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The Malone Telegram
November 2025



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Why you should shop local for the holidays

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Various components come together to make the holiday season a festive time of year. There is a lot to get done in a short amount of time during the holiday season, and part of that includes shopping for all of the family members and friends on your shopping list. Shopping can be a complicated process that involves identifying which stores will be the best places to shop. Local retailers make the perfect place to shop for holiday items. According to the American Express Business Economic Impact Study, more than two-thirds of every dollar spent with a local business stays in the community. Indeed, shopping local benefits consumer and community alike.

The following are some of the many perks to shopping locally throughout the holiday season.

¥ **Personalized attention:** Small businesses are known for their personalized customer service and owners and staff are often lauded for taking the



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time to interact and learn about their customers, a dynamic that is impossible at larger retailers.

¥ **Meet and interact with people:** Shopping in-person at local stores, you'll see faces from

your community and become better known in the local area.

¥ **Shorter lines:** Local stores are bound to have smaller crowds and thus shorter lines. That translates to less stress and

hassle when it comes to getting in and out with holiday gifts.

¥ **Smaller carbon footprint:** Pollution, traffic congestion, habitat loss, and resource depletion may not occur on the

same levels when shopping locally compared to patronizing big box stores. That's because local retailers tend to create or source their products locally, whereas many big box stores secure their goods overseas.

¥ **Easier parking:** This goes hand-in-hand with smaller crowds, as shopping locally does not typically require driving up and down endless aisles at malls or standalone retail stores in an effort to find a parking spot. Local retailers in town may have on-street parking or closed lots that are convenient to shoppers.

¥ **Small batch shopping experience:** Consumers can secure items in small businesses that are not carbon copies of those found across the country at major retail chains. When seeking a unique, thoughtful gift, shopping locally is the way to go.

Shopping locally this holiday season provides an array of benefits to consumers, and helps to solidify a strong Main Street in communities.

Christmas with Almanzo

Experience old time holiday cheer at the annual Christmas With Almanzo event at the Almanzo Wilder Homestead. Enjoy Farmer Boy Christmas chapter readings, carol singing, mulled cider and cookies in the Wilder home. In the Visitor Center, children can have fun with holiday crafts and the gift shop will be open.

Admission is free. Chapter readings will take place at 11:15am, 12:00pm, 12:45pm, 1:30pm, and 2:15pm. The Wilder Hmestead is located at 177 Stacy Road in Burke, NY. More information is at almanzowilderfarm.com



11th Annual David Sauther Memorial Winter Wonderland Craft & Vendor Show

Saturday, December 13th 2025

9:00 am ~ 3:00 pm

Davis Elementary School

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Holiday Auction

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Winter Wonderland Craft Fair and Vendor Show

Mark your calendars for December 13, 2025 for the 11th Annual David Sauther Memorial Winter Wonderland Craft & Vendor Show Fund-raiser to benefit The Emmaus Soup Kitchen of Malone. It will be held at Davis Elementary School, 187 Webster St. Malone from 9:00-3:00. This holiday event features crafters, artisans, direct sales vendors and local businesses with over one hundred participants, plus a bake sale , memorial 50-50 auction, non-perishable food drive, face painting, and a visit from Santa. Lunch will be available.

All money raised supports the Soup Kitchen which has been in existence since 1992, serving patrons from across the North Country. The Soup Kitchen does not receive any

local, state or federal funding and, according to organizers, donations have gone down since the Covid pandemic, making

this fundraiser crucial to keeping the doors open in 2026. Event planner, Aimee Marshall notes, "Our participants support this wonderful cause by coming from as far as away as Vermont, plus Essex and Lewis counties. We even have a talented Potter from Albany! Pay it forward and help an organization in need by coming out and enjoying the day with all there is to see and do! It is a very well advertised show and very well attended!" Vendors can contact Marshall at soupkitchencraftshow@aol.com or by phone at 518-521-7276.



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Budget-friendly holiday shopping tips

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Holiday shopping and entertaining involve a whirlwind of activity to round out the end of the year. The holiday season also tends to be an expensive time of year. According to Capital One Shopping, the average spending for holiday travel, gifts and entertainment expenses is \$1,638.

The National Retail Federation says American consumers spend an average of \$997.73 on gifts and other holiday items each Christmas. For some people, adding an additional \$1,000 to their November or December budgets can be challenging, and many individuals seek budget-friendly solutions for their holiday celebrations. The following guidelines can help corral spending this year. Set a budget. It's impossible to keep a budget if one is never established in the first place. Determine how much you can comfortably spend on gifts, travel and entertaining, as well as any other holiday expenses. Once the number is calculated, divvy up spending accordingly.

PLAN YOUR LIST

Make a list of everyone



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you need to purchase gifts for, along with gift ideas and estimated costs. Set a dollar amount for each individual, particularly if you will not be spending the same amount on each person. Having numbers in black and white, and comparing them to what you have allocated for gifts, will enable you to see whether you are

overspending or on budget.

SHOP EARLY

Begin holiday shopping as early as possible, even months before the holidays arrive. Such an approach enables you to take advantage of sales as they come up. Also, you will not fall victim to impulse buys or last-minute purchases

because you are under a time crunch.

Track spending

Utilize whatever method works for you to keep apprised of spending. It may be jotting down numbers on a piece of paper or using a budgeting app on a smartphone. Having a clear idea of what you have spent and any dollars remain-

ing will help you keep your overall spending in line with your budgeted amount.

GET COUPONS

Signing up for stores' loyalty programs can enable you to receive members-only coupons or digital codes to your phone or email. Compare the discounted final price with other stores' offers to make sure that you are getting the best deals. Browser extensions also can search automatically for coupons and apply them to the checkout when online shopping.

USE CREDIT CARDS WISELY

Credit cards come with various perks, many of which are points or cash back accumulated with each purchase. Utilize a card that works best for your needs, whether it's to get airline miles or score extra spending money for a particular retailer. Only charge what you can pay in full when the bill arrives; otherwise, the benefits may be negated by high interest rates.

Holiday spending can derail financial plans for those who do not establish a firm budget and commit to spending wisely towards the end of the year.

Let charitable gifts spread joy and benefit more than just recipients

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Charitable giving increases significantly in the months surrounding the holidays.

Approximately one-third of annual giving happens in December, and 10 percent of all giving occurs in the last three days of the year, according to Charities Aid Foundation America.

The surge in donations typically occurs with people's desire to spread holiday cheer, enjoy tax advantages and help people in the community, says Non-profit Source. Some people are compelled to donate in the name of another person. Here are some ideas for charitable holiday gifts that benefit many.

