Hosting for the holidays?

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EVERYTHING PUMPKIN
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AUTUMN amazing
CIDER • DOUGHNUTS • APPLES • PUMPKINS • HAYRIDES
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Season-proof your skin
WEATHER IS CHANGING AND SO IS YOUR SKIN
PAGE 3

WREATHS
The history of this iconic décor
+ Ideas to make one for every season

PAGE 3
Fall’s unusual traditions

Kick your autumn celebrations up a notch with different activities for the season.

By Sally Rummel
news@tctimes.com; 810-629-8282

Known for its changing leaves, pumpkins, apples, cider and doughnuts, autumn is considered by most people to be a welcome transition between the extreme heat of summer and cold temperatures of winter, especially in Michigan.

Sweatshirt weather, cool nights, football, Octoberfest and Thanksgiving are just a few of the reasons many people love autumn, but it’s also the season for some unusual traditions.

Halloween

Yes, everyone knows about the innocent fun of this popular trick-or-treat holiday, but its beginnings bring a little “spook” into the celebration.

Halloween is a time of celebration and superstition. Straddling between fall and winter, this time of year was known as the “dark side,” according to History.com.

Today’s holiday is thought to have originated with the ancient Celtic festival of Samhain, when people would light bonfires and wear costumes to ward off roaming ghosts.

It was a time of year when the boundaries between this world and the “otherworld” could more easily be crossed. Offerings of food and drink were left outside for the spirits, ensuring that people and their livestock would survive the winter. People went door-to-door in costume, often reciting verses in exchange for food.

In the eighth century AD, Pope Gregory III designated Nov. 1 as a time to honor all saints and martyrs; the holiday, All Saints’ Day, incorporated some of the traditions of Samhain. In the ninth century AD, western Christianity shifted the date of All Saints’ Day to Nov. 1. The evening before was known as All Hallows’ Eve while the day after, Nov. 2 became All Souls’ Day.

Today, Halloween is a family friendly holiday of trick-or-treating, costumes, pumpkin carving, candy apples and more.

Devil’s Night

Though it’s no longer acknowledged in modern times for safety reasons, there’s a dark side to today’s happy celebration of Halloween. Devil’s Night or “Mischief Night” takes place on Oct. 30, Halloween Eve. On this night, neighbors used to play pranks on each other (toilet-papering or egging houses, rearranging garden gnomes, etc.).

The origins of this night are unknown, but it appears it’s at least a few centuries old.

Haunted houses

Only an hour’s drive from the tri-county area is one of the top haunted house attractions in the U.S., the four-story Erebus Haunted House in Pontiac.

Haunted houses like Erebus attract the superstitious in all of us. They range from simple walking tours to houses set up in old prisons, mental asylums, hotels, cemeteries and more. Most are open throughout the month of October. Other eerie events include haunted hayrides.

For lists of area haunted events, visit Michiganhauntedhouses.com.

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Today’s wreaths say ‘Welcome’

This seasonal décor used to be a headdress worn as a sign of affluence

By Sally Rummel
news@tctimes.com; 810-629-8282
A welcoming wreath on your front door is a sure sign of fall and the upcoming holidays.

You can buy beautiful ready-made wreaths at many local florists and home décor shops in the tri-county area, or you can get out your glue gun and begin the crafty process of a DIY project.

A wreath can be as simple as a circular display of laurel leaves or grapevines, or a much more elaborate display of seasonal embellishments.

Either way, the wreath you choose to display says a lot about your decorating style, and also has a history you likely don’t know about.

There are two different schools of thought when it comes to the history of the wreath. The first states that the wreath dates back to ancient Greece and Rome, where members of the Greco-Roman society would hand-make ring-shaped wreaths using fresh tree leaves, twigs, small fruit and flowers — wearing them as headdresses that represented one’s occupation, rank, achievements and status. The laurel wreath was most commonly used then, to crown victors of the Olympic Games. Literally translated, wreath means “a thing bound around,” from the Greek word, diadema.

In time, all social classes wore wreaths to celebrate special occasions and to honor religious holidays. Then they transitioned from head ornament to wall decoration.

