



Fair Trade, Holiday Ideas, & Gift Giving

This holiday season and throughout the year, the Library Sustainability Committee's Gift Guide makes it fun and easy to choose local, sustainable, fair-trade and recycled gifts and more.

Here are suggestions for gifts that support local small businesses and artisans, as well as places to find fair-trade sustainable items from around the globe.

Or maybe the perfect gift is something a little less tangible, such as a donation to a favorite charity or an unforgettable experience (or at the very least, a fun one!).

Researchers have found that for those who already have plenty, experiences bring more happiness than material possessions. And San Diego has so much to offer! Consider a gift card to a favorite restaurant; tickets to the movies, a concert, or the theater; or a membership to one of our local gardens or museums.

This year's updated guide is full of resources and ideas that are great for the local economy, easy on the earth, and delightful to receive.

Enjoy the season.

SUPPORT LOCAL SAN DIEGO

FARMER'S MARKETS offer a rich variety of crafts and homemade items. Click below to discover farmers' markets throughout the San Diego area:

Farm Bureau San Diego County - Certified Farmer's Markets

Simply Local - Local merchants selling a variety of products

Summers Past Farms - Herb garden, gift shop, nursery and classes. Closed Monday and Tuesdays.

MEMBERSHIP GIFTS can be enjoyed all year long and have the added benefit of supporting environmental groups or one of San Diego county's beautiful museums or gardens. Just to get you thinking, here are a few we came up with:

Balboa Park gift pass

Birch Aquarium - gift membership

CicloSDias San Diego - giving people a break from the stress of car traffic

Japanese Friendship Garden

San Diego Botanical Garden

San Diego Coast Keeper

San Diego County Bicycle Coalition

San Diego Food Bank - give products, time, or donations

San Diego Zoo

Sea World

Water Conservation Garden - located at Cuyamaca College has an online membership form

JOIN A CSA (COMMUNITY SUPPORTED AGRICULTURE) to enjoy locally and organically grown food.

Be Wise Ranch - Select from several pick-up sites in San Diego.

Garden of Eden Organics - Delivers to campus on Thursdays from 12:30–2:00.

UC San Diego Roger's Community Garden - Lease a plot and grow your own!

CONSCIOUS DINING & COOKING - Amazing options are out there! Below are lists of dining/cooking options throughout San Diego:

OFR (Ocean Friendly Restaurants) - List compiled by Surfrider Foundation, San Diego Chapter.

San Diego Coastkeepers list and tips - For finding sustainable seafood restaurants and food sources.

San Diego's Essential Vegan & Vegetarian Restaurants - From Eater San Diego

San Diego's Top 15 Vegan Restaurants - From the San Diego Union-Tribune; compiled in 2016, but they are all still here and they nailed it!

HOLIDAY & GIFT EVENTS

December Nights at Balboa Park - December 1, 2017 from 3:00–11:00 p.m. and December 2, 2017 from noon–11:00 p.m. Both evenings the museums in the park open their doors from 5:00–9:00 free of charge.

SHOPPING FAIR TRADE & FUN GIFT IDEAS

FOR CONSCIOUS DECISION-MAKING check out these great resources before making your sustainable purchases:

GoodGuide - A free online source for the social and environmental ratings of brands and companies

Where Am I Wearing - A resourceful site created by author Kelsey Timmerman based on his book about where our clothes comes from and the people who make them

ALL

Fair Indigo - Clothing and gifts, some made in America, some fair trade

National Wildlife Federation - An online store with some organic t-shirts and other neat gifts; your purchases help support their wildlife programs.

Nature Conservancy - For gifts and membership

ACTIVE LIFESTYLE

Gaiam - Yoga clothing, exercise DVDs

Klean Kanteen - Stay hydrated on the go!

Patagonia - Environmentally conscious clothing

CLOTHING & SHOES

Hazelnut Kid - Children's clothes, toys, and games

PrAna - Clothing store

Soul Rebels - Fair-trade footwear made in Ethiopia

Sustain U - A clothing company offering 100% recycled apparel that's made in America

Toms Shoes - For every pair of Toms shoes sold, another is given to someone in need. Enjoy your new shoes even more because someone else will be enjoying theirs, too, courtesy of Toms and you. Now just think of the potential if other companies did this, even for just one month a year.

FOOD & SNACKS

Bee's Wrap - An alternative to plastic wrap made from beeswax, organic cotton, and other natural fibers; reusable and compostable

Chico Bags - Reusable bags, including snack and [produce bags](#), made from organic cotton and hemp

Lunch Skins - Reusable snack and sandwich bags, made in America. Buy online or brick-and-mortar fans can check out their [retail partners](#).

