

Out of the box

Gifts to do, to see, to make, to try, to experience...

GIFT IDEAS

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CALGARY HERALD

Everyone has at least one person on their holiday gift list who's impossible to buy for. This year, why not think out of the box?

In that spirit, we've done some of the heavy thinking for you. These gifts won't necessarily be easily wrapped, and some won't fit under the tree, but they will leave a lasting impression.

Illustrations by Pierre A. Lamielle, Calgary Herald

Present to pump you up

If you're tired of stuffing stockings with gym socks and health magazines, get a little creative for the fitness nut in your life. For example, grab a \$70 card good for five yoga classes at the Bodhi Tree Yoga Centre (270-0219, 821 14th St. N.W.). Give a package of eight personal training sessions at the Talisman Centre (233-8393, 2225 Macleod Trail S.), which costs \$484 for members or \$536 for non-members (prices don't include GST). Or snag a Canada Olympic Park gift card, which ranges in price from \$20 to \$250 and can be redeemed for any product or service offered at the park — from ski or snowboard lessons to a bob-sleigh or luge run (247-5452, 88 Canada Olympic Road S.W.).

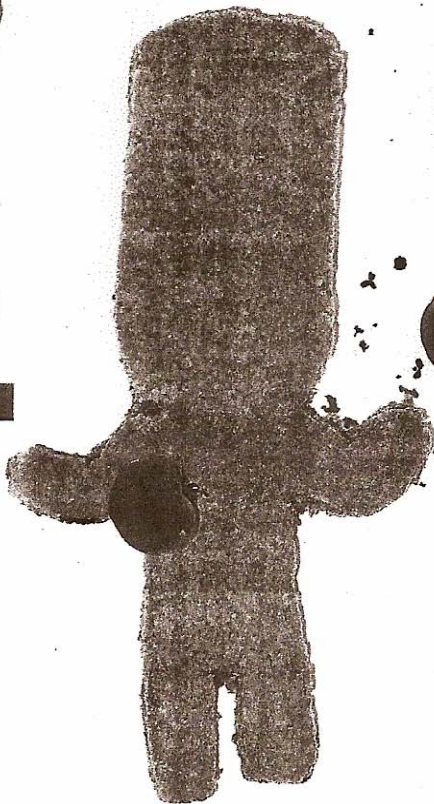


Private dinner for two

For \$120 a person, Calgary chef Patrick Dunn, owner of InterCourse Chef Services, will plan a special menu with your sweetheart's favourite foods, hit the market and then arrive on scene, whip up a three-course feast in your kitchen, serve it in your dining room and do all the dishes.

Or for \$275, Dunn will host a private cooking class in your home for you and a friend. The classes are fun and informative with lots of taste testing along the way. Or make it a party and invite a bunch of friends, at an additional \$75 each, to an in-home cooking class/party.

For more information call Dunn at 880-4207, visit inter-course.ca, or e-mail patrick@inter-course.ca.

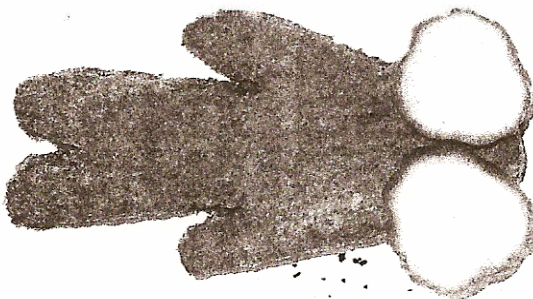


Private flight over the city at sunset

This gift is sure to impress, won't empty your wallet and will be a show stopper this holiday season. Hire a single-engine, fixed-wing Cessna, pilot included, to take you and a friend for a sunset flight over Calgary and the foothills.

A 30-minute flight costs \$75. Or for \$210, go farther afield to the mountains, to watch the sun set behind the peaks from the clouds above.

For more information, call Morgan Air Services at 291-3644 or visit morganairservices.com.



Pamper, relax, exfoliate, repeat

This is one great deal in our books. For \$155, the Quickie 6 Pack from Skoah spa card buys your favourite gal or guy six signature Quickie facials from Skoah spa in Chinook Centre. This is a relaxing, decadent facial experience, all in a little less than 30 minutes. This facial includes cleansing, exfoliation, mini-massage, mask, moisturizer, a quickie skin assessment and then you're sent on your way with a list of Skoah products best suited for your skin. For more information call 203-0200; visit skoah.com; or e-mail chinook@skoah.com.

