

HAVE A WENDERFUL CHRISTMAS

Your guide to living sustainably
through the holiday season



AT WEN WE LOVE THE HOLIDAYS...

However, we also know that the planet doesn't love them quite as much.

Every year in Britain we produce 30% more rubbish over the Christmas period, which amounts to over 3 million tonnes of festive waste. Trees, cards, wrapping paper, food, packaging and gifts... too much of the things we think are essential to our festive celebrations end up in the landfill. This can represent quite a dilemma for those of us trying to reduce our environmental impact, but fear not! – you don't need to be a Scrooge to make Christmas greener. If you want to cut down and reduce over the festive period, Wen has a few ideas to share...



Wen.

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CHRISTMAS TREES

People in Britain buy around eight million trees every year and despite growing recycling efforts, over six million end up burnt or dumped in a landfill (according to the British Tree Growers' Association).

If you're going for the more traditional Christmas tree look you might want to consult this guidance from the Carbon Trust, ranking different options from most to least environmentally-friendly:

1. The winner is the potted tree. You can plant it in your garden after Christmas and bring it back inside the following year. An average breathing tree will also capture over 1 tonne of carbon per year, compensating for around 10% of your annual carbon footprint!

2. If you don't have a garden or the space to keep a potted tree, real trees are a good option. Make sure to purchase it from a seller committed to growing trees in an environmental and sustainable manner.

3. If you have an artificial tree, by all means re-use it! Plastic trees are ranked third by Carbon Trust due to their carbon-intensive manufacturing processes. But by reusing your tree, you can lower its environmental impact. Just remember: plastic trees do not recycle well so even if you want to switch to a real tree, make sure to donate rather than throw the old one away....

If you are looking for an original alternative to the Christmas tree, why not decorate a big pot plant instead? You could also get creative and build your own tree out of waste materials from around the home!

WRAPPING PAPER & CARDS

1.5 billion of Christmas cards are thrown out in the UK yearly which amounts to 500 million cut trees (one tree is needed to make three thousand cards).

Only send them if you mean them! Christmas cards are a great tradition, but too many are sent thoughtlessly and to a very large mailing list. Why not switch to e-cards and reserve paper cards for the people who will most appreciate it!

A very small portion of the 8,000 tonnes of wrapping paper used each year is recycled. Alternative wrappings can easily be made with newspaper, pieces of old material and pieces of string or ribbon. But if you are buying , make sure to go for 100% recycled paper.

If you do receive more cards than you can keep and more wrapping than necessary, why not save them and get crafty?

Cards and wrapping paper are easy to recycle: keep them and use them the following year to make your own new cards,tags or decorations. - You could even use wrapping paper to make your own Christmas crackers.

If you are not feeling creative yourself, you could check with local community centres and schools whether they would be interested in taking your cards..

Alternatively, you can always recycle the cards with the cardboard recycling, or bring them to your local supermarket.



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MAKE A CHRISTMAS CRACKER

A4 sheets of paper (any thin paper will do, you can use a previous year's wrapping paper for example)

Glue or tape

Kitchen or loo-roll barrels

A piece of string, shoelace or ribbon

Christmas snaps (which you can get online or in most crafts shops)

Decorations

Small gifts or toys

You could also add individual jokes or sayings
And a paper crown (easily handmade too!) to make the cracker experience authentic

1. Divide the A4-size paper into three by scoring it lightly. Cut up the kitchen-roll barrel into three parts, ensuring that one piece is slightly larger than the others. This will form the central part of the cracker

2. Tape or glue the snap, only sticking the ends to the paper to make sure it'll break. Place the three parts of the barrel in the centre of each section of the paper

3. Using a tight grip and rolling away from yourself, roll the paper onto the barrel, tucking in the edges neatly. Then glue or tape the seam of the cracker

4. Add gifts to the cracker by dropping them carefully into one end. Personalise your crackers by adding decorations such as bows and ribbons

5. Using a piece of string, tie around the paper at the ends of the central section in the paper to create a neck at either end of the cracker



GUILT FREE GIFT GIVING

Shop consciously this Christmas. The British spend more on Christmas presents than any other European country, with the average Brit spending over £300 on gifts! It is, of course, far better to give than it is to receive, and we applaud this show of generosity, but all too often gifts fall victim to a change of taste, and are doomed to landfill site after one use. This is a time when shops and advertisers will constantly make you believe that you need to buy more.

