

# Enough with the Stuff!: Give the gift of pandemic-safe adventure

Holiday shopping can be a strain even under the best of non-2020 circumstances. It's a whole new challenge when you're the type of gift giver who would rather buy your significant other concert tickets — and finds yourself at a loss when most forms of entertainment face a murky re-opening. But if there's one thing we've learned this year, it's how to be resourceful and whether you're buying your bud binoculars for their new birding passion or renting out the Showcase at Providence Place for a private screening so you can eat movie theater popcorn again, there's still plenty of interactive gifts you can give the out-of-the-box loved one on your shopping list.

## Level up their walks

Walking: This totally *pedestrian* pursuit has become the pandemic-proof activity of choice for so many of us, whether we like it or not. ("What did you do this weekend?" "Well, we ate. Then we took a walk." "US TOO.") But what better way to break up the routine of someone's weekend constitutional than by gifting them a pair of snowshoes? A basic set of adult's or children's size shoes can be found at Ocean State Job Lot for under \$50. Encourage them to be used by slipping a map of the trails at Pulaski Memorial Recreation Area in Chepachet in the gift box or a map of Goddard Park, where you'll be sure to find other snowshoers making their way this winter.

**Recommended for:** the friend who went all in on new hobbies this year and is ready to branch out from sourdough and into something a little more physical.

## Stay safe and shop small businesses

This is the year to go all-in on gift cards to your favorite small businesses. Help your loved one experience some pre-pandemic normalcy by sending them for an afternoon on Ives Street and doubling up on gift cards to **Twenty Stories** and **Aleppo Sweets**. Twenty Stories may be most famous for their book mobile, but their Fox Point storefront is available for in-store shopping by appointment, which means the bookworm in your life can enjoy a crowd-free browsing experience. Because the store curates 20 new titles each month, owners Alexa Trembly and Emory Harkins are experts at helping you find the right book to fit your mood out of their inventory. They're also offering gift bundles this holiday season, under categories like "Book Club Favorites," "Noteworthy Young Adults" or "The Little One" bundle, which includes two books and a Twenty Stories onesie. After their appointment, your loved one can pop into the other side of the building (Twenty Stories and Aleppo Sweets literally share a main door) and pick-up a to-go order from Aleppo.

**Recommended for:** anyone who wants to get cozy with a book and baklava, but also wouldn't mind leaving the house for a change.

## Rekindle love for a Rhody tradition

Roger Williams Park Zoo is such a Rhode Island stalwart that, when it comes time for gift giving, this big obvious could almost slip our mind as an option. But if you're shopping for a family or a couple,

gifting a zoo membership is a top-notch way to encourage outdoor activities all year long. Besides free admission, membership has the extra perk of discounts to more than 100 zoos and museums across the country, setting you up with a readymade list of places to go once we're safely mobile again.

**Recommended for:** animal lovers and the Rhode Island transplant in your life who never took a picture on top of the bronze dog statue.

### **Hide out in someone else's (tree) house**

While several Airbnb's in Rhode Island offer a glamping experience in the summer and fall, there's only one Airbnb we know of where guests can go off grid any time of year. Just across the border in Rehoboth, searchable as "Providence area Treehouse Farm Stay," you'll find the rental of Airbnb super host, Anne. Her tree house, a shingled, big windowed tiny home on a platform amidst the woods, is located on farmland. There's no electricity, but your giftee can take a day away from Netflix binging and instead visit with the farm's animals, which include Nigerian dwarf goats, American guinea hogs, horses, poultry, and a water buffalo named Bill. (Bill's a pretty popular guy with past guests.) There's a composting toilet, but the hosts also provide a "real bathroom" for guests to use in the winter. Should you share that detail with your friend before you book their surprise stay? The choice is yours!

**Recommended for:** the person in your life who always says they want to unplug or desperately needs a night away from their roommate.