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Does your holiday playlist need an upgrade? We reveal three unique albums that will have you rocking all season long.

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The holidays can be a stressful time. Give yourself a break by reading our guide to reducing holiday stress.

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The holidays have become a fantastic time for premiere sporting matchups. We preview four cant-miss sporting events.

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4 Reasons the Holidays Are a Great Time to Make Your Move

Many homeowners assume that the holidays are a bad time to buy or sell a home, but nothing could be further from the truth. Here are 4 great reasons to make your move now.

Easier transaction

During the holidays, people tend to focus on the things that are really important to them—friends, family, and togetherness. Buyers and sellers tend to be in a more giving mood, and they are more likely to budge on a repair request or kick in a little extra money to complete a transaction.

Less competition

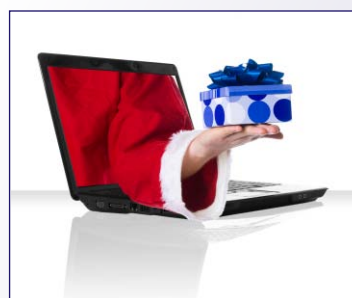
Over the years, so many people have assumed that the holidays are a bad time to buy or sell a home and that many buyers and sellers recede from the market for a few weeks. This tends to make sellers more eager to meet buyers, and buyers more eager to place an offer among depleted competition.

Great closing date

Buying or selling in the winter likely means closing escrow in the spring, several months before the busy summer season. Making your move before the big rush means more competitive rates on movers and moving vans, as well as a wider selection of trucks and scheduling options.

Improved curb appeal

Most neighborhoods look best during the holiday season when they are bustling with light and life—making it very easy to fall in love with a home during these special months. Even those neighborhoods with fewer lights and decorations are likely to be in pristine condition during the holidays when homeowners are eager to show their homes off to visiting friends and family members.



Last-minute Holiday Gift Ideas

Having a hard time finding that perfect gift in time for the big day? Here are 4

fast, easy, and thoughtful gifts that will appeal to almost anyone on your list.

Magazine subscription

www.Magazines.com is a website that sells magazine subscriptions online to nearly every major (and minor) magazine. You can easily search for magazines based on interest or personality profile. Once you find a magazine your recipients will like, you can send it directly to their house by entering their address in the online web form.

Audible account

www.Audible.com is an online book store that specializes in audiobooks. Members subscribe and receive book credits each month, which they can use to purchase and download any audiobook of their choosing. For someone who loves to read but doesn't have the time to relax with a book, this is a perfect gift.

Amazon gift card

www.Amazon.com sells everything from clothes to DVD players, which means everyone can find something they can use at Amazon.com. An Amazon gift card can be ordered online in just a few seconds and sent via email directly to your recipient.

iTunes gift card

An iTunes gift card is a great way to help music lovers expand their collections. iTunes gift cards are available in increments as small as \$15 and can include a personalized message. Gift cards can be ordered online (www.Apple.com), shipped within 24 hours, and sent directly to your recipient.

3 Unique Christmas Albums

Christmas albums are usually predictable because we have heard all of the songs a hundred times before. Every once in a while, a rendition comes along that completely reinvents the notion of the Christmas album. Here are 3 albums guaranteed to have you rocking throughout the holidays.

A Christmas Gift for You from Phil Spector by Various Artists

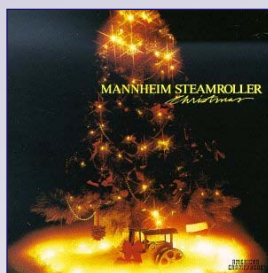


Often referred to as the "greatest rock and roll Christmas album of all time," this album features just over 34 minutes of upbeat, exquisitely produced songs sung by great 60s stars like the Ronettes and the Crystals. If you haven't heard of this album before, it's probably because its unfortunate release date destroyed any chance of mainstream commercial success; A Christmas Gift for You was released on November 22nd, 1963—the day of

President Kennedy's assassination.

<http://bit.ly/spectorexmas>

Mannheim Steamroller Christmas by Mannheim Steamroller



Mannheim Steamroller has had more consistent commercial success with Christmas albums than any artist in the history of popular music. They have 8 Certified Platinum albums, ranging over 15 years. Mannheim Steamroller owes its success to unique, synthesizer-generated arrangements that are often devoid of any lyrics or traditional (not computerized) instruments. Mannheim Steamroller Christmas is the album that started it all—Mannheim Steamroller's first and most beloved Christmas album.