The second story on wreath history is a common Christian lore. Christians assembled “Advent wreaths” to symbolize their strength of persevering through the harsh forces of winter. Today, the Christmas wreath is symbolic of Christian immortality, represented by both the circle and sphere.

Today, the wreath is a symbol of “welcome” to neighbors and friends and continues to be an important symbol of decorating for just about any holiday.

Sources: Proflowers.com, Ladybugwreaths.com

SAVE YOUR SKIN THIS WINTER

If you have red or raw skin
If your skin is constantly red and feels raw, creams can be irritating if they have a fragrance. Instead, use Aquaphor or raw coconut oil on dry patches around the nose or eyes overnight.

Avoid harsh exfoliating or foam formulations
If you have dry patches and flaky skin, using a traditional face scrub is a short-term solution that causes long-term problems. They can make the skin even more dry overtime. Instead, rub facial oil over the skin until flakes fall off. Allure recommends Olay Regenerist Luminous Facial Oil.

If you have dry lips
Dry lips are a problem during winter, check what lip balm you’re using. If it’s scented, it could be drying out your lips even more. Switch to a basic, unscented lip balm. Allure recommends Nivea Lip Butter or Aquaphor.

Go with a heavier body lotion
Instead of normal body lotion or body moisturizer, switch to a body butter for the winter. Allure recommends Kai Body Butter and Lavanila The Healthy Body Butter Pure Vanilla.

SUMMARY
Winter is hard on the skin, so don’t get flaky with your skincare routine.

USE HEAVIER CREAMS AND DITCH THE FOAM WASHES

By Hannah Ball
hball@tctimes.com; 810-433-6792
With winter on its way, the air gets drier and so does your skin.

Colder temperatures, paired with less moisture in the air, can cause cracks in the outer layer of the skin, loss of hydration, and occasionally inflammation.

To avoid your skin drying out, upgrade your skincare routine. Here are tips to save your skin this winter:

— Go with a cream face wash
Using a cream face wash instead of a foaming cleanser will dry out your face less, and help your skin adjust to the colder weather. Allure magazine recommends Burt’s Bees Intense Hydration Cream Cleanser or Lancome Creme Mousse Confort.

— Choose a thicker moisturizer
Creams hydrate better than lotions because the ingredients form a physical barrier that traps moisture in the skin. Even though the weather is colder, the rays from the sun can still harm your skin. Allure recommends Kiehl’s Ultra Facial Moisturizer Sunscreen Broad Spectrum SPF 30.

— If you have red lips
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Source: refinery29.com, allure.com

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Area cider mills and pumpkin farms are ripe with apples, pumpkins, cider and doughnuts

By Sally Rummel
news@tctimes.com; 810-629-8282

Fall is the season of color — from changing leaves in russets and gold to crimson apples and bright orange pumpkins. It’s also the season of delicious tastes, including apples and squash, cider and doughnuts.

These autumn tastes and traditions create special family memories as you visit local apple orchards, cider mills, farmers markets and roadside stands during Michigan’s most beautiful season of the year.

Cider mills
Michigan boasts more than 100 cider mills, including a number of local ones in the tri-county area. Put all of these on your must-do list this fall, and make a day of visiting some of these unique gems of a Michigan autumn:

- **Spicer Orchards:** 10411 Clyde Rd., Fenton (Hartland Township). U-pick apples, fresh cider and doughnuts, along with other baked goods, children’s area with farm animals. Call (810) 632-7692, or visit: spicerorchards.com.
- **Parshallville Cider and Grist Mill:** 8507 Parshallville Rd., Fenton (Hartland Township). Fresh cider and doughnuts, from a historic, scenic location. Call (810) 629-9079, or visit: parshallvillecidergristmill.com.
- **Mueller’s Orchard and Cider Mill:** 6036 Lobdell Rd., Linden, (Fenton Township). Also featuring fresh cider and doughnuts, and many other activities, like a pumpkin hayride, petting zoo, children’s area. Call (810) 735-7676, or visit: muellersorchard.com.
- **Diehl’s Orchard and Cider Mill:** 1479 Ranch Rd., Holly (Rose Township). Experience the cider and doughnuts, along with a bevy of other activities. Call (248) 634-8981, or go to diehlsorchard.com.