DONATE IN SOMEONE'S NAME

To honor a loved one who may be living or deceased, or who fought an illness and won, you can donate to a nonprofit in the name of that loved one.

Many charities offer printable or physical cards to let the recipient know a donation has been made in his or her name.

GIVING BACK THROUGH GIFTS

Certain products purchased feature proceeds that go toward a charitable cause. For example, every purchase of TOMS shoes helps fund mental health access and community development, while the body care products from Thistle Farms are made



See CHARITY 78

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Tips for gifting coworkers

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The holiday season finds people making shopping lists that include gifts for all of the special people in their lives. Such lists also feature the people with whom individuals may spend the majority of their time each day: coworkers. Gifting coworkers can strengthen professional relationships, build camaraderie and show appreciation while on the job. A well-chosen gift can leave a lasting impression, whether it's given for a birthday, promotion or the holiday season.

According to a 2019 survey from Office Depot, 70 percent of employees said their workplace had a holiday gift-giving tradition like Secret Santa or White Elephant. It is important to balance thoughtfulness with professional decorum

when selecting gifts. These guidelines can help anyone navigate workplace giving.

¥ Consider company culture. One of the first aspects of gift giving among coworkers is understanding the culture of the company. In some businesses, gift exchanges are commonplace and encouraged during team celebrations or the holiday season. In others, they may be rare or even frowned upon. It is always a good idea to check with human resources before choosing a gift, particularly for those who are new to the company.

¥ Avoid personal gifts. When selecting gifts, consider thoughtful items that are not too personal. These can include desk organizers, coffee mugs, plants, notebooks, photo frames, or even gift cards to nearby restaurants.

¥ Be mindful of food and beverages. When choosing to give a gift of food, be aware of any dietary restrictions and allergies the gift recipients may have. Also, while a gift of wine or another bottle of alcohol may seem fitting, one never knows if a person is abstaining from drinking, so it's best to avoid such gifts in the work-

place.

¥ Consider personalized gifts for close colleagues. Giving personalized gifts to close coworkers can be a great way to show appreciation when one knows the recipient well enough. For example, if he or she can't survive without coffee each morning, then a gift of an engraved insulated cof-

fee tumbler can be perfect. If the coworker mentions being part of a book club, a specialized bookmark or gift card to a bookstore will be fitting.

¥ Be careful with humor. When gifting a funny present, avoid anything that can be misinterpreted or considered

See COWORKERS T13

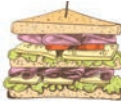


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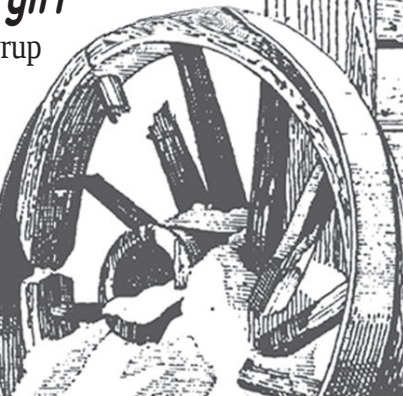


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Experiential gifts for everyone on your list

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Gift exchanges are a hallmark of the holiday season. Individuals spend weeks making lists and shopping for items they believe recipients will appreciate.

However, this holiday season shoppers may want to change up their gift-buying strategy to focus less on material offerings and more on experiences.

A recent survey from Get Your Guide found 92 percent of Americans prefer to receive an experience over a physical gift during the

holiday season. In addition, Deloitte's 2024 survey of more than 4,000 consumers in the United States found that spending on experiences during the holidays is expected to rise by 16 percent year-over-year, reaching an average of \$735.

Experiential gifts place value on memories and emotional connections rather than objects.

As people increasingly are drawn to these special moments, here's a look at expe-

See GIFTST12



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Doctors' Tips to Stay Healthy and Safe This Holiday Season

StatePoint

The holiday season is a joyous time to reconnect with family and friends, but it can also throw your wellness routines out of alignment. Doctors advise prioritizing healthy choices now so you can start 2026 feeling your best.

"Amid the hustle and bustle of the holidays, it's easy to lose sight of our well-being, over-indulge in food and drink, and feel stressed. A little awareness and a few healthy habits can go a long way in helping you and loved ones enjoy the season in good health," says Dr. Bobby Mukkamala, president of the American Medical Association (AMA).

For a healthy and happy holiday season, the AMA recommends the following tips:

1. Watch what you eat. Pay attention to labels and avoid ultra-processed foods, especially those high in added sodium, saturated fats and sugar. Consider having a healthy snack before the big meal or offer to bring a healthier dish for the holiday spread. Drink water instead of sugar-sweetened beverages, and eat nutritious, whole foods such as fresh fruits and vegetables alongside richer holiday dishes.

2. Prioritize your mental health. Factors such as holiday spending and navigating



StatePoint

time with extended family can bring on extra seasonal stress. Get sufficient sleep and exercise, and don't hesitate to talk to a mental health professional when you need help managing stress.

3. Prioritize physical activity during this busy time of year. A good rule of thumb for adults is at least 150 minutes of moderate-intensity or 75 minutes of vigorous-intensity activity each week. Brisk walks, bike rides, hikes and family-friendly sports like basketball and touch football can provide easy, fun ways to get off the couch and elevate your heart

rate. If you're traveling, don't forget to pack your sneakers!

4. Be prepared when traveling. Whether you're flying or taking a road trip, you might be tempted to grab convenient yet unhealthy food for the journey. Consider packing your own snacks, such as fresh fruits and vegetables or small portions of dried fruits and nuts. When flying, pack your medication in your carry-on bag instead of your checked luggage so it's easily accessible. Keeping medication handy will help you avoid missing a dose on busy travel days, especially amid flight de-

lays. Stay hydrated and drink plenty of water during your flight as air travel can cause dehydration. And keep your body moving in-flight to avoid blood clots.

5. Make smart choices and plan ahead if you're driving. In December 2023 alone, 1,038 people died in alcohol impaired-driving crashes in the United States. If you plan to drink, always arrange for a sober driver or alternative transportation. And if you are the designated driver, commit to 100% sobriety. Also make sure to get plenty of sleep before your road trip as drowsy

driving is responsible for an estimated 100,000 car crashes each year nationwide.

6. Vaccination remains the best protection against several serious respiratory viruses circulating this fall and winter, particularly as people are spending more time indoors and gathering for the holidays. The AMA encourages you to speak with your physician or other health care professional to determine which vaccines are best for you. The AMA offers infographics to help patients and physicians cut through vaccine confusion and foster open, honest conversations with each other. The infographics can be found at <https://ama-assn.org>.

