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Sassy Girl's Guide to the Holidays

Gifts

Top 10 Gifts for the Moms in Your Life

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The biggest challenge of the holiday gift-buying campaign is finding the ideal present for dear ol' mom. Whether your mother is the sweetest person on earth, or your toughest critic, the gift suggestions on this shopping list should have mom beaming with seasonal joy and glad tidings.



1. Roots' Leather Shoulder Bag. Moms are always spending money on others and rarely on themselves. Case in point, the purse that she's been carting around for what seems like forever. She may think that her handbag is just an everyday necessity, not an accessory that has the power to make her feel fashionable and confident. Indulge your mom with an introduction to the Little Olivia shoulder bag from Roots (\$108). With two classic hues—black or brown—to choose from, this gorgeous purse of 100% Italian leather is proudly Canadian made. Stylish with a timeless appeal, this Roots creation is the ideal bag for a multi-tasking mom-on-the-go. With a handy zippered outer pocket riding shotgun to the roomy main compartment, this tote has plenty of space to keep mom's life organized. The Little Olivia is so hip and happening, you'll want to "borrow" it from mom for yourself!



2. Culinary DVD & Book Combo. Moms typically love to spoil their loved ones with homemade treats warm from the kitchen. This holiday season, let's give mom an overdue respite from kitchen confines. Let mom sit back and enjoy the season without lifting a measuring cup, or turning on the oven. While the family pitches in to create this year's holiday feast, mom can kick back, relax and enjoy some delicious culinary treats, entertainment style. As a starter course, the wonderfully uplifting *Julie & Julia* DVD (Sony Pictures Home Entertainment; available as of December 8 from Amazon.ca; \$24) will whet mom's appetite for the holiday meal to come. The film focuses on blogger Julie Powell's (portrayed by Amy Adams) year-long odyssey cooking her days through the elaborate French recipes of Julia Child's *Mastering the Art of French Cooking*. Meryl Streep's portrayal of Ms. Child, one of America's most revered chefs, is fascinating and inspiring. Don't be surprised if more than one of your family sneaks away from the heat of the oven to catch a glimpse! Your own home-cooked feast may be more Julie than Julia, but this movie and the yummy aromas wafting from the kitchen are all the ingredients needed to have Mom's

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mouth watering.

Once dinner has been gobbled up, and the tryptophan has taken effect, mom can curl up by the toasty fireplace and partake in a satisfying dessert with Andrea Israel's *The Recipe Club: A Tale of Food and Friendship* (published by Polhemus Press; available at Chapters.Indigo.ca, \$20.). This touching story is told through the course of letters, emails and recipes (80 in all) exchanged between two dear friends during the journey from childhood to adulthood. Mom can explore all the triumphs, tragedies and secrets that only the closest of friends can share, along with some tasty recipes on the side. With these two culinary themed gifts, mom's appetite will be pleasantly satiated.



3. Monthly Flower Deliveries. Canada may be knee deep in Winter for much of the year, but it can be Spring for mom every month! Join the [Bouquet of the Month Club](#) (O'Connor Florist; price range \$145-\$500) and ease that Great White North chill. Based in Toronto since 1979, O'Connor Florist provides same-day delivery of beautifully arranged bouquets across most of Canada and the U.S. You can send flower power for a few months, or the entire year. O'Connor Florist offers several spectacular bouquet packages for your petal purchasing pleasure.

4. Pampering Cosmetics Demonstration. We all agree that moms are at the top of our "to be pampered" list. While we might prefer to receive a truck load of new cosmetic products to try out on our own, our moms are often hesitant to take the plunge into new make-up territory without a little guidance. Help mom venture out of her make-up comfort zone and treat her to an indulgent afternoon all at the same time with an enjoyable cosmetics demonstration at The Bay. An HBC gift card is mom's ticket to Canada's most famous retailer and its impressive collection of renowned cosmetic favourites including MAC, Clinique, Elizabeth Arden, Estee Lauder and more! Mom can learn all the latest make-up techniques and test the most desirable products in a private session at the cosmetic counter of her choice. The Bay has 92 convenient locations across Canada.

5. The Gift of Year-Round Reading. Purchasing a subscription to one (or more) of your mom's favourite magazines is a great way to show her that she's in your thoughts all year long. Receiving a weekly or monthly publication directly through the mail is an indulgent treat and as we all know, mom is the last person to be self-indulgent. These days there's a magazine for every interest: fashion, entertainment, news, cooking, pets, crafting and more, not to mention all the foreign publications that are also available to subscribers worldwide. To give the gift that gives all year long, visit the websites representing your mom's favourite magazines. Online 'zine purchases are the way to go; gone are the days when you had no choice but to use those cardboard subscriber cards that annoyingly slipped out from the magazine's pages. Websites such as Amazon.ca also offer handy gift subscriptions and occasionally throw special deals where you can sub to several magazines all at once all for a fraction of their retail price.



