



# DECK THE HALLS WITH **ECO-FRIENDLY** DECOR

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“GREEN” YOUR HOLIDAY EVENTS WITH THESE  
FUN, EASY AND EARTH-FRIENDLY TIPS.

## TIP

1. When decorating, consider natural touches, such as found greenery or pine cones.

If you're dreaming of a **green** Christmas—or any other holiday—there are many things you can do to make your entertaining more **eco-friendly**. From invitations to gifts, catering to decor, here are some tips for greening your **holiday event**.

## INVITATIONS

Go paperless by using online invitation sites such as Evite.com or MyPunchbowl.com. If sending a printed invitation, consider plantable cards printed with soy ink and embedded with wildflower seeds.

## FOOD AND DRINK

Whether buying your own food or hiring a caterer, look for organic and locally made products. For catered events, try sustainable suppliers such as Seattle's Herban Feast or Portland's Crave Catering. Even in winter, the Pacific Northwest offers an abundance of local products. Herban Feast's fall and winter menus feature a variety of dried, pickled and jarred vegetables, vinegars, oils, herbs, preserves and chutneys made from fresh summer produce.

For toasting your guests, choose one of the region's certified organic or sustainable wineries, such as Snoqualmie Vineyards in Washington, Holesinsky's Vineyard and Winery in Idaho, WillaKenzie Estate in Oregon, or Summerhill Pyramid Winery in British Columbia. Oregon in particular has a large number of certified sustainable vineyards—up to 29 percent of the state's wineries according to the Oregon Wine Board.

The Northwest also offers plenty of organic beers, including Washington's Fish Tales Organic Ales, Oregon's Roots Organic Brewing Co., Kodiak Island Brewing Co. in Alaska and British Columbia's Nelson Brewing Co.

For a non-alcoholic alternative, consider serving cider made from Northwest-grown apples. Or how about some eggnog made from fresh local ingredients? Eschew bottled water in favor of water with lemon slices served from attractive pitchers.

Opt for fabric tablecloths, cloth napkins, and reusable dinner ware if possible. If reusable dining ware is inconvenient, choose compostable plates, napkins and utensils.

To further reduce paper use, John Jackson, owner and chef at the soon-to-open Charcut Roast House in Calgary, Alberta, suggests displaying food and beverage menus by projection or on chalkboards.

## LIGHTING

Light-emitting diode (LED) displays are revolutionizing the lighting industry by providing longer-lasting, brighter lights at a fraction of the energy usage. "Their brilliance is spectacular," says Isaac Kearns of Christmas Decor by C and D Landscape Co. in Dayton, Ore. "The LEDs burn so much brighter, they shine so much more, yet they reduce your energy bills by 90 percent."

To set a festive mood, try dimming the lights or using candles. Natural soy or beeswax candles are an eco-friendly alternative to standard petroleum-based synthetic wax candles. If you're concerned about fire safety, get the best of both worlds with rechargeable candles such as Smart Candle's Platinum Evolution LED candles, which simulate the flickering of live candles and last for up to 15 hours on a single eight-hour charge.

## DECOR

Decorating with greenery and found items such as pine cones is a great way to make things look appealing and smell fresh at the same time. Instead of cut or artificial Christmas trees, choose potted trees that can be replanted after the holidays.

Create your own centerpieces using items with a specific color or theme. Herban Feast often decorates with wreaths of bay leaves or rosemary that guests can take home and use for cooking. Gourds, cinnamon sticks tied with ribbon, and garlands of popcorn and cranberries can also look quite festive.