7. Start New Year's resolutions early. Speak with your doctor or other health care professional about quitting tobacco, nicotine and e-cigarettes, and declare your home and car smoke-free to protect loved ones from secondhand smoke exposure.

"While you're celebrating this holiday season and reconnecting with family and friends, remember to take care of your health. Eating well, staying active, and taking precautions to prevent the spread of respiratory viruses can help you enjoy the season and start the new year strong," says Dr. Mukkamala.

Charity

From T4

by women survivors of trafficking, prostitution and addiction. Other products may help feed the hungry or support cancer patients.

SUPPORTING ANIMALS

A symbolic animal adoption can support conservation efforts around the world. Making a donation to the World Wildlife Fund in someone's name, for ex-

ample, enables you to get a plushie, certificate and information on the animal the contribution will be helping.

FAIR TRADE GIFTS

Making a purchase of fair trade items means you're often buying handmade and ethically sourced goods. These gifts support artisans in developing countries and help fund community projects. Gift recipients can feel pride in ownership of an item that was designed and purchased with the greater good in mind. Charity gift

cardsCharitable gift cards, like those available from TisBest Charity and CharityChoice, let the gift recipient choose which nonprofit will receive the funds.

SUPPORT SPECIAL BUSINESSES

Offer gift cards or take people to dine or shop at businesses that support those with special needs. For example, No Limits Cafe in New Jersey is a full-service restaurant that trains and employs adults with intellectual disabilities. Dining there will help to continue

to support these important efforts to give every employee a sense of pride and purpose. Charitable gifts make

a recipient feel special and can make many additional people feel good as well.



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Thoughtful gifts for seniors

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Gifts from friends and loved ones can make people feel cherished and valued. When these people are the older adults in one's life, such as parents or grandparents, gifts take on additional meaning because they can warm the hearts of very special people. Finding unique gifts for seniors can be challenging because these individuals have been receiving gifts for many years, and many may already have everything they need. Inspiration is everything when shopping for the ideal gifts for the older adults in one's life, and the following are some categories that can serve as a springboard for what to get seniors this holiday season.

COMFORT AND MOBILITY

Although people like to say, 'age is just a number,' getting older may come with a few aches and pains and even some limitations. Gifts like seat cushions that correct posture or easy on/off sock helpers can be helpful. Cloud foam slippers or even a grab bar that attaches into the hood of the car door can be great gifts.



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FITNESS AND FUN

Gifts that cater to interests, well-being and more can be ideal. Active seniors may appreciate a fitness tracker or exercise equipment (yoga mat, light dumbbells, resistance bands) to

facilitate fitness goals. Storage solutions for hobbies and craft items also can be fitting. See-through containers to store paints or beads or an organizer for fishing tackle can make seniors' hobbies even more enjoy-

able. A roll-up puzzle mat is great for puzzle enthusiasts to protect their work until completion.

FAMILY GIFTS

Seniors also may appreciate gifts that touch the heart. A custom recipe cut-

ting board that features a treasured family recipe may become a cherished item. A customized photo calendar that features family members' birthdays and other key events also is thoughtful. A photo jewelry locket makes a nice gift for a special senior woman.

TRAVEL GIFTS

Seniors typically have more time to devote to travel than younger adults, and gifts that cater to their wanderlust are a perfect fit. Digital GPS-based devices that connect to keys or luggage can help prevent lost items while traveling. Bright luggage that won't get mixed up at the baggage carousel or ergonomic neck pillows that facilitate napping on a flight also can be appreciated. Those who know destinations the seniors in their lives may want to visit can purchase plane or cruise tickets as a generous gift for someone special.

Various categories can provide ample inspiration when shopping for gifts for seniors this holiday season.

Thinking outside-the-box for kids' gifts

Metro

Children may look forward to the holiday season more than most people. The holiday season is an opportunity for kids to tear open wrapping paper and see the amazing gifts they've received this year. Although toys and games are typical gifts for children, there are many other items that go beyond these staples to make for unique and creative gifts that can spark imagination or boost physical activity. Shoppers can consider these outside-the-box gift ideas when shopping for youngsters this holiday season.

¥ 3D pen or printer: Kids can design and build amazing ob-

jects that encourage them to employ their creative side.

¥ Soap-making kit: These kits spur creative endeavors and ultimately produce useful finished results. Soap or perfume kits are great for hands-on sensory learning. Such gifts also teach some components of science and math by requiring users to follow the recipe.

¥ Robot-building kits: Take building kits one step further with items that can move. Robot kits combine play with engineering basics.

¥ Interactive books: Children can solve puzzles or make choices to move the story along. These types of books may even appeal to the most

hesitant readers.

¥ Bug collection kits: Budding entomologists can observe insects close up, and then release them back into the wild.

¥ Greenhouse, terrarium or bonsai tree kit: Put together the materials needed for kids to grow something special. They can nurture the plant along the way.

¥ Dress up trunk: Fill a box or a trunk with various dress-up costumes and accessories and let children's imaginations run wild. This will spur hours of imaginative play and crazy combinations of clothing.

¥ Geocaching app: Let kids



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find objects hidden all over their neighborhoods in real-world outdoor treasure

hunts. Geocaching utilizes

Unique places for holiday shopping

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Although the holiday season is a relatively brief period, it still can consume months of time in regard to preparation, shopping and hosting. According to a SWNS Digital survey of 2,000 adults in the United States, the average American spends six weeks preparing for the holiday season. Five weeks are devoted to planning presents, meals and other essentials, while an entire week is just for decorating.

Shopping for presents can consume a lot of time, especially for those who aren't

quite sure what to get. Thinking outside of the typical retail box may help with inspiration, and shoppers may encounter smaller crowds and find better deals.

Here are some unique places to shop to grab great holiday gifts.

¥ Pharmacies: While you're picking up your prescription or medicine cabinet essentials, take a spin around the store to see what else might be available. Typically, pharmacies have entire aisles dedicated to seasonal merchandise, so you might be able to find

holiday decorations, gift wrap, candles, pampering items, and even food-related items and gift baskets.

¥ Farmer's market: Farmer's markets pop up in towns on set days of the week. Although plenty of farm-related produce and plants are available, these markets also attract many other small businesses. You can find craftsmen, jewelry makers, niche food sellers, and so much more.

¥ School (or church) bazaar: In an effort to raise funds for the PTA or other organiza-

tions, schools and churches often host holiday fairs and bazaars right before the holidays. Area businesses rent table space and set up booths with an array of different products for sale. This is a great spot to grab interesting finds all under one roof. Plus, you're supporting the local community in the process.

