Sustainable Christmas ideas: 5 ways to make your festivities forest friendly

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The Christmas adverts are already here, and Mariah Carey seems to be on repeat in every shop. Although Mariah doesn't want a lot for Christmas, the season is famously a time of excess and waste. Our small choices as consumers can make a big impact on the planet, and with a bit of planning, it is possible to have a more sustainable Christmas. We've put together some tips below on how to make sure your festivities are forest friendly.

1. Use responsibly sourced and recyclable wrapping paper, gift bags and gift tags

That shiny, glittery wrapping paper may look pretty but it's not environmentally friendly, it can't be recycled and glitter is a microplastic. Opt for plastic-free gift wraps, bags and tags, which are recycled and recyclable. Just remember to make sure they are FSC-certified so you can spread Christmas cheer with a clear conscience, knowing that the products are made with materials from well-managed forests and/or recycled sources.

2. Send responsible Season's greetings

It is estimated that UK consumers send 1 billion Christmas cards each year. Choose FSC-certified Christmas cards when you shop to ensure that your season's greetings come from a responsible source and do not contribute to deforestation. To help spread even more Christmas cheer, you can buy FSC-certified charity Christmas cards to raise funds for good causes. As with gift wrap, avoid any Christmas cards containing glitter or other unrecyclable decorations. Lots of cards now come without wrapping to help further reduce waste.

3. Give eco-friendly Christmas presents

Every year, UK citizens spend £700 million on unwanted gifts so take some time to think about what your friends and family really want. For a greener Christmas, look for gifts made from sustainable materials with minimal packaging (and make sure any packaging is recyclable – and preferably FSC certified!) and remember that it is ok to re-gift!

For forest-friendly Christmas gifts, keep in mind that it's not just wood and paper that can be FSC-certified. Viscose textiles, rubber, bamboo, and cork can be certified. You can find the FSC label on books, yoga mats, board games, clothes, wellies, hairbrushes, and bird boxes, to name just a few.

You can also help to support charities whilst Christmas shopping; you can find a range of sustainable Christmas gifts online from the WWF, Woodland Trust, Oxfam and the RSPB, for example.

4. Choose environmentally conscious Christmas Crackers

On Christmas Day, about 40 million Christmas crackers are anticipated to be thrown away. The sparkly crackers, the small gifts, the shiny ribbons and the snap usually can't be recycled. If you want your Christmas dinner to start with a bang, choose plastic-free crackers that are recycled and/or recyclable.

If you enjoy some Christmas crafts activities, instead of buying Christmas crackers, you could make your own ones using FSC–certified paper and card or using fabric and a loo roll tube! A quick search online will bring up many tutorials to show you how to do this.

Media:



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5. Reuse and recycle

After the big day is over, remember to reuse and recycle what you can to extend the life of forest resources for as long as possible. When it comes to your gift bags, these can easily be re-used and, if you haven't enthusiastically torn into your presents and the wrapping paper is still in one piece, you can roll it up to re-use next year.

If you're not able to re-use your wrapping paper then make sure you remove any Sellotape and ribbons and carry out a 'scrunch test' to check if it is recyclable. Scrunch the paper into a ball; if it remains in a ball it can be recycled. However, not all councils accept wrapping paper; whether it passes the scrunch test or not, click here to check your local authorities' guidelines.

Shockingly, only one out of every four Christmas cards is recycled. When the time comes to take your Christmas decorations down, remember to recycle your cards; just remove any unrecyclable parts/decorations first. If you're feeling crafty, you could always cut up your Christmas cards to make your own gift tags for next year.

Where to shop? Here are some festive FSC-certified products and where you can find them:

FSC-certified wrapping paper/gift bags

Paperchase – Kraft trees village wrapping paper and Christmas forest wrapping paper

Marks and Spencer – Woodland wrapping paper

WWF – Panda wrapping paper

Hallmark – Red & gold Christmas gift wrap compendium

Oxfam - Kraft Christmas wrapping paper - robin design

FSC-certified Christmas Cards

Woodland Trust – Festive robin Christmas cards

Tache – Christmas card collection

Paperchase – Charity Christmas cards

WWF – UK nature Christmas cards

Oxfam – Premium Woodland Christmas card pack

Hallmark – Colour in Christmas cards for kids

Card Factory – Photo frame Christmas card

FSC-certified Christmas Gifts

Lululemon – The Mat 5mm FSC-certified rubber yoga mat

Tea Pigs – Christmas bundle

Oxfam – Plants for free (book) by Sharon Amos

Hunter – Balmoral classic wellington boots

Clarks – Tor Run shoes

Masai – Along scarf

Toys and Games:

Jojo Maman Bébé – FSC-certified wooden toys

Brio – Toys and games

RSPB – Birds trivia game

Ginger Fox –Taskmaster card game

Orange Tree Toys – Peter Rabbit stacking cubes

Le Toy Van – Sophie's wooden dolls toy house and Wooden tool bench toy

Big Jigs Toys – 100% FSC-certified kids tepee

Hobbycraft –3D wooden whale puzzle

WWF – The tiger who came to tea gift box

FSC-certified Christmas crackers

Marks and Spencer – Guessing game Christmas crackers and Trivia game Christmas crackers

Sainsburys – Robin dinner crackers

Some other places you can find FSC-certified products

Co-op

Sainsburys

Tesco

John Lewis

Marks and Spencer

Next

Flying Tiger

For more information on choosing forest friendly products, visit https://uk.fsc.org.

Company Contact:

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