

## Four gift ideas for the cook on your list

Friends and family members who love to cook are a blessing. Not only do they spoil us with their culinary creations but they're also exceedingly easy to buy for. Here are four great gifts that are sure to please the cook on your Christmas list.

### 1. A GOURMET FOOD BASKET

Give them a food basket assembled especially for them, with their favourite cheese, spices, oils, wine — you name it. Alternatively, you might put together a basket of local or artisanal products or even one that plays upon a unique theme; say, orange food products, if this is their favourite colour, or Italian foods if they happen to have a trip to Rome booked.



### 2. A PERSONALIZED KITCHEN ACCESSORY

Enlist a local shop or craftsman to add

a personal touch to the kitchen item you're giving. It could be a thoughtful phrase, a funny remark or simply the person's name. You can personalize a wide range of items, including aprons, oven mitts, cutting boards and serving trays.

### 3. A SPECIALIZED COOKING COURSE

Have you spotted a penchant for cake making, sushi rolling or Moroccan cuisine in your favourite foodie? Enrol them in a specialty course so that they can cultivate their passion into an art form.

### 4. ASSORTED SPICES

If the cook on your list has an adventurous streak, get them an assortment of rare spices to stimulate their creativity — and their taste buds! If you're travelling abroad before the holiday season, consider picking up some out-of-town flavours along the way.

## Spreading holiday cheer to the elderly

As the Christmas season begins, it's important to plan when you'll visit your elderly friends and relatives.

Christmastime can be difficult for seniors, especially for those who've lost loved ones, who live far from their families or are no longer as active as they once were. A visit from a loved one at Christmas can mean a lot to an elderly person who might otherwise be alone.

Visiting elderly friends and relatives will be rewarding for you too. The more time you spend with your older family members, the more you'll learn about your ancestry and relatives. Someday, you'll pass this family history onto your own children and grandchildren.

The holidays are also an ideal time to bring the generations together and let your kids spend quality time with their grandparents and other older relatives. Not only do children often lift people's spirits, but they'll also get the chance to bond with the people who raised their parents and hear stories about what Mom and Dad were like at their age.

Even if you don't have an elderly relative who lives nearby, you can still bring Christmas cheer to older people in your community. Many nursing homes and assisted living facilities host holiday activities and invite community members to participate. Taking part in one of these events could be just what you need to get into the true spirit of the season.

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