

Christmas Wish List

Make holiday shopping excursions special

As they fulfill the social obligations of the holiday season, many people find themselves spending less time at home. Holiday shopping can monopolize people's time away from home during the months of November and December, and some shoppers wonder how they become so disconnected from other activities, including family time, that they cherish throughout the rest of the year.

One way to tackle holiday shopping without sacrificing time with family and friends is to make holiday shopping a social event.

- **Invite friends or family along.** Recreate the days of your youth when it was fun to meet friends at the mall and scour the shops. Plan a meeting location and have an itinerary in place before you set out. Divide shopping lists so that everyone shares the task of shopping and fatigue doesn't set in prematurely.
- **Make lunch or dinner part of the day.** Incorporate refuelling into your shopping plans. Failure to eat or drink can lead to hunger pangs and test

shoppers' patience, two factors that are seldom conducive to successful shopping. Having an end goal to meet friends or family at a nearby restaurant - even a dining location right within the mall - can inspire intrepid shoppers to get their work done promptly. Reward yourself for a job well done over a tasty meal and maybe a cocktail. Just be sure to indulge responsibly.

- **Break up the day with a flick.** Many malls also play home to movie theatres. Plan your shopping around the movie schedule so you can take a two-hour break to rest and relax in the theatre. Chances are you'll come out of the film relaxed, refreshed and ready to tackle the rest of your shopping list.
- **Make it a date night.** The thought of shopping may not conjure up ideas of romance, but if time is short, couples can use shopping excursions as an opportunity to spend time together. Visit a coffee shop or a bar for a nightcap afterward and enjoy some one-



on-one time. Parents can enlist the help of a babysitter to keep children entertained while they enjoy some

uninterrupted time with each other. Shopping for the perfect gifts fills the days leading to the holidays. Make

the most of such excursions by inviting friends and family along.

—MS

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