

The sustainable

C H R I S T M A S

Survival Guide

Summary:

- ✓ **Buy or make meaningful gifts. Share an experience with the people you care about**
- ✓ **Observe how much food will be trashed. Save leftovers and reuse them creatively**
- ✓ **Cook with more seasonal vegetables**

This month you are getting sick. Influenza you think? Well no, it's the so-called Christmas-induced stress syndrome.

Remember last year's stress of buying gifts for all your friends and family? You probably still wonder how to give everyone something personal but still not too expensive, and even of the similar price for everyone.

Every Christmas the average Swiss spends **310 CHF** on this frenzy gift shopping (1). But a 2016 European online survey reports that a hefty **70%** of responders **feel forced** to spend on Christmas (2).

And why even bother?

- **10% didn't remember** the gifts
- **15% didn't want** the gifts
- **25% re-gifted** the gifts to someone else
- **14% sold the gifts**
- **10% tried to return them** to the store

But why do we fail at making good gifts? One of the main reasons is the low probability of guessing other's **personal tastes** correctly. That's why presents like clothes, perfumes and liquor might not be the best kind of gifts.

What can be done?

What is the most meaningful gift you can make to someone you care? **Your time**. It sounds cliché but...

Think about it, it's not an exchange of goods that shows you and your best friends how much you care about each other. What made you become best friends are all the experiences you shared together.

So why not go and buy 2 concert tickets for your best friend's favorite band?

Maybe you don't have time for that? Then give them that book you read that you think could make a difference in their life.

What can I do?

Know what people really would like to receive:

Your friends and family can share a list of gifts you'd like for free on **Giftster**. It's very quick to set up and saves you the anxiety of figuring out what a good gift for them could be.

Too high-tech? Well, you could still either try to find a gift that helps them in their daily struggles, or simply check out these gift suggestions we think you'll like:

For (a)...	Gift suggestion
Family member	books on personal development like these
Friend	concert / theater / movie / museum ticket
Colleague	homemade Christmas biscuits like these
Kid	educational and ecological toys like these
Aspiring eco warriors	reusable bottles, coffee cups and more

What to do when you're clueless

Depending on the type of relationship consider:

- Sustainably designed gifts like [these](#)
- **Donating effectively** to a good cause they support. German **alternative**.

Is Santa Claus so big because he eats our leftovers?

Picture the Christmas lunch and dinner. Who doesn't love to celebrate and gather with family and friends around a plentiful buffet?

We love these festive meals so much that indeed many of us end up **overeating**. And the feared judge of how much that was, is nothing else than: the scale.

But you probably already knew that and that's why it's so normal to pick a new year's resolution aimed at making us shed that extra kilo or two we put on over Christmas.

But while some kilos of that delicious food end up in us, what's gaining the most weight is actually the garbage.

Small country, big wasters. The Swiss are not doing so great when it comes to food waste in their homes: each of us **thrash 56 kg of food** each year. About half of that is then burned (**3**). In Europe, we're the third biggest waste producers (**4**).

To add insult to environmental injury, our Christmas meals are mainly based on animal products (that includes cheese), so that our ecological impact skyrockets even more.

What can I do?

Challenge yourself to take the issue into your own hands:

- **Be aware of food waste:**
 - Observe how much food is served and how much is then thrown away
 - be part of the clean up
- **Cook with the season**
 - Integrate **these seasonal veggies** into your meal and sides.
- **Save your leftovers**
 - Keep your food safe and sound: **This is how** to be preserve your leftovers
 - Give new life to your leftover using **these delicious Christmas leftover recipes**

Did you know that by using these little tricks you are already making a huge difference? By avoiding to throw away, or simply not consuming, **1 kg of beef** you are saving **15'400 L of water** (**5**)!