Pumpkin farms
Mitchell Farms: 3404 Mitchell Rd., Holly (Holly Township). U-pick pumpkins, hayrides. New this year, homemade doughnuts on weekends on this sesquicentennial heritage working farm. Visit mitchellfarm.biz

Eichelberg Farms: 11154 Linden Rd., Linden. (810) 735-4391, open 10 to 6 daily (closed Saturday), pumpkins of all sizes and colors. Visit eichelberg-farm.hub.biz

Starrs Lakeview Farms: 15550 Linden Rd., Linden. Freshly picked pumpkins, fall decor, fresh fruits and vegetables. Call (810) 735-5835.

Other well-known Michigan cider mills
- **Historic Dexter Cider Mill** near Ann Arbor is the oldest continuously operating cider mill in the state.
- **The Franklin Cider Mill** opened in 1837 as a gristmill, and is in the Franklin Historic District, north of downtown Detroit.
- **Yates Cider Mill** in Rochester Hills has been water-powered since 1863, and presses 300 gallons of fresh blended apple cider per hour.
- **Uncle John’s Cider Mill** in St. Johns began in the early 1900s when the mill was a cattle barn. Today it offers the sweet scents of cider and doughnuts. Explore the five-acre corn maze and straw bale maze, take a wagon ride, walk the nature trail, visit the pumpkin patch and enjoy a number of festive fall family events.

Source: Michigan.org

AUTUMN AMAZING

Eichelberg Farms on Linden Road in Fenton Township has traditional pumpkins, as well as a selection of unique ones if area residents are looking for something different this year.
De-stress this foodie holiday by planning ahead, sharing the load or dining out

By Sally Rummel
news@tctimes.com; 810-629-8282

It’s “feast or famine” when it comes to how comfortable you feel preparing a bountiful Thanksgiving dinner for family and friends. Whether you’re a seasoned chef or a novice cook, putting out a Thanksgiving spread is the most time-consuming and potentially stressful part of this food-based holiday.

With more than a month before our big feasting holiday on Thursday, Nov. 23, you can easily make your plans well in advance, deciding:

• Do you want to prepare the entire meal from scratch yourself?
• Are you inviting family and friends to come potluck-style?
• Are you ordering dinner or parts of dinner from local grocery stores or other special food suppliers?
• Are you going out for dinner and leaving the cooking to the experts?

However you decide to host your loved ones, it will take some advance preparation to make sure your family’s Thanksgiving is memorable for everyone, including yourself.

Here’s some advice to get you started on your Thanksgiving plans:

• Set your Thanksgiving dinner menu a month in advance, or make your dinner reservations a month ahead at your favorite local restaurant. Either way, you’ll know you’ve got a plan in place.

• If you’re shopping for groceries for a meal you’ll prepare, divide your list into perishables and non-perishables, and start stocking up now with the non-perishables. This will be easier on your shopping cart, your own peace of mind and your budget. Return as the holiday nears for your turkey (which you should pre-order, especially for a particular size), herbs, cheeses and fresh produce.

• Empty out refrigerator with all but the essentials, clearing out vinegars, unopened jams, etc. Store hardy produce like apples, fresh cranberries and potatoes in a cool, dry place, like the trunk of your car or the basement.

• Two days before Thanksgiving, list, in order, all the tasks that need to be done. Make side dishes ahead of time and save the dishes that must be made on Thanksgiving Day. Consider cooking your turkey a day ahead and re-heating it with broth, and making a mashed potato casserole the night before, rather than fussing with mashed potatoes when you’re already swamped in the kitchen.

• Coordinate dishes that can be cooked in the oven at the same time and keep track of what’s in the oven and on the stove top with timers.

To save time and hassle, consider what parts of your Thanksgiving meal are “non-negotiable” — maybe your best-loved sweet potato casserole and your own-from-scratch dinner biscuits, and farm out other items that aren’t important traditions at your house. After all, Thanksgiving is more about family and gratitude than it is about food.

