

## ENJOY A SUSTAINABLE HOLIDAY SEASON

As the year comes to an end, it is time to celebrate with friends and family. The holiday season is one of the most anticipated times of the year, with festive decorations, delicious foods, and opportunities to give back to those we love. Although our festivities and cheer come with great intentions, the planet is affected by the amount of resources consumed and wasted, most of which can be avoided by making simple changes.

You can make more sustainable holiday choices while still creating lasting memories with those you love. Taking action now will prevent additional materials from entering the waste stream, preserving precious resources for future generations. Use the below tips for a sustainable holiday season.

### **Gift Sustainability**

Show your holiday gratitude by gifting sustainably. Consider gifting a vintage treasure found at your local reuse thrift shop; not only will this benefit the planet by reducing the amount of resources we use, but vintage items make a unique gift!



### **Gift Experiences**

Another great alternative is gifting experiences, such as tickets to a local museum, gift certificate to a Parks & Recreation class, or a live local theatre show. Experiences create less of an impact on the environment, ensuring less emissions go into the atmosphere and less packaging goes into the landfill, along with lasting, unforgettable memories. If you do decide to purchase a new gift, shop local and opt to purchase gifts from stores that are eco-conscious like the Green Oceanside Business Network members, which are listed in the City's Green Oceanside app. This will generate less emissions and support the local Oceanside economy.

### **Reuse Gift Wrap**

When it is time to package your gifts, use what you already have. Newspaper comics, paper shopping bags, and even scratch computer paper make great alternatives to gift wrap. You can use stamps or children's artwork to decorate. Fall leaves, shells, and even trimmings from your holiday tree can be used to give your gift the perfect touch. You can also create a two-in-one gift by using a reusable shopping bag to store your gift or wrapping the gift with a scarf.



### **Do it Yourself Décor**

The best part about the holidays are the decorations. Repurpose decorations from previous years or create a decoration swap with friends

and family. Get crafty with newspaper to make recycled snowflakes, or upcycle items such as glass bottles, buttons, or extra fabric to create your own holiday ornaments, wreathes, and table décor. Succulents and living plants also make great decorations. Pumpkins, squash, and gourds can be used as décor and cooked once ripe while succulents and other plants can be used to decorate your home or office once the festivities are over. If you choose to purchase decorations, make your local thrift store your first choice for shopping. Buying upcycled items creates fewer carbon emissions, saves water, and reduces waste.

### **Ditch Disposables**

After the gifts and decorations are completed, it's time for the party. Ditch the disposable plates and utensils and opt for reusable tableware. Choosing reusable tableware ensures less materials going into the landfills.

### **Food for Thought**

With nearly 6 million tons of food scraps or food waste being thrown away in California each year, it is important to plan your holiday meal and get a head-count of attendees to know exactly how much food you will need. When prepping for the meal, save bones or vegetable scraps to make a broth at a future date. You can compost scraps that would otherwise go into the landfill bin. Learn more about composting by visiting the City's [Solid Waste and Recycling webpage](#). Once the party is over, store any leftovers in reusable containers and search online for recipes, or get creative in the kitchen to transform leftovers into new dishes. Consider donating leftover packaged or non-perishable food items to your local food pantry.



And most importantly, enjoy your holidays and remember, every simple change can make a **big** difference!

Take photos and tag #GreenOceanside when posting on social media and download the Green Oceanside app through the Apple and Android app stores to upload your sustainable holiday cheer!

The Green Oceanside team wishes you a sustainable holiday season. To learn more about how you can become a better steward of the planet by reducing waste, conserving water and energy, and protecting our oceans, visit [www.GreenOceanside.org](http://www.GreenOceanside.org).