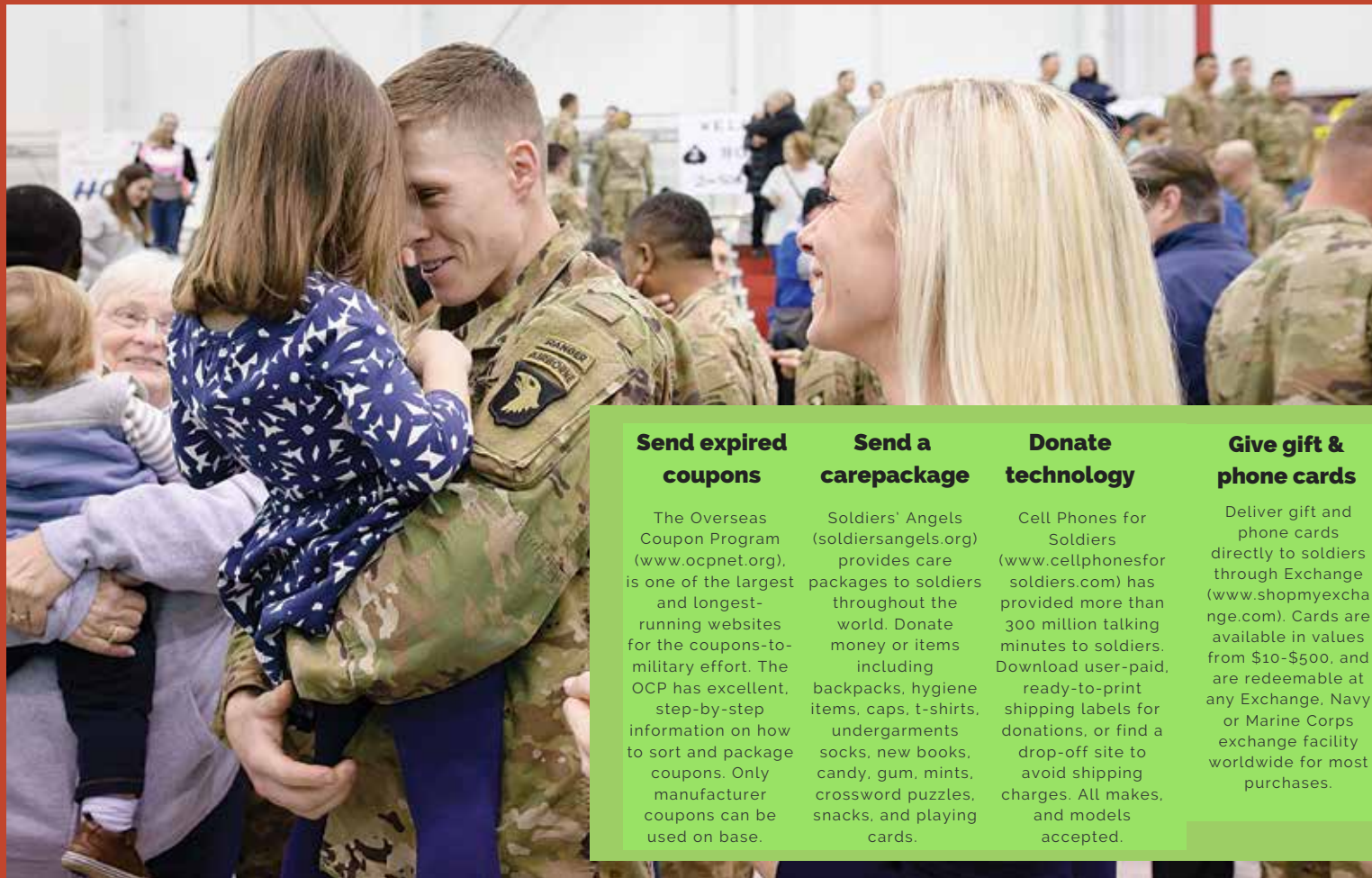


# Holiday

## GIFT GUIDE I

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The Overseas Coupon Program ([www.ocpnet.org](http://www.ocpnet.org)), is one of the largest and longest-running websites for the coupons-to-military effort. The OCP has excellent, step-by-step information on how to sort and package coupons. Only manufacturer coupons can be used on base.

