

Holiday Shopping & Ideas



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Make Personalized Gift Tags!

Have fun looking through photos with your children, reliving the fun you had together. Choose pictures of individuals and families where faces are clear and easily recognizable.

To make gift tags you will need a computer, a printer, and self adhesive labels. Mailing/shipping labels pictured are 3" x 4". According to the size of your packages, go with labels as small as address labels (1"x2") or all the way up to 6" or ... even a full page!

Never used "labels" before? It's easy! Start by opening a new document in Microsoft Word. From the toolbar choose View/Zoom/Whole Page. Choose from the same toolbar: Tools/Letters, Mailings/Envelopes, Labels. Next, under Options go to Label Products; choose the product number from the package on the drop down menu, click OK. On the pop up that appears, click "New Document"; the new document name will be "Labels#". If the page appears blank, go to the top tool bar again, choose Table/Show Gridlines. Now you will see a full page with gray label outlines. The cursor will default centered on the left margin of the top left label. Choose

Insert, Picture, From File; then click on desired photo. It will fill the space initially; if you want more white space, click on the image; the photo will be outlined; resize the photo by dragging the corner in. Center the photo, and repeat the process until you have as many labels as you need. Try Print Preview just to make sure. Then print the labels, peel off the backing, and label your wrapped packages!

If you do not have a scanner to digitize printed snapshots, or your printer isn't cooperating, take advantage of services that might be available at your local print/copy store. Solutions offered may include scanning photos to a CD, or allowing you to e-mail the file and pick up the finished product later. It's worth a call.

Variation: Print photos, one to a card onto sheets of plain white 2" x 3½" matte business cards that pop apart. Both "clean edge" or perforated business cards will work. Separate printed cards. Use a single hole punch to make a hole in the top left corner, thread thin ribbon through the hole and attach with ribbon.



Ice Bowl Make this elegant frozen centerpiece!

The day before you plan to use your ice bowl, choose two from a set of nested bowls, such as the second and fourth or first and third. Place one layer of fresh or frozen cranberries ice cubes on the bottom of the larger bowl, then cover with a layer of ice cubes. Arrange fresh bay leaves up the sides of the bowl; use ice cubes to hold them in place, top off with several rows of cranberries all around the edge. Center the smaller bowl inside the larger, adjusting so when frozen, the ice will be of a uniform thickness. Evenly distribute weight inside the smaller bowl to hold it in place. Several bags of frozen vegetables, or flour in a large plastic bag that will conform to the bowl work well. Gently pour water between the bowls; add more weight as necessary to keep the top bowl from "floating". Set on a level surface in the freezer overnight.

Shortly before you are ready to use the ice bowl, remove weights

and lift smaller bowl out; pour cold tap water in smaller bowl to loosen, then turn ice bowl gently onto a towel-lined platter. If the warmth of your hands on the larger bowl does not loosen it enough to free the ice bowl, wrap a wet towel around it. Set ice bowl in a saucer discreetly lined with folded paper towel to absorb the drips as it melts. Display on a pedestal cake plate and fill with cooked shrimp and cocktail sauce.

Variations are endless ~ imagine a bowl with circles of orange, lemon, and lime, filled with sherbet or melon balls ... or one with stripes of julienned carrots and cucumber to hold gazpacho. Almost any combination of herbs, vegetables or fruit slices will work.

Note: For a clearer ice bowl without frosty areas, use only distilled water. Freeze ice cubes of distilled water ahead of time.

Caution: Use only food grade herbs. Ornamental vegetation or flowers may have been treated with herbicide and are therefore unsafe; some houseplant leaves and flowers can be poisonous.