¥ Home improvement retailer: Plenty of people will appreciate practical gifts that they can use in and around the home. A visit to a hardware store or home improvement

retailer offers up aisles of essentials for the do-it-yourselfer. While new shelving for the garage or a set of flashlights may not be the most glamorous gifts, these items can come in handy.

¥ Craft store: Cater to recipients' favorite hobbies by ensuring they'll be flush with plenty of supplies. Craft stores have a bevy of items for every interest imaginable. They're also surprisingly good places to grab deals on picture frames, housewares,

See UNIQUE T14



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Ideal gifts for those who love the outdoors

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Many people find that the great outdoors is the perfect place to spend their days. Activities run the gamut from hunting and fishing to hiking and camping. Plenty of other interests, like birdwatching or mountain biking, also maximize time spent in the outdoors.

According to the 'Outdoor Participation Trends Report' from the Outdoor Industry Association, gateway activities like hiking, camping and fishing each gained more than two million new participants over the last year. There's also been a surge in participation in such activities among seniors and youth, contributing to a more multigenerational outdoors experience. There's also been participation growth among Black and Hispanic Americans, indicating long-term momen-

tum toward equity and inclusion.

When it comes to holiday giving, tapping into the interests of outdoor enthusiasts is a great way to offer gifts that will be used and appreciated. Here are some ideas when making holiday shopping lists.

¥ First aid kit: No matter the activity, having an up-to-date and well-stocked first aid kit can be a lifesaver when spending time in the outdoors. The kit should include items like splints and bandage wraps for immobilizing ankles or limbs in the event of sprains.

¥ Quality wool socks: Nothing can derail an outdoor adventure faster than wet, cold or blistered feet. Wool socks are a must because they are moisture-wicking, warm and comfortable.

See OUTDOORS T14 Metro



Take a bite of these holiday gifts for foodies

Metro

Food-related gifts are popular come the holiday season. According to Packaged Facts' November-December 2023 report on consumer and corporate food gifting in the United States, 50 percent of consumers had purchased food gifts for others over the 12-month report period, and 65 percent had purchased food gifts for themselves. The holidays of Chanukah and Christmas are particularly popular for giving food gifts, with nearly half of all food gifts purchased during these holiday seasons.

For a dedicated foodie in one's life, a gift that tempts the palate can be rewarding. There are delectable gifts of all flavors for the culinary-minded. Explore these possibilities when building holiday shopping lists.

ASPIRING COOK

Preparing meals at home allows cooks to customize flavors to meet their personal needs. Experimenting with recipes and perfecting techniques is high on the list for



Metro

budding chefs. Outfitting their kitchens with durable cooking gear, like a cast-iron skillet, Dutch oven, immersion blender, or kitchen scale can help home cooks immensely. A variety of cookbooks that feature different cuisines can

provide endless inspiration.

TEMPTING SWEETS

Cooks and bakers typically fall into two distinctive camps. Baking is an art that marries creativity with science. If a foodie delights in all things

sweet, focus on gifts that cater to their sugar-laden passions. Baking essentials like a stand mixer, silicone baking mats, cookie cutters, professional-grade pans, and gourmet ingredients are sure to please. Don't underestimate the ap-

peal of beautifully packaged candies, chocolates, cookie bars, or even specialty coffees and liqueurs when gifting food.

GLOBAL PALATE

Some foodies love nothing more than sampling cuisines from all around the world. While you might not be able to offer a ticket to every far-flung region, you certainly can gift flavors from these countries with a well curated gift. Think international snack boxes, a collection of sauces from different areas, unique condiments, or food baskets brimming with items from a particular country or region.

HIGH-CLASS DINING

Some food lovers seemingly have everything. In such cases, a bottle of wine or another favorite liquor as well as a gift certificate to a local four-star restaurant might be the icing on the cake for gifting.

Ultimately the best gifts for foodies are those that recognize their passion for palate-tempting treats.

Gifts

From T7

Experiential gifts for everyone on a holiday shopping list.

PARENTS AND GRANDPARENTS

Experiential gifts for older adults are beneficial because they won't add to the clutter or belongings such individuals have already accumulated throughout the years. Useful ideas include memberships to museums, entry to botanical gardens, culinary tastings, travel vouchers, and subscriptions to wellness classes.

TEENS AND YOUNG ADULTS

Teens are big on experiences over material gifts. According to TD Bank's 2024 survey, Gen Z leads the trend in experience-first gifting, with 68 percent preferring experiences. Examples of good experiential gifts for

this demographic include escape room experiences, concert tickets, adventure sports like indoor rock climbing, subscription services to streaming music, or movie passes.

CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

Families already may be out and about, and parents of young children may appreciate experiences more than additional toys and games that are already filling the house. Annual passes to zoos, museums or aquariums can keep families occupied year-round. Children might like a science or art workshop, while movie night gift cards and tickets to family shows also are viable gift options.

SPECIAL PARTNERS

Experiences can strengthen relationships and intimacy. Possible gift ideas include spa days, cooking classes for two, a weekend travel getaway, or tickets to a theater

Holiday Gift Guide

performance or concert. The Amex Trendex 2024 survey found that 38 percent of people plan to give an experience to a significant other.

Experiential gifts focus on fun, creating memories and reducing waste. Such gifts also tend to be more economical in the long run.

The holidays are often filled with excess, and experiential gifts can put the focus back on joy and spending time together.

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Sunday, December 7, 2025 at 4:00 p.m.

Centenary United Methodist Church
345 West Main Street, Malone, NY



All Proceeds Benefit
Hospice of the North Country

Kids

From T9

GPS coordinates to find hidden containers, called geocaches, placed there by other players.

¥ Various craft supplies: Let kids create any and all of their fun ideas by compiling a kit full of various craft supplies. From beads to wooden letters to paints to paper, there are plenty of items to be made.

¥ Hiking attire: Get kids out into nature by supplying the gear needed to take to the trails.

¥ Adopt a star or planet: Children can adopt and name a star or planet and get a certificate honoring the event.

¥ Time capsule: Let children store favorite items tucked away for safe keeping, where they'll remain until unveiled in the future. Parents and other holiday shoppers can think creatively when it comes time to choose gifts for children.

Coworkers

From T6

offensive. It's best to avoid any political humor. For those unsure about whether a gift might be taken the wrong way, skip that gift and choose another option.

¥ Limit the cost. Some coworkers may be friends, but it is best to keep all gifts inexpensive and of the same value if the plan is to gift everyone in the department. According

to the Office Depot survey, 27 percent of respondents felt meeting a spending limit is very important. The general range of gift prices at the workplace is between \$20 and \$30. One of the best ideas for company gifting is to see who might want to participate in a gift exchange, and then everyone brings a grab bag gift. Then there isn't pressure on any one person, and gifts are distributed randomly.

