

SHOP LOCAL FOR THE HOLIDAYS | LOCAL FLAVORS

Don't Forget the Treats

With the focus so much on gift-giving, it's easy to forget that you also can get a little creative with the types of gifts you buy, especially with food. Most towns have local restaurants and bakeries, and all it takes is a bit of effort to work up a Christmas gift that can warm a heart — and a stomach.

THINK OUTSIDE THE BOX

Local bakeries are the obvious mainstays for most towns, and those are great. But, if you're looking to get a bit more creative, check around for something a bit quirkier. From gourmet popcorn shops to vintage candy stores, many small towns hold some interesting surprises, if you look close enough. These gifts can be both delicious and one-of-a-kind, since it's something only available locally. If you want to take it a step further, include a gift box with a local recipe.

CHECK OUT THE HOLIDAY DEALS

Along with being delicious, a box of cookies or gourmet treats also can take the edge off of wrapping and delivery. Many bakeries and candy shops offer holiday-themed packages, complete with bows and cards that can be personalized with different treats and messages. Some even offer delivery. If you're giving to a sports fan, some even offer team-themed packages. Just be sure to ask what types of gift packaging they offer. It might cost a couple of extra bucks but could save a whole lot of hassle.

DON'T FORGET THE RESTAURANTS

If you want to go with something a bit easier, you can always pick up an item (or gift card) from a local restaurant. The local barbecue joint might have its own special sauce, or a local bakery might sell its own cookie dough for baking at your leisure. If you have a loved one who likes to cook (or grill), this could make for a unique option to keep on the gift list.

