



Ultimate Gift Basket Crafting Guide

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Introduction

Hello new friend and welcome inside the Ultimate Gift Basket Crafting Guide. Within these pages, you will find plenty of useful information on making your own gift baskets as thoughtful gifts or to earn some extra spending money in your spare time.

Whether you use this guide for personal or professional reasons, you will find plenty of phenomenal ideas, tools and tips for creating stunning, and original, gift baskets for anyone and for any occasion without spending tons of money to do it.

I do hope that this guide provides you with everything you need to begin making and "gifting" wonderful hand-made gift basket creations that will surely be accepted graciously from those you care for.

Why Gift Baskets?

Gift giving in the form of "basketing" isn't reserved for just Easter any longer. The gift basket business is becoming a booming market. And for good reason too. The gift basket industry is a-buzz offline and on when it comes to selecting a thoughtful present that will be remembered by your friends and family without all the extra hassles of wrapping, or not knowing just what to give.

Let's face it, shopping for friends or loved ones is an out right guessing game when you get right down to it. Gift baskets change all that. They make it possible for you to give important people in your life a present that really means something and cuts down on the icky-face, "I'm only pretending to like this present" factor.

Gift basketing gives you a chance to unleash your creative inner child and go wild while providing a pleasant package. And the "package" is the real winner in this scenario. Because, instead of just receiving one gift, when you give an entire basket full of goodies, the value of it, or at least the perceived value, is indeed higher.

I'm sure you have no doubt hear the phrase "It's the thought that counts". Well, there is no truer a statement ever uttered to describe the process of making a home-made gift basket due to the thought and time involved in creating one. Plus, you can whip one up in a jiffy for those "crunch time" gift giving situations without too much hard work on your part.

To add on to that last thought, gift baskets are terrific for virtually any occasion you can dream up. And, you'll always have something to give that is a one-of-a-kind present that will bring smiles to your friends & loved ones faces to be sure. No matter what type of basket you come up with :-).

Beyond that, making gift baskets is NOT an expensive process by any means. It is indeed quite affordable in the grand scheme of things. And of course,

Not to mention the fact that you could even take your gift basket making skills and turn them into a profitable on-the-side income as well. Why shouldn't you have a chance to cash in on your creativity offering specialized gifts for others that may be searching for just this type of thing?

Gift Baskets are products that can be produced and sold YEAR ROUND without slowing down. So, this can be an "At Home" type business that you can do in your spare time and earn yourself some profits with despite there not being any holidays going on or coming up. Every day is a good day for a gift basket!

Gift Basket Creation Is EASY!

Yes. It truly is. If you can find a container(not always a basket), stuff to put inside of it, a few ribbons or extra accessories, and BAM! You've got yourself a gift basket.

Traditionally of course gift baskets came in, what else?, baskets. But, as time and traditions have changed, so have the basket formats. And that helps out tremendously in the imagination arena. Traditional gift baskets can be boring. . . .

But, how about. . . .

A beach bucket filled with summertime goodies = BEACH FUN & EXCITEMENT!



Because people, and manufacturers, seem to be breaking away from the old, frumpy, traditional styles of the gift basket format, it makes creating home-made gift baskets an unbelievably simple task that isn't really a task at all, but instead FUN! Both for the creator and the gift recipient.

Plus, this gives the gift basket creator an opportunity to get really inventive with their ideas without going over budget on the supplies needed to make a specialized gift basket for an individual that has an interest in something specific. Take for instance a person who loves to cook. You could create a gift basket made from a large glass mixing bowl and fill it with all the ingredients to make some sweet treats.

This way, you give the aspiring cook all the tools, including the food ingredients, they need to make great tasting treats without having to cook the treats and present that to them. Much less work for you!

And, the time it will take you to construct a "designer" gift basket is very minimal. The longest portion of time you will spend will consist of shopping for your gift basket components. Beyond that, it should take as little as 5 minutes to get your gift basket together and ready to give to your beloved.

Sure, you COULD take \$10.00, run into your nearest drug store and purchase a pre-packaged "hot chocolate lovers" gift box filled with a couple of generic coffee mugs, a few packages of instant hot chocolate packettes, and two spoons. But. . .

