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Andover's Sustainability E-Newsletter

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Sustainable Holiday Gift Guide for the Ultimate Procrastinator

Wondering what holiday gift to give for that special someone who cares about the environment and climate change about as much as you do? Fast running out of time (and ideas)? Well, this is the guide for you! The suggested gifts are broken down by approximate costs. You can showoff with a little trivia about the environment when they open the package as well.

Stuffers (under \$25)

- Swedish Dishcloths— These fast-drying and long-lasting towels are meant to replace artificial sponges or roughly 17 rolls of paper towels. Swedish dishcloths are 100% biodegradable and compostable, so when you are done with them, they can go right to the compost. Because these dishcloths are thinner and dry faster than sponges, they will likely stink less too after dish duty. Also, Swedish Dishcloths come in a variety of colors and patterns that will please the most artistically demanding customer. Look for these marks of distinguished sustainable manufacturers: Certified Fair Trade, GOTS, OEKO-TEX, FSC and Responsible Forestry Certified
- Non-slip and Non-Stick Silicone Baking Mat— These durable baking mats are a dream for cookie and pastry makers. Safe for ovens, microwaves, and freezers (-40 to 480 degrees), the non-slip and non-stick mats come in all different sizes for a variety of applications. Aluminum foil requires mining for bauxite; as a consequence, there's about 88% more embedded carbon in every ton of aluminum compared to plastic. The silicone baking mat costs about twice as much as a 200 sq ft roll of standard aluminum foil, and do require hand washing and drying, but with the proper care, the mats should last at least 5 years.

Fun Activities and Games for Families (up to \$60)

- Botanical or Plant Press— For the little (or big) explorer in your family, sometimes a leaf, an herb or a flower catches your eye on the trail or in the garden. You can make this press yourself or buy a kit. Pressed plants have a second life as framed art or as a collectible memento for a budding ecologist. It is a gift that keeps giving; so many memories will be made during the time spent outdoors with family and friends looking for great samples. According to the British Natural History Museum, with proper care and good technique, pressed plants can last for hundreds of years. Guide on specimen selection and trail etiquette can be found [here](#).
- Wingspan Board Game— This is a well-crafted strategy board game for 2-5 players. The goal is to collect different birds and maintain a thriving ecosystem within three different habitats. The bird cards are beautifully drawn and so life-like that you may well forget your quest to lay eggs and gather resources to defeat your opponents. It's a game that is both engaging and relaxing to play at the same time, which has the added benefit of teaching children about the biology of birds and fragile ecosystems, and inspiring some family birdwatching in your backyard or on the trail after the game.