### Send a carepackage

Soldiers' Angels ([soldiersangels.org](http://soldiersangels.org)) provides care packages to soldiers throughout the world. Donate money or items including backpacks, hygiene items, caps, t-shirts, undergarments, socks, new books, candy, gum, mints, crossword puzzles, snacks, and playing cards.

### Donate technology

Cell Phones for Soldiers ([www.cellphonesforsoldiers.com](http://www.cellphonesforsoldiers.com)) has provided more than 300 million talking minutes to soldiers. Download user-paid, ready-to-print shipping labels for donations, or find a drop-off site to avoid shipping charges. All makes, and models accepted.

### Give gift & phone cards

Deliver gift and phone cards directly to soldiers through Exchange ([www.shopmyexchange.com](http://www.shopmyexchange.com)). Cards are available in values from \$10-\$500, and are redeemable at any Exchange, Navy or Marine Corps exchange facility worldwide for most purchases.

### Write a letter of thanks

There's no easier way to say thank you than writing a letter to someone stationed overseas. Operation Gratitude ([www.operationgratitude.com](http://www.operationgratitude.com)) offers easy to use guidelines for people of any age to help a soldier feel connected with someone back home.

### Aid a celebration

Operation Shower ([operationshower.org](http://operationshower.org)) helps throw baby showers for military families across the country. Brides Across America (<http://www.bridesacrossamerica.com>) accepts wedding dress donations on behalf of more than 2,000 brides annually.

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- So bring your family down to the Frederick Myers Veterans Memorial Park November 25th and welcome the Christmas season with your friends and neighbors!
- Wallkill Federal Savings Bank along with Fox 103.1 WJGK Radio will be at the event, there will be activities for the kids, bonfire and Shoprite will be providing light refreshments!



# Get 'Gin' the Holiday Spirit

## For your celebration, let gin please every palette

By Matthew M. F. Miller  
CTW Features

Looking for one cocktail to please a diverse crowd? Look no further than gin. Contrary to its stuffy reputation, gin is the "it" spirit to infuse your 2017 holiday gathering with trendy pizzazz. According to HM Revenue & Customs, the U.K.'s tax, payments and customs authority, sales of the juniper-based alcohol rose by 12 percent in 2016 – a pace that is expected to be shattered in 2017. Need more proof? More gin is exported to the U.S. than any other country, which means you'll be in good spirits, so to speak.

In an interview with The Guardian, Miles Beale, chief executive of the Wine and Spirit Trade Association, said, "The quality of the gin combined with the world's love for brand Britain has seen British gin breaking records both at home and abroad."

In fact, according to sales figures, gin is now more popular than it has been in a century. Much like the beer craze of a few years back, craft gin is leading the charge in its rising popularity, with new distilleries popping up constantly. Consider making your cocktail extra special by visiting or buying gin made from a local or regional distillery. If you visit the distillery, ask if they have any

stickers, coasters or other swag to offer your guests at the bar to further personalize the cocktail.

For those new to gin, you're in for a treat. It has a neutral flavor that is derived from grain or fruit and is infused with (or distilled a second time) with botanicals. The only gin requirement is the juniper. It offers extreme versatility and unlike some stronger spirits (tequila, bourbon) it tends to be a crowd pleaser. It's also easy to use and there are simple cocktails that require very little know-how or additional mixing gear.

Need inspiration? Try this yuletide twist on a classic that's sure to get any party started.

### Orange Cranberry Gin & Tonic

- 3 oz. gin
- 1 oz. fresh squeezed orange juice
- 1 Tbsp. cranberry sauce
- 4 oz. tonic water
- 2 1-inch pieces orange peel

In a cocktail shaker, add gin, orange juice and cranberry sauce. Stir clockwise until combined. Fill a high ball glass with ice and pour the mixture from the shaker into the glass. Top with tonic water. Garnish with orange peel.



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# Back to food basics for the holidays

By Bev Bennett  
CTW Features

To prepare for Thanksgiving, Karla Brewer is signing up for a crash course covering the basics of preparing the meal. Never mind that she's already taken this class a dozen times.

"It's the kick-off to the holiday season. That's when the holidays start for me," says Brewer.