You could take that SAME \$10.00, go down to an arts&crafts store such as Old Time Pottery or Hobby Lobby and purchase two specially selected coffee mugs for less than \$1.00 a piece, a couple of fine spoons for another dollar, and a lovely more personal container maybe costing you about \$3.00, or less.

Then shoot on over to the supermarket and with the left over \$4.00, stroll down the hot cocoa aisle, grab some gourmet hot chocolate instant packages, and maybe a few extra goodies like a small bag of marshmallows, then POOF! You have a very unique hot chocolate lovers gift basket!

The look on the gift recipients face is worth all the additional time spent in creating such a terrific and personalized gift basket. Isn't it? ;-)

Selecting A "Theme" For Your Basket

If you can think it up, you can turn it into a gift basket. Gift basket creation is all about creativity and imagination. How far can yours stretch to come up with fresh, inventive ideas?

Plus, the more creative you get, the better chances you will create a gift so unique it wouldn't be found anywhere else in the world. In fact, you could give 10 people the exact same supplies and ask them to come up with their own gift basket and end up with 10 different variations on the exact same theme. So, keep your mind open to new and exciting ways to present your ideas in the form of gift baskets. There is never a wrong way to do it. Just YOUR way to do it!

There are plenty of ways to come up with killer ideas for your next important gift basket creation. Some of which you can snatch up from simple greeting card ideas. Take a stroll down your local gift card aisle in the corner market and see what categories of cards they have there. Inside this one little aisle, you can come up with all sorts of inventive, never-seen-before, gift basket ideas!

Adding to that, here is a simple list of more gift basket ideas from totally traditional to the less-than-seen unique basketing ideas to get your creative juices flowing.

Themes To Try

Classic Themes:

- * Holidays
- * Birthdays
- * Anniversaries
- * Baby Shower
- * Graduations
- * Housewarming
- * Sympathy
- * Get Well
- * Going Away
- * Congratulations
- * Seasonal Celebrations

Specific Themes:

- * Gardening & Outdoor Activities
 - * Butterfly Gardening
 - * Water Gardening
 - * "Backyard" Farming
- * Winter Sports
- * Golf
- * Weight Training
- * Health/Dieting
- * Grilling/B.B.Q.
- * Tennis
- * Football(American & Traditional)
- * Camping
- * Forestry
- * Pets
- * Retirement
- * Snacks
- * Poker
- * Moving
- * Observing Heritage
- * Music Enthusiasts
- * College
- * Computer Enthusiasts

- * Alcohol Enthusiasts(Spirits)
- * Movie Enthusiasts
- * Classic Food Baskets
- * Coffee Enthusiasts
- * Office/Corporate
- * Vacationing
- * Specialty Meats & Cheeses
- * Spa & Relaxation
- * Romantic
- * Thank You
- * Wedding
- * Cookie/Sweets
- * Friendship
- * Tea
- * Fruits & Veggies

Even if you're really stuck for an idea, always remember that food is universal, so you can never go wrong with creating a classic food gift basket. You can make it "stand out" from other food baskets by picking a centralized food item and building upon it.

For example, say you decide to go with cheese. Well, there are plenty of great cheeses out there, but you can also go with cheese flavored snacks too. Or adding recipe cards for fondues or dips that can be made with the cheeses you have included inside the gift basket. Don't forget the cheese slicer, grater, or spreader, depending upon the types of cheeses you've included!

Supplies Necessary

Okay! Now that you have a central theme selected for your gift basket, you need to start getting the supplies together. Depending on how fancy you want your basket to be, you should be looking at a price range of \$25 to \$250. Remember, what you put inside your gift baskets is entirely up to you.

Keep in mind also that you need to take into consideration who you are building your particular basket for. If you are making a basket for a 7 year old child for a gift, then you should be well within the "less than \$50 range" for their basket, including the basket and specialty papers you plan on using. On the other hand, if you are making a basket for an electronics enthusiast, then your gift basket contents will be in the higher range if you plan on including things like blank CD-R discs, ZIP drives, software, etc. You get the idea here :-).

Now, on to the basic supplies you're going to need to create your new gift basket. .