Source: RealSimple.com
Fall forecast: plaid, textures and Americana

■ Update your closet this fall with new plaids, ruffles, reds, feathers and fringe

By Sally Rummel
news@tctimes.com; 810-629-8282

Fall is a transitional season that inspires all of us to change our wardrobes to prepare for a cooler, cozier season. You don’t have to revamp your entire wardrobe to be in style this fall — many of these trends can be added on as you add new colors, textures and accents.

Shop in your favorite local boutiques to find these trends right here in Fenton, Linden and Holly.

#1 Trend — Plaid
Whether you’re wearing it as a fashion statement or sitting on it in your home decor, you’ll be right on with one of fall’s biggest trends — plaid.

From head to toe, add some plaid, either as an A-line dress to work or pulling on a plaid vest to wear on a crisp fall day. To keep your outfit on point, pair your plaid with a solid color, advises Experchat.com

#2 Trend — Ruffles
The fun thing about wearing ruffles is that they can embellish any part of your ensemble, whether it’s the neckline, the hemline or bordering your blazer or jacket.

#3 Trend — Feathers and fringe
Embellishments are the “name of the fashion game” this fall, including fringe and feathers. Fringe is fun and has a little bit of a retro feel, according to Gurl.com. When it’s added to a sweater, it makes it even more cozy.

#4 Trend — Red
Looking for your new statement color for this fall? Instead of the more traditional muted colors like orange or brown, opt for red. It’s the dominant color this fall, and you’ll see it popping up for women of all ages. If you tend to be timid around red, start with a blouse or sweater and pair it with a pair of jeans, dressing it up with heels.

#5 Trend — Americana
From artisan-looking prints to lots of denim and political tees, designs are using Americana fashion as a major inspiration this fall. Choose a boho-style dress or opt for denim-everything.

Source: Gurl.com, Elle.com

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Serving all your travel options!
By Sally Rummel
news@tctimes.com; 810-629-8282

It’s not too early to get a jump on holiday shopping, or at least deciding what you might enjoy buying for yourself this fall. Buying locally gives consumers a chance to see, touch and experience what they are about to purchase, and also offers an opportunity to learn more about products and services.

Here are a few items to take a look at, selected by local retailers as “fall favorites.”

Feast
You don’t have to drive to a mall or shop the internet to find gourmet kitchen brands like Global cutlery from Japan or Staub enamelled cast iron cookware from France.

“If you have a task, we have the tool,” said owner Sean Garlant, whose new Fenton store is a feast for all your senses.

With the holidays fast approaching, Feast can be your go-to store for all your utensils, cooking ware, kitchen gadgets and Michigan-made products, plus spice blends, gourmet salts and creative rubs.

Feast also has a number of cooking classes on its calendar, for seasoned and novice cooks to hone their skills as they cook together with professional chefs with an easygoing approach — then enjoy their food together.

For information on upcoming classes, visit Feast-cookingschool.com.

Billmeier Camera
Owner Terry Green, whose store is in downtown Fenton, sees a huge interest in “real photography,” with customers stepping up to improved photo quality and features beyond what their cell phone camera offers.

“Cell phones have definitely replaced regular point-and-shoot cameras,” said Green, 41. “But there’s a strong resurgence in higher-end point-and-shoots priced between $500 and $1,000.”

One very popular model is the Sony RX 100 Mark V ($1,000). “It doesn’t look impressive, it’s small enough to fit in your pocket,” said Green. But it takes absolutely amazing photos.”

Mirrorless cameras, like the family of Sony 6000 models, are also huge sellers, with DSLR (digital single lens reflex) image quality in a lighter, more portable package.

The big thing people have to decide when choosing where to buy a camera is, do you want to buy it from a big box store because of convenience, or do you want to form a relationship with us at Billmeier Camera?

The big thing we want to make cooking a fun, interactive experience for both seasoned and novice cooks

Sean Garlant
Feast

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Terry Green
Billmeier Camera

“We don’t just sell phones, we also sell accessories like speakers, Bluetooth headsets and virtual reality goggles.”