Whether you're a novice, or like Brewer have a few roast turkeys in your culinary repertoire, getting into the Thanksgiving spirit can be easier when you get back to basics.

Don't think you have to search out the hottest food trend (avocado toast is over). That's not necessary or expected.

Instead concentrate on what's important – providing a meal that nurtures your guests and fits your comfort level, say cooking experts.

Think about the foods that are connected with sentiment and nostalgia, says Shelley Young, founder, CEO of the Chopping Block, a Chicago recreational cooking school that offers the Thanksgiving class Brewer enjoys.

This could mean including Uncle Joe's sweet potatoes or Aunt Sue's favorite green beans with bacon in the menu.

If you can't remember the family favorites, ask. But be practical as you formulate your menu.

"When it comes to a busy day and you have guests, pick

the things you know you do well and are comfortable with," says Susana Holloway, co-owner and chef instructor, Portland's Culinary Workshop, Portland, Ore.

Maybe you'll decide to ask a friend to bring her prized pumpkin pie rather than making it yourself. Give yourself and your guests a break from those foods you think you "should" serve.

"I think I should focus on nutrition, but every time those foods aren't touched," Holloway says.

As Young says, "It's unnecessary work and effort."

By planning your menu in advance, you can set a stress-free pace for shopping and cooking. First take a kitchen inventory of the equipment and ingredients you'll need. Even if you've hosted decades of Thanksgiving meals, you may be surprised at what's missing from the cupboards.

The baking soda you intend for the biscuits may be two years old or maybe you lent your roasting pan to a neighbor who hasn't returned it. Your guest headcount may require more dishes that you can buy or borrow.

Write two shopping lists, one for ingredients you can pick up ahead of time and a second for those things you'll purchase a few days before Thanksgiving, Young says.

You can buy the turkey (thawing instructions follow), cranberries, butter and any frozen vegetables in advance if you have the freezer space.

In addition, replenish pantry items such as flour, corn-meal, sugar, dried herbs, spices, vinegar and oil.

Your second list includes perishables you'll want to stock closer to Thanksgiving, such as milk, eggs, vegetables and fruits.

Use the same approach to food preparation. Start some dishes weeks before and freeze them while making others close to or on Thanksgiving Day.

For example, cut up bread for stuffing and freeze that.

"Pull it out [of the freezer] and toast right before making the stuffing," Young says.

Freeze baked muffins if desired. To serve, thaw at room temperature and reheat in the oven for 5 to 10 minutes while the turkey is resting.

"Cranberry sauce can be done three or four days ahead and tastes even more delicious if you do it in advance," Holloway says.

Go over the menu again and see what else you can do the day before, including trimming the ends off green beans, making salad dressing and baking sweet potatoes for mashed sweet potato casserole.

The night before Thanksgiving, pull out the pots and pans you'll need and note the food that goes into each.

"I have notes for everything," Brewer says.





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"Post-it notes and a glass of wine and your music," she says, sharing her Thanksgiving secret for success.

## Back to basics recipes Cornmeal Muffins

1 ¼ cups yellow cornmeal  
¾ cup all-purpose flour  
1 tablespoon baking powder  
½ cup sugar  
½ teaspoon salt  
2 large eggs, beaten  
2 tablespoons honey  
¾ cup milk  
6 tablespoons unsalted butter, melted  
1 cup corn kernels, thawed if frozen and well drained

Spray a 12-cup muffin pan with non-stick cooking spray. Set aside.

In a large bowl stir together cornmeal, flour, baking powder, sugar and salt.

In a smaller bowl, whisk together eggs, honey, milk and melted butter. Pour over cornmeal mixture and stir quickly to blend; batter doesn't have to be smooth. Stir in corn.

Spoon batter into pan, filling indentations about ¾ full. Bake in preheated 375-degree oven for 17 to 20 minutes or until muffins are golden and small knife inserted into a muffin comes out clean.

Set aside to cool on rack 5 minutes. Serve warm.

Makes 12 muffins.

## Basic Roast Turkey with Gravy

1 fresh or frozen, thawed 8-to12-pound turkey

Salt and pepper

A few sprigs fresh sage plus a few leaves for gravy

2 tablespoons melted butter or olive oil  
¼ cup flour

2 cups chicken broth

Sage, rosemary and thyme sprigs for garnish (optional)

Pat turkey dry with paper towels.

