

December 2007 - Vegas Parent Newsletter Article

Style - It's Not Just For Other Women Anymore

by Lindsay Burns

Greetings once again, resplendent readers! Thanksgiving, believe it or not, is yesterday's news but thankfully it's still a week until Hanukkah and almost four weeks 'til Christmas - still plenty of time to shop "savvy" and entertain elegantly! If your family is anything like mine, you still haven't finished your shopping, (despite having promised yourself last year that you'd get it done earlier THIS year) you're already stressing over the decorating and parties (isn't it amazing how a fun and festive time always turns into a major stressor?) and if you see one more "Singing Santa" decoration you may go postal. Maybe I can give you a few "stylish" tips to bring down your stress level and allow you to actually ENJOY the holidays - even while your knees are shaking over the three worst words in the English language - "some assembly required".....

You probably already know the toys/games/cool clothes that your kids want. Buying for my kid doesn't stress me out - it's all the OTHER gifts, like the "never good enough, always just slightly wrong" thing I used to find for my mother in law. Well, here are some of my ways of buying/ making gifts that will please, while being novel and affordable. For the buying I refer, of course, to online shopping, which I believe was invented for busy mothers. There are SO MANY great sites that if you don't have a few in mind, you can get lost, just as you do in huge malls. So, read on.....

Do you get invitations at the last minute, to the homes of people you don't have gifts for? I stock up on hostess gifts so that I'm never without one. At napastyle.com, you can buy slate cheese boards which your "giftee" can write on with chalk and wash clean for the next party. They come in three sizes and I buy a few of each so that I can mix and match. Buy a couple of unusual cheeses at Smith's/Vons/ Albertson's, steal a colorful chalk from one of the kids and you have an interesting, stylish hostess gift. Buy some cheeses and salamis and a set of pretty chalks and presto! a more lavish answer to "what should I bring?" As a matter of fact, just visit www.napastyle.com and if you wait too long, they'll ship overnight!

Family was always the toughest for me to buy for, until I found www.acornonline.com. This gift catalog has adorable gifts for kids, educational and fun ideas for young adults, videos, DVDs, pictures and cute sweatshirts and PJs for the "mature" family members. I find stocking stuffers galore here, as I do at another great site, www.redenvelope.com. The teenage girls in our family are usually thrilled with gift certificates to www.sephora.com, which is THE greatest cosmetics superstore. They provide free shipping on orders over \$75.00, and it's much easier to find things on the site than it is in one of their stores here in the valley. Then, last year I went with the same pashmina for all my aunts but in a rainbow of different colors from www.bloomingdales.com - I gotta tell ya, I earned some brownie point for those!!!! And no, I still haven't found the one gift that my mother-in-law would declare perfect, but I came as close as I possibly can with a facial and skin care products from Maria at Pure Liquid Skin Studio up on Horizon Ridge. That's also where Nannette Fader sells massage packages, which my husband claims can't be a gift because they're so NECESSARY. Well, honey, so are Chanel jackets.....

For my close friends in town, I love to coordinate services at a cool spa, so that my friend who adores having LONG nails gets a mani-pedi, another buddy who stresses about staying youthful

gets a signature facial and the yoga fanatic in the group gets a massage. I ask my husband for a treatment for me and the whole gang has a spa day (of course, everybody adds on a service or two!) We wait to do it until mid-January, when everybody needs a lift. By the way, does EVERYONE know that during the week, locals get a 20% discount at almost every hotel spa in town?????

Well, friendly fashion fans, I've given up some of my favorite secrets and if you want to know more, send me an email. I'm always finding new sites and ways to save and I'll be happy to share but there's one problem. If your friends and family are as clued in as you are, they also subscribe to VegasParent.com, so some of the gifts you give may not be a surprise! Then again, you might find that the gifts you give are ones that you enjoy receiving, and isn't that the definition of a perfect gift????