



KEEP IT SIMPLE

No-fail ideas for  
a cosy Christmas cocktail party  
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# LIFE AT HOME

DECOR • DOMESTIC ARTS • RENOVATIONS • RENTALS • RESALE

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CALGARYHERALD.COM

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## AROUND THE HOUSE

### Making eco-resolutions

**CONTEST** • We know the eco-sins are out there... milk cartons furtively stashed in the trash instead of the recycling bin, trips to the corner store by car rather than bicycle. Even (horrors!) using plastic bags from the grocery store because you forgot to take your own.

Is there hope for you? Of course there is! Find salvation (and prizes) by resolving to do better for the planet in 2008. Submit your eco-resolutions (and why you're making them) via e-mail by end of day Dec. 14 to [lifeathomecomment@theherald.canwest.com](mailto:lifeathomecomment@theherald.canwest.com) with "eco-resolutions" in the subject line. We'll select four of the best entries to feature on Dec. 29 — the perfect time to turn the page on an imperfect past. The four winners will receive a selection of prizes to reward their green-ness.

Need some inspiration? Check out the Green Guide at [calgaryherald.com](http://calgaryherald.com) for a variety of tips to help you reduce the impact your lifestyle has on the planet, from green cleaning to eco-friendly computer recycling.

— Calgary Herald

### 1.5 million ways to help the environment

**RECYCLING** • Home Depot has launched in-store recycling drop-offs for compact fluorescent light bulbs (CFLs), challenging its customers to help them recycle 1.5 million of the energy efficient bulbs by 2011.

Switching from incandescent bulbs to CFLs is one of the easiest ways to help the environment at home. The bulbs use up to 75 per cent less electricity than incandescents and last five to 10 times longer. They do, however, contain small traces of mercury, so diverting them from landfills makes them even greener.

Drop off your used CFLs at the recycling unit located near the special services desk in each Home Depot store. Home Depot will then ensure the bulbs are recycled responsibly, turning them into new products such as glass bottles and jars, baseball bats and products for the lighting industry.

— Calgary Herald

### Plan It Calgary

**LAND USE** • The City of Calgary wants to know what you think is important to create a vibrant, livable city. The Plan It Calgary project focuses on the city's long-range land use plan, and has come up with three possible future scenarios.

To offer planners your feedback on the scenarios, go to [calgary.ca/planit](http://calgary.ca/planit), where you'll find a workbook with a questionnaire titled "Where do we grow from here?" Fill it out by Jan. 10, 2008 to have your say.

Responses will be combined with input from across the city to help develop a long-term plan to guide Calgary through its growth, taking into consideration the needs of current and future residents.

— Calgary Herald

## INSPIRING IDEAS

HOLIDAY GIFTS THAT EVERY HOME WILL LOVE

YVONNE JEFFERY  
CALGARY HERALD

Wise gift givers know that some household items should never be wrapped in paper and given as presents.

Don't even think of offering your partner a vacuum cleaner for Christmas (not even the spiffy new Dirt Devil Kones designed by Karim Rashid) unless it's written in black and white on their gift list. The same goes for any kind of exercise equipment that the recipient doesn't know they need.

If you're looking for gifts that will thaw the chilliest of hearts, however, read on. We've researched major retailers to come up with a baker's dozen of ideas that should be easy to buy this month (although it's best to phone first to check stock availability or be willing to go with a close substitute or order online if the store has run out).

With prices from \$8 to \$3,000, at least one should fit your budget and your wish list — but don't forget to ask for a gift receipt, just in case.



### FUN AND FESTIVE (LESS THAN \$30)

#### Scents of the season

Each year, Canadian company Fruits & Passion donates funds from the sale of its holiday hand soaps to Habitat for Humanity Canada, so the purchase of the rich hand soap in either Amaryllis (new for 2007) or Orange and Cinnamon (an annual favourite) does double duty in the gift department. A 250-ml bottle is \$8 with any purchase of \$10 or more; the scents are also available in hand care and home fragrances. Available at Fruits & Passion stores or online at [fruits-passion.com](http://fruits-passion.com).



#### GIFT CARD DELUXE

Forget slipping a gift card into a holiday card — The Bay has come up with the Voicebox (\$5), a small box that stores and dispenses a standard gift card with just a click of a button. It also records your greeting for a more personal touch (and will re-record greetings so that it can be used more than once).



#### Bathroom bling

These Distinctly Home black and white towels and soap dispensers will add a little sparkle to a modern bathroom. Go with both black and white if you know the duo will suit the recipient's decor, or choose just one of the colours if you're not certain. You'll spend \$14.99 for the soap dispenser and \$19.99 for the towels, at The Bay.



#### Wooden Sudoku Board

Puzzlers can enjoy hours of number crunching with The Deluxe Wooden Sudoku Board (\$29.99 at HomeSense) — it even provides "thinking" tiles to keep track of numbers that could fit into certain squares. The numbered tiles tuck into compartments in the puzzle board's drawer, keeping everything corralled between games.



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HOUSE OF REAL ESTATE



Winston Hts/Mountview \$309,000

414 - 22 Avenue, NE

Holding property, near SAIT & 16th Ave. Ideal for redevelopment! 37 x 125-ft R-2 lot with a 500 sf house, full basement; sold as land value (house has been gutted) renovate & hold on, or bulldoze & build.



Patterson, \$349,000

60 Patina View, SW

Ideal starter/investment, 1344 sf townhouse, 2 bedrooms + den, balcony off eat-in kitchen, deck off living & formal dining, big bay windows, jet tub ensuite, double tandem garage, low condo fee \$186/month.



Strathcona, \$469,000

#31, 39 Strathelea Common SW

Executive 3 bdrm townhouse, 2000 sf, extensive hardwood, maple kitchen, granite centre island, large butler's pantry w/ telephone desk, fireplace in great room, low condo fee \$212/month.



Cougar Ridge, \$775,000

103 Cougar Plateau Circle SW

The Promontory of Cougar Ridge! With extensive upgrades, 2300 sf, + dev'd basement, chef's kitchen, granite countertops, high-end stainless appliances, huge pantry w/ space for freezer, 3+1 bedrooms.



Elbow Valley, \$1,695,000

123 Elbow Ridge Bluffs,

3061 s.f. bungalow + developed walkout, oversized 4 car garage, heated driveway, 6 fireplaces, 3 "master" bdrms each w/ full ensuite, main bedroom w/ huge walk-in closet & private laundry.