

## Sustainable Gifting 2023

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By Thomas Beck, AIA, NCARB

It is a good time of year to be thinking about great ways we can personally make a difference in our daily actions. Last year we wrote about the topic of Sustainable Gifting (<https://www.eprail.com/2022/11/30/together-we-build-sustainable-gifting/>), and we thought an update for 2023 would be timely. Last year we included many links for the suggested local non-profits, art venues, restaurants and more, and those can be found in the article on the eprail.com link above. This year we will highlight a few more local ideas and repeat a few from last year's list. Last year we included a quote about some of the best gifts being not things but "cherished memories." We have lots of opportunities for that here in Estes Park.

Some of our favorite restaurants in Estes Park are also some of our community's most generous contributors to local causes dear to our hearts. This year Mama Rose's won the EP Nonprofit Resource Center National Philanthropy Day Business Philanthropists of the Year award. Also nominated were other great restaurants like local tavern, The Rock Inn, The Egg of Estes and Bird & Jim. Another local gem is Mountain Home Café, whose proprietor Olga Ortega is one of the 12 women featured in our Estes Park Women's Monument. (<https://www.visitestespark.com/blog/post/12-amazing-women-trailblazers-that-have-transformed-estes-park/>) One of our favorite local restaurants The Dunraven hosts a huge annual fundraiser to benefit Crossroads Ministry. Twin Owls Steakhouse, another of our favorite spots for a great meal, also actively give back to the community. You can send these businesses some local love not only by dining there yourselves, but also by giving gifts of gift cards/certificates to friends and family. All of the local 2023 Philanthropy Day nominees can be seen on the EPNRC website. (<https://www.epnonprofit.org/nominees.html>) There is also a list of all of the more than 100 non-profits in the Estes Valley. (<https://www.epnonprofit.org/list-of-nonprofits.html>)

Last year we mentioned a number of the local organizations and places where one can appreciate and participate in the arts. These included the Art Center of Estes Park, Inspired Artisan Market, and the Estes Arts District, which supports both visual and performing arts. This year we can add the new venues Bear & Bee Inspired Maker's Studio and Boutique, and Seed and Sage Studio to the list of venues offering opportunities for creativity in Estes Park.

Last year we mentioned both the Fine Arts Guild, which in 2023 is celebrating its 65<sup>th</sup> year in Estes Park, and the American Legion Post 119. Last year we mentioned the Honor Wall, "the 100-ft.-plus wall will hold 2,400 commemorative tiles honoring individuals who have unselfishly served—or are serving—our nation or the community." Over the past couple of years Post 119 has hosted a series called Listening at the Legion, reasonably priced listening room concerts focused on appreciating and listening to singer songwriters performing their own original music. The concerts benefit the American Legion, which in Estes Park serves the needs of veterans but is also open to the public. The concerts are funded largely by the generous donations of local individuals and businesses (of which T.W. Beck Architects is included.)

Last year we also mentioned supporting local gems such as The Estes Park Museum Friends and Foundation by becoming a member, and The Estes Valley Land Trust, which protects land and open space. Our local Estes Valley Recreation and Park District operates the golf courses and the Community Center with its workout facilities and swimming pool. A membership or season pass would be a wonderful gift!

Support the local food and beverage industry by giving gift cards to a favorite local restaurant, winery, brewery, or distillery. Snowy Peaks Winery is always a presence supporting nonprofits in our community, as are breweries such as Lumpy Ridge and Avant Garde Aleworks. We personally participate in Snowy Peaks Explorers Wine Club, which is a great way to sample a variety of bottles of the winery's offerings and gives us a discount on all of our purchases.

We don't do too much shopping in general, but when we do we like to try to keep it local. Laura's sister asked what she wanted for her birthday, and she asked for a gift certificate for our local shop Rocky Mountain Majesty, where she can buy delicious, flavored olive oils and balsamic vinegars. We like to visit them at the Estes Park Farmers Market, because they have a wide variety of those items out for tasting in the summertime. There are lots of local retailers who would love to provide gift cards to give to your giftees.

As we said last year, the above, incomplete list is comprised of locals we are personally familiar with and support. There are many, many more local opportunities for giving the gift of memories and experiences. Picture the ones that speak to you and give the gift of those to your friends and family this holiday season.

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