Remove giblets from turkey cavity. Use for another dish such as turkey broth.

Season turkey cavity with salt and pepper. Add sage sprigs.

Place turkey breast-side up on rack in roasting pan. Add ½ cup water to the pan. Tuck wings back. Brush turkey skin with butter; season lightly with salt and pepper.

Roast in preheated 325-degree oven, allowing about 2 ¾ to 3 hours for an unstuffed bird (according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture timetable; you may want to start checking the bird temperature after 2 ¼ hours). When a



meat thermometer inserted in the innermost part of the thigh, not touching bone, reaches 165 degrees the turkey is done. If the bird becomes too dark before it's done, place a sheet of aluminum foil lightly over the bird. Continue roasting.

Remove turkey from oven, when done. Lift onto a platter and tent with foil. Set aside 15 to 20 minutes.

Meanwhile, skim and discard excess fat from drippings in roasting pan leaving about ¼ cup drippings. Stir in flour. Place on stovetop burner over low heat. Cook over low-medium heat, stirring constantly until mixture is thick and browned bits are scraped up. Gradually stir in chicken broth. Bring to a simmer, stirring constantly until thickened and smooth. Season with ¼ teaspoon each salt and pepper. Sprinkle with 1 teaspoon minced fresh sage if desired. Makes about 2 cups gravy.

Makes 10 servings.

For a timetable on turkey roasting visit [www.foodsafety.gov/keep/charts/turkey-roastingchart.html](http://www.foodsafety.gov/keep/charts/turkey-roastingchart.html)

To thaw a frozen turkey allow 1 day (about 24 hours) for each 4 to 5 pounds of turkey in the refrigerator at 40 degrees, a 12-16 pound bird requires 3 to 4 days

## Pecan Pie

Crust:

1 cup all-purpose flour plus extra for work surface

1/4 teaspoon salt

6 tablespoons cold unsalted butter, cut into small pieces

1 egg yolk

2 to 3 tablespoons very cold water

Filling:

½ cup dark corn syrup

¼ cup maple syrup

3 eggs

1 cup sugar

2 tablespoons unsalted butter, melted

1 teaspoon vanilla extract

¼ teaspoon salt

2 cups raw pecan halves

For piecrust, stir together flour and salt in large bowl. Cut butter pieces into flour using a pastry blender. Stir together egg yolk and 2 tablespoons water; sprinkle on flour mixture and gently toss to evenly moisten. If dough is dry, add the remaining tablespoon of water and gather pieces into a ball; shape into disk. Cover with plastic wrap and refrigerate 1 hour - 1 day.

## Thanksgiving Menu Timetable

**Vegetables:** Peel and trim vegetables a day in advance, place in containers; cover and refrigerate.

**Roast turkey:** Season and roast on Thanksgiving.

**Stuffing:** Cut up bread and vegetables one or two days ahead and refrigerate (or freeze bread cubes well in advance). Bake stuffing alongside turkey.

**Muffins:** Bake either on Thanksgiving morning or well in advance. If frozen, thaw muffins at room temperature, place on baking sheet and reheat in preheated 325 degree oven for 5 to 10 minutes while the turkey is resting.

**Pie:** Make crust a day ahead. Thanksgiving morning roll out dough and fit into pie plate. Refrigerate while making filling. Bake pie during meal.

Lightly flour a work surface. Arrange dough on surface and roll out to 12-inch circle with lightly floured rolling pin. Gently fit into bottom and up the sides of 9-inch pie pan. Trim off overhanging dough. Make decorative pinches in top of crust.

Refrigerate while preparing filling.

In a large bowl beat together corn syrup, maple syrup and eggs. Beat in sugar, melted butter, vanilla and salt. Stir in pecans.

Pour into piecrust. Place on baking sheet. Bake in preheated 350-degree oven for 50 to 60 minutes or until filling only slightly quivers and crust is lightly browned. Cool on wire rack 1 hour before serving.

Makes 8 servings.

