

## Wrap it Up

With just a few items, you can make your own fun—and memorable—gifts to share.

BY HILLARY BLACK



### Rudolph the Red-Nosed... Root Beer!

PHOTOGRAPHY BY HILLARY BLACK

Buy bottles of root beer (we selected an assortment of fun-looking, vintage-style brews) and decorate to your heart's content. Embellishments can be purchased at any crafts store: Wiggle "eyes," red pom-poms or rhinestones for "noses" and light brown chenille pipe cleaners make great "antlers." Use felt for bowties (cut shape and glue square in the center), scarves (cut length and feather the ends), etc. Use a gold or silver pen to write your message right on the bottle. Or, decorate the carton with holiday wrapping paper, adhere with tape or glue, and give as a set or bring as a hostess gift. These reindeer are sure to be the hit of any holiday party!

**Homemade gifts** are always appreciated, and we all love to try a new recipe—especially if someone else cooked it! Home-baked cookies and treats always make excellent gifts. Fill up a re-purposed jar or a cellophane bag, and the kids can decorate the tops with colorful paper or fabric and embellish with ribbons, bows, stickers and markers. For recipes, see the special treats section (page 78). Peppermint Marshmallows (page 11) and White Hot Chocolate Mix (page 29), along with the following favorites will give you great ideas for getting a head start on your holiday gift list.

See Shopping Guide, page 96.



## Let It Snow... Snow Crunch!

RECIPE AND PHOTOGRAPHY BY PAULA BIGGS, FROGPRIENCEPAPERIE.COM

Spread popped popcorn on a cookie sheet, drizzle with melted white chocolate almond bark and sprinkle M&M's or similar candies on top. Let cool to set chocolate and break apart. Alternatively, form the mixture into popcorn balls. Place in cellophane bags tied with ribbon or string, or fill cute containers to give as a more substantial gift. Top with a festive label if desired.

## Festive Hot Chocolate Mix

WRITTEN AND PHOTOGRAPHED BY MANSI DESAI

Hot chocolate is a favorite in every family, and what better way to bring a smile to someone's face this holiday season than to present them with a jar of homemade hot chocolate mix.

### Festive Hot Chocolate Mix-in-a-Jar .....

Makes approximately 12 servings  
(in a 1-quart jar)

**Note:** This mix will fill a 1-quart jar, but you can use different jar sizes as long as you keep the ratio of ingredients consistent.

- 1 cup powdered milk
- 1 cup unsweetened cocoa powder
- 1 cup granulated sugar
- ½ teaspoon salt
- ½ cup miniature chocolate chips
- ½ cup miniature marshmallows
- ⅓ cup miniature M&M's or similar candies

- 1 Layer the powdered milk, cocoa powder, sugar, salt, chocolate chips, miniature marshmallows and M&M's candies in a 1-quart jar to create colorful layers.
- 2 Add a festive ribbon and gift tag or label and attach it to the jar.
- 3 Print a recipe tag to attach to the jar, or have your kids create a hand-written label that states: "Mix ⅓ cup Hot Chocolate Mix in a mug with 1 cup boiling water and stir. Store remaining mix in airtight container."



## Message-on-a-Chocolate Bar

Quick and easy, make custom tasty greetings by covering chocolate bars with adorable labels you make, or use our printables designed by Frog Prince Paperie. Visit [frogprincepaperie.com](http://frogprincepaperie.com) or <http://goo.gl/A9wdT>.



"Tidings of good cheer, twinkling lights, and a warmth in your heart that makes you think of home."