

Gift Ideas

Themed Stockings Add Festive Flair To Holiday Tradition

(NAPSA)—Tradition holds that, long ago on a very cold evening, Saint Nicholas threw three pouches of gold coins down the chimney of a home where three poor sisters lived. According to the legend, the pouches landed inside three stockings left on the fireplace to dry. Ever since then, children have been hanging stockings by the fireplace on Christmas Eve in hopes that they may have the same fortune.

While today's holiday stockings rarely contain gold coins, a new tradition has emerged to create themed stockings for loved ones of all ages.

If you plan to play Santa and stuff a stocking this year, here are some themes to consider:

Everyday Essentials with a Seasonal Twist. There's nothing wrong with filling the stocking with practical stuff, but make it more fun by choosing items with some holiday flair. For example, add a snowman—or nutcracker-shaped Crest SpinBrush electric toothbrush along with a pair of wild red or green socks. Then, instead of candy, fill the toe with winter essentials like vitamin C drops and lip balm.

Celebrating the Inner Peter Pan. For the child at heart who refuses to grow up, stuff the stocking with gifts that celebrate youth at any age, such as bouncy Super Balls, bubbles, a 64-pack of crayons, a coloring book and modeling clay. And it never hurts to toss in a classic comic book.

Bookworm Bonanza. The holidays are a great time to curl up by the fire and catch up on your reading. Pack a stocking



with the paperback releases of the year's best-selling novels, then add some munchies and—depending on the age—a pair of reading glasses. For a personal touch, create some handmade bookmarks.

Preparing to Go Home for the Holidays. If friends or loved ones will be traveling during the holidays, give them an early gift by presenting them with a travel-themed stocking. Include travel versions of classic games, a book of Sudoku puzzles and a holiday CD that can be added to their MP3 player. If they are traveling by plane, add a few small toys that can be shared with any fussy child who may be assigned to a seat near them.

So as you don your Santa's hat and start planning stockings for your loved ones, remember that creativity can be as valuable as gold coins when making a memorable holiday stocking.