"Especially during the holidays, one thing that's really nice is using citrus fruits like oranges and

## get connected

CHRISTMAS DECOR BY  
C AND D LANDSCAPE CO.  
503.864.3551  
[www.canddlandscape.com](http://www.canddlandscape.com)

CHARCUT ROAST HOUSE  
[www.charcut.com](http://www.charcut.com)

CRAVE CATERING  
[www.portland-catering.com](http://www.portland-catering.com)

FISH TALES ORGANIC ALES  
[www.fishbrewing.com](http://www.fishbrewing.com)

GREEN YOUR THEME  
206.841.9917  
[www.greenyourtheme.com](http://www.greenyourtheme.com)

HALF PAST LAVISH EVENT  
PRODUCTION  
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[www.halfpastlavish.com](http://www.halfpastlavish.com)

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HOLESINSKY'S VINEYARD  
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[www.holesinsky.com](http://www.holesinsky.com)

KODIAK ISLAND BREWERY  
[www.kodiakbrewery.com](http://www.kodiakbrewery.com)

NELSON BREWING CO.  
[www.nelsonbrewing.com](http://www.nelsonbrewing.com)

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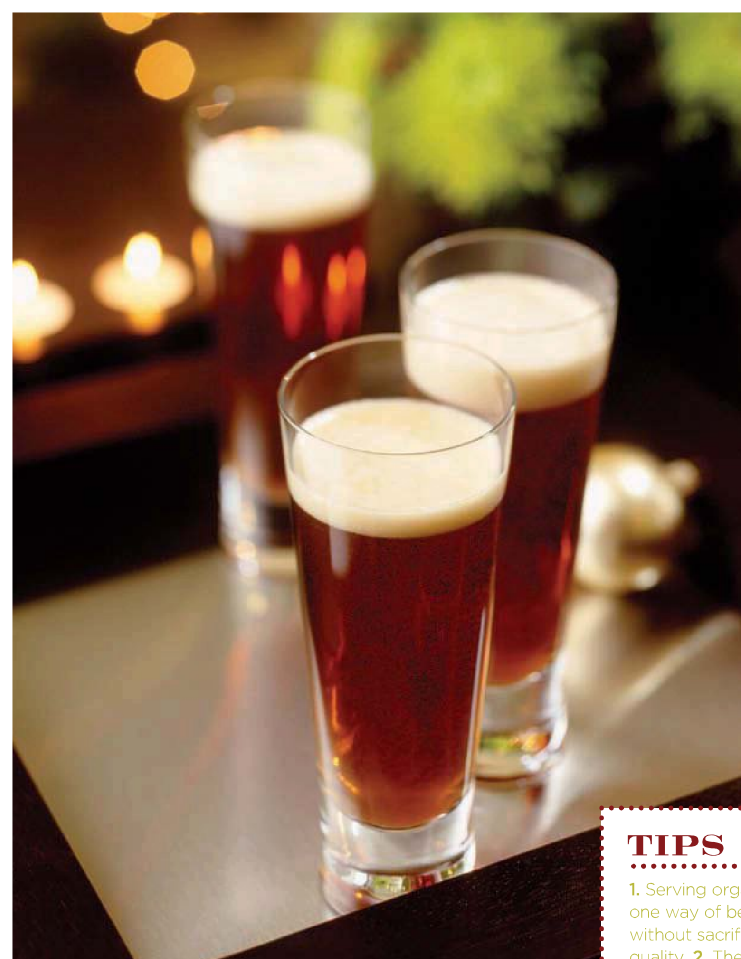
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SNOQUALMIE VINEYARDS  
[www.snoqualmie.com](http://www.snoqualmie.com)

SUMMERHILL PYRAMID  
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[www.willakenzie.com](http://www.willakenzie.com)





## TIPS

1. Serving organic beer is one way of being sustainable without sacrificing flavor or quality. 2. The Northwest has an abundance of local food and wine that can help reduce your party's environmental impact. 3. Consider using reusable dinnerware and fabric linens instead of disposables.



poking cloves into them,” suggests Courtney Russell of Half Past Lavish Event Production in Redmond, Wash. “It makes things smell gorgeous and looks really great.”

Karin Bigelow, a facilitator for Green Your Theme, a networking website for eco-friendly events, says reusing materials at hand is becoming increasingly popular: “Instead of using ribbon, people are using twine or cutting cloth that they would otherwise give or throw away. They’re cutting up old nightgowns and so on.” You can also buy holiday ornaments made from scrap metal and other recycled materials.

