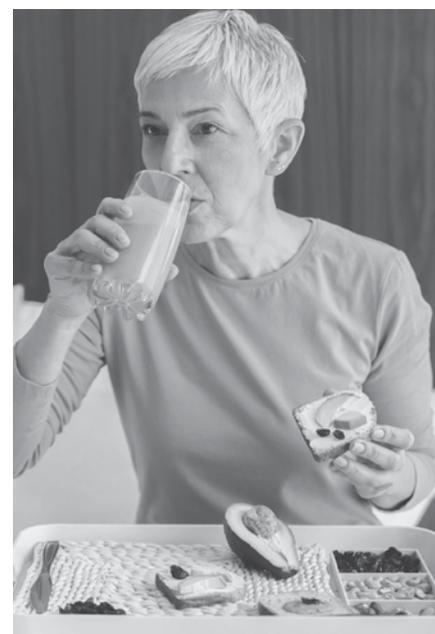
STAY HYDRATED

Be sure to drink plenty of water throughout the day and in between consuming alcoholic drinks. This will help you avoid becoming dehydrated and will also allow you to feel more satiated and therefore make you less likely to overeat.

GET IN A WORKOUT

On the day of the party, try to get in a workout. Not only does regular exercise help you metabolize your food quicker, but you'll also crave healthier foods, making it easier to pass on heavier fare.

Making sure you take care of yourself over the holidays allows you to treat yourself without overindulging. You'll enjoy spending time with loved ones and set the right precedent for the new year.



Unwrap the Magic

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Christmas in Cameron

November 30, 2019

Schedule of Events...

- 3 p.m. Christmas Parade
- 4-8 p.m. Horse drawn carriage rides through downtown (docking station at Northwest corner of McCorkle Park)
- 6 p.m. Christmas selections from Cameron High School Choir, Directed by Jeremy Hess
- 6:15 p.m. Drawing to light up the park [Children 10 and under may get a raffle ticket by bringing a canned good donation for the Food Pantry]
- 6:30 Light up the Park
- Mayor reads "The Night Before Christmas. Entrance of Santa and Mrs. Claus Take Photos with Santa
- Free Hot Chocolate and more stationed in the park

Staging and lineup will be on Fourth Street, west of Cherry Street. The parade will proceed from Fourth and Cherry, east to Walnut, south to Third Street, west on Third Street, and ending at Pine Street.

Entrants must be lined up by 2:30 to be judged.

Awards for best in each category will be given immediately following the parade in the Pavillion.

One entry form per entrant. Entry form must be submitted to Tim Wymes at City Hall, 205 N Main St., Cameron by November 27 to be judged.

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Gifts for the people who serve you all year long

The holidays are the perfect time to say thank you to the hairdressers, bus drivers, babysitters, baristas and many others who regularly serve you. If you're wondering what to get them, here are some ideas.



- Pretty hand soaps
- Holiday dish cloths
- Scented candles
- A scarf or shawl
- A soft blanket

- A tote bag
- Premium coffee or tea
- A to-go mug
- A bottle of wine
- A box of chocolates

If you know a little about their tastes, you can also consider something more personal like a book you think they might enjoy, a sweater or a decorative item for their home or workspace.

The point of buying gifts for the people who serve you is to thank them for the positive difference they make in your life all year long. Don't forget to include a nice card with a handwritten message expressing your appreciation.

Gifts teachers will love

Christmas is the perfect time of year to extend your thanks to your children's teachers. Instead of giving them another "world's best teacher" mug, choose one of the following gifts that's sure to please.

- Personalized pencils with their name printed right on them
- A tote bag that's roomy enough to carry all their work to and from school
- A personal laminator to neatly display student's work (don't forget extra laminating sheets)
- A gift card to a local coffee shop to keep them caffeinated while they're marking homework
- A membership to a local museum to inspire their lesson plans
- A scarf to keep them warm
- A gift basket filled with supplies like dry-erase

markers, red correcting pencils, glue sticks, grade-appropriate books and even classroom decor

- A nice bottle of wine to help them relax over the vacation
- A box of artisanal chocolates, because everyone deserves a treat

In addition, few teachers can resist handmade gifts, so anything your kids make is sure to be appreciated. No matter what you choose, don't forget to have your child make a card that expresses thanks to the teacher for everything they do.



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How to choose a host or hostess gift

If you get invited to someone's home over the holidays, it's best not to arrive empty handed. However, it can be hard to know what to bring, especially if the host or hostess is a relatively new friend or acquaintance.