Use cash or a debit card rather than a credit card to avoid racking up debt. Another easy thing to do is to plan ahead. Whether for food, toys or decorations, by making a list you could avoid buying things you don't really need or want. Shopping locally or at markets reduces the airmiles of your gifts, and, subsequently, lowers your carbon footprint, as well as supporting small businesses. Buy fewer, more considered gifts, rather than presents for the sake of presents! Buy things that you know the recipient will really love, and that will last. They will be more appreciated by your friends and the planet.

Buy vouchers or experiences, not stuff! Paying for someone to do something they wouldn't normally afford is environmentally friendly and giving them a treat. Tickets to plays, ballets, day trips, evening classes or short courses are all great gifts that don't cost the earth!

Give your time, not money: visiting an elderly relative is a gift in its own right. Or volunteer at a homeless shelter. Contact your local volunteer bureau or look on www.timebank.org.uk

For a present that lasts all year- and really does keep giving- pay for a subscription to a magazine or membership of a charity. Join Wen and receive briefings on our different campaigns.

FASHION

Buying second hand or recycled clothing is one of the most environmentally friendly options. Scour your local charity shops for some great bargains that are completely unique! An estimated 350,000 tons of used clothing goes to landfill each year in the UK, so buying second hand clothes is a great way of reducing this number. And, the money often goes to a good cause, so you can feel good about that too! Shops such as Clothes Shack offer a huge range of as good as new second hand clothes, some for as cheap as 99p! Try [Reve en vert](#), the self-proclaimed Net-a-porter of sustainable style or [Depop](#), an online platform where people trade their previously loved used goods at affordable prices.



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BEAUTY

A lot of the products marketed to help reduce our wrinkles, thicken our hair or improve our skin are full of harmful chemicals that may actually be causing more damage than good. What we put on our bodies can have as much of an impact as what we put into it. However, deciphering the ever increasing list of ingredients on the packets of products we use every day can be an impossible task, so many of us are using these products with no real understanding of what is actually in them. Making your own cosmetics and beauty products using all natural, organic ingredients is the best way of ensuring that you aren't applying harmful chemicals to your skin, and, of course, everyone prefers a homemade present!



Making your own moisturiser is really easy, and it can be given a unique, personalised scent by using different combinations of essential oils.

Making your own moisturiser is really easy, and it can be given a unique, personalised scent by using different combinations of essential oils. Essential oils all have different benefits for the body, so you can tailor your moisturiser to suit your recipient! On the next page is a list of our favourite oils, and their benefits for the skin!





JOJOBA OIL

This lightweight oil is suitable for all skin types, though it works best for those with combination or oily skin. It is very similar to sebum, the skin's natural lubricant, which regulates how much oil the skin produces naturally. Jojoba oil is also an excellent carrier oil (for mixing with other exciting things!)

ROSEHIP OIL

This oil is great for healing scar tissue as it is rich in Omega-3 and Omega-6 essential fatty acids and Vitamin C, so try it on stretch marks! It is also high in retinoic acid, which can help reduce the appearance of wrinkles and brighten the skin.

ALMOND OIL

A very moisturizing oil that is excellent for dry skin.



HEMP OIL

Hemp seed oil has a low comedogenic rating, which means it does not clog pores! Perfect for use on the face, and also has effective anti-inflammatory properties. It is also believed to contain the ideal ratio of Omega 3 to Omega 6 essential fatty acids, allowing it to sink into the skin well. Take care to store hemp seed oil in the fridge or freezer as it will spoil if left at room temperature. It works best when mixed into a carrier oil.