Gifting between coworkers can be thoughtful and foster stronger relationships if done correctly.



Santa (and his elves) trust natural gas.

Everyone knows that Santa's workshop runs on Christmas magic and the tireless work of his cheerful elves. But here's a little secret the reindeer don't talk about.

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**Merry Christmas &
Happy New Year**

Outdoors

From T11

¥ Insulated, waterproof jacket: A high-quality jacket for outdoor adventures that will be efficient at trapping heat, windproof and water-resistant is a thoughtful gift. Patagonia is a popular brand of outerwear, but retailers like Columbia and REI also merit consideration.

¥ Trail shoes or sandals: Supportive, comfortable and non-slip footwear is a given when enjoying the great outdoors. Depending on the activity, there are plenty of options from boots to hikers to trail sandals to consider.

¥ Waist pack: Packing light for short jaunts in the wilderness may include stocking a waist pack (also known as a fanny pack) with must-have items. They are lightweight, comfortable and spacious enough for the essentials without getting bogged down by a backpack or another bag.

¥ Buff: A buff is a tube of lightweight, stretchy material that serves innumerable functions in the great outdoors. It can be used to shield the neck from the sun or wind, or to absorb sweat or keep hair out of the face. A buff can be useful on a hiking or backpacking trip, or just about any outdoor activity.

¥ Headlamp: Visibility is essential when enjoying the great outdoors, and many activities happen during dawn and dusk when light may be at a premium. A headlamp keeps things hands-free and sheds light on surroundings or up-close tasks, like setting up fishing hooks or field dressing game.

¥ Satellite communicator: A satellite communicator can keep outdoors enthusiasts safe and at ease when off the grid. Certain regions have spotty cell coverage, and satellite devices will do better at sending out messages or SOS signals should something go awry.

¥ Hiking poles: Telescoping hiking poles are adjustable and lightweight, and offer extra support and balance when on trails. Outdoor enthusiasts will benefit from gifts tailored to their love of nature, wildlife and adventure.



Metro

12 gifts for crafty people

Metro

Craft enthusiasts can be easy people to shop for come the holiday season. Shoppers can simply fuel their loved one's passion for crafts by keeping their supplies fully stocked or introduce them to new crafting techniques. There are roughly 85 million active creatives and 30 million sewists in the United States and Canada, according to Customcy, a custom product manufacturer. Millennials account for 41 percent of consumers in the craft market, according to the Center for Generational Kinetics. These 12 gift ideas will be perfect for creatives who want to enjoy their passion for crafting to the fullest.

1. Organizers: Craft supply

organizers can keep people's gear neat and tidy in bins or compartmentalized boxes.

2. Gift cards: A spending spree at a nearby craft retailer can help crafters get everything they need.

3. Rotary cutters: While quality scissors are a necessity, a rotary cutter can make fast work of slicing through materials.

4. Cutting mat: A self-healing cutting mat is ideal for model-making, sewing and paper crafts.

5. Cutting machine: A cutting machine, like those offered from Cricut or Silhouette, can help people complete a vast number of projects. These machines can cut vinyl, paper, labels, and

even fabrics and foam for certain models.

6. Pattern books: Those who enjoy needlework, crocheting or knitting can benefit from books that offer patterns or digital sewing ideas.

7. Yarn and thread: High quality yarns and threads can elevate completed projects.

8. Paper or canvases: Fine artists and painters will need places to display their creative visions. A stock of mixed media paper and canvases means art can be made whenever inspiration strikes.

9. Resin supplies: Resin products have become more popular and crafters who enjoy such projects will benefit from epoxy resin and molds or acrylic pouring kits.

10. Clay: Those who enjoy making clay-based creations can always use more clay in a variety of colors and new clay sculpting tools.

11. Floral supplies: Whether live flowers or artificial, foam, floral tape, stem snips, and ribbons can help people create beautiful designs.

12. Home improvement: Many crafters can benefit from having a dedicated space to engage in their projects. A gift of minor home renovations to create a crafting room or area in an existing spot can make a crafter very happy. Crafting is a popular hobby with scores of enthusiasts. Catering to their hobbies with special gifts will keep crafters busy and happy throughout the year.

Unique

From T10

food-making supplies, and decorative items.

¥ Specialty food store: Head to small specialty food stores to load up on unique items larger supermarkets might

not carry. Ethnic markets may have flavorful and interesting ingredients to group together in a food basket that makes an ideal gift for transplants missing the flavors of home.

Before a person logs on to the internet for online shopping or heads to the nearest strip mall, he or she can explore various unique places to shop for holiday gifts.

How to master the art of last-minute shopping

Metro

Shoppers who wait until the eleventh hour to do their holiday shopping are in good company. Consolidated Credit says one in five shoppers waits until December to start grabbing holiday gifts. Although shopping early to land the best deals and avoid the stress of running out of time works for many people, there are those who do their best work when shopping is down to the wire.

If you're thinking of being a last-minute Larry or Lucy in regard to your holiday shopping, there are some ways to make late shopping successful.

¥ Don't downplay the power of gift cards. Some suggest that a gift card isn't an ideal gift because it doesn't require much thought or effort. But the numbers do not lie. A research report from the Retail Gift Card Association notes that 71 percent of people surveyed feel 'very satisfied' when they get a gift card.

¥ Establish a plan. Even if you're shopping at the last minute, that doesn't mean you should head out unprepared. Consider the recipient, which kind of gift might fit them best,



Metro

and how much you're willing to spend. Then you can narrow down which store to visit.

¥ Download a shopping comparison app. Capital One Shopping enables consumers to comparison shop and accumulate shopping rewards. Online shopping is convenient, and can be a viable option for those who waited until mid- to late-December to shop. Just be aware of shipping times and expedited fees to make sure the gifts arrive on time.

¥ Consider a membership gift. A membership for a subscription box, a wine or coffee club or even a streaming

music or movie service can be great last-minute gifts.

¥ Skip the clothing department. Clothes are go-to choices for holiday gifts, but they can be particularly challenging to purchase. Size, cut, style, and additional variables are unique to each individual. Since browsing clothing racks can take a lot of time you likely will not have, avoid clothes as last-minute gift options.

¥ Screen shot promo codes and coupon scan bars. If

you've come across discount codes and coupons in your research, have them at the ready when shopping online or in person. Don't hold up the line trying to load a website or find

a coupon on the store app, as it's likely those behind you are last-minute shopping as well.

Last-minute shopping for holiday gifts requires strategy and savvy.