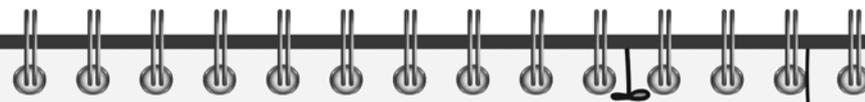
Fortunately, there are number of things — wine, chocolate, coffee, tea, fancy hand soap and unscented candles, for example — that make great gifts when you don't know the recipient very well.

However, if you do know them, you could offer your host or hostess something that you think they'll appreciate. If they love to cook, for instance, a cookbook or an inexpensive kitchen gadget would be ideal.



Whatever you bring, make sure it's not something that makes your host or hostess work. For example, if you choose to bring a bouquet of flowers, arrange them in a vase before arriving so they don't have to.

Remember, this gift is meant for the hosts to enjoy after the guests have gone home. They're not obliged to share it with you or anyone else, so don't expect them to.



Christmas checklist

To avoid holiday mayhem, you need to remain organized in the days and weeks leading up to the main event. Here's a checklist that will help you keep track of everything that needs to be done before Christmas.

ENTERTAINING

- Choose a theme for your party if you're having one
- Make reservations (caterer, event space, restaurant, cleaning crew, Santa Claus)
- Send out invitations
- Decide on a menu (don't forget to consider your guests' allergies and dietary restrictions)
- Make separate grocery lists for what can be purchased weeks in advance and what must be bought in the days before
- Start cooking (make dishes in advance and freeze them)
- Make a seating plan and choose the table decorations
- Obtain any extra dishes, napkins or chairs you need
- Choose the music and plan party games
- Clean the house from top to bottom
- Prepare a room for overnight guests
- Make sure your driveway and walkway are clear



- Make note of what to buy for each person on your list
- Write Christmas cards and send them out early to ensure they arrive before the holiday
- Help your kids write their letters to Santa and send them off
- Buy wrapping paper, ribbons and bows
- Wrap gifts as you buy them to avoid doing it all at once, and hide them until the big day

DECORATING THE HOUSE

- Go through your decorations and throw out and replace anything that's broken
- Hang outdoor decorations before the cold weather arrives
- Decorate the inside of your house
- Don't set up your natural Christmas tree until a week or two before the day (or it will be dry by the time Santa arrives)



GETTING YOURSELF READY

- Make your appointments early (hair, esthetics, makeup, nails) to be sure you get the time slot you need
- Shop for your party clothes and visit the tailor if adjustments are needed

Keep this checklist handy to make sure you don't forget anything this season.



BUYING GIFTS

- Organize a gift exchange
- Start shopping early to avoid crowds



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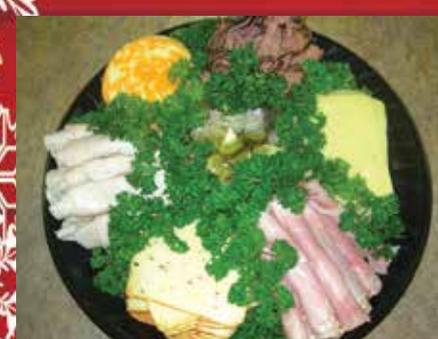
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3 games to play at the office holiday party

Are you looking for a way energize your holiday office party? If so, here are three fun games that virtually anyone can enjoy.

1. **OFFICE TRIVIA.** Before the day of the event, send a questionnaire to all employees asking them about their interests, pet peeves and preferred foods, books, movies and travel destinations. Collect the answers and use them to create an office trivia game.

2. **GUESS THE WORD.** Write words on individual strips of paper and then fold and place them in bowls.

Each team chooses a player who will have to guess the word based on clues from their teammates.

3. **GIFT WRAP CHALLENGE.** Put players in teams of two. Tie one person's right hand to the other's left and have them attempt to wrap a gift with their free hands. The pair that does the nicest job wins.

If you play your office games in teams, assemble the groups randomly. A fun way to do this is to cut up old Christmas cards and hand out the pieces. Teams can then be formed by those who have pieces from the same card.



Stairway to Christmas: how to decorate stairs for the holidays

The stairway in your house is the perfect place to show off your Christmas spirit. Here's how to dress up this oft overlooked part of your home.

DECORATE THE HANDRAIL

Wrap the handrail with evergreen garlands and decorate them with either berries, pinecones and burlap ribbons for a rustic look, or with Christmas baubles for a more whimsical take. Wrap a string of white or colored lights around the garlands to add some sparkle.

