



Irish Fireside
**HOLIDAY
GIFT GUIDE**
2009

The Irish Fireside team of holiday elves have sifted through your nominations and we've come up with a fine list of Irish and Celtic gift ideas.

A special thank you to everyone who took the time to send us their recommendations... there were a lot of you, and kudos to our team of judges who helped sort through the suggestions.

If you like any items in the guide, send a note to the artisan or business. Many of the items are handcrafted, and the makers would certainly appreciate your feedback.

Happy Holidays,

Corey & Liam
www.IrishFireside.com



Carved Stone by Sam Bates

www.carvedstonebysambates.com

We were stopped in our tracks when we first spotted Sam's intricate Celtic knotwork designs carved into beautiful stone. His motifs are original, and the results are exquisite. He sticks to one-of-a-kinds, so contact him directly to find out what he has available or visit his website for a slide show of his favorite work.



Irish Coin Cufflinks

www.irishcoincufflinks.com

In the days before the Euro, the Irish Punt was the country's currency. Adorned with Irish symbols... the harp, stag, salmon, hare and bull, the coins were works of art in their own right. Now, they are available as gorgeous cufflinks, and better yet, proceeds benefit the Irish-American Story Project.



A Journey into Ireland's Literary Revival

www.rtoddfelton.com and www.roaringfortiespress.com

Ireland has a rich literary history, and R. Todd Felton brings it all together as he explores the relationship between Ireland's beloved writers and the country that fueled their imaginations. We've revisited the pages of this book many times since discovering it a year ago, and have found there is no end to interesting tidbits inside.



Critters for Keepsies

www.crittersforkeepsies.com

Dublin-based artist Beth O'Halloran uses recycled materials, such as gloves and baby socks, to craft her adorable critters. Her eco-friendly creations are made with organic, plant-dyed textiles and stuffed with organic cotton to be gentle on the planet and the lucky person caring for the critter.



Samson's Titanic Journey

www.odonnellpress.com

It's been a hundred years since the Titanic left the shipyards of Belfast and disembarked from Cobh, Ireland. Follow the journey of one of history's most famous ships through the eyes of Samson, a mouse who hopped on board with plans to reach America.



Gifted by Nature

www.giftedbynature.ie

Imagine the excitement when a package of gorgeous, eco-friendly bath items arrive from Ireland. Gifted by Nature's line of luxurious body oils, creams, washes, scrubs, candles and more allow you to give the gift of an Irish spa. We're especially keen on the Bamboo Silk Velvet Robe and any gift boxes that include their "Life's Little Pleasures Hand Wash."



Shard Jewelry from Ireland

www.lamplighterstudio.com

The Irish Fireside's very own, Liam Hughes spends a good bit of his time in Ireland hunting for shards of broken dishes. Be it remnants of Belleek, Donegal Parian, Irish spongeware or 150-year-old transferware, each piece of his handcrafted pins and pendants hold a bit of Irish history.



Tommy Moloney's Irish Breakfast

www.tommyamoloneys.com

There's nothing like an Irish Breakfast, and Tommy Moloney's delivers everything you need to make it at home... right down to the black and white puddings! Their website includes several recipes, in case you're unsure of how to create the perfect Irish-themed menu.



Elena Brennan Designs

www.elenabrennan.com

Inspired by Celtic myth, Elena Brennan has created an astounding collection of fine, wearable art. Her Children of Lir pieces tell the ancient Irish story of the royal children who were turned to swans, while her other collections celebrate angels, seashores and delicate gossamer patterns.



Official Irish Dirt

www.officialirishdirt.com

There are few gifts more Irish than Irish Dirt... and yes, the Auld Sod Company really is exporting authentic soil from County Tipperary. Their Shamrock Gift Set even includes a Belleek bowl that can be reused when the Irish greens outgrow their fine porcelain container.



Cleo Irish Clothing

www.irishclothing.ie

Fine Irish woolens and linens are the hallmark of Dublin-based Cleo Irish Clothing. Their unique hats and wraps are likely to garner compliments to anyone who wears them, and their traditional sweaters harken to the company's roots making Aran sweaters.



Meadow Miniatures Floral Jewelry

www.meadowminiatures.com

Carefully picked flowers from Yeats' Country in County Sligo are expertly pressed and dried before they are turned into charming jewelry. With designs ranging from Celtic to contemporary, Meadow Miniatures allows one to wear a wee bit of the Emerald Isle.



Hobby Horse Toys

www.hobbyhorsetoys.com

On the shores of Lough Erril in County Leitrim, you'll find Dan Hillman working away on his unique hobby horse toys. The hand-cut and hand-painted works of art resemble creatures from Ireland's ancient illuminated manuscripts. They're not only beautiful, they're fun.