## Hacksgiving

Here are 10 tips for a smooth dinner

1. Use a wide-hole cheese grater to reduce cold butter to pea-size pieces for a piecrust recipe.

2. Opt for ovenproof ceramic or similar cookware that doubles as a serving piece. You get twice the function with only one dishwashing.

3. Avoid some of the last minute juggling to warm foods in the oven by baking side dishes in a French oven - a cast-iron pot with an enamel coating that keeps food hot up to an hour, according to Shelly Young.

4. Save space in the large oven using a toaster oven to brown casseroles or crisp bread for croutons.

5. Keep mashed potatoes hot in a slow cooker set at low. Stir in a little butter or cream just before serving.

6. The workday Thermos doubles to keep gravy or sauces hot.

7. A bigger bird may not be a convenience for the cook. Two smaller turkeys can roast in the same pan in less time than a mega-sized turkey, and guests can fight over four, not two, drumsticks.

8. In place of the roasting pan rack, cover the bottom of the pan with a layer of whole carrots, celery stalks and quartered onions. Set the turkey over the vegetables.

9. If you're short on time pick up sliced vegetables from the supermarket produce department or salad bar. The extra expense may be worth it.

10. Accidentally burn the piecrust? Scoop out the filling and serve it over ice cream or layer with vanilla pudding as a dessert parfait.





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# Cranberry-infused cocktail for autumn entertaining



Besides the ubiquitous “pumpkin spice,” nothing says “autumn” more than tart cranberries. Cranberries are a major component of Thanksgiving feasts, turning up alongside and atop turkey as well

as in quick breads and desserts.

Cranberries are loaded with health benefits, which include reducing the risk for ulcers and preventing gum disease. Also, just eight ounces of cranberry juice

cocktail contains 137 percent of the daily recommended value of vitamin C.

Cranberries can even be used to craft great cocktails. Move over mulled ciders, this crisp “Cranberry Margarita” from The Cape Cod Cranberry Growers’ Association makes a great autumn-inspired beverage.

### Cranberry Margarita

- 1 1/2 shots of tequila
- 1 shot of cranberry juice cocktail

- 1/4 cup of whole berry cranberry sauce
- 1/2 shot of triple sec
- 10 ice cubes
- Sweetened dried cranberries, lime for garnish Serves 1

Combine all ingredients except garnish in a blender. Blend on high until smooth and frosty. Serve in a margarita glass. Garnish with dried cranberries and a lime wheel.

# This quiche puts sweet potatoes front and center

Sweet potatoes are a favorite side dish at Thanksgiving dinner tables. Packed with vitamins, nutrients, fiber, and delectable flavor, sweet potatoes have earned their place on holiday dinner tables. While many holiday hosts bake, fry or mash their sweet potatoes, these beloved tubers can be prepared in other ways as well.



### Sweet Potato Quiche

Makes 8 servings

- 2 cups sweet potatoes, peeled and diced into small cubes
- 3/4 cup yellow onion, diced
- 2 1/2 tablespoons olive oil
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- Black pepper to taste
- Egg mixture:
- 4 eggs
- 1 cup heavy cream
- 1/2 teaspoon fresh rosemary, minced
- 1/2 tablespoon fresh parsley, minced
- 1 1/2 teaspoons salt
- 1/4 teaspoon pepper
- 3 ounces Gruyere cheese, shredded
- Pre-baked deep dish pie crust

Preheat oven to 400 F. Mix together the first five ingredients and place on baking sheet. Roast in the oven for 15 to 20 minutes.

While sweet potatoes and onions are roasting, shred cheese and set aside. Whisk the egg mixture and set aside.

Once potatoes and onions have finished roasting, spoon them into the pre-baked pie shell. Next, layer the shredded cheese on top of the sweet potatoes.

Reduce oven to 375 F. Pour egg mixture over the cheese and potatoes. Place quiche in the oven on a center rack. Bake 20 to 25 minutes, or until eggs are set.

If you want to put a new twist on this Thanksgiving staple, whip up this recipe for “Sweet Potato Quiche,” courtesy of the North Carolina Sweet Potato Commission. Submitted to the NC State Fair Tailgate Recipe Contest by Kristen Frybort, this recipe marries sweet tubers with decadent cheese, rich cream and savory spices.

