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Beatrice: A quaint and easy spot for holiday shopping

By **Janet Beatrice**/ Only in Maynard
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If you find holiday shopping stressful, if you're still going to the mall and fighting crowds, hoping to find gifts that just happen to match the people on your list - you are missing a lovely Christmas/Hanukkah gift right in your backyard.

The warmest, most unique, most thoughtful gifts can be found in downtown Maynard, where you know the names of the shopkeepers and chances are, they know yours. In fact, for a long time, I've felt that Maynard has the best, most charming downtown around.

Worried about the effect your shopping will have on the environment? Just shop at Dunia Eco-Store, where you can find charming gifts for under \$10, luxurious organic cotton gifts for the special people on your list (I got my mom their organic cotton bathrobe for Christmas), and plenty of great stuff in-between, including a large selection of bamboo cutting boards and bowls. Be sure to check out their socially responsible games for kids.

Want to support local artists? At Art & Soul (formerly Art in the Heart of Maynard) you can find gifts from the funky to the sublime in a range of prices to suit every budget. Fairies would make a great gift for girls and women. So would ornaments, pillows with wise sayings on them, soaps, jewelry. For men, check out the handsome wooden boxes Ingrid makes. There's so much you'll just have to stop in. Just being in the store is a pleasure (I find that true for all the stores in downtown Maynard).

On to Teresinas, where I must recommend a product that I've had personal experience with: 100 percent African Shea Butter. Last year, when my hands were chapped to the point of bleeding, I ordered this stuff through the Internet. I had heard it did wonders. It's true! This year, I can get it right here in Maynard, and I did - it will be a great gift for my sister and sister-in-law. Be sure to wrap them in a wrapsack from Dunia - a fun and environmentally correct way to wrap gifts.

Needless to say, you'll find plenty more treasures at Teresinas and Teresinas Too, including adorable little soda pop candles.

Don't neglect Quaint Things because they sell furniture. They've got some great housewares and some devilish fudge (one has candy canes in it!).

And don't forget CD Willy's, Periwinkles, the Warehouse Store, the Maynard Outdoor Store - and any of the great stores that I'm surely forgetting.

If you're getting tired after all that shopping, stop at the Boston Bean House for a Chai Tea or a latte. And while you're there, pick up some coffee for the coffee lovers on your list.

Now that you're relaxed, you can go on to your final stop. Get yourself some wrapping paper and greeting cards at the Paper Store. You can also find art supplies, books, children's craft kits, stuffed animals, and a whole lot more great stuff.

Now go home, put on a Christmas or Hanukah CD (you did get one at CD Willy's didn't you?), wrap those gifts and rejoice! Your holiday shopping is done, with the help of Paige, Deeds, Debra, Will, Mary, and all the other friendly and charming shopkeepers of downtown Maynard.

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