* A Container

* Packing Extras & Accents

* Basket Goodies

Wow, is that really ALL there is? Yep. That's it!

The container can be a basket, or any other object that can hold the contents of your gift. It doesn't necessarily need to be a basket per say. If, for example, you were making a gift basket for someone who enjoys going out to eat at fast food joints, you could find a small plastic basket that such establishments normally use for their own "basket" meals, use some wax paper for lining, throw in some fast food coupons, some ketchup, mustard, and other assorted condiments, a small package of frozen french fries, hamburger patties, buns, etc., and you're all set!

When we talk about packing extras and accents, we're talking about basket filling like tissue paper, shredded paper, etc. In some instances, depending on what your basket theme is, you could also use clothing such as a tee shirt or similar for your basket lining element. Also, for accents and such you could include a nice ribbon/bow combination adorning the entire basket, a card attached, string lights, glittery garland, pine cones, etc.. Again, this strictly depends on the theme of the basket as to what kind of accents you decide on.

Or, if you plan on wrapping up your entire gift basket, you may need some cellophane wrap and ribbon to close it all up with. Don't forget extras like hot glue and tape if you plan on decorating your basket or container. Also, scotch tape is a great idea to help keep your basket goodies stuck in place if you plan on traveling or sending your gift basket via mail.

Finally, we have the main "guts", if you will, of your gift basket. . .The Goodies! This is all the gifts you are including within your gift basket such as food, coupons, books, cd's, toys, clothes, and similar. Be sure that if you are planning to make a gift basket a few weeks or months in advance to use non-perishable items that won't spoil for prolonged periods of time.

Things that need to be refrigerated or consumed rather quickly will need to be placed inside of gift baskets that you plan on giving within 24 hours of creation.

Remember too that anything can be given as a gift can be included inside a gift basket. And, you don't have to spend tons of money on the items you place inside your gift baskets either. You CAN be frugal when making gift baskets ;-).

To conclude, here are some places both online and off for you to purchase your gift basket components:

Places To Purchase Your Supplies:

Online:

<http://www.giftbasketsupplies.com/>
<http://www.americabasket.com>
<http://www.papermart.com>
<http://www.creativegiftpackaging.com/>
<http://www.epicureanfoods.com/ws/main.php>
<http://www.qcu.com>
<http://www.pastashoppe.com/>
<http://www.giftbasketwholesalesupply.com/>
<http://www.jdwdist.com/>

Additional info on the Gift Basket industry:

<http://www.festivities-pub.com/>

Offline:

Michael's Arts & Crafts Center
Old Time Pottery
Party City Outlet
Hobby Lobby

Many of the resources listed above have great deals for you when it comes to purchasing your gift basket supply needs. All you need to do is take a little time to shop around to figure out which places have what you require for the lowest price.

Looking through store flyers for common drug stores like CVS or WalGreens can be a huge help for some of your gift basket supplies. And also, do a little online research at your favorite stores' online shop for gift basket supplies as well.

Putting It All Together

Now it's time to put everything together. Presentation is quite important when it comes to making your gift basket. You can't simply throw everything in a bucket, slap a bow on it and say "Here Ya Go!". It takes a little more thought than that.

Take into consideration the size of your container. Is it small, medium, or larger in size? How much can you fit within it before it begins to look "over stuffed"? While we want our gift baskets to look "full", we don't want them to be messy with too many things shoved in to every available space!

Also, you will want to put taller items towards the back of your basket and going down in size until you reach the front in several different rows of goodies. You can also try the "fan out" method of displaying your gift basket goodies.

Meaning, as a handful of playing cards has a fan type shape, so too should your gift basket goodies. Anything you can do to make your display more pleasing to the eye will add to the miles of smiles you'll receive when giving your basket.

You want your gift recipient to see everything they can inside your, er, THEIR, gift basket so they know just how much you are presenting them with. So, try your best to put your goodies in a pleasing looking fashion inside your basket.

Now, before you begin "stuffing" your basket, if you plan on doing any outside decorating, do this first so that if anything needs to properly dry, it has time to do so.