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# Money lessons on Main Street

## How to teach your kids about money by shopping local this holiday season

By Marilyn Kennedy Melia  
CTW Features

There's a "take your child to work day" intended to give kids a view into the work world. A "take your child to the store day" would help kids learn how to manage the paycheck that comes with a job, experts believe.

"Picture yourself as a child and think about how hard it would be to learn about the concept of monetary transactions without ever being able to see or touch the dollars necessary for a transaction to occur," says David Almonte, member of the American Institute of CPAs National Financial Literacy Commission, Durham, North Carolina.

Today, children witness items arriving seemingly by magic. All it takes is a shout to "Alexa" or a few clicks on a phone.

So, as early as kindergarten age, give your child a few



dollars and/or coins, and take her to town to help holiday shop, advises Erica Sandberg, author of "Expecting Money" (Kaplan Publishing, 2008).

Keep the message positive: "You have \$5, let's see what gift we can find for Grandma,"

is better than, "No, no! You can't buy that, it's too expensive."

With the more positive approach, "You are teaching controlled spending," Sandberg says. "Spending is like driving a car, it can be

dangerous, but there are good driving skills."

Almonte agree.

"Try giving the dollars necessary for the transaction to your child and have them hand over those dollars to the cashier, then have your child handle any change received back," he says. "Communicate the process taking place – 'We need to give the cashier money in exchange for this toy that you want!' – as they physically complete each of the necessary steps in the transaction."

Those in-store experiences are valuable, but also add a trip to the bank to open up a savings account in your child's name when you're in town, says John Pelletier, director of the Center for Financial Literacy, Champlain College, Burlington, Vermont. "Studies have found that young people who have had a banking relationship score higher on financial literacy tests."

## Tips to Get Good Prices In Your Neighborhood

By Jessica Royer Ocken  
CTW Features

Shopping local doesn't mean breaking the bank.

Bill Brunelle, co-founder and managing partner at Independent We Stand, a group dedicated to supporting local businesses and educating their communities about the importance and strong economic benefits of buying local, says it's a "common misconception" that local retailers are more expensive than national chain stores or websites.

"I think most retailers in locally owned businesses understand that they have to compete on price," he says. However, they also know they have to deliver superior customer service – even after the sale – which may not be the case for sellers far removed from their patrons.

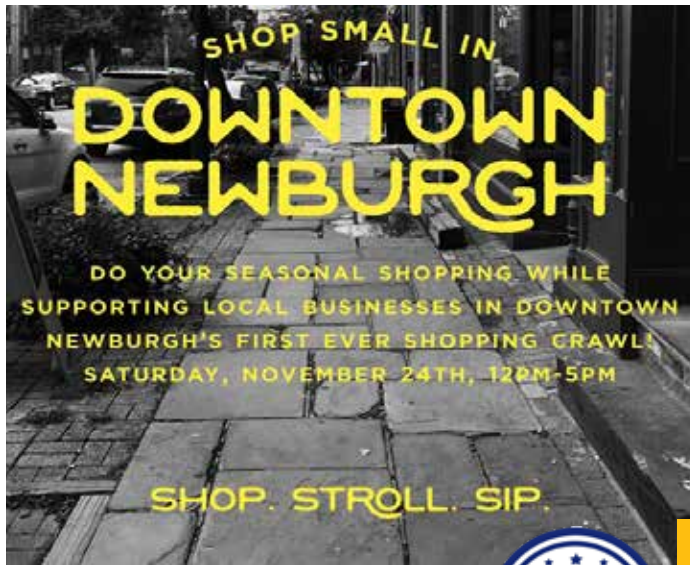
While there are added costs for bricks-and-mortar businesses, such as rent on the store and staff salaries, that may be reflected in the price of their wares, this also means you're dealing with people who care about what they're selling, notes Kathleen McHugh, president of The American Specialty Toy Retailing Association (ASTRA). They've made a personal investment.

Small business owners often have more flexibility in terms of pricing because they're not beholden to a corporate policy. While you always want to be respectful – we're not haggling here, folks – she sees no problem with inquiring about an item's price when you've seen it somewhere else for less.

Open a dialogue with the manager or owner, perhaps they'll work with you. The worst they can say is no.







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**Cemetery Pieces**

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