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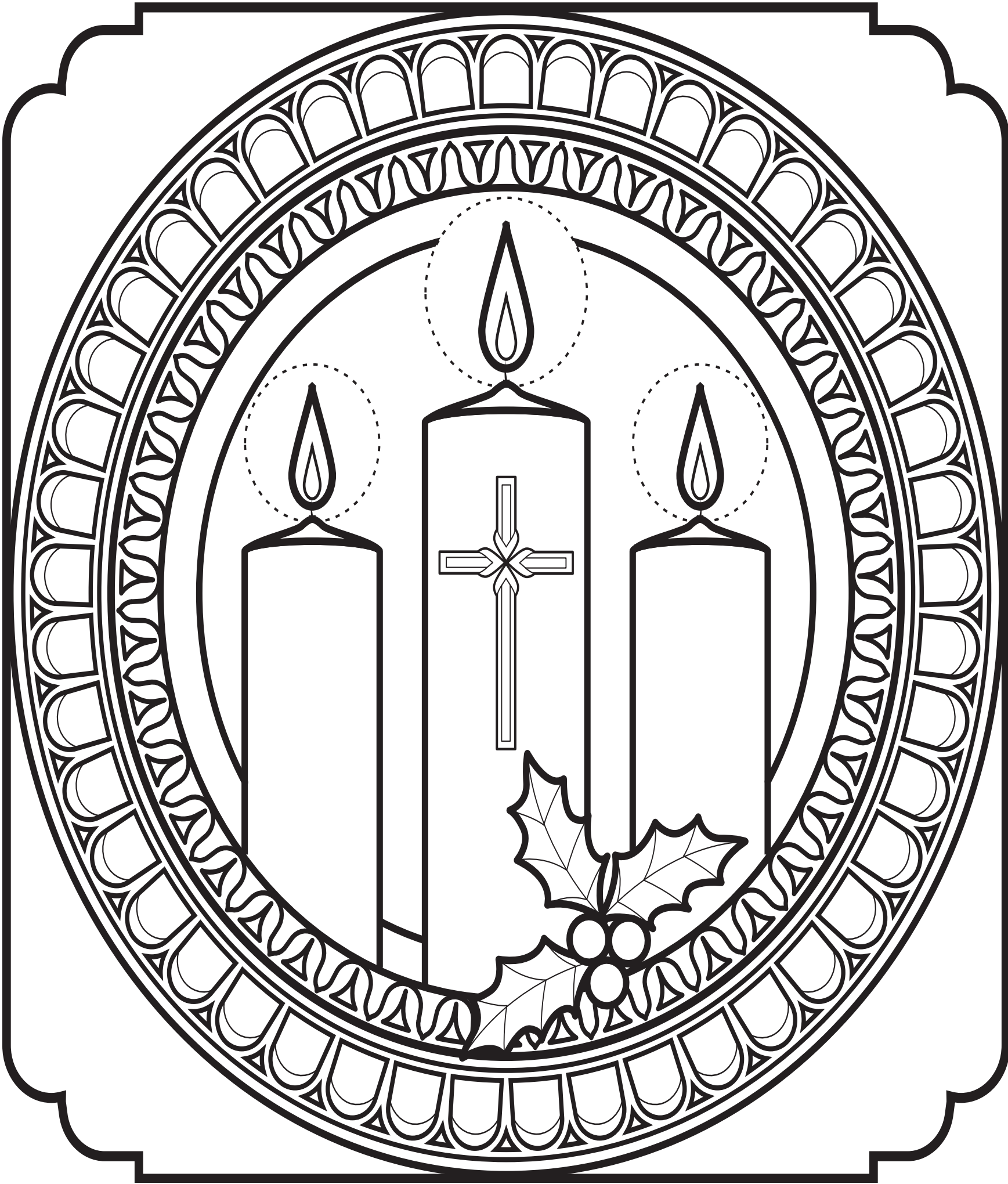
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HOLIDAY EVENTS

Nov. 26

Fort Covington

Night Before Thanksgiving celebration: Wings and fries, 5 to 7 p.m.; Mike Mallette Show, 5 to 8 p.m. **Wednesday, Nov. 26**, Fort Covington American Legion Post 1418, 111 Dundee Road. Information: 518-483-3772.

Nov. 27

Malone

Fourth annual Thanksgiving Day dinner: For those 60 and older, 11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. **Thursday, Nov. 27**, Malone Adult Center, 12 Homestead Park. Dine in or take-outs. Menu: Turkey, mashed potatoes, stuffing, gravy, cranberry sauce, vegetable, roll, and apple pie. Cost: \$2 suggested donation. Reservations requested: 518-481-1103. Sponsored by Franklin County Office for the Aging.

Dec. 5

Malone

"A Fairy Tale Christmas Carol": With North Franklin Theatre Group, 6 p.m. **Friday, Dec. 5, and Saturday, Dec. 6;** and 2 p.m. **Sunday, Dec. 7**, RedBarn Playhouse, 30 Robinson Circle. Cost: \$12; senior citizens and students, \$10. Information, tickets: www.facebook.com/NFTGstage or 518-837-7389.

Saranac Lake

Holiday salon: Artwork priced under 100, 5 to 7 p.m. **Friday, Dec. 5**, Adirondack Artists Guild, 52 Main St. Information: www.adirondackartistsguild.com.

Dec. 6

Burke

Christmas With Almanzo: 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. **Saturday, Dec. 6**, Almanzo Wilder Homestead, 177 Stacy Road, Farmer Boy Christmas chapter readings, carols, mulled cider and cookies. Barnes closed to tours; museum and gift shops open; free admission.

Canton

Craft, Food, and Wine Holiday Market: St. Lawrence County Chamber of Commerce, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. **Saturday, Dec. 6, and Sunday, Dec. 7**, St. Lawrence University, 23 Romoda Drive.

Potsdam

Light the Night parade: Line up, 5 p.m.; parade, 6 p.m. followed by ceremony and shopping **Saturday, Dec. 6**, downtown Potsdam and Ives Park and Market Street Mall. Information: www.potsdamchamber.com.

Dec. 7

Malone

Ecumenical Christmas concert: Hosted by Hospice of the North Country, 4 p.m. **Sunday, Dec. 7**, Centenary United Methodist Church, 345 W. Main St. Cost: \$10; 10 and younger, free. Information, tickets: Natalie Whitehurst, 518-561-8465.

Dec. 13

Lake Placid

Jingle Bell run/walk: Hosted by Adirondack Health, registration, 7 a.m.; race begins, 8:30 a.m. **Saturday, Dec. 13**, Lake

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How to navigate holiday shipping charges

Metro

Each holiday season, hundreds of millions of packages are delivered across the globe. Thanks to online shopping, major courier companies play a significant role in ensuring that shoppers get their gifts on time.

