

The Beauty of a Minimalist Holiday



Decorations

-Think about getting a **smaller tree** which will mean less time, money and less lugging in and out of the house. If you usually get more than one tree or decorate the trees outside, consider **scaling back**.

-Get **eclectic** and let the kids help by creating a **themed tree** using things you **already have**.

-**Does anyone actually enjoy putting up lights?** Spend your Saturday inside drinking a cappuccino instead of fearing for your life dangling from the roof. **Think of the money you'll save on energy!**

Presents

-Consider **re-gifting** as a way to stick to your budget this year. Make sure it is something you would normally give to that person and ensure that it is truly appropriate for them.



-Do you find yourself **returning half of what you bought?** Treat picky teens to a **shopping spree** after Christmas (when the deals are on) and stick to **a few gifts** that are on their list that you know you'll "get right".



-**Shop online.** Finding parking spots and braving the crowds aren't a necessary part of the Christmas ritual. You can **find more online** than you can at the mall.

Shop early and find good deals on Ebay. Most stores in your mall have an online store; at the very least you can **comparison shop** before heading out.

Food

-Cut back on baking and cooking. Contrary to popular belief six kinds of dessert are not required. Do you really need a 20 pound turkey or is ten pounds really enough? **We tend to overeat at Christmas**, so think about what food you really need to enjoy the holidays and what is just too much.



-Are you running from house to house for back-to-back Christmas dinners? Try a quiet, **"stay in"** Christmas. Have supper with your immediate family and promise to visit other relatives another night for cookies and cider. This means **less work** and cost for them as well!

You may fear being labeled a **Scrooge** for changing traditions and cutting back during the holidays. However, you may also find that family members and friends are happy to let go of some of the expenses and responsibilities that come with our traditions. Plus, if you are **less stressed**, you can **spend more time enjoying time with your family** instead of running around trying to get everything "just so." Your family will agree that a minimalist holiday will make you a more relaxed and fun person to be around.

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