Mountain Rose Herbs - Herbs, spices, and teas along with body-care items and aromatherapy products

People Towels - A replacement one-time-use paper towels, made of 100% organic fair-trade cotton

SKOY cloths - Reusable cleaning cloths made of cotton and wood-based cellulose pulp. Use SKOY instead of paper towels for all your cleaning needs.

Soda Stream - Make your own sparkling water and carbonated drinks. No more empty bottles. Carbonator cylinders can be exchanged when empty.

Thailand Unique - Offers an alternative source of sustainable protein—insects! For that very special someone.

To-Go Ware - Bamboo utensil sets and stainless steel food containers.

Vegan Essentials - Gifts and food with a special holiday section.



SHOPPING FAIR TRADE & FUN GIFT IDEAS

HANDBAGS

[Harveys Bags](#) - Handbags made out of recycled seat belts fabric

[Yoogi's Closet](#) - Authenticated pre-owned luxury goods

HANDCRAFTED & HOME GOODS

[Ecochoices](#) - A variety of natural living products for every room in your home, including the baby's. Enjoy shopping for ecotoys and games, furniture and garden products, as well as hemp greeting cards, made from a blend of hemp and post consumer recycled fiber.

[Etsy](#) - The world's handmade marketplace offers neat one-of-a-kind gifts including recycled, upcycled, and repurposed items.

[Great Green Goods](#) - Everything featured on this blog is made from recycled materials.

[Green Field Paper Company](#) - Handmade paper crafted in San Diego, includes hemp paper, junk-mail paper, garlic paper, Grow-A-Note greeting cards, and recycled wrapping paper. This company offsets its electricity use by purchasing wind energy credits.

[Hempmania](#) - Enjoy products made with hemp: think purses, backpacks, cords, twines, and lip balm. Earth-friendly hemp grows naturally without pesticides and fertilizers.

[Mighty Nest](#) - Create a healthy home with these eco-friendly & non-toxic products.

[Northern Sun](#) - Billed as "products for progressives," Northern Sun offers fun stuff including T-shirts made from organic cotton and/or made in the U.S.A.

[Novica](#) - Handmade products from global artisans who benefit from fair prices, no binding contracts, and the freedom to make a success of their craft by building a sustainable business.

[NaturalKidz](#) - Children's clothing store. Many of the clothes are made from recycled and/or sustainable products

[Project Repat](#) - Quilts made from T-shirts you love but no longer use. Check out the website for more details and to find out how to design your own quilt!

[Servv](#) - Beautiful hand-crafted items. This nonprofit fair trade organization is dedicated to lifting disadvantaged artisans, farmers, and their families out of poverty: "Behind every basket, tunic and necklace that we offer, you'll find *a story of positive change.*"

[Ten Thousand Villages](#) - A fair-trade store with a variety of clothes and gift ideas

[Uncommon Goods](#) - With a focus on sustainability and good design, artists worldwide offer household goods, clothing, jewelry, and more.

[Viva Terra](#) - Recycled products including dishes, glassware, and vases

TECHNOLOGY

[Grovemade](#) - Eco-conscious bamboo and wool iphone & ipod cases made in Oregon

[Kill-a-watt electricity usage monitor](#) - This device monitors home energy usage and shows how much electricity appliances and other things in your home and garage use. Also available is the Kill-a-watt power strip.

[Programmable thermostat](#) - For the handy person. These are available at most home improvement stores. According to the EPA, the average family would save approximately \$180.00 per year by installing a programmable thermostat in their home.

[Real Goods Solar](#) - Carries many sustainable items including solar ovens and solar chargers for your phone and other small electronic devices.



FOR THE ANIMAL & PLANT LOVERS

Many of these non-profits survive on donations and need help feeding and caring for animals that they rescue throughout the year. If you have an animal lover on your list, a donation to any of these nonprofits is sure to please.

ANIMAL LOVERS

Animal Place - Located in the Sierra Nevada foothills, this organization rescues farm animals

Farm Sanctuary - Rescued farm animals live out their lives in comfort while helping educate farm guests. Adopt an animal for a year; or **Adopt-A-Turkey** for a one time donation of \$30.00. And for a donation of \$200.00 you can sponsor the entire **posse!** Don't worry, they won't send a boxful of turkeys; once they receive your donation, the Farm Sanctuary sends pictures and fun facts about the birds.

Gentle Barn Farm Sanctuary - Rescues, rehabilitates, and gives sanctuary to abused animals. Children and other farm guests learn reverence for all life when they meet and learn the stories of the animals here. Adopt an animal for life!

Muttville Senior Dog Rescue - Older dogs in shelters often do not find a home, which is where Muttville steps in. A \$65.00 donation provides care for one rescued dog for an entire month.

San Diego Audubon Society - "The mission of San Diego Audubon Society is to foster the protection and appreciation of birds, other wildlife, and their habitats, through education and study, and advocate for a cleaner, healthier environment."