Salam Asmaro
T-Mobile of Fenton

We want to make cooking a fun, interactive experience for both seasoned and novice cooks

Sean Garlant
Feast

“We just don’t sell phones, we also sell accessories like speakers, Bluetooth headsets and virtual reality goggles.”

Salam Asmaro
T-Mobile of Fenton

Add ‘cozy’ to your home this fall

Local stores have all you need to transition from one season to another.

By Sally Rummel
news@tctimes.com; 810-629-8282

You don’t have to go far to “get cozy” in your home this fall — the tri-county area is full of home décor stores and boutiques with products in new trends that will add warmth to your living spaces during these cooler fall months.

Here’s what you need to shop for:

● New throw pillows in cozy colors and textures, including knits, furs, plaids, etc.

● New plush throws with subtle warmth and texture, perfect to wrap around you and your family on chilly fall evenings. Contrast your neutral couch with a bright colored throw and look for furs, sweater knits — anything with texture.

● Layer area rugs to add color and texture to your floors, as well as to provide extra cushion and warmth.

● Fireplace accessories and a contractor to make sure your fireplace is safe for its first use this fall.

● Aromatherapy touch and coziness to your living space with fall window treatments, trading out the light, airy blinds or curtains for warmer.

● Light fall candles, available in seasonal scents at most local boutiques. Surround your tub with the warmth of lit candles on chilly fall/winter evenings.

● Cozy your patio area with a fire pit and coordinating throws on each patio chair to extend the season of your outdoor space.

● Say hello to warmer, more substantial fall bedding and stow away your summer quilts. Use heavy-duty down comforters and thermal blankets while dialing down your thermostat.

● Add autumn to your table with a fall centerpiece, seasonal tablecloth or placemats.

Source: HGTV.com

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There are many uses for pumpkins

By Vera Hogan
vhogan@tctimes.com; 810-433-6823

Peter Peter pumpkin eater, had a wife but couldn’t keep her. He put her in a pumpkin shell and there he kept her very well.

Yeah right, like that’s going to ever happen. Some of us heard some sick nursery rhymes when we were kids. Like this and the one about that old lady who lived in a shoe with a bunch of kids … but that’s another story.

But back to pumpkins. It is a sure sign of fall when the big pumpkins arrive in boxes filled with the very deep bowl or pot. Rinse the seeds and pulp under running water. Pick out the larger pieces of pumpkin pulp. Rinse and repeat. Remove as much of the stringy pumpkin pulp as possible. Now fill the very deep bowl or pot with water. The pieces of pumpkin will sink and the pumpkin seeds will float to the top.

Roasting Pumpkin Seeds

The ingredients you will need are about 3 ½ cups of fresh pumpkin seeds, a large bowl, ¾ cups water and ½ cup plus 2 tablespoons of sea salt. Put 4 cups water and 1/2 cup of sea salt in a large bowl. Warm the water up in the microwave for 2-3 minutes. Stir until most of the salt has dissolved. You may still have a little salt on the bottom but that is fine. Add the pumpkin seeds and let soak for at least three hours.

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Pour the pumpkin seeds into a large colander. Rinse and repeat. Remove as much of the stringy pumpkin pulp as possible. Now fill the very deep bowl or pot with water. The pieces of pumpkin will sink and the pumpkin seeds will float to the top.

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Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Pour the pumpkin seeds into a large colander to drain. Spread the pumpkin seeds in a single layer on a cookie sheet. Sprinkle two tablespoons of sea salt all over the pumpkin seeds and stir to evenly coat. Place the cookie sheet in the oven and bake for 20-30 minutes depending on how large and how many pumpkin seeds you have. Every five minutes or so rotate the pan and using a spatula flip the seeds.

Pumpkin Puree

If you burned a candle inside a Jack-O-Lantern on Halloween, it’s best not to use that pumpkin for puree as the sides will likely be blackened from the flame. Use a fresh pumpkin instead.

Preheat oven to 325 degrees F. Cut the pumpkin in half, stem to base. Remove seeds and pulp. Cover each half with foil. Bake in the preheated oven, foil side up, 1 hour, or until tender. Scrape pumpkin meat from shell halves and puree in a blender. Strain to remove any remaining stringy pieces. Store in freezer until ready to use for baking pies, muffins and more.