Shipping costs are a component of ecommerce, and must be factored in when budgeting for holiday spending. Shipping rates are based on a number of factors, including the weight of the package, its dimensions, the distance it needs to be shipped, and how quickly (or slowly) the package must arrive.

Volume is another component of shipping. During the holidays, couriers move more packages than during other months of the year.

To facilitate this, they may need to bring on more permanent staff or temporary workers. Those increased staffing costs are passed on to the consumer through shipping rate increases. So what is the holi-



Boxes on doorstep of house

day consumer to do in regard to shipping?

These guidelines can help shoppers master the art of shipping this holiday season.

¥ Shop as early as possible. Shopping early can alleviate some of the extra charges associated with last-minute shopping. When they shop early, shoppers can choose the longest shipping duration, which often costs the least.

Packages shipped outside of the holiday rush tend to be less expensive to ship than those being sent between Thanksgiving and New Year's Day.

¥ Price out the major couriers. If you are shipping a parcel from home, you can compare the prices of the postal service, UPS and FedEx. Choose the one with the most budget-friendly and timely service.

¥ Utilize membership discounts. Organizations like AAA or AARP offer members percentage-based discounts on some shipping services. ¥ Shop with retailers that offer free shipping. Many retailers entice shoppers to buy with them by offering free shipping. Keep in mind there may be a threshold that needs to be met, such as a minimum total before shipping is free. Shoppers can save a lot if they purchase several gifts from one retailer and meet that threshold.

¥ Consider ship-to-store op-

tions. Many retailers offer the opportunity to ship-to-store for free. This can be advantageous for retailers because, once inside the store to pick up the shipment, a consumer may be more inclined to purchase additional items. However, if you're disciplined

and only grab what you've pre-purchased, you can avoid shipping costs entirely.

Shipping during the holiday season can be costly. Customers need to be aware so they can navigate rates accordingly and stay within their holiday shopping budgets.



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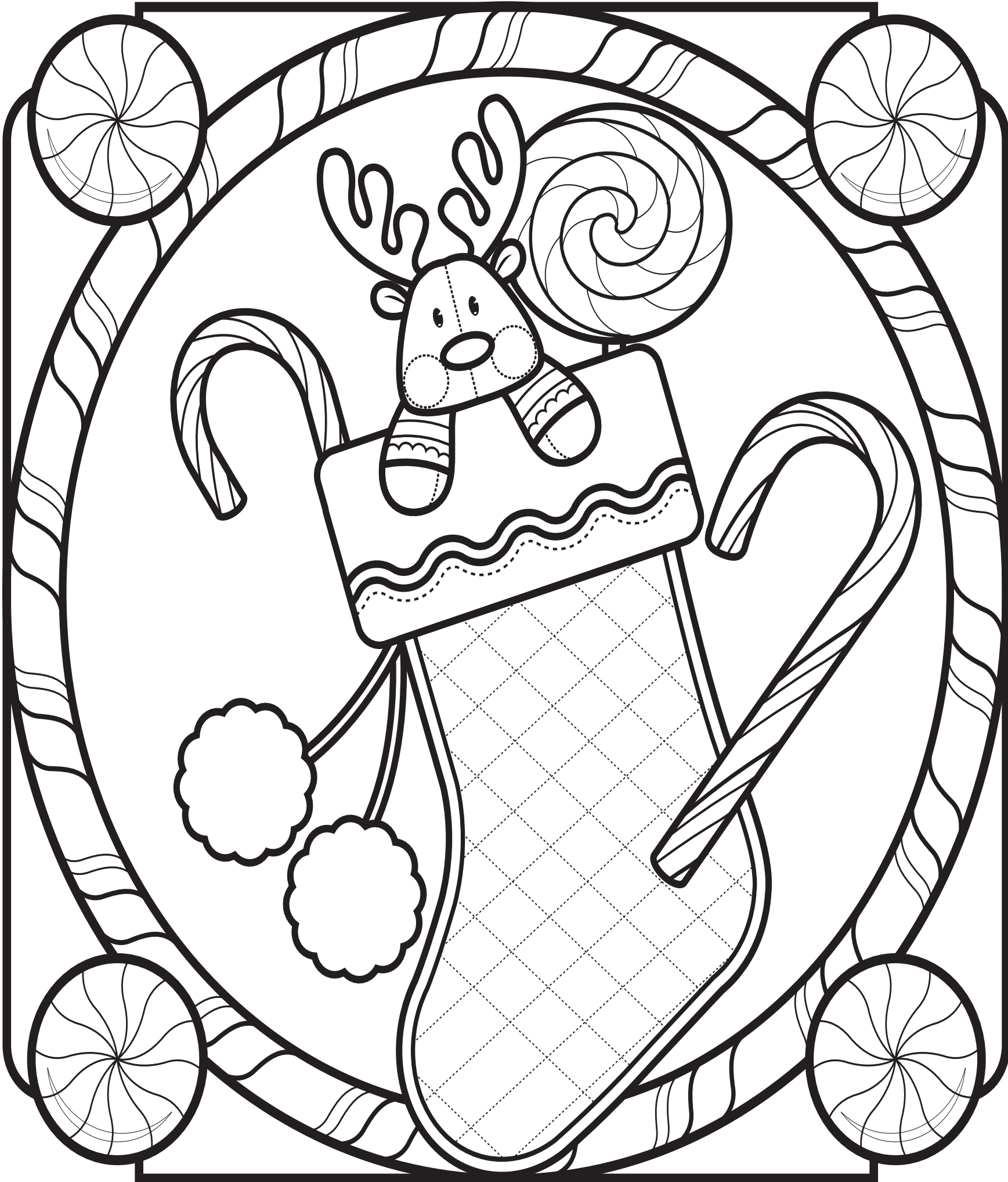
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Gifts for music lovers

By **MATT UNDERWOOD**

munderwood@vdt.net

Danish author Hans Christian Andersen once said, "Where words fail, music speaks." Music is a universal language that can bridge cultures and unite people from all over the world in compelling ways. Is it any wonder that so many people are inspired, soothed and encouraged by music?

No two music fans are the same, so it's not always easy to find the right gift for the budding rock star or audiophile on a holiday shopping list. Tuning into these individuals' love for music is a great way to grab gifts they are sure to enjoy.

¥ Go vinyl: Vinyl albums predate cassettes, compact discs and digital music. But there are still some artists who release on vinyl, and many music fans say nothing beats the sound of a record playing on a turntable. Find an artist the recipient loves, and visit a local music shop to

track down a vinyl version of one of their albums.

