

Compliments of



Cooking with Color

Enjoy blue, red, and purple fruits this holiday season.
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No Sprain, No Pain

Protect your ankles against winter slips and spills.
page 46

December 2006

tasteforlife®

relax &
ENJOY

7 HEALTHY
HOLIDAY TIPS

party without
pounds

SAY NO TO
WEIGHT GAIN

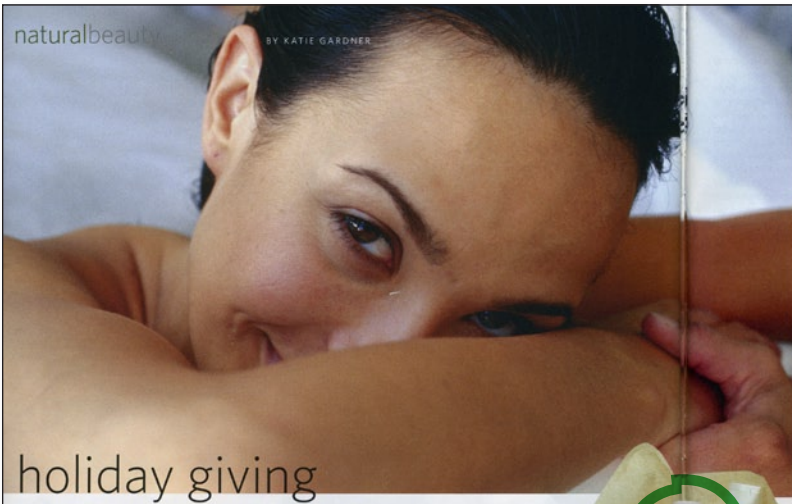
give the gift
of health

enzyme
power
AID YOUR
DIGESTION

the beauty
of pure
fragrance

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holiday giving

PURE FRAGRANCE FOR FAMILY AND FRIENDS

Natural beauty care products can encourage rest and relaxation—as well as mental clarity—during this busy, often hectic season. Your favorite natural products store has gifts that are as varied as the needs and preferences of those on your shopping list. Luxurious oils, high-quality soaps, and healing bath salts are just some of the many choices.

GIFTS FROM NATURE

Bath oils. Great for massage, in the bath, or as an all-over body softener, plant oils help keep skin soft and smooth. "Nutrient-rich oils such as macadamia nut, sesame seed, sunflower, extra-virgin olive, and avocado are rich in omega fatty acids and can easily penetrate the skin's tissues and aid in prevention of moisture loss," says Stephanie Tourles, licensed esthetician. These rich, emollient oils are great for pampering normal to dry skin, especially during the winter months.

Oils work best when applied to damp skin, as they help seal moisture in and prevent water evaporation. Tourles suggests using one to three teaspoons of natural oil per bath, or smoothing onto the skin immediately after bathing or showering. For oily skin, choose lighter oils like grape seed or hazelnut.

Bath salts. "Soaking in mineral-rich waters has a long history of therapeutic use all around the world," explains Tom Havran, aromatherapy specialist at Aura Cacia. "Adding bath salts to a tubful of warm water increases the mineral content in the bath, aiding in the detoxification process." Bathing in warm water opens pores in the skin, while minerals help pull fluid and toxins from body tissue. Two recent studies show the healing potential of Dead Sea salts for hydrating and reducing rough skin. Even people with atopic dry skin, or eczema, who soaked their forearms



in water containing 5 percent Dead Sea salts for 15 minutes, reported decreased inflammation.

"Sea salt and Epsom salt alike help to draw out lactic acid buildup in your muscles following a strenuous workout," adds Tourles. Soaking for 20 to 30 minutes in a baking soda bath can be useful. "Baking soda acts as a water softener, leaving the skin very soft and silky. It relieves itching from rashes and general dry skin."