Easy pumpkin dessert

If you have a busy schedule but want to treat your family with a quick, easy and delicious pumpkin dessert, this one is about the most simple recipe you’ll find. Buy a box of spice cake mix and a 15-oz. can of pure pumpkin. Grease or spray a Bundt pan and preheat oven to 350 degrees F. Combine the cake mix and pumpkin until mixed thoroughly. Fill Bundt pan and bake for 25 to 30 minutes. Once cool, turn the Bundt pan over onto a plate and you have a wonderful coffee cake. This can also be made with a chocolate cake mix.

You can jazz this dessert up by adding a half cup to a cup of raisins or chocolate chips to the spice cake and pumpkin recipe.

Pumpkin decorations

Pumpkin shells make wonderful planters. Just scoop out the innards and fill with your favorite plant or flowers. It makes a wonderful fall gift.

If you’re having a party and would like to give your guests some parting gifts, buy a bag of the small pumpkins, usually available in any produce aisle this time of year. Cut off the tops and scoop them out as you would a large pumpkin. Fill with soil and fall flowers such as pansies, sumac, mums and others.

Place one pumpkin at each guest’s place setting. They’ll be delighted that you would thoughtful enough to provide such a festive take-home gift.

Source: flouronmyface.com
Fall beers are on tap

Oktoberfest and beyond—heavier, warmer spicier beers are here

By Tim Jagielo

In the fall, comfort food is king, and that includes beer.

Oktoberfest beers specifically have a full-bodied malty flavor, balanced with hops for a smooth, drinkable taste, without being too heavy on taste or alcohol.

Northern Oak Brewery brewmaster Jeff Coon is well acquainted with Oktoberfest beers and makes an authentic Oktoberfest beer, Noroakfest.

“When I drink Oktoberfest beer I like drinking from a one-liter mug,” he said. “It’s light in body, and flavor, and balanced with hops. “It’s very enjoyable to drink.”

The beer was first brewed in Munich, Germany, in 1810 as part of the celebration of the marriage of Bavarian Crown Prince Louis, later King Louis I of Bavaria to Therese von Sachsen-Hildburghausen, according to History.com.

The Bavarian royalty invited citizens to celebrate outside the gates of the city. The festivities included the beer as well as horseracing. The royalty decided to repeat the festivities, and this annual celebration became Oktoberfest.

Coon said that during this time, beer brewers were restricted to simple, pure ingredients — barley, hops and water. They were brewed in March, and then stored in caves packed with ice through the summer, and was pulled out at the time of harvest. Aging it five months also gave it a unique flavor. “It was a celebratory-type of beer,” Coon said.

The beer today is much the same. It has a malty flavor with a deep gold to amber color.

“Usually the fall beers are going to be a little heavier body,” Jeff Coons Northern Oak Brewery brewmaster

Aside from the specific Oktoberfest beer, seasonal beers change as well. Gone are the light, citrusy shandys, making way for the heavier spicier flavors of fall and winter.

Overall, beers in the fall have new flavors like pumpkin, figs and currants, said Coon. “Usually the fall beers are going to be a little heavier body.”

Philip Canup is co-owner of Beale St. Smokehouse BBQ. He keeps the beer tap rotating through the season with craft beers, including seasonal fall beers. He has Dogfish Head Punkin Ale, and a fall-themed mead from Fendale and Autumn ale by Founders Brewery, to name a few.

These beers will soon transition to winter ales, which are also more full bodied, and spicy. The flavor of peppermint will permeate winter seasonal beers.

Local brewers use local ingredients

Motor City Malt House LLC in Detroit makes malts for craft beer brewing and distilling markets in Michigan. This company provides malts to Lynchpin Brewing Co. in Fenton, and uses almost 100-percent Michigan malts, said Tom Laboda of Motor City Malt House. Most malts are made by multinational corporations. Their beer is from farm to glass,” he said. “Lynchpin pays more for locally grown and made malts, but by doing so, they are supporting the entire production chain from farmer to consumer.”
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HOW BEING AN early bird CAN BENEFIT holiday shoppers

Come the end of the often hectic holiday shopping season, many people resolve to begin shopping earlier the next year. While such resolutions can be hard to keep, shoppers would be wise to consider the myriad ways they can benefit by starting their holiday shopping earlier than they’re typically accustomed to doing.

