

A passion for antiques

Christmas is a wonderful time to spoil those who love to collect antiques. Some people think that antiques are out of their price range, but that isn't always the case. It just takes a bit of effort and window-shopping to find an original gift that is sure to be cherished for years. You don't even necessarily have to find an elab-

orate gift. Sometimes a small decorative item can be found to complement an old-fashion decor perfectly.

With a bit of luck, you can easily find the perfect treasure. It could be a vase, a chandelier, a chest, a teapot or any other charming item. Or use your creativity and transform everyday antique items into original

decorative pieces. Flowerpots can be placed in an antique wheelbarrow or in an old straw hat. An antique quilt can be hung on the wall or even on the ceiling, and an old soft-drink cooler can be used as a coffee table. The possibilities are endless; all you need is a bit of imagination.

In any antique collection there will be some items that have not withstood the test of time as well as others.

You can give an antique collector restoration tools or accessories such as silk screens to add new life to pieces of furniture in poor condition. There are also countless books that are full of information when it comes to collecting or refinishing antique items. Some books are more general while others focus on specific items, styles and eras.

Have a sparkling Christmas

There is no better way to say, "I love you" than by surprising the one you love with jewellery. Whether it is to show your love for your spouse, mother or grandmother, offering a gift of jewellery can symbolize just how important a person is for you. Since it is such a precious gift, it should be selected with great care. This will often include visiting several jewellery stores, and determining certain criteria before making a final decision.

The type of jewellery to offer is probably the first decision you should make. Will you offer a bracelet, necklace, ring or earrings? Only by knowing the recipient of the gift well will you be able to make the right choice. Brooches and pendants can also make wonderful gifts. Thanks to a wide selection of styles and designs, it is easy to find pieces that will reflect a person's unique personality and style.

On top of these choices there are many different types of practical accessories that can also make wonderful gifts.

Other criteria that should be considered include the material chosen. Does the recipient prefer gold, silver or pearls? Each offers its particular charms and usually it is a question of taste. The size and design also need to be carefully chosen. Some delicate designs cannot adequately accommodate a large stone, no matter how precious it may be. It goes without saying that price will also drive your final decision.

You can enjoy a truly sparkling Christmas by offering the one you love some jewellery. No other gift can elicit such emotion and its timeless beauty is sure to leave a loved one wide-eyed with wonder.

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