LAVENDER OIL

Lavender oil is suitable for dry and oily skin. It is often recommended to include in a facial oil to treat acne or breakout-prone skin due to its antibacterial, antifungal and anti-inflammatory properties. It could help heal and fade the appearance of scars and sun spots.



BASIC BODY MOISTURISER

8 tbsp shea butter

2 tbsp nourishing oil,
such as avocado,
apricot,

jojoba or sweet
almond oil

15 drops lavender
essential oil

10 drops rosemary
essential oil

3-5 drops tea tree
essential oil

Melt shea butter in a saucepan over a low heat.

Add in the 2 tbsp nourishing oil and mix.

Chill the mixture in the freezer for 15-20 minutes
until solid (but not too hard!)

Add in the essential oils and whip until soft and
buttery. You can use an electric whisk or do it by
hand – think of it as a workout!

Store at room temperature.



*Change the essential
oils in this recipe to
create your own,
personalised
products!*

VANILLA CHAI BODY SCRUB

5 chai tea bags

1/2 cup brown sugar

1/2 cup white sugar

1/2 teaspoon ground
cinnamon

6 tbsp coconut oil

1 tsp honey

2 tsp vanilla extract

Mix the contents of the tea bags, the sugar and cinnamon

together. Add the coconut oil, honey and vanilla extract. Mix well.

Store in a sealed jar. The mixture will keep for up to a year.



*Chai is the
perfect
Christmas
flavour!*



REVE EN VERT

Shoreditch based Reve en vert is the self-proclaimed Net-a-porter of sustainable style. They supply beautiful, high-quality fashion, beauty products and jewellery that are as environmentally friendly as they are aesthetically pleasing. Their clothes are designed by a well curated group of designers who have both ethical and environmental interests at heart, and are also guided by a desire to create really high quality garments.

www.revenvert.com

BLUEPATCH

Bluepatch is a catalogue of British products, all made with a sustainable edge. They've everything from eco-fashion and handmade furniture to organic wine and beauty products. Take a look- you're sure to be inspired! www.bluepatch.org

NAPPY EVER AFTER

Nappy Ever After provide a range of real, cloth nappies in a range of fashionable (and adorable!) styles! Plus beautiful clothing and items for the nursery. Reusable nappies are better for the planet, your baby and your wallet.

www.nappyeverafter.co.uk

LIV

Based on a working biodynamic farm in England, Liv sells organic clothing, made using skilful craftwork and positive people-chains. They describe themselves as 'the ethical department store,' and sell everything from organic cotton clothes to natural skincare products and ethical homeware. www.liv.co.uk

PEOPLE TREE

For over twenty years, People Tree has been a pioneer of sustainable and Fairtrade fashion, partnering with artisans and growers to create environmentally and human friendly clothing. Their garments are hand crafted in organic cotton and sustainable materials, using traditional skills that support rural communities. www.peopletree.co.uk

LITTLE GREEN RADICALS

Little Green Radicals create beautiful baby clothes using organic and Fairtrade materials. Launched in 2005, it was one of the first brands in the UK to receive the Fairtrade certification for cotton.

www.littlegreenradicals.co.uk

FOOD

Christmas really is all about eating, and we've gathered our favourite recipes for a seasonal, healthy and delicious festive feast!

Christmas is a time to treat yourself to good food. So why not try some fresh local produce? Or, better yet, grow your own! Different types of cabbage, including kale and brussels sprouts are at their best in December so raid your garden for some delicious green accompaniments to your Christmas feast.

Carrots and beetroot are also in season at this time of year, and they make great accompaniments to the classic roast! Simply roast both in the oven for 30-45 minutes, or until they are soft, then serve hot with crumbled goats cheese and roughly chopped almonds sprinkled over the top.

Look for organic, locally produced or fairly traded food. Farmers markets are popping up all over the U.K. Avoid food that is over-packaged and take your own bag to the supermarket. Buy foods in reusable containers (glass, cans, paper). Make a list before you go, so you're not tempted to buy things you don't really need or want. Of course use the leftovers in any way you can!