PLANTS & GARDENING

Back to the Roots - A NorCal start-up offering a variety of products including a Gourmet Mushroom kit grown from coffee grounds.

California Organic Flowers - Organic bouquets

Olivewood Gardens - A local garden and nutrition education center in National City. "Olivewood's purpose is to build healthy families and a healthy environment. We work with children, families and adults through hands on classes in the garden and the kitchen."

Seed Savers Exchange - For the gardener on the list, the exchange is dedicated to saving and sharing heirloom seeds.

Spikenard Farm Honeybee Sanctuary - This Virginia farm raises money to educate people about the importance of honey bees. They recently purchased the land they were leasing and now are raising funds to construct a building on the property to hold classes and lodge the interns who tend to the bees and the farm.

United Plant Saver - Protects native medicinal plants of the United States and Canada and their natural habitats while ensuring an abundant renewable supply of medicinal plants for generations to come.

City Farmers Nursery - A San Diego garden center with organic plants and seeds, hydroponics and pond supplies, koi, water plants. They also offer classes.



SECONDHAND TREASURES

THRIFT & RETAIL SHOPS

Experience the thrill of the hunt! Wonderful one-of-a-kind items—vintage, secondhand, and even new—can be found in San Diego’s many area [thrift and resale shops](#). With their constantly changing inventory, these stores always have something new (to you). Added bonus? Supporting a favorite charity, buying items at a fraction of their retail price, even de-cluttering if you choose to donate or trade in some things of your own. Enjoy the satisfaction of knowing that you are protecting the environment by taking time to find the perfect gift. A sampling of stores can be found on [Yelp!](#)

Some staff favorites include:

Amvets

[Goodwill, San Diego](#) - Notes eco-stylist Danny Seo, "It's amazing what you can find at Goodwill. Vintage fabrics, wallpaper, and sweaters all make great wrapping -- just look for rich textures." The inventory at Goodwill stores varies by neighborhood and clientele. Try a few to find your favorites. And don't miss Goodwill's bookstores...

[Fabulous Finds](#)- According to one of our librarians who volunteers there, "Fabulous Finds ... is so well laid out and stocked that shoppers forget it is a thrift store and not a fancy gift shop. . . . I almost always leave with a few bargains. I find great gifts for Christmas and birthdays there. I actually bought a beautiful piano and a loveseat there in the past few years."

VINTAGE & CONSIGNMENT

Curated, rather than simply collected, vintage and consignment shops offer treasures with a little less hunting. Save money and declutter by selling or trading in some of your own things for cash or store credit. These stores tend to cluster in neighborhoods that have great coffee shops, too. Try La Mesa, OB, or for a day south of the 8, check out the many vintage stores in Hillcrest, North Park, and South Park.

[Best Used, Vintage & Consignment in San Diego](#)

[Best Consignment in San Diego](#)

[Best Fashion Consignment in San Diego](#)

[Best Record Stores in San Diego](#)



BOOKS, BOOKS, BOOKS

From mass market paperbacks to vintage volumes and collectors editions, secondhand bookshops have something for everyone, at prices that are often better than those found online. Experience the joy of browsing actual shelves while supporting a local business.

[Best Used Bookstores](#) in San Diego

Some staff favorites include:

[Bluestocking Books](#) in Hillcrest

[Verbatim Books](#) in North Park

[Mysterious Galaxy](#) in Clairemont

[Maxwell's House of Books](#) in La Mesa

[San Diego Public Libraries](#) (Mission Valley is especially nice!)



ART SUPPLIES

[ArtForm](#) This creative reuse nonprofit has a store open most Saturdays from 10–2. Treasures galore for artists of all ages.

D.I.Y

[DIY Projects.com](#) Crafts from A-Z and some great ornament ideas

[eHowArtsAndCrafts](#)

[45 Different Ways to Use Plastic Bottles in Sustainable DIY Crafts](#)

[16 Cereal Box Projects That Will Reinvent DIY](#)

[19 Brilliant Ideas to Label the Plants in Your Garden](#)

[Regrowing Vegetables from Scraps](#)

[Easy 7-Ingredient DIY Natural Beauty Recipes](#)

[50 Handmade Natural Beauty Products for Gifts](#)

IDEAS FOR WRAPPING GIFTS GREEN

REMEMBER TO RE-USE AND RECYCLE!

Earth911 has some creative ideas for wrapping gifts, think fabric and old calendar pages— [11 Low-Waste Gift Wrapping Alternatives to Buy or DIY.](#)

According to [Eco-Chick](#) if every family wrapped just three gifts with re-used materials we would save enough paper to cover 45,000 football fields!!! That is huge, so see if you can find fun ways to wrap just three presents this holiday season.