6. The Quintessential Celebrity Perfume. Gift ideas may come and go with the times, but perfume is always a popular present for our moms. The fragrance market is flooded with a plethora of choices, and by far the fastest growing sector of this industry is celebrity perfumes. Moms probably equate scents and stars with women like Elizabeth Taylor and Cher. These ladies were trailblazers on the famous fragrance front, but this holiday season why not give mom a celeb scent update? Most moms wouldn't want a perfume represented by the party girls of the day so best to leave the wares of Kim Kardashian, Paris Hilton and Britney Spears as gifts for your girlfriends. No offense to Kim and co., but I think mom deserves a celeb fragrance that's a bit more classy, more elegant with a celebrity that mirrors those requirements. Step into the spotlight, Reese Witherspoon! The gorgeous Oscar® winner epitomizes these qualities, and her new fragrance from Avon, In [Bloom Eau de Parfum](#) (\$45), is a refreshing addition to the cosmetics world. Beautifully feminine, alluringly sensual and quietly confident, In Bloom is much like Reese herself. Inspired by the heavenly scents Reese loved as a child growing up in Tennessee, In Bloom is a delicate blend of magnolia, gardenia and jasmine. Body lotion and shower gel (\$15 each) are also available as part of this much awaited collection. With Reese's down-to-earth attitude and her unwavering popularity, this scent is guaranteed to be a favourite of women everywhere. Avon products can be purchased from Avon Independent Sales Representatives, through the Canadian Avon website, or 1-800-265-AVON.

7. Tiffany & Co. Mom Charm Bracelet. Surprises never go out of fashion, and when one involves the iconic Tiffany blue box elegantly tied with a silky white ribbon, you're guaranteed to receive a giddy response. Tiffany & Co. is world famous for its luxurious jewellery and its sterling silver collection is beyond compare. I've specially selected a stunning must-have bracelet that is totally charming! Gaze upon the sophisticated ["Mom" sterling silver heart charm and bracelet](#). What better way to tell mom she's always in your heart with such a classic piece. All Tiffany charms are also sold separately, so if you prefer to display the heart-shape charm on a neck chain instead, you can do that too. Sterling silver link bracelet (\$155); sterling silver charm (\$165), available in person at Tiffany & Co. locations in Vancouver, Edmonton, Calgary, Montreal and Toronto. www.tiffany.ca; 1-800-265-1251

8. Netbook Nirvana. Many of us web savvy types find it funny that our parents still have no clue about email, the Internet and all the tech goodies that our generation take for granted. If your mom is still avoiding the information highway like the plague, a handy netbook will get her speeding along with the rest of us. Sure, netbooks are the peewees of the computer world, but what it lacks in stature, it makes up in portability,

Real Housewives of Atlanta

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price and ease of use. Plus, for a computer novice, a netbook offers all the necessities—email, Internet, webcam and widescreen display—in a teeny, powerful package that ticks all the boxes for many computer-fobe moms. Netbooks aren't as intimidating as mammoth desk top set-ups, or fancy laptops featuring a profusion of confusing bells and head-scratching whistles. Check out the [Asus Eee PC 1005HA](#) (from [www.newegg.ca](#); \$380.), top rated as head of the class by Consumer Reports magazine for its long battery life and decent price point. Mom will be surfing the web and forwarding joke emails to you in no time.

9. Made-to-Order Photo Calendar. Memories are precious and what better way to save them for posterity than with a custom-made calendar of cherished photographs. Why should mom mark the months ahead with a run-of-the-mill calendar when she can have one that showcases heart-warming family celebrations? There are several intuitive calendar creating programs on the web. Many allow you to add colourful backgrounds, captions, even scanned artwork (revisit your childhood scribbles!) all with a few simple clicks of your mouse. If you're feeling especially creative, perhaps a hard-bound book with page upon page of favourite photo moments would be more mom's style. The websites supply the templates and layout possibilities, you just add the pictures. To unleash your inner photo editor, visit [Blacks](#), [Apple.com/ca](#), [Kodak Gallery](#), or [Picaboo.com](#).

 **10. Life Experiences.** If you're like me, you're always trying to think of the most incredible gift possible for your mom. What's ironic about this dilemma is that most moms would probably prefer the gift of time spent with you more than anything else. Aw! Well, what better time to be all sentimental and mushy than during the holidays! So, how do you take your "hanging out with mom" time from ordinary to extraordinary? Make your together time special with the help of Life Experiences. This unique company offers exceptional memory-making experiences all across the country. The adventures on offer are incredibly varied and simply amazing! You and your mom could engage in luxury spa retreats, decadent meals catered especially for you at exclusive restaurants, breathtaking whale-watching excursions, wine-tasting adventures, even a session driving a Formula 1 car or a Ferrari! The choice is yours! Life Experiences take care of all the tricky organizational details, leaving you with the sole task of selecting the ideal adventure for you and your mom. Gift cards for Life Experiences can be purchased at Shoppers Drug Mart locations across Canada, or you can visit the [Life Experiences](#) website for the full slate of available outings in your particular province!

Happy shopping and happy holidays!

Written by: Jackie Middleton

For more of Jackie's writing, please check out her blog at [www.losethatgirl.com](#)

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