Food waste is a huge problem generally, but it is especially bad at Christmas. According to Foodcycle, each Christmas Brits throw away 5 million Christmas puddings, 2 million turkeys and 74 million mince pies! This is a huge strain on the environment and our wallets!

You can find loads more tips for a waste-less Christmas at www.lovefoodhatewaste.com, and keep your eyes on the Wen blog for seasonal recipes.

To add a new twist to the classic sprout, try halving them, then frying with a few cloves of garlic and a good pinch of salt and pepper over the top for the perfect vegetable side.

GLAZED LENTIL, APPLE AND WALNUT LOAF

200g uncooked green lentils
125g walnuts, finely chopped and toasted
3 tbsp ground flax + 120ml water
3 garlic cloves, minced
225g diced sweet onion
100g diced celery
50g grated carrot
1/2 a peeled and grated sweet apple (use a firm variety)
50g raisins
50g oat flour
40g breadcrumb
2 tsp fresh thyme (or 3/4 tsp dried thyme)
salt & pepper
red pepper flakes

Balsamic Apple Glaze:

60g ketchup
1 tbsp pure maple syrup
2 tbsp apple butter
2 tbsp balsamic vinegar

1 Preheat oven to 160 C/fan140C/gas 3. Rinse and strain lentils. Place lentils into pot with double the volume of cold water (or veg broth). Bring to a boil and season with salt. Reduce heat to medium/low and simmer, uncovered, for at least 40-45 minutes. Stir Frequently & add a bit of water if needed, so that they don't stick to the pan. The goal is to overcook the lentils slightly. Mash lentils slightly with a spoon when ready.

2. Toast the walnuts in the preheated oven for about 8-10 minutes. Set aside.

3. Increase oven temp to 180C/fan160C/gas 4.

4. Whisk ground flax with water in a small bowl and set aside.

5. Heat a teaspoon of olive oil in a skillet over medium heat. Saute the garlic and onion for about 5 minutes. Season with salt. Then add in the diced celery, shredded carrot and apple, and raisins. Sautee for about 5 more minutes. Remove from heat.

6. In a large mixing bowl, mix all ingredients together. Adjust seasoning to taste.

7. Grease a loaf tin and line with parchment paper. Press mixture firmly into tin. Whisk glaze ingredients and then spread half on top of the loaves. You can reserve the rest for a dipping sauce.

8. Bake at 180C/fan160C/gas 4 for 40-50 minutes, uncovered. Edges will be lightly brown. Cool in tin for at least 10 minutes before transferring to a cooling rack. Best to wait until the loaf is cool before slicing.

Recipe from: Oh She Glows Cookbook, Angela Liddon

LEBKUCHEN

250g plain flour
85g ground almonds
2 tsp ground ginger
1 tsp ground cinnamon
1/2 tsp bicarbonate of soda
200ml clear honey or maple syrup
1 lemon, finely grated zest
85g butter (or vegan alternative)
pinch each ground cloves, grated nutmeg and black pepper
1 tsp baking powder

For the icing

100g icing sugar
juice from 1/2 lemon

1. Tip the dry ingredients into a large bowl. Heat the honey (maple syrup) and butter (or alternative) in a pan over a low heat until it melts, then pour into the flour mixture along with the lemon zest. Mix well until dough is combined and fairly solid. Cover and leave to cool.

2. Heat oven to 180C/fan160C/gas 4. Using your hands, roll dough into about 30 balls, each 3cm wide, then flatten each one slightly into a disk. Divide the biscuits between two baking trays lined with baking parchment, leaving room for them to expand. Bake for 15 mins, then cool on a wire rack.

3. To ice the biscuits, mix together the icing sugar, lemon juice and 1-2 tbsp water to form a smooth, runny icing. Dip the top of each biscuit in the icing and spread with the back of a knife. Leave to dry out in a warm place.

Lebkuchen are German biscuits similar to gingerbread, they are easy to make and a great Christmas treat.



Wen

20 Club Row, London, E2 7EY
wen.org.uk

Written by

Sarah-Jane Ewart, Alison Ratliff & Rosily Roberts

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