Global Giftwrap

www.globalgiftwrap.com

In the Irish language, "Nollaig Shona" translates to "Happy Christmas," and Global Giftwrap's line of Irish-inspired wrapping paper celebrates beautiful Celtic and contemporary designs. As a bonus, the back of each sheet includes a bit of background about the design.



Celtic Harp Music From Anne Roos

www.celticharpmusic.com

The Celtic harp is a wonderful instrument, and in the hands of Anne Roos, it is absolutely mesmerizing. Anne's collection of CDs all come with a full-color book of stories and information that add to the listening experience. You'll have trouble deciding which of her CDs to give this holiday season... I suggest you get ALL THREE.



Irish Beer Gift Basket

www.gourmetgiftbaskets.com

The Irish are famous for their beers, and this bucket from Gourmet Gift Baskets features some of Ireland's favorite brews. Although we must admit, the distinctly non-Irish beef jerky seems a bit out of place, but, heck, it'll go great with Guinness.



Lenox Trees Around the World Ornament - Ireland

www.lenox.com

Give the tree a little Irish flair this year with a limited edition 2009 ornament from Lenox. The ivory fine china trimming features distinctly Irish scenes such as an Irish dancer, fiddle and even a shillelagh, and it is accented with 24 karat gold.



Tailten Games

www.tailtengames.com

Ireland's Tailten Games has managed to take the game world by storm with their line of Celtic-inspired games and puzzles. We found ourselves desperately stacking game pieces in a full-on Project Kells tournament, so these games aren't just for the kids! Beautifully designed and addictively enjoyable.



Island Turf Crafts

www.islandturfcrafts.com

5,000-year-old turf from the bogs of Ireland has been crafted into beautifully-finished artwork that include ornaments, clocks, crosses, frames, paperweights and jewelry in the shape of high crosses, harps, Saint Brigid's cross and several other forms.



Panoramic Landscape Photos of Ireland

www.thewidereye.com

Peter O'Donnell's breathtaking photo of the Rock of Cashel hangs over Corey's desk and provides a welcome visual escape to Ireland. His panoramic photos capture the Irish landscape, and his 2010 calendar lets you enjoy the best of Ireland year-round.



Michelle Masters Topiary Cards & Art

www.michellemasters.com

Michelle Masters' distinct topiary illustrations are well-suited for Irish Celtic designs. Her collection of notecards, soaps, linens, pillows and wall art offer charming accents for every room.



Dingle Linens

www.dinglelinens.com

"Holy Ground" on Ireland's Dingle Peninsula took on a different meaning, as actual holes were dug in the ground for flax to be soaked. Dingle Linen carries on the Irish linen tradition with a range of fine products.



Alan Ardiff Jewelry

www.alanardiff.com

We were enchanted by Alan Ardiff's unique kinetic jewelry. The internationally-recognized, Irish artist creates whimsical, beautiful art, and his piece "Star Grazing," with what must be an Irish sheep, especially caught our eye.



Rosetta Stone Irish/Gaelic

www.rosettastone.com

There has been a revival in speaking the Irish language both in Ireland and among the Irish diaspora worldwide. We've given a copy of the Rosetta Stone language software and gave it a test run. We found it quite easy to use and shared our reactions in [this review](#).



Irish Turf Incense

www.turfpeat.com

There's something about the aroma of a turf fire that simply brings you home to Ireland. These incense "briquets" from the Gifted Hand are made with real Irish turf and come packaged in a quaint Irish cottage.



Traditional Irish Wedding

www.irishcultureandcustoms.com

Bridget Haggerty literally wrote the book on traditional Irish Weddings. This gift is perfect for anyone planning a wedding or simply interested in the history, myths and traditions associated with Irish nuptials. Visit the Contact Bridget link on the site to get a personalized copy.



Earthen Craft Pottery Celtic Tiles

www.ecptile.com

Based on Celtic carvings and architectural details, these gorgeous knotwork art tiles are hand-crafted and hand-designed by Brian Davis and Katie Hobson. Each piece comes with a wood stand, making it easy to display the rich, natural colors of their glazes.



Soapourri Claddagh Soap

www.soapourri.com

Cindy Helgason's handcrafted Claddagh Soap Gift Box comes with two beautiful and fragrant soaps in gold and bronze. And those with a passion for Ireland should also try her Irish Oatmeal soap made with real Irish oatmeal or her special loaf soap featuring the Irish tri-color flag.



Irish Dance Silhouette Greeting Cards

www.customsilhouettes.com

Sharman Armstrong specializes in creating beautiful custom silhouette images. Her collection of Irish and Celtic note cards capture the spirit of Irish dance and make fantastic gifts for anyone who finds their toes tapping to an Irish tune.



Killyliss Studio Crafts

www.killylissstudio.com

Colm McCann opened his studio in 1991 and has been making unique Irish gifts and crafts ever since. Each item is handcrafted and inspired by symbols and traditions of Irish culture. Just as Colm loves telling stories through music, he also tells them through his art.