Driving Miss Daisy

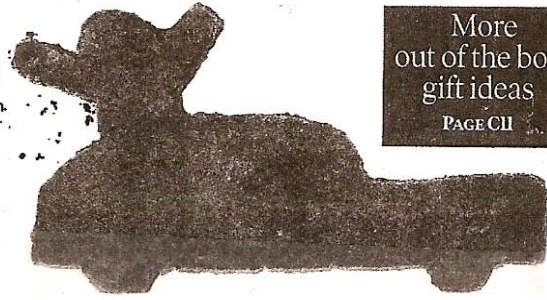
The last thing your granny needs is another trinket to put on the mantle. Why not get her something she can use? A gift certificate for Driving Miss Daisy, a local cab and companion service for seniors, is a great idea. Think of this service as a step up from a basic taxi ride — drivers will accompany the senior in your life to and from doctor's appointments, the

grocery store and social events.

Currently, the service is available in the northwest and west central parts of the city, but will expand to cover the southwest and southeast starting Jan. 1. A \$90 gift certificate gives 100 minutes of transportation time. To order, call Bob at 454-4568 or e-mail bob@drivingmissdaisy.net.

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A health and wellness makeover

The \$1,700 price tag may seem steep at first glance, but Sante Spa's one-month Life Balancing program is a stellar gift for someone in need of a total health overhaul.

After an initial comprehensive physical testing, experts at Sante (508 24th Ave. S.W.) devise a personalized and medical-based program designed to whip people

into good physical and mental health. The program includes one session with a physiotherapist, two nutritional counselling sessions, six personal training sessions and four life coaching sessions supplemented with unlimited e-mail support for the month. For more information, call Anita at 228-7862, e-mail anita@santespa.com or visit santespa.com.

Illustration by
Pierre A. Lamielle,
Calgary Herald

Spark a creative fire

The Continuing Education faculties at the University of Calgary and Mount Royal College have courses to suit any personality, whim or passion, from photography to art history to language lessons, to investing, to meditation, to painting, to business management and life coaching classes.

The new semester at both facilities starts mid-January. Courses and seminars vary in length and cost.

For U of C classes and schedule, call 220-2866 or visit conted.ucalgary.ca.

For Mount Royal classes and schedule, call 440-3833 or visit conted.mtroyal.ca.

The gift of meal planning

Give the gift of never again having to answer the question: what's for dinner?

Gift certificates for weekly personalized meal plans by Calgary company Wovenfare will silence the queries.

Here's how it works: sign up online for a free account, then go to the purchase credits link. There you can buy meal plan gift certificates for that busy multi-tasker on your holiday list.

Gift certificates cost \$20 for five weeks, \$35 for 10 weeks, \$48.75 for 15 weeks or \$60 for 20 weeks. Starting Saturday, and just for the month of December, Wovenfare has a 52-week

(one-year) special for \$120.

From there, gift recipients fill out an online questionnaire about their food likes and dislikes, and their cooking habits (i.e. do they like to work from recipes or wing it), among other nutrition and lifestyle questions.

Every week, a new personalized meal plan, complete with healthy recipes and a shopping list, is e-mailed.

For more information go to wovenfare.com or call 809-1678.

The gift of time

Give the gift of time, in the form of concierge services, to that extremely busy person on your gift list. For \$65, \$80 or \$110 an hour (rates are based on level of service) Calgary-based Time is Money Concierge Services will offer up their time to free up some for someone else.

The company will arrange appointments, do banking, book restaurants, do recycling, drop off and pick up dry cleaning, plan parties, book plane tickets and accommodations, pay bills and do banking, among a wide variety of other services.

The company also sells annual memberships for \$175 plus the cost of hours (at a reduced rate for members).

Call 612-2993, e-mail info@timeismoney.ca or visit timeismoney.ca for more information and service listings.

A getaway without getting away

Kensington Riverside Inn — that quaint boutique hotel in the heart of hipsterville — has several pampering packages to romance that special someone.

A favourite, called Getaway in the City, costs \$120 plus GST (in addition to regular room rate) and includes a \$100 gift certificate at Osteria de Medici or River Cafe, a bottle of sparkling Frixenet wine, evening hors d'oeuvres, underground parking, popcorn (for late-night movie watching) and gourmet breakfast in bed complete with morning newspaper.

Rooms range in cost from \$284 to \$399 per weekday night from Dec. 1 to Feb 29. Weekend (Friday and Saturday nights) rates are \$199, \$224, or \$299, depending on the room. Rates don't include taxes.

One hitch: getting a weekend dinner reservation in Calgary between Dec. 20 and 31 is already tight so the folks at the inn recommend a stay in the new year or, if the guest can find a table at their own favourite restaurant, hotel staff will still honour the \$100 dinner gift certificate.

For more information, visit kensingtonriversideinn.com or call 228-4442.

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