Alternatively, you can decorate the handrails with ribbons instead of greenery. Depending on the look you want, you can choose to use either one type of ribbon or a mix of different kinds in an assortment of colors and sizes.

DECORATE THE STAIRS

If they're wide enough, put decorations directly on the stairs. Pillar candles (battery-operated ones are safest), wooden decorations and festive figurines can help create the holiday ambience you're after.

DECORATE THE WALLS AND CEILING

Ask the kids to make paper snowflakes and use them to decorate the wall along the stairway. You can also display holiday photos from Christmases past. As a final touch, consider suspending large ornaments from the ceiling. Make sure to hang them high enough so that no one bumps their head.

If you follow these tips, your stairway esthetic is sure to please visitors and earn their praise all season long.



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10 gifts outdoorsy types will love

Are you looking for a gift for the outdoor enthusiast in your life? If so, here are some ideas.

FOR THEIR NEXT ADVENTURE

1. A portable water filtration bottle or straw
2. Binoculars
3. A kit to turn the flashlight on their phone into a lamp
4. A military grade compass
5. A down jacket or rain coat
6. A wireless charger for their electronics — one that's solar powered is ideal
7. A portable camping stove and mess kit

TO INSPIRE THEM

8. A wilderness survival book
9. Novels and memoirs about outdoor adventures
10. A bird feeder to bring wildlife to their backyard

To really spoil your outdoor enthusiast, consider buying them a pass that will grant them access to the country's national parks for a year. No doubt, they'll love exploring the American wilderness.



5 'WILD' BOOKS FOR WILDERNESS BUFFS

1. *Into the Wild* By Jon Krakauer
2. *Wild: From Lost to Found on The Pacific Crest Trail* By Cheryl Strayed
3. *The Call of the Wild* By Jack London
4. *One Man's Wilderness: An Alaskan Odyssey* By Sam Keith
5. *Lost on the Wild: Danger and Survival in the North Woods* By Cary J. Griffith

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Offline shopping: 7 reasons to do your holiday shopping in person



Are you tired of handing over your hard-earned dollars to online retailers? If so, offline shopping is a trend that's becoming increasingly popular. The principle? Focus on in-person shopping experiences rather than anonymous exchanges on the internet. Here are seven great reasons to do all your holiday shopping offline.

1. TO SUPPORT YOUR COMMUNITY

Making purchases from your local merchants at this busy time of year is a concrete way of giving back to your community. Your money goes directly into your neighbors' hands and helps to create — and keep! — jobs in your



region. In contrast, ordering a gift online from the other side of the world doesn't help the people closest to home.

2. TO CONNECT WITH PEOPLE

When you visit the businesses in your region, you get to interact directly with local merchants. Of course, shopping online (in your pajamas?) has its advantages but talking to salespeople and fellow shoppers is even better.

3. TO STIMULATE THE LOCAL ECONOMY

The more people support local retailers, the longer their businesses can continue to thrive and serve the community, thereby creating a strong local economy. What's more, dynamic neighborhoods are much more pleasant to live in than those whose shops have been forced to close and are accumulating dust, dirt and graffiti.

4. TO STRENGTHEN YOUR SENSE OF COMMUNITY

Visiting businesses in your neighborhood will increase your ties to the region. When you explore the area around you, you'll rub elbows with your neighbors and discover amazing goods and services a stone's throw from your home.

5. TO BENEFIT FROM EXCELLENT SERVICE

Returns and exchanges are a breeze when the product you've purchased comes from a nearby store. And local merchants know they need your business to survive, so they'll do everything they can to ensure you're happy. Conversely, returning and exchanging items bought online is sometimes difficult.

6. TO ENJOY A VARIETY OF PRODUCTS

Are you familiar with all of the goods and services available in your region? Probably not. In fact, there are likely more businesses in your area than you realize! Consider spending a day visiting them. You'll find that in just a few hours, you've completed all your holiday shopping and are still close to home.

7. TO BE KIND TO THE ENVIRONMENT

Shopping locally not only eliminates the cost of shipping, but also tends to reduce the distance products travel before reaching you. In addition, you can avoid the need for extra packaging materials when you shop in person, especially if you bring your own tote bags.

This year, go ahead and get your holiday gifts, goodies and decorations a few minutes from home — you have nothing to lose and everything to gain.