<http://bit.ly/steamroller>

A Very Special Christmas by Various Artists



You would be hard pressed to find a more impressive array of mainstream 80s talent on any single album. Bruce Springsteen, Madonna, U2, Whitney Houston, Run D.M.C.—just to name a few—offer heartfelt renditions of their favorite seasonal songs. All proceeds support the Special Olympics. Since its initial release, there have been 6 additional volumes, which combined with this album have accounted for over \$55 million in dona-

tions to the Special Olympics.

Hot New Product

The Future of Skiwear



Recon Instruments is reinventing skiwear with its futuristic ski goggles. The goggles have a digital display embedded in the lenses that can be activated quickly and display a wide variety of information, including trail maps and real-time GPS locations of everyone in your party. Recon is accepting pre-orders for its Alpine Goggles right now. No word exists yet on an official release date.

www.reconinstruments.com

Easy Ways to Reduce Holiday Stress



Develop a list of priorities

There are so many additional responsibilities and distractions during the holiday season that it can be easy to lose sight of what's really important. Make a list of the things you want to accomplish throughout the holidays in order of their importance. Spend a little time reviewing the list each morning to achieve greater focus, and refer to the list whenever you are feeling stressed out or overwhelmed.



Simplify

The holidays can be a very stressful time for people with high standards. It's impossible to attain perfection in every aspect of your life during the holidays. There is simply too much to do in too little time, and nothing is as stressful as running out of time. Instead of trying to achieve perfection, look to fulfill your responsibilities as simply as possible. If you are able to complete everything (baking, buying gifts, wrapping gifts, addressing/sending cards, decorating the house) with time to spare, you can go back and spend more time on the things most important to you.

Seek out online alternatives



Many holiday traditions can be much less stressful if moved online. For instance, sending an e-card as your holiday greeting instead of the traditional hand-addressed card can save you hours (and quite a bit of money). You can even record a video greeting and upload it to YouTube. Then, include the link in your email. And, last-minute shopping is much easier online, where you don't have to fight crowds and traffic. Most of today's top online stores can guarantee delivery times within 12 hours, which means you can be sure your gift will arrive on time.

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Practice saying "no"

The easiest way to reduce stress is to reduce your responsibilities. There are some traditions that are too good to pass up and some that you will always be obliged to attend. However, it's also easy to get sucked into buying gifts for people who don't really need them, hosting guests who could easily stay elsewhere, and going to parties that wouldn't really miss you. Try to eliminate these types of obligations by saying "no" politely but decisively. Then, you will have the time you need to devote to the things and people you really care about.

Finding the Best Travel Deals Online



When it comes to finding the best air fare or hotel rate, everyone has a different technique. Some people like to buy directly from airlines, while others like to peruse the package deals offered by online providers like Expedia. Wouldn't it be nice if you could see all of this information in one place? As it turns out,

there is such a place. www.Kayak.com is a website that aggregates travel deals from hundreds of online travel sites. It works a lot like a search engine. Let KAYAK know what you're looking to do, and they'll let you know where to find the best deal.

4 Unmissable Holiday Sporting Events



The holiday season has steadily become one of the best times for sports lovers. Here's a sneak peek at what we have to look forward to over the next few weeks.

Cavs @ Lakers on Christmas December 25th, 2pm PST



When the 2 best players in the NBA square off on Christmas Day, you can count on some fireworks. Kobe Bryant and the World Champion Lakers will host LeBron James and the Cleveland Cavs. As an added subplot, Shaquille O'Neal, who won 3 rings as a Laker, will be back in Staples Center to face his old team as a Cav. The game begins at 2pm and will air on ABC.

Chargers @ Titans December 25th, 4:30pm PST



Although this figures to be a good matchup, the real reason to watch this game is to see what it might signal for the future of the NFL. The NFL has rapidly become an integral of the Thanksgiving holiday. This year, the NFL is looking to build on that success

by scheduling a single game on Christmas Day. If this game receives high ratings, look for the NFL to showcase at least one premier matchup every Christmas.

Flyers @ Bruins January 1st, 10am PST



Over the last 2 years, the NHL has developed one of the most unique traditions in all of sports. A game that is traditionally played indoors, the NHL has offered one outdoor game on each of the last New Year's Days. Last year, legendary Wrigley Field (home field of the Chicago Cubs) was turned into an outdoor ice rink where the Chicago Blackhawks hosted the Red Wings. This year, the game will be held at Fenway Park (home of the Boston Red Sox), in a game that promises to be as fun as it is rare.

BCS Championship January 7th, 5pm PST



The BCS Championship Game is never without its controversy, but this year's game promises to be a very special one, matching two 13-0 teams. The Alabama Crimson Tide will be battling the Texas Longhorns. This will be the ninth time these two storied programs have faced off.