

Unique Gifts: Ideas for All Seasons

 by: Darlene Arechederra 'We Make a Living by What we Do,
But We Make a Life by What We Give.'

-- Winston Churchill There's an alternative to buying gifts that sit on a shelf waiting for the next garage sale. For something completely unique, why not consider gifts that 'keep on giving' for your friends, co-workers or loved ones? The Animal Lover Give a goat. How about a pig? You'll be providing food and income-producing animals (cows, chickens, sheep, pigs, water buffalo). These animals in turn provide milk, eggs, and wool. Families then share one or more of their animals' offspring with other needy families. Why not give a gift in the name of your favorite animal lover? Visit Heifer Projects International, <http://catalog.heifer.org> for more ideas and information. Animal shelters always need extra help. Ask your local shelter what its needs are. Donate the items, or have a bake sale, garage sale or other fundraiser to provide for the need. The Crafter Why not give your crafter some craft supplies or gift certificates to a favorite craft store? The crafter can in turn create gifts to give away, or perhaps sell them for some extra bits of money. The Gardener Know someone who loves to garden? Buy the seeds or plants (vegetable, flower, fruit, etc.) and tools that make it easier for them to garden. If they have a good year, they'll be able to share the abundance with family, neighbors and friends. Does your gardener like to 'can' or freeze their produce? How about providing them with canning jars, lids and other supplies. Military/Soldiers Donate your unused frequent flyer miles. Help pay for soldiers who arrive in the states for a 2-week leave or emergency leave. These soldiers are brought into the US, but then have to purchase last-minute tickets at higher prices to travel the rest of the way back home to their families. Find more info at <http://www.HeroMiles.org> Send a care package to the troops. For ideas of what 'not' to send this year, follow this link: <http://www.army.mil/operations/oif/FAQ.html> For care package ideas, there are 2 downloadable and printable pages of ideas here. See top of page at this link: <http://www.asa.themilitary.net> Send Phone Cards for the soldiers, enabling them to call home. You can give them about 100 minutes for only \$20. More info can be found at <http://www.uso.org> For Children -- a Gift for the Future A \$50 bond purchased today could be worth \$100 in 20 years. For more info about other funds and ideas about growing kids' money over time, pop into this site: http://www.child.com/moms_dads/family_finance/gift_fund.jsp The Parent/Grandparent/Senior A roll of Postage Stamps can last a long, long time. This is a great gift, especially for the elderly or those living on a limited income. Give a year's worth of TV Guide. Your kindness through this gift will never be forgotten. Many, especially those in nursing homes, cannot afford even a weekly newspaper. For Those in Need Giving to your local food pantry helps those in need. Most pantries are reporting their donations have been down, so they'll need some extra help to replenish their shelves. Purchase groceries for a needy family. Help them plant a garden in the Spring. If they have no gardening area, consider sharing yours. A small donation can feed many people at your local Salvation Army Soup Kitchen. Look into Legitimate Charities. This site offers an alphabetical list of National Charities: <http://www.Give.org/reports/index.asp> For Just About Everyone Find exactly the right gift at <http://www.Surprise.com> Categories range from the Caffeine Fiend, to the Chocoholic to the Empty Nester. There are also ideas for particular occasions and personalities. Simple, targeted gifts mean more to the recipient -- and provide an inexpensive way for you to show your appreciation. Be different! Give a gift that keeps on giving -- and truly make a difference this year!

About the Author

Author and ezine editor Darlene Arechederra inspires busy women to put the fun back into saving their money. Her complimentary newsletter serves up heaps of motivation with a unique, down-home style of writing. Join her today at <http://www.RatRaceRemedies.com>.

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