Russell adds, “Another thing that I think is really fun is creating napkin rings by taking old paper towel tubes and cutting them into one- or two-inch sections and wrapping them with old wrapping paper or old material. They can really add color to your tabletop, and everything is completely reused.”

If you must use paper, opt for biodegradable decorations such as rice paper garlands and lanterns.

## GIFTS

Rather than a trinket that people won’t use, why not give your guests a gift that means something? One idea is to give donations in your guests’ names to an organization that they support. You might consider adopting an acre of land or planting a tree.

Another option is to give an experience such as a kayaking trip or a family pass to the local zoo. Tickets to cultural events, gift certificates to local restaurants, or passes to nearby national parks also make great gifts. Experiential gifts create lasting memories, and as Bigelow points out, “Memory doesn’t take up space.”

For takeaway party favors, Bigelow suggests reusable water bottles or tote bags, which are also a convenient way to send leftovers home with guests.

Russell also favors small potted plants as takeaway gifts. “I like potted herbs or plants better than seed packets because a lot of times the seed packaging isn’t ecofriendly,” she says. “Also, planting seeds is harder and a lot of people never get around to doing it.”

If you’re wrapping gifts, opt for reusable gift bags or materials. Consider wrapping gifts in other gifts, for example winding a scarf around a book. At the very least, try reusing last year’s wrapping paper or other paper such as grocery store bags or newspaper.

Finally, make sure your guests are traveling to your event in as sustainable a manner as possible. Encourage carpooling, provide bus passes, or rent a shuttle bus to transport people from a central location.

Above all, get creative. You’ll be surprised at how many green ideas you come up with. 🌱

# ONLINE GREEN PARTY RESOURCES

## Botanical Paperworks

Offers plantable invitations, greeting cards and other paper products. » [www.botanicalpaperworks.com](http://www.botanicalpaperworks.com)

## Eco-Products Inc.

Offers biodegradable food containers, plates, cups, utensils and napkins. » [www.biodegradablestore.com](http://www.biodegradablestore.com)

## Grassroots Environmental Products

Offers beeswax candles; recycled wood and metal ornaments; organic bamboo dinnerware; biodegradable plates, cups and utensils; hemp table linens and napkins; plantable tree kits; reusable gift bags and totes; and more. » [www.grassrootsstore.com](http://www.grassrootsstore.com)

## Green Party Goods

Offers compostable tableware; biodegradable crepe streamers, garlands and lanterns; reusable tote bags; and other eco-friendly gifts. » [www.greenpartygoods.com](http://www.greenpartygoods.com)

## Infinite Canopy

Offers biodegradable plates, cups, napkins and utensils made from corn, sugarcane and bamboo. » [www.infinitecanopy.com](http://www.infinitecanopy.com)

## Linnea's Lights

Offers natural soy candles. » [www.linnealights.com](http://www.linnealights.com)

## LIVE (Low Input Viticulture and Enology Inc.)

Information about the LIVE wine certification program and a list of certified vineyards and wineries in Oregon and Washington. » [www.liveinc.org](http://www.liveinc.org)

## Oregon Certified Sustainable Wine

Offers information on sustainable wine certification and a list of Oregon wineries certified under this program. » [www.ocsw.org](http://www.ocsw.org)

## Oregon Wine Board

Includes information on different sustainable and organic wine certifications, as well as a list sustainable, organic or biodynamic wine producers. » [www.oregonwine.org](http://www.oregonwine.org)

## Organic Bouquet

Offers organically grown flowers, plants and wreaths. » [www.organicbouquet.com](http://www.organicbouquet.com)

## Rawganique

Offers hemp and linen tablecloths, napkins and placemats, plus hemp and recycled paper products. » [www.rawganique.com](http://www.rawganique.com)

## Sustainable Catering Association (Oregon)

Offers information on how to find out if a caterer is using sustainable practices. » [www.sustainablecateringassociation.org](http://www.sustainablecateringassociation.org)

## Way Out Wax

Offers 100 percent natural soy wax candles and air fresheners. » [www.wayoutwax.com](http://www.wayoutwax.com)