Deals
The more time shoppers give themselves to find gifts for their loved ones, the more time they have to comparison shop and find the best deals. Retailers often offer steep discounts during the holiday season, but such deals may pale in comparison to those that can be had throughout the rest of the year. Holiday shoppers who begin shopping early can always skip buying in late summer or autumn if they think better deals can be had once the holiday season begins.

Credit score
Another advantage to shopping early for holiday gifts is it allows consumers to protect their credit scores by spreading their spending out over several months instead of doing so in the handful of weeks between Thanksgiving and Christmas. In a survey examining debt associated with the holiday season, Magnify-Money found that the average holiday debt in 2016 was slightly more than $1,000. Credit card debt can negatively affect consumers’ credit scores, especially if balances are not paid in full when bills are due. Shoppers can avoid such situations entirely by shopping early using only disposable income to make purchases instead of credit cards. Such financial flexibility may not be possible for shoppers who wait until the holiday season has begun to start shopping.

Time
Shoppers can save more than money by starting their holiday shopping in advance of the holiday season. In spite of the popularity of online shopping, many people still visit traditional brick and mortar retailers to do their present buying. Such stores can be overwhelmed with shoppers between Thanksgiving and Christmas, leading to long lines and lengthy searches for parking. Shoppers are far less likely to encounter big crowds and crowded parking lots if they get their shopping done before the dawn of the holiday season, saving themselves substantial amounts of time as a result.

Shoppers who commit to getting their holiday shopping done early can save money and time and protect their financial reputations as well.
Autumn weddings bring their own seasonal beauty

By Sally Rummel
news@tctimes.com; 810-629-8282

You may have always heard about June brides, but October has officially become the most popular month for weddings, according to wedding experts at The Knot. Why is fall so wedding-friendly? The beautiful hues of fall foliage make it easy to use this season’s warm oranges, reds and yellows as a backdrop for your theme or standing out on their own.

Centerpieces using pumpkins, gourds, berries and strings of pearls, accented with bronze-colored lamps can give your reception an amber glow.

With the summer’s heat behind you, the weather in fall becomes more temperate, making this season more comfortable for the bride, the bridal party and the guests. Cooler temperatures also provide more opportunities for a romantic feel in the bride’s wedding dress. Elegant sleeves and more lace are popular in the fall. Elegant wedding gowns can be paired with a stylish fur or cape. Also, boutonnieres with berries and maple leaves will add a burst of color to the groom’s crisp gray suit.

Warm drinks and holiday-inspired pies and bisques can be added to the bar and menu, including signature cocktails like Spiced Rum Apple Cider.

Seven trends to look for this fall:

● **Color theme**
  Jewel-toned color palettes in a moody range of plum and burgundy are leading the way in wedding color schemes. Brides using spring neutral hues will add a veil of frost over them. Weathered pastels will add a touch of romance.
  **HOT TREND:** Copper metallic hues

● **Reception**
  Build your decor upwards, with tall candles and ornate candelabras for a formal event. For a rustic theme, bring the outdoors in with leaf-adorned branches.
  **HOT TREND:** Copper metallic hues

● **Wedding cake**
  Clean, textured look in wedding cakes, dressed up with small bunches of blooms or greenery. Translucent cakes have a thin veil of frosting with just a bit of the cake showing through, adorned with flavorful drizzles of caramel or ganache.
  **HOT TREND:** Serve smaller cakes with a second-string dessert to serve guests. Perfect for fall — seasonal pies.

● **Stationery**
  Embrace the whimsical side of the season with breezy calligraphy and motifs of graceful garlands. Use big blackboard for signage on the wedding day, including a welcome sign at the entrance of the venue.
  **HOT TREND:** Give your signage a romantic border with eucalyptus or lemon leaf garlands and accent with florals like clematis or wisteria.

