



Eco-Friendly Gift Giving

Gift-giving brings joy to both the giver and the receiver. Yet, how we choose and present those gifts has environmental, as well as financial, impacts. Eco-friendly gift shopping embraces the heart of giving while considering the planet's well-being.

In searching for the perfect gift, start by considering materials with minimal environmental impact. Look for products made from recycled, upcycled, or organic materials. Gifts crafted from organic cotton, bamboo, or reclaimed wood are not only beautiful but also a nod to environmental stewardship.

You can also think outside the box and consider gifting experiences rather than physical objects. From cooking classes to weekend getaways, experiences can create lasting memories without the need to store or care for material possessions. Subscriptions to services can be a delightful, ongoing reminder of your thoughtfulness.

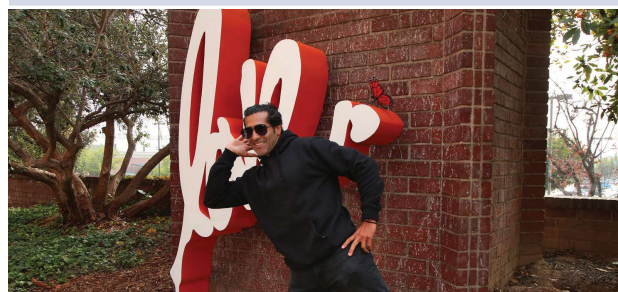
Finding a gift does not end after the purchase — presentation matters! Opt for reusable or recycled wrapping materials, or get creative with what's already on hand. An old map, a newspaper, or

fabric can be transformed into a unique and environmentally friendly gift wrap.

Eco-friendly gift shopping is a thoughtful, considerate process that goes beyond the traditional act of giving. It's a way to celebrate relationships and special occasions while honoring a commitment to the earth. By considering a gift's source, materials, purpose, and presentation, it becomes easier to make choices that resonate with our values and the larger goal of sustainability.

Ultimately, the essence of gift-giving remains the same: to show love, appreciation, and thoughtfulness. Embracing eco-friendly practices in this tradition only adds to its depth and meaning, allowing us to give in a way that celebrates both the individual and our shared responsibility to the planet.

For tips on handling holiday trees and other waste, look for Republic Services' winter Recycling & Waste Newsletter in next month's *Around Alhambra*. To learn more about local programs, visit RepublicServices.com/municipality/Alhambra-ca, call 800-299-4898, or email Alhambra@RepublicServices.com.



The Alhambra Celebrates Two-Year Anniversary of EVOLVe Outdoor Sculpture

In November 2021, local community members joined The Ratkovich Company to unveil a new outdoor sculpture by noted Los Angeles artist Ruben Rojas at The Alhambra. The commissioned artwork, titled EVOLVe, marks the expansion of The Alhambra's Public Art Program to include open-air works.

EVOLVe is a permanent installation in The Alhambra's Certified Butterfly Garden. The massive 8-foot by 6-foot artwork features Rojas' iconic "love" script, with a realistic depiction of a monarch butterfly gently alighting at the tip. Rojas says, "Taking a page out of the butterfly's journey,

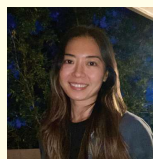
EVOLVe speaks to the evolving growth and rebirth of the human community."

The Alhambra Public Art Program was launched in 2019 to serve the community and support local artists. The inaugural exhibition was presented by the Academy of Special Dreams Foundation, a non-profit organization dedicated to bringing awareness to artists in the special needs community. Since then, The Alhambra has donated gallery space to the Academy for ongoing exhibitions.

The Academy's latest exhibition, "Uniting Borders," currently hangs at The Alhambra.

In Their Own Words: Winter Holiday Traditions

Around Alhambra asked local leaders and community members, "What is your favorite holiday tradition?" Here is what they had to share.



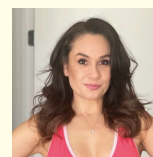
Jean Park, Program Coordinator at API Forward Movement

"One of my favorite holiday traditions is getting together with friends for a game night and playing classic holiday movies in the background. Everyone brings something to share, and it's always a fun and special way to end the year."

James Doyle, Personal Injury Lawyer at Doyle Accident & Injury Attorneys



"My favorite holiday traditions are the local events in Alhambra, such as the Pumpkin Run and the Lunar New Year Festival. The residents have probably seen my advertisements on the front page of *Around Alhambra* by now, but I am trying to run a booth at all these events so I can interact with the community directly."



Joanna Vargas, Downtown Alhambra President

"I have so many holiday traditions that I absolutely love! If I had to choose one, my favorite is waking up early Christmas morning and starting a fire in the fireplace, turning on Christmas music, and opening up gifts. There is a feeling in the air, and I love that feeling."

Elijah Chavez, VP of Vez Guitar Academy

"My favorite holiday tradition is gathering with my loved ones and sharing food, music, and laughter."



Photography by: Arturo Gomez-Molina

Celebrating the 10th Annual Alhambra Pumpkin Run & Halloween Festival

On October 29, downtown Alhambra came alive as the 10th Annual Alhambra Pumpkin Run and Halloween Festival unfolded. Presented by Wondries Automotive Group and organized by the Downtown Alhambra Business Association and the City of Alhambra, this milestone event featured four runs for all ages—a 10K, 5K, 1K, and a half-kilometer "Kiddie Run"—and drew an impressive 2,200 participants and nearly 10,000 spectators.

Despite the day starting chilly, the temperature quickly warmed up. The event kicked off with the Alhambra High School cheerleaders accompanying the entrance of Mr. Pumpke the Pumpkin on the Alhambra Fire Truck to send the runners off. The Mark Keppel High School Marching Band and Fried Music's rendition of the National Anthem set the stage for an unforgettable event.

After the runners were off, the festivities began. The celebrations would last throughout the day and into the evening as the autumn-themed Pumpkin Run transitioned seamlessly into the exciting Halloween Festival. Amidst the crowd, trick-or-treating kids adorned in a deli-

ful array of costumes added to the festive charm. From classic staples like Queen Elsa and Spiderman to unique ensembles like Wednesday Addams with a Thing on her shoulder and a baby Groot comfortably seated in a stroller, the creativity was a sight to behold.

The festival, which was situated between Main Street and Commonwealth, featured a farmers market and other activities for the whole family. A lively beer garden, sponsored by Ohana Brewery, provided the perfect setting for adults to unwind. Families reveled in the festivities, with kids showcasing their creativity in a spirited costume contest—this year, the coveted first prize went to the Invisible Man! The rock climbing wall emerged as a crowd favorite, providing both challenge and thrill for participants of all ages.

Proceeds from the event benefited The Alhambra Educational Foundation, which contributed to local Alhambra schools. The day was a thriving community gathering, bringing together diverse participants for a day of festivities in Downtown Alhambra for this fun family event!