

How to be environmentally friendly this Christmas

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Christmas is a very important time of year for thousands of people. We are constantly buying decorations, presents, food, trees, shining lights, ribbons for wrapping and so much more.

Our houses turn into twinkling wonderlands, the scents of pine and cinnamon lingering in the air.

But when pretty ribbons have been untied, when the shiny wrapping paper torn to shreds. When your looking at the piles of leftovers, stuffed from your Christmas feast of the glossy honey glazed ham, crispy turkey skin and it's meat, drowning in gravy. Potatoes as fluffy and soft as clouds and, oh.....ummm....the sprouts..well..(you gave them to the dog) don't you ever realise how Christmas is such a wasteful time of year?

How can we be more environmentally friendly this Christmas so we can reduce waste but still have a fabulous holiday season? I'm here to help you do so.

1. Decorations

Decorations are a huge part of Christmas, the glittering baubles, twinkling lights but here are some better ways to decorate this Christmas.

Plastic baubles are not recyclable, veer away from those. Invest in nice glass baubles that are recyclable and will last for that bit longer. For lights, avoid CFL ones. They may save energy but are very harmful towards humans and the environment. Try solar charged lights instead.

Christmas crackers will result in 154,000,000 pieces of plastic being dumped in the ocean this year alone. I advise to make your own with old paper hand written jokes and handmade paper crowns.

For your tree not get a fake one they consist of plastic and even oil. Real trees are farmed and cut down each year to preserve the natural woodland. Buy a real tree from a farm that plants a few saplings for

every tree cut down. 250 tonnes of trees (6 million trees) are thrown away after Christmas when they could be composted so make sure to dispose wisely.

2. Food

Would you believe me if I told you 2 million turkeys, 74 million mince pies and 17.2 million Brussel sprouts are thrown away every Christmas? Now I can understand about the sprouts but that's a lot of food waste. Keep your leftovers, have them for dinner a different night, make a sandwich or soup with the meats and veggies.

Also source local food so your food has travelled minimum food miles in a vehicle so less emissions go into our atmosphere. It's also good to get local food as your money goes into the local economy.

3. Presents and wrapping etc

The study of 2,000 adults found the average household will get through four rolls of wrapping paper over the Christmas period. A roll-and-a-half of sticky tape will be used per household, while three-and-a-half black bags full of packaging will be thrown out. 5 million tonnes of wrapping paper will be sent to landfills in the UK this year. That's 100 sq km of paper.

Try to reuse old newspaper or even wrap in fabric.

Stay away from aerosol gifts as the fumes wreck the atmosphere and don't buy gifts with lots of plastic packaging as 100,000 tonnes of plastic will be binned on Christmas day.

Paper is made of trees and Christmas cards are made of paper, 1 tree is only enough for 176 people to send cards to their loved ones. This then means that 1 billion Christmas Cards will end up in bins, the equivalent of 33 million trees! Make sure to recycle all Christmas cards.

Now that you realise that Christmas is such a wasteful time of year, I hope you will try some of my ideas out and make a difference to the Earth this Christmas.