● **Fashion**
  With cooler weather comes longer sleeves and cozy layers. Two-piece separates are a bridal fashion trend not to be missed. Cashmere sweaters and luxurious full-length skirts offer a totally personalized look.
  **HOT TREND:** The second dress — come reception time, slip into a fun little dress for a night of dancing.

● **Flowers**
  Freshly picked, wild-looking bouquets are still popular. The hottest stems are wine-colored dahlias. Tabletop arrangements are looking more green and leafy, like succulents, eucalyptus, wheat greens, acacia and bay leaf branches. Pops of color are provided by berries.
  **HOT TREND:** Small vines of ivy elongate the shape of traditional bouquets, giving them a whimsical appeal. Unexpected add-ins, like thistle and small leafy twigs, capture the spirit of the outdoors.

● **Foods**
  Creative food and drink stations are in their prime right now.
  **HOT TREND:** Consider gourmet coffee stands, passed appetizers, craft beer stations, build-your-own taco bars and even barbecue sauce stations. Lean on seasonal, local favorites

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This FREE event is for children ages 12 & under. No face covering masks or “weapons” permitted.

Presented by:
Hosting for the holidays?

Turn your house into a ‘home’ with new furniture, flooring and appliances

By Sally Rummel

The holiday season is a time of joy and togetherness with family and friends. If you’re having guests over for Thanksgiving, Christmas or New Year’s holidays, now is the time to make your home “company ready."

Flooring

Nothing will pull your home’s interior look together more than new flooring. After a busy summer, fall is a good time to take stock of what your home needs now, in time to enjoy for the holidays.

Today’s flooring options extend far beyond just hardwoods: tile, laminates and carpet. Consider bamboo in an explosive array of colors and styles for a hardwood look that’s even more durable than American hardwoods, according to Houzz.com.

For a rustic-hewn look, consider factory-finished hardwoods that resemble reclaimed wood, but are easier to install, repair and maintain. If you’re into tile, especially in your kitchen, look into large format tile in sizes like 12x24 or even 36x36 for a new dramatic look with less grout to maintain.

Other new flooring options include cork, now available in many colors and popular for its acoustic-insulating qualities, and luxury vinyl that mimics hardwood so closely you have to get down on your hands and knees to notice any distinction.

Carpeting is still a very viable, durable, fashionable option, especially in today’s new cut-and-loop patterns that provide texture and substance to your home’s décor. Carpet is also soft and comfortable underfoot, an ideal option for bedrooms and family rooms. Today’s carpet is also more stain resistant and durable than ever before.

Furniture

Your shabby living room couch is looking a little more “lived in” than you’d like, and you’re wishing you had a larger dining room table to fit everyone around this holiday season.

Perhaps a sleeper sofa would make hosting out-of-town guests a little easier, or a new daybed or trundle bed would add additional sleeping space. Maybe a new mattress would be much more comfortable in your guest room than the old one you have now.

Now’s the time to shop for new furniture pieces that will make holiday entertaining more comfortable and enjoyable for everyone.

With seven furniture stores in the tri-county area, there’s no reason to shop anywhere else. You’ll get the best one-on-one personalized service, convenient delivery options and more.

Appliances

You certainly don’t want your Thanksgiving turkey being undercooked or overcooked in your decades-old oven, nor do you want to try to cram all your holiday perishables into your undersized, inefficient old refrigerator.

This is the perfect time to consider replacing some of your outdated appliances, just in time for that turkey dinner.

According to Moneycrashers.com, October is the second month of the year that manufacturers are unveiling their latest models, and you might be able to take advantage of this year’s models at a discounted price.

Some corn mazes are even open at night for flashlight fun, usually designed for older kids and adults.

For a list of corn mazes, visit Cornmazeamerica.com Punkin’ Chuckin’

This is the sport of hurling or “chucking” a pumpkin for a distance by using mechanical means.

At Johnson Giant Pumpkin Farm in Saginaw, a 40-foot trebuchet will launch 60- to 80-pound pumpkins high into the air, to the thrill of crowds who come to watch this unique fall event on weekends.

For more information on fun fall events, visit: www.funtober.com/festivals/michigan.

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