

1

Slow down

'Tis the season to be jolly, not stressed, frenzied, or road-raged. Trade in the hustle and bustle of long car rides and over-packed malls for a relaxing stroll through your favorite downtown business. The benefits of slowing things down over the holidays can improve your health, well-being, and overall mood, especially when schedules are at their fullest. The less time you spend traveling great distances and drudging through hordes of shoppers, the more time you will be able to enjoy with your family around the fireplace.

2

Save money

Shopping locally, you tend to buy just what you need. This helps cut down on the clutter – and the wrapping – once you get home, but also lessens the impact on your wallet. Keeping local owners in business also fosters a competitive entrepreneurial landscape that will in the long run improve quality while decreasing costs.

3

Give a gift to the local economy

While you're making your list and checking it twice this holiday season, don't forget to include your local independent business owners. They're not asking for much this year, just a little support. And you'd be smart to give it. A substantially larger percentage of your hard-earned money stays in your community when you choose to shop locally for Christmas instead of leaving the area. Recent studies have shown that as much as \$75 of every \$100 you spend at a locally owned businesses remains in your area, versus \$40 at non-locally owned establishments. This number, in most cases, drops to zero dollars when you buy online.

4

Go unique

Local Local businesses are hotbeds for the unique and eclectic items that are sure to make a lasting impression on that hard-to-buy-for person in your life. Pottery, paintings, garden supplies and more can be found just a few blocks away at your downtown establishment.

5

Go green while saving green

Shopping locally not only saves you money in the long run, but it also helps lessen your carbon footprint by reducing the amount of gas and packaging required to complete the cycle of product development to purchase. The connection between smart shopping and sustainability is strong, especially over the holiday season when massive amounts of shoppers are visiting stores across the world. While you're focusing on the perfect gift for that special someone, don't forget the health of the environment and the shape you want to leave it for future generations.



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