Fragrances. Natural scents make healthy alternatives to conventional perfumes, which may contain dubious substances including phthalates, synthetic aldehydes, and other chemicals that can cause skin and sinus irritations or allergies. Researchers suggest that exposure to chemicals in conventional colognes and perfumes contributes to the growing number of asthma cases, as well as allergic contact dermatitis and even migraines.

"Mass-market perfumes and colognes contain coal tar-derived synthetic fragrances and other ingredients that can be drying and irritating to sensitive skin—and can only mimic the synergistic essential oil blends of a natural perfume," says Havran. Formulated with herbs and essential oils, natural perfumes and colognes work with the body to create subtle fragrances that bring a sense of well-being to the wearer. "When essential oils are inhaled, they have a direct effect on the limbic system of the brain and can positively affect mood," he explains.

Soaps. These make great stocking stuffers—even those mainly men need to get clean. "During the winter months, when indoor heat can really rob skin of moisture, it's helpful to use natural soaps that do not contain detergents and other chemical ingredients, which can exacerbate dryness and itchiness," says Dakshina Vanzetti, president of Aurore Ayurvedic Imports.

Natural products are formulated with humectants like vegetable glycerin, which attract and hold moisture in the skin. "Natural soaps made with ingredients like olive oil, glycerin, and shea butter are less drying than detergent-based conventional soaps because they do not strip skin of its natural protective oils," notes Tourles. "Natural plant oils also have moisturizing properties that help to nourish skin and prevent dryness."

Look for luxurious soaps with mineral-rich Dead Sea salts, goat's milk, and coconut or sesame oils to keep skin moisturized. "Our soaps often help deliver relief from conditions such as psoriasis and eczema as well as acne," says Amjad Muasher, third-generation soapmaker and founder of One With Nature.

FOR THAT SPECIAL SOMEONE

To promote real indulgence, create or purchase gift bags that include everything to keep the body beautiful. Combining beauty products like body lotions, soaps, scrubs, bath salts, massage tools, and oils makes it easy to pamper the entire body.

If someone on your list has rough, cracked hands or feet, choose or create a manucure or pedicure gift bag that can help make fingers and toes look like new. Foot care



THE GIFT OF HERBS

Natural products contain botanicals, hydrosols (distillation waters from essential oil extraction), and pure essential oils that supplement personal care formulas. "Herbal extracts provide benefits

beyond the functional ingredients of a product. Antioxidants from green tea may help fight free-radical damage and thus the effects of aging," says Tom Havran of Aura Cacia.

For everyone on your gift list, choose botanical and essential oil scents that best fit their needs: **INSOMNIA.** Bergamot, chamomile, cypress, frankincense, geranium, jasmine, lavender, lemon, marjoram, melissa, myrrh, neroli, nutmeg, patchouli, petitgrain, rose, sage, sandalwood, and ylang-ylang.

RELAXATION AND STRESS RELIEF. Anise, basil, bay, bergamot, cardamom, chamomile, citrus, clary sage, eucalyptus, fennel, frankincense, juniper, lavender, marjoram, neroli, nutmeg, peppermint, rose, rosewood, sage, sandalwood, thyme, and ylang-ylang.

SKIN REJUVENATION AND HEALING. Oatmeal, green tea, vitamin C, aloe vera, and lavender.

SORE MUSCLES. Bay, camphor, chamomile, cinnamon, eucalyptus, ginger, juniper, lavender, marjoram, peppermint, rosemary, and thyme.

kits with foot massagers, socks, pumice stones, soaks, files, scrubs, and creams make caring for feet a relaxing indulgence. Or put together a manucure kit with everything needed to repair damaged hands and nails: nail brushes, filing blocks, hand and cuticle creams, even soft cotton gloves to wear to bed at night.

For holiday giving, choose lotions, bath products, and soaps with wintry, holiday scents like pine, fir, cinnamon, myrrh, and frankincense. For variety, try mixing different scents, or if someone on your list is a lavender lover, create a gift bag filled only with lavender-scented beauty treats.

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