

Fantastic, Edible Christmas Gift Ideas for Cheapskates

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Fresh Fruit and Veg Hampers

I haven't bought Christmas presents for years. I go down to the markets and find what fruit and vegetables are cheap. Look up the Internet for recipes and then madly bottle jams, chutneys and sauces. I make enough for presents and for me for during the year. - Contributed by Merinda, Frenchs Forest



Mini Christmas Puddings

You will need - A cheap Christmas pudding or fruit-cake - brandy - icing sugar - lolly snakes. Crumble the pudding or cake in a bowl. Add a small amount of brandy at a time and mix up until you have a play dough consistency. Roll into balls the size of a 10 or 20-cent piece. With a teaspoon dribble some icing on each ball to look like custard. Cut up some red and green snakes to look like holly leaves and berries and place on top of each "pudding". This is so quick and easy and you can even involve the kids. If the kids are too young to help - keep them amused with the leftover orange and yellow snakes. - Contributed by Emmalee, St. Kilda East

Nuts'n'Bolts

A friend once gave me a recipe for "Nuts N' Bolts" a type of Indian style spicy nut mix. It can be made weeks before Christmas and remains fresh forever if kept in a jar. I save large and interesting jars throughout the year, decorate them with Christmas ribbon and stick on my own hand made label. I use 500g of Nutri-grain, 500g of peanuts, 1 pack of cream of chicken soup mix, 1 pack of French onion soup, 3 teaspoons of curry powder, pinch of chilli powder, a handful of currants or sultanas, a few chopped dried fruits, 1 pack of Chang's original noodles and half a cup of olive oil to allow spices to stick to the fruits and nuts. Mix in a large airtight container and rotate

for a couple of days before pouring into your jars. This mix will make a great cheap and tasty gift and will look terrific in a pretty nut bowl on your Christmas table! - Contributed by Michelle, Canterbury

Christmas Pot-Pourri

This is kind of like cooking but also crafty! Ingredients: 2 sticks cinnamon bark, 1/2 cup of dried cloves, 2 cups gum nuts, 1 cup mistletoe leaves, scented oil to sprinkle on gum nuts, a few dried petals just for colour. Mix and package (i.e. in cellophane or an attractive bowl). - Contributed by Julie, East Victoria Park

Home Made Herb Butters

Home made herb butters are always popular, purchase cheap little pots from your local \$2.00 store fill, seal with glad wrap, wrap in some cellophane add some raffia, thread on a gum leaf for an Aussie touch. Keep in the fridge until ready to give your gift. Don't forget the old favourite coconut ice, easy to make, put into a recycled jar, wrap in clear cellophane, so that the pink and white or green and white create their own colourful look, tie with a pretty ribbon, you don't even need a jar, the cellophane wrap can be enough. Good luck and happy Christmas. - Contributed by Madeleine, Mt. Evelyn



**MERRY
CHRISTMAS**

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