

Holiday Gifts for the Gardener

As we look towards the last days of 2007 many of us turn to celebration with our friends and family. With each gathering, as guest or host, we share gifts and thanks for a diversity of festivities. That perfect gift, whether small or grand, can be a challenge. Luckily for the gardener in you life there is an abundance of gift ideas.

Books and magazines are a staple in many gardeners' homes. From design ideas and annual displays to vegetable gardening, there is a plethora of books and magazine subscriptions to choose from. Reference guides are also used by many avid gardeners. These books can provide a wealth of information on many topics that will delight any gardener in your life. Two books that are considered gardening 'bibles' in northern Nevada are Sunset's Western Garden Book and Michael Dirr's Manual of Woody Landscape Plants. Both would make excellent gifts.

For the creative gift giver a basket of garden goodies can cater to the individual likes of each receiver. Start with a small basket or decorative pot. You can set a theme or choose what you like and fill the basket. Gloves, bulbs, and garden hand tools are some popular choices. For a more personal gift consider scented oils, natural soaps and home fragrances. These products can enchant the gardener throughout the year. Always popular are items that are grown or made locally – honey, jams, lavender products, Pea Vine Pottery, to name a few.

Take the idea of a bouquet a little further and gather up a bunch of garden tools to make a beautiful display. Bright colored rakes, various shaped shovels, hoes, spades, and many other tools can be bundled together and tied off with a bow.

If your gardener has a shed full of tools then consider gifts they can indulge in. Intensive hand lotions to sooth hard working hands are available in a variety of scents and forms. Thick salves and aroma filled skin therapy comes in decorative bottles, tubs, and soaps. All gardeners love to pamper themselves after a day in the soil. These products can keep them happy through an entire season in the yard.

Our climate limits any outdoor gardening during the brisk winter months. To keep gardeners happy and busy, create a gift set that will let them enjoy gardening indoors. Some herbs or seeds placed in a pot, tray or even tea cups can be set in a windowsill to decorate the indoors. The plants can be cared for during the winter and planted outside in the spring season. The herbs will create a lovely scent inside the home, provide some seasoning for the cook, and when planted outdoors, the pots or tea cups can be given another use. Or consider an Aero Garden – a kitchen garden appliance that allows anyone to grow herbs and vegetables on the counter hydroponically with its built-in light source.

Water globes make an attractive gift for the indoor plant gardener. These decorative little items hold water and slowly release it as the plant soil dries; they're ideal for someone who travels and must find a plant sitter to water in their absence or just to help with the regular watering routine.

If you're looking for a big ticket item to surprise the gardener in your life, there are countless options to choose from. To start with many enjoy bird baths and fountains in their yards. These are made from a variety of materials, some more durable than others, and come in many styles, shapes and colors. A potting bench can also be a wonderful addition to a gardener's shed or side yard.

Don't forget the gift card. When in doubt let your favorite gardener do his/her own shopping. Gift cards in any amount are available at many independent garden centers and allow the shopper to explore unique products in the store and discover new materials and beloved favorites to incorporate into their home and garden.

With your gifts in hand it's time to prepare them for delivery. Instead of the everyday box and wrapping paper try something to add a little garden pizzazz. Use burlap as wrapping and tie your package nicely with rope adding pine cones instead of a bow. Or place your gift in decorative pottery or choose from a variety of garden style mugs/glassware and tie ornamental grass clippings around the outside and add a holly twig for seasonal flare. To label your gift choose a pack of seeds and neatly write "To and From" and gently attach to your creatively wrapped gift. With your gifts in hand, decorated to impress, you can be sure you will wow the garden friends in your life.