[Furoshiki](#) is Japanese wrapping cloth and can be made from all types of fabrics including cotton, rayon and silk. See some ways to wrap various gifts on the [Japanese Department of Environment's](#) site. There are also some [YouTube videos on Furoshiki wrapping techniques.](#)

[Herbal Dye Gift Bags](#) make gift bags using plant material

[Eco Gift Wrap](#)

CLEANING UP AFTER CELEBRATION

[Tips on how to by Mother Earth Living](#)

[Recycle your tree](#)

WHAT TO DO WITH "EXTRA STUFF"

[Rare Hare Studio / Art FORM \(Found Objects Recycled Materials\)](#) - A nonprofit that provides arts education with creative reuse to schools, teachers, and the community. Art FORM accepts [donated materials](#) and also offers creative reuse materials and art supplies to the community every Saturday from 10am–2pm. Visit the Saturday store at 3316 Adams Avenue, San Diego, CA 92116 and choose among fabulous reuse materials and art supplies, all available for a low-cost donation. All proceeds from the Saturday store benefit Art FORM's school and community programs.

[Terracycle](#) - This is the company that purchases the UC San Diego Library defunct pens and markers. Check out the fun items that they have made from recycled materials, including ours.

FOR MORE INSPIRATION: BOOKS & MAGS YOU MIGHT ENJOY

[Eco-Friendly Crafting with Kids](#) - Quirky, colorful, and fun projects for pre-school kids and their parents to make together. Small children love crafting and creating, and it's educational as well as enjoyable. Crafting can help develop fine motor skills and teaches small children to follow instructions and work alongside someone else.

[Green Crafts for Children: 35 Step-by-Step Projects Using Natural, Recycled, and Found Materials](#) - None of the projects in this book use any special materials. Instead, they rely on ingredients that you are likely to have in the cupboard or items that can be found around the house or garden, or out on walks in the park or at the beach.

[Recycled Crafts Box](#) - Corrugated Castle. Fancy Foil Fish Mobile. Paper Bead Bangles. Braided Rag Coasters. Old Shoe Flower Pots. Puppy Dog Sock Puppet. With a little imagination, just about anything we think of as trash can be transformed into an art project good enough to give as a gift or to keep and treasure yourself.

[Junk Genius: Stylish Ways to Reinvent Everyday Objects](#) - Find highly rewarding and money-saving repurposing projects, and discover why making your own is a trend well worth exploring.

[Junk Beautiful: Room by Room Makeovers with Junkmarket Style](#) - One person's trash is another's treasure.

[Restore. Recycle. Repurpose. : Create a Beautiful Home](#) - Renovation that's eco-friendly...AND economically smart!

[ReMake It!: Recycling Projects from the Stuff You Usually Scrap](#) - To the green and crafty kid, vintage LP covers, empty tissue boxes, and broken umbrellas are not trash--they're treasures!

[The Resilient Investor: A Plan for Your Life Not Just Your Money](#) by Hall Brill Michael Kramer and Christopher Peck. A guide to investing in changing times that considers our lives and communities as well as our finances.

[Sustainable Happiness Live Simply, Live Well, Make a Difference](#) edited by Sarah Van Gelder and the staff of *YES! Magazine*.

[Esther the Wonder Pig](#) - "Unlikely pig owners Steve and Derek got a whole lot more than they bargained for when the designer micro piglet they adopted turned out to be a full-sized 600-pound sow! This funny, inspirational story shows how families really do come in all shapes and sizes."

[The Humane Economy: How Innovators and Enlightened Consumers Are Transforming the Lives of Animals](#) - "A major new exploration of the economics of animal exploitation and a practical roadmap for how we can use the marketplace to promote the welfare of all living creatures, from the renowned animal-rights advocate Wayne Pacelle, President/CEO of the Humane Society of the United States and *New York Times* bestselling author of *The Bond*."

[Mercy for Animals: One Man's Quest to Inspire Compassion and Improve the Lives of Farm Animals](#) - "A compelling look at animal welfare and factory farming in the United States from Mercy For Animals, the leading international force in preventing cruelty to farmed animals and promoting compassionate food choices and policies."

[Vegan Cookies Invade Your Cookie Jar](#) - Out-of-this world cookies along with some tips, tricks, and techniques for adapting some of your favorite recipes.

[VegNews](#) - The premier vegan lifestyle magazine, VegNews serves up the latest in meat-free news, food, travel, politics, and buzz. A fun and breezy read for anyone, vegan or not, this magazine has been named one of the 50 best life style magazines by the *Chicago Tribune*.

[Veganomicon: The Ultimate Vegan Cookbook, 10th Anniversary Editon](#) - A sumptuous and scrumptious update of a beloved vegan classic, 250 recipes, including some new ones, color photos, and tips to "make your kitchen a vegan paradise."

[Yes! Magazine](#) - A nonprofit, reader-supported, independent magazine that doesn't just report problems in the world, but also focuses on what people are doing to find solutions.

HAPPY CONSCIOUS SHOPPING!