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## The holidays are a nutty time of year



Snacking is as much a holiday tradition as turkey, tree lights, parties and shopping. It's a great time to put the nutcracker to use. Dr. Earl L. Mindell, an internationally recognized expert on nutrition, vitamins and herbal remedies, says the holidays are prime time for people to gain an awareness of the health benefits of nuts.

"Many of us love pecan pie, especially during the holidays," says Mindell. "But eaten separately throughout the year, as is the case with almonds, chestnuts, walnuts and other tree nuts, they'll significantly change your diet for the better. The nutritional values and different ways nuts protect your health are worth changing your snack habits."

There are all kinds of ways to enjoy nuts — with a dazzling array of flavored nuts available at places like Sisters Olive & Nut Co. on Cascade Avenue.

Oregon is actually a world leader in the production of the hazelnut — an extraordinarily versatile nut that goes well with and in all kinds of holiday treats.

"It's great to cook with," said Rachel Henderson of Hazelnut Hill, an online purveyor of Oregon hazelnut products. "They're

nutritious; they're good for you. They're actually really versatile."



Hazelnuts are used in candies and are tasty on their own when roasted, which brings out their flavor.

"Hazelnut butter can be used like peanut butter," Henderson noted. They can be used in sauces, and turned into flour.

"A majority are exported to China," Henderson said.

The market is so extensive, she noted, that many grass-seed farmers are converting fields to grow hazelnuts.

Hazelnut Hill specializes in creating hazelnut products for the domestic market — particularly the Oregon market. The Eugene-based retailer has been in business for over two decades, and is now under the ownership of Henderson and her husband Ryan. Ryan has run a successful farm for over 30 years, and Rachel is a passionate chocolatier.

For more information, visit [www.hazelnuthill.com](http://www.hazelnuthill.com).



## Hike-N-Peaks

Winter is slowly creeping up on Sisters Country. Be ready with a visit to Sisters' own outdoor emporium, Hike-N-Peaks.

It's all about layers, and Hike-N-Peaks has you covered — literally — from base to shell. They also carry great soft shell pants for snowshoeing and cross-country skiing. Get your snowshoes here, and your trekking poles. There are gloves for every kind of winter outdoor activity.

And the outdoorsy person on your list will be mighty happy if you shop for them at Hike-N-Peaks. Stop in on Black Friday and get extraordinary deals on top brands of packs, tents, and sleeping bags — like Osprey, Big Agnes, and Marmot.

As proprietor Sharri Bertagna says, "It'll be rockin'!"

There are plenty of stocking-stuffers there, too — something for every budget and for every person who looks longingly to the Sisters backcountry for the spirit of adventure!



## Hazelnut Hill

At Hazelnut Hill, they go nuts at the holidays!

Who doesn't love hazelnuts and chocolate? They've been making hazelnut products for over 26 years, but new owners Ryan, a fourth-generation farmer, and Rachel, a passionate chocolatier, are using the same recipes — plus some of their own — to take hazelnuts to a new level.

Order their hazelnuts in bulk for eating, or hazelnut meal for baking; or shop their website for gifts of roasted hazelnuts and specialty products like hazelnut toffee or brittle, chocolate-covered hazelnuts and turtle candy, hazelnut pancake and waffle mix, and hazelnut butter. And don't miss their hot chocolate or a two-pound Oregon scenic chocolate bar!

Hazelnuts are a great source of magnesium and iron, and a good source of protein and healthy fats. There's nothing more "Oregon" than hazelnuts; the state is the largest hazelnut producer in the U.S.

Visit Hazelnut Hill at [www.hazelnuthill.com](http://www.hazelnuthill.com) or call 541-510-4464.