Hot spiced cider



This is the perfect hot drink to serve on chilly winter evenings spent at home. Make a batch any time you want to enjoy an intimate gathering with loved ones or a well-deserved treat.

INGREDIENTS

- 2 ounces spiced rum
- 1-1/2 cups flat, hard apple cider
- 2 tablespoons honey
- 2 cinnamon sticks
- 2 pods of whole star anise
- Juice of half a lemon

Start to finish:
10 minutes
Servings: 2

DIRECTIONS

1. In a small saucepan, combine all the ingredients and bring them to a gentle simmer over low heat. Allow to simmer for 2 to 3 minutes.
2. Pour the beverage into two toddy glasses, making sure to put a cinnamon stick and a star anise pod in each cup.

For a non-alcoholic alternative, omit the rum and use non-alcoholic cider.

Coconut-cranberry blondies

Looking for an alternative to brownies? These festive blondies are the perfect substitute.

Start to finish: 3 hours (25 minutes active) Servings: 12

INGREDIENTS

Blondie

- 1 cup all-purpose flour
- 3/4 cup sweetened, shredded coconut
- 3/4 cup dried cranberries
- 1/2 teaspoon baking powder
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1 cup white chocolate chips
- 1/3 cup butter
- 1 egg
- 1/2 cup brown sugar
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract

Sauce

- 1 cup white chocolate chips
- 1 or 2 tablespoons milk

DIRECTIONS

1. Preheat the oven to 350 °F
2. Cover the bottom of an 8-inch square baking dish with parchment paper, letting the edges hang over the side.
3. In a bowl, combine the flour, coconut, cranberries, baking powder and salt.
4. In another bowl (this one should be microwave safe) place the white chocolate chips and butter and melt them in the microwave for about 30 seconds.
5. In the bowl of an electric mixer, beat



the egg, brown sugar and vanilla on medium speed until the mixture has doubled in volume (about 3 minutes).

6. Add the white chocolate and butter mixture to the egg mixture and mix on slow speed. Slowly incorporate the dry ingredients until just combined.
7. Pour the batter into the baking dish and bake for 30 minutes or until a toothpick inserted in the middle comes out dry.
8. Let cool for about two hours.
9. To make the sauce, melt the white chocolate chips in the microwave (about 30 seconds) with 1 tablespoon of milk. If it's too thick, add another tablespoon of milk once the chocolate is melted.
10. Cut the blondies into squares or rectangles and serve with the sauce.

5 tips for maintaining kids' routines during the holidays

Over the holiday season, it's all too easy for your children's routine to get thrown off track. Here are five tips to help you stick to a schedule and hopefully keep meltdowns to a minimum.



1. PRIORITIZE SLEEP.

Tired kids tend to get cranky, hyper and easily flustered. While a late night or two are almost inevitable at this time of year, overall, it's best to maintain their regular sleep schedule.

2. EAT HEALTHY. Make sure the entire family gets a healthy breakfast and lunch every day. Fill the kids up on fruits, vegetables and other healthy snacks before heading to a party. This way, they'll have less room to gorge on cookies, cakes and other treats.

3. ENTERTAIN AT HOME — OR DON'T. Some parents find it easier to host during the holidays, while others can't imagine planning a party. Don't be shy to let your loved ones

know what works for your family.

4. GET EXERCISE. Make sure your kids remain active over the holidays, and that they have sufficient time to run around. Consider visiting an indoor play park or indulging in some outdoor fun.

5. MAKE TIME FOR PLAY. Avoid filling every free moment with a planned activity. Set aside time for playing at home and relaxing.

While sticking to a routine is beneficial for kids, doing so isn't always feasible. Remember to be flexible and not worry too much if things don't go as planned.

Christmas markets: holiday shopping at its best!

Are you ready to do your holiday shopping? Would you enjoy doing it while sipping on mulled wine and listening to carolers croon? If so, head to a nearby Christmas market and take in the best the holiday season has to offer.

You'll find unique gifts for your loved ones made by local artisans and artists. If you're on the lookout for one-of-a-kind jewelry, clothes, works of art or anything else, a Christmas market is the place to go. You can also pick up delicious goods to serve at your next party courtesy of the area's butchers, cheese makers, bakers and more.

However, shopping isn't the only thing to do at your local Christmas market. There's a slew of activities that the whole family will love. Musicians and carolers will undoubtedly be there to entertain you and you can make a craft to take home with you. The little ones may even get to meet Santa himself.

There's no better way to get into the holiday spirit than by visiting a Christmas market, so head to one close to home.



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