Then, begin with your gift basket "bedding", i.e. - your basket lining. Use enough to give your gifts a "bed" to lay on, but don't add too much bedding that makes your basket look "over stuffed". Otherwise things will start to spill out, and we don't want that!

Next, start placement of your gift basket goodies on their "bed". You should try to go from largest along the back of the basket to smallest in the very front of your basket. This way, much more of the basket items can be viewable. Then, if you have

very tiny things such as lollipops, mints, tiny stuffed animals, etc., those can be taped onto the other items using your scotch tape to give an even more pleasing look to your basket.

Finish it off with a nice ribbon/bow combination that can be ran over the entire surface of the basket, taped, and a bow added for a final touch. This can be done longways or sideways across the basket, in the center or placed on the sides(if running a longway ribbon/bow combo).

Also, if you are not going to use the ribbon/bow combination and opt for the more traditional cellophane wrapping for your basket, be sure you have enough to completely cover your entire basket. Lay the cellophane piece down on a flat surface, and set your gift basket in the center. Pull up the four corners of the cellophane wrapping to enclose your basket inside. Then use a bit of ribbon to tie off, or close up the cellophane. This is normally done at the top of the basket.

Finally, don't forget any little cards that you may want to add and tape those on, or tie them on with ribbon after using a hole punching tool.

Of course there are plenty of different finishing "wrap" variations. And you can always not use any type of wrapping for your basket. It may just be beautiful enough on it's own without it.

Earning Extra Income From Gift Basket Making

For those that are interested in earning a bit of "on the side" cash with their creative genius in the art of gift basket making, then this section is just for you.

Gift basket making is a terrific extra income for anyone with spare time, those that are retired, or those that are currently home-makers, or stay-at-home parents. The overhead costs are relatively low, yet, you can charge quite a bit for custom designed gift baskets.

Plus, you don't need a whole lot of "start up cash" for a gift basket making endeavor either. You could start out with just a few hundred dollars, or less, and have some attractive, creative, original baskets to sell. Or, you could start out with less than \$100 and still have a few great baskets to sell.

While you can effectively sell your unique gift baskets online, the best way to earn from them is OFFLINE. Yes, offline is the way to go. The reason why is very simple. There are MORE markets open for gift basket creations offline.

What sort of offline "markets" could you possibly sell your gift baskets at?

How about flea markets? Or garage sales? Or neighborhood rummage sales? Or right from your own home? Or even out on a highly travelled stretch of road at a parking lot or side of the road?

Any of these places and more are possible. And you DON'T need a retail shop to sell from. Do keep in mind though that this is just a part time income source and NOT something that is intended for full time income. Or at least not at the beginning at any rate ;-).

Let's not forget about advertising. How do you advertise such a business? Well, the greatest way is through word of mouth! Start off by making unique gift baskets for your friends or relatives and then dropping them off unexpectedly at their job. Chances are, someone, or several someones, will be interested enough to ask your friend or family member who the basket is from or who made it? A wonderful income catalyst word of mouth can be!

Another way can be to get yourself a specially made magnet or sticker for your vehicle. Yes, this is going to cost a bit of money, but, you can set up your own online store at <http://www.cafepress.com> and generate your own bumper stickers, pens, coffee mugs, etc., and order them for yourself at wholesale prices.

Those are just two ideas for advertising your gift basket making endeavor. There are countless more. But, the word-of-mouth idea is the best, and cheapest by far. Plus, you'll get the best results using it too!

Final Thoughts

Well, we've come to the end. I do hope that you have found some creative ideas throughout this guide to help you with your gift basket making plans. Using your own mind, you can come up with the best ideas of all. This guide is just a starting point for you!

Gift basket making can be a joyous pass time for you, and those that will be receiving your gifts. It can also prove to be a wonderful little side money maker for you too. No matter what you decide though, it is true that gift basket making can enrich your life. And the lives you touch with your splendid gifts and most importantly, the thoughts behind them.

Again, I wish you the best of luck with all your endeavors, whether gift basket oriented or not. Let your creativity flow and see what you can come up with.

More Resources...



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You will learn how to:

- evaluate different locations
- estimate your start-up costs
- what inventory you should start with
- where to find wholesale products
- how to assemble your basket design
- write your business plan
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