



# LAUDATO SI' CHRISTMAS

An ethically sound Christmas is a wonderful way to celebrate the holiday season while positively impacting the world and your Christmas budget! The key to combating overconsumption at Christmas is the same as combatting overconsumption in general – consume intentionally! Only buy what you need, and when you do, try to buy with the earth and the community in mind.

Here are some ideas to help you achieve this:

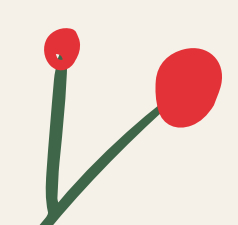

## Presents

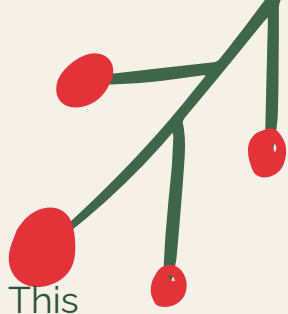

**1. Support Local Businesses** - Shop locally to support small businesses in your community. This helps your local economy and reduces the carbon footprint of shipping products over long distances. An example is [BrisStyle Twilight Markets](#) in King George Square

**2. Buy Ethical Gifts** - Choose ethically produced gifts, such as fair-trade products, handmade items, or companies committed to ethical and sustainable practices. Some of my favourite online stores for this are [Leprosy Mission](#) or [Catherine Hamlin Fistula Foundation](#)


**3. Charity Shopping** - If you love shopping, consider shopping at thrift stores or charity shops. You can find unique and budget-friendly gifts while supporting a good cause.

**4. DIY Gifts** - Create homemade gifts like baked goods, crafts, or personalised photo albums. This adds a personal touch and reduces the demand for mass-produced items.





**5. Give the Gift of Time** - Offer your time and skills as gifts. This could include offering to babysit for friends or family, providing a free home-cooked meal, or helping with a home improvement project.



**6. Minimalist Approach** - Embrace a minimalist Christmas by focusing on experiences and quality time with loved ones instead of material gifts. Consider gifts like movie tickets, spa vouchers, or cooking a special meal together.

**7. Donate to Charity** - In lieu of traditional gifts, consider donating to a charity in someone's name. Many organisations offer "gift cards" for donations, allowing recipients to choose a cause they care about. Consider '[My Cause](#)' or '[Global Gifts](#)' from Caritas

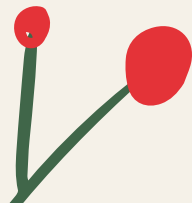
**8. Sustainable Stockings** – Avoid wrapping items in a stocking. Fill stockings with practical and eco-friendly items and avoid getting stocking fillers that only hold interest for a short time.

### Wrapping


**1. Reduce Packaging** - opt for gifts with minimal packaging or wrap presents using eco-friendly materials like reusable cloth gift bags, furoshiki (Japanese wrapping cloths), wrap gifts in scarves, towels or other fabric that can be reused or recycled paper. Descriptions of how to wrap sustainably are found [here](#).


**2. Choose Sustainable Christmas Cards** - Send e-cards or cards made from recycled materials. Alternatively, make your own cards from repurposed materials.

### Decorations



**1. Bon bons or Crackers** can significantly contribute to unnecessary waste at Christmas. Look at buying [reusable crackers](#), [sustainable crackers](#) or [make your own](#) with recyclable materials.





**2. Sustainable Decorations** - Use eco-friendly or reusable decorations. For instance, opt for LED lights, buy a potted Christmas tree to replant later, or make your own ornaments from recycled materials. Here is a [site](#) that explain ways to decorate sustainably. Avoid glitter items for they contribute to microplastic problems. [Biome](#) is a business from which you can buy sustainable and ethical decorations.

**3. Look at your Christmas Tree options.** Being artificial or real trees, there are sustainable options for both that are explained in this [link](#).

### Catering

**1. Avoid over catering.** If you enjoy baking at Christmas, consider donating to shelters or community supports near you but cook for the crowd you have and show generosity in a variety of ways. Maybe send people home with take home packs to reduce food wastage.

**2. Use washable napkins and tablecloths,** rather than paper disposables.

**3. Invest in a crockery and cutlery** set for the family that is used for all big celebrations. This is easy to buy from charity stores, so you avoid single use items.

**4. Find ways to celebrate vegetarian options** to reduce the focus on meat.

**5. Do your food shopping for Christmas at your local farmers markets** to reduce the carbon footprint.

**6. Buy food in season** in Brisbane and celebrate being Australian.

**7. If you are ordering catering** in Brisbane this season, look for businesses making a positive impact on the community both ethically and environmentally.





## General Hints

- 1. Practice Gratitude** - Encourage gratitude by starting a tradition where everyone at your Christmas gathering shares something they are thankful for. This assists the community in which you live!
- 2.** Encourage family to use **public transport or carpool** to travel to your Christmas gatherings. This helps with carbon emissions and worries of consuming alcohol! Share [Translink journey planner](#) links.
- 3. Educate and Advocate** – Through your sustainable and ethical initiatives and example you are taking the opportunity to educate your friends and family about the importance of thoughtful choices.

Remember that it's not about being perfect but consciously incorporating more ethical and sustainable practices into your holiday celebrations. Every small step counts; collectively, these actions can positively impact your footprint. Start by picking two initiatives and add two more each year.

Pope Francis - “**There are no lasting changes without cultural changes, without a maturing of lifestyles and convictions within societies, and there are no cultural changes without personal changes.**” (Laudate Deum, paragraph 70)