

NINE TOLEDO GIFTS FOR \$25 OR LESS

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Anyone anywhere in the world can walk into a mall and buy a perfectly good holiday gift. That's sort of the problem. This year, how about trying something different and unique? How about something Toledo?

There are plenty of ways that you can give the gift of the Glass City, from products made locally to ones that were inspired by Toledoans. Santa may be from the North Pole, but it turns out he's got plenty of elves working for him down here — more than you might think.

And talk about the gift that keeps on giving. Buying locally keeps more money in the local economy and provides a needed boost to area businesses that often count on holiday sales to stay afloat, especially during tough times like these, says Stacy Jurich, executive director of Toledo Choose Local, a nonprofit advocate for independent businesses in the area.

Don't worry about where to go or what to get. We've already done some of the heavy lifting for you. Here's a sampling of locally inspired gifts that cost \$25 or less. Additional gift guides will follow on each of the next two Sundays. All you have to do now is saddle up the reindeer and get going.

- 1. Christmas Splendor candle jar.** This 16-ounce homemade candle from Curb's Candle Co. on Central Avenue actually smells like the holidays with the aroma of cinnamon, cloves, apples, and berries. \$15.
- 2. Frog gummies.** Stock up on your favorite childhood treats — everything from giant jawbreakers to old-time candy — at Boyd's Retro Candy Store on Phillips Avenue. A perfect stocking stuffer for anyone with a sweet tooth. Frogs are 5 cents each or \$4.66 per pound.
- 3. Olives, Feta, Phyllo & More cookbook.** The holidays are a time to eat, right? This book by parishioners of Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Cathedral has more than 500 recipes for Greek and American cuisine. Cost: \$25 at the cathedral on Superior Street.
- 4. Silver horseshoe charm necklace.** It's got to be good luck to buy locally made jewelry, right? This piece by Curtice, Ohio's Jaci Riley, of Crave Jewelry Design, features a pewter horseshoe, brass shamrock, and pink Swarovski crystal. \$25 at Red Envy on Central Avenue.
- 5. "Moths and Rust."** This experimental folk CD by the Homeville Circle, a six-member band based in Toledo, is one of several local groups worth a listen. Cost: \$9.97 from Culture Clash on Secor Road. Also try the Polka Floyd Show's self-titled disc and "Presenting the Nu-Tones" by the Nu-Tones.
- 6. University of Toledo and Bowling Green State University winter hats.** Stay warm this winter with hats from the region's two state universities. Cost: \$14.98 from the UT Bookstore Student Union location and \$10.99 from the BGSU Bookstore
- 7. Firelands Winery Pinot Grigio.** From vineyards on Isle St. George in Lake Erie, this bright and citrusy wine is a delightful surprise that stacks up well against similar Italian wines. Cost: About \$10 per bottle.
- 8. Toledo Bullfrogs T-shirt.** Hop on the bandwagon for the city's arenafootball2 franchise, which will play in the new downtown sports arena starting in 2010. Cost: \$17.95 from the Swamp Shop at Fifth Third Field.
- 9. Rock-tails.** These trendy cocktail glasses by Libbey, Inc., are tinged with a fluorescent glow and have a rounded bottom that makes them sit slightly askew. Cost: \$19.99 for a six-piece set at the Libbey Glass Factory Outlet on Erie Street.

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