¥ Purchase an instrument: Has a budding musician had his or her eye on an instrument upgrade? Sweep in and be the holiday hero by purchasing a brand new one according to the specs desired.

¥ Photo history book: Browse a local bookstore and you will find a range of books that are geared toward music fans. From biographies of famous artists to compilations of album cover art throughout the years to songbooks for aspiring musicians, there's no shortage of options at a local bookseller.

¥ Custom-molded earplugs: Hearing loss is nothing to take lightly, and music fans who frequently play or attend concerts need to prioritize protecting their hearing. Custom-molded earplugs will conform to the wearer's ear shape, offering ultimate protection.

¥ Luxury headphones: A luxury set of headphones can

provide amazing audio for the best listening experiences.

¥ Audio interface: A loved one who wants to start making their own recordings will need an audio interface. This device connects a computer to music instruments and other audio equipment allowing one to play, record and process sound.

¥ Approved fanny pack: Stadiums are cracking down on the types of bags concert-goers can bring in. Therefore, a stadium-approved clear fanny pack can be a great gift for someone who is frequently watching live music.

¥ Masterclass membership: Sometimes there's no better tutor than the professionals who have been there. With a Masterclass subscription, a music lover can learn how to write songs, sing or even play music from well-known music stars. Gifts geared toward music enthusiasts will hit all the right notes this holiday season.

Events

From T18

Placid Public Beach, 31 Parkside Drive. Family-friendly, two and a half miles; circling Mirror Lake in counterclockwise loop. Registration: \$25; advance, \$20. Information, registration: runsignup.com.

Massena

Pancakes with Santa: 9 to 11 a.m. **Saturday, Dec. 13**, First United Methodist Church, 189 Main St. Free; doors open: 8:45 a.m.; doors close: 9:05 a.m. Reservations required: Fae, 315-769-8036.

Dec. 19

Canton

Winter Farmers Market: With Garden-

Share, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. **Friday, Dec. 19**, Presbyterian Church, Park Street. Locally grown foods, holiday gifts.

Dec. 20

Potsdam

Winter Farmers Market: With Garden-Share, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. **Saturday, Dec. 20**, Market Square Mall, 22 Depot St. Locally grown foods, holiday gifts.

Dec. 24

Moir

Christmas Eve service: Featuring carols and scriptures with "The Potsdam Players," violinist and cellist, 6:30 p.m. **Wednesday, Dec. 24**, Cross Roads Fellowship, 2341 County Route 5. Free.



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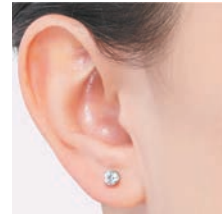



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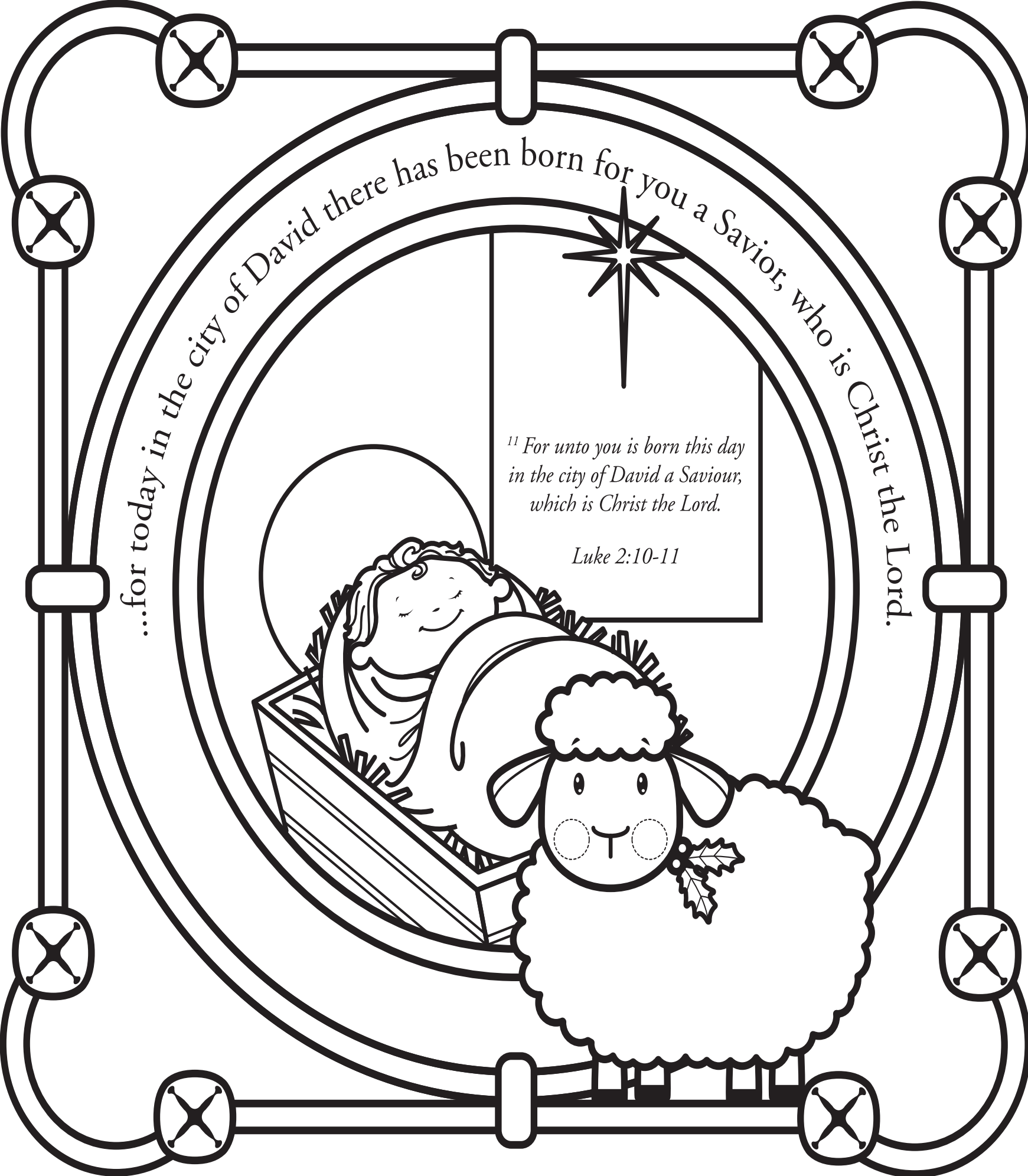
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