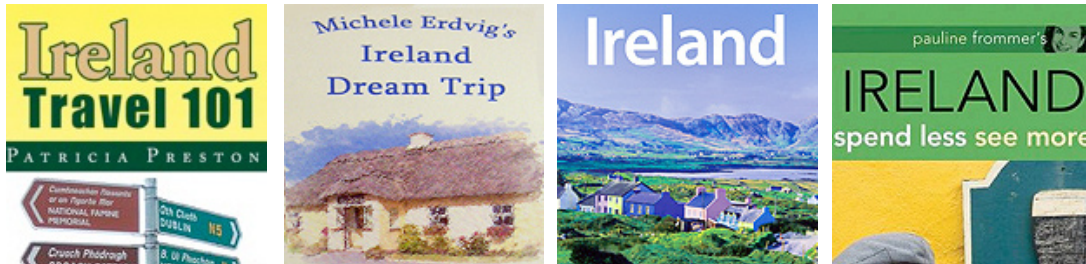
Bridgedale Socks

www.bridgedale.com

Bridgedale has been knitting socks in Northern Ireland since 1910. That said, these aren't your great-grandparents wool socks! Their lineup includes a sock for everything from sub-zero snowshoeing to desert hiking to rugged, rainy hill-climbs.

Irish Guide Books

Guide books make great gifts for those who will be making their way “across the pond.” There are four books we’d like to see in our Christmas stockings. Pat Preston’s [Ireland Travel 101](#) provides one of the most thorough overviews for planning a trip to Ireland. [Michele Erdvig’s Ireland Dream Trip](#) highlights her personal favorite places to stay and tips for organizing the perfect holiday. [Lonely Planet Ireland](#) covers the most locations in Ireland. And [Pauline Frommer’s Ireland](#) delivers on its promise to help travelers spend less and see more.



Irish and Celtic Holiday Music

For holiday music, Irish and Celtic artists do it best. Each year, the [Irish & Celtic Music Podcast](#) broadcasts a wonderful collection of some of the best. The [The Chieftains: The Bells of Dublin](#) is a perennial favorite. PBS has put together a complete CD/DVD collection of their [Christmas Celtic Sojourn](#) show. Eileen Ivers’ [An Nollaig](#) is filled with a mix of holiday lullabies and lively fiddle tunes. And the [Irish Tenors Christmas from Dublin](#) is sure to please.



Other Music

When it comes to music, we've already recommended the [Irish and Celtic Albums You Should Experience](#) in our blog. However, Irish Fireside fans will likely enjoy Marc Gunn's collection of [Irish Drinking Songs](#). And breaking away from Irish music, we thought you might enjoy some easy listening music from Irish-Americans [Liam Hughes](#) and [Anne Davis](#).



A Few Other Items You Might Enjoy

Bit Devine Calendars & Accessories - www.zazzle.com/cowboycraic - Bit has combined her love of words and her beautiful photos from Ireland into calendars, mugs, mouse pads and several other items.

Burren Smokehouse - www.burrensmokehouse.ie - Specializing in smoked salmon fresh from County Clare, Ireland.

Deep Creek Celtic - www.bonanzle.com/booths/deepcreekceltic - This family-owned business features fine jewelry crafted in Ireland and Scotland.

2010 Vintage Fighting Irish Calendar - www.asgardpress.com/10_Notre-Dame - Celebrate the spirit of the Fighting Irish with this colorful vintage calendar.

Jimi Wallet - www.thejimi.com Mike O'Neill created the Jimi Wallet to stand up to rough conditions... even the windswept Irish seaside. Enter the code "FIRESIDE" for 20% off.

Michele Erdvig Calendars & Accessories - www.zazzle.com/irelandyes - Michele has created a series of items featuring wonderful images from Ireland. We're especially drawn to her Irish Tulip Festival Calendar.

O'Casey's Irish Store - www.okcs.com - You may recognize the O'Casey's fine jewelry from Ireland from their appearances at Irish Festivals around the country.

Pat Preston Calendar - www.zazzle.com/irelandexpert - Pat's calendar of Ireland's Towns and Villages is a sure hit with photos from many of her favorite places.

Puckane Crafts - www.puckanecrafts.com - Known mainly for their fine wood art depicting Irish scenes, Puckane Crafts carries many other items you won't find anywhere elsewhere.



A Few Things to Remember

Many of the businesses in this guide are based in Ireland or create custom products. To avoid disappointment, contact the artist or business immediately and ask about time frame and shipping costs before you purchase (many overseas businesses will require you contact them by Dec 6th or earlier to assure Christmas delivery).

The links in this post were clickable and working at the time of publication... we're terribly sorry if they don't work when you click them.

Due to the number of nominations, many fine gift items could not be included in this guide. If there is an item you'd like to see in next year's guide, let us know.

If you spotted any items you thought were exceptional, be sure to contact the makers. A short email will mean a lot.