

## **“Peace on Earth – Healthy Holiday” Merchandising & Marketing TIPS by Debby Swoboda**

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Celebrate “the season” with the theme: “Peace on Earth – Healthy Holidays with an International Flair.” This is obviously the month of caring and celebrating, which means people are feeling charitable and ready to share good food, good times and good feelings with their fellow man. They’re also looking ahead to the New Year, when they’ll vow to lead healthier lives. The good news for you is that you can help them with all of these endeavors!

Create a charitable outlet by offering to donate proceeds of sales to customers’ chosen charities. Provide information about environmental organizations and causes. Look for vendors that donate proceeds as well.

Staying healthy during the holidays should be an underlying theme throughout your store during October. ‘Tis the season to decorate, so have fun and go all out creating a festive atmosphere in your store!

### **Produce & Grocery Departments:**

Print decorative signs to hang in the produce and grocery departments:

“Around the World with Immune Fighting Recipes.” Feature several countries in each department on a rotating basis. Create handouts with recipes and information about studies such as the one stating that several Thai dishes, such as Tom Yum Soup, have been under scientific study for their incredible health benefits (see Thai Soup Under Study, <http://edition.cnn.com/2001/HEALTH/diet.fitness/01/03/thai.soup>). Feature the fresh herbs and spices used in Thai cooking - such as turmeric, galangal, coriander, lemongrass, and fresh chilies – which are known to have immune-boosting and disease-fighting power.

### **International Recipes:**

There are many terrific resources for healthy international recipes. Post recipes throughout the store and set up end caps and displays with all the ingredients in one place. Rotate them throughout the month, and put some of the featured items on sale.

Here’s a great web site and recipe ideas from it to get you started: <http://www.internationalrecipes.net>

Almond Snack Mix	Sicilian Roasted Artichoke
Beef & Spinach Pockets	Mediterranean Salmon Stir Fry
Curtido Salvadoreno (El Salvador style cabbage)	Vegetarian Wontons
Beingan Bharta (Indian Eggplant)	

You can also set up a display with recipes for making immune building snacks for the holiday such as a cereal with fiber, dried berries, nuts, popcorn and more – e.g., <http://www.organicvalley.coop> or [http://www.cooks.com/rec/search/0,1-0,trail\\_mix,FF.html](http://www.cooks.com/rec/search/0,1-0,trail_mix,FF.html).

### **Gifts:**

Many people are thinking about buying gifts in December, and most of them are grateful for new ideas. Your healthy gifts can take on an international/peaceful flavor with items such as:

Fitness Balls	Essential Oils Aromatherapy products
Soy Candles	Organic colognes from around the world
Yoga Mats	International Cookbooks
Earth Ornaments	CDs with relaxing music
Peace Ornaments	Magnetic Jewelry
Solar Holiday Lights	Massage gadgets

Pedometer  
Heart Rate monitor  
Lilac Sachets  
Herbal Pillows  
Relaxation Fountains

Natural t-shirts and tote bags from various organizations with supportive sayings on them

Gift baskets:

Coffees, teas  
Wine & cheese  
Chocolate  
Gluten free  
Sugar free  
Heart Healthy

Fruit  
Breakfast: hot chocolate, coffee, tea, oatmeal, dried fruits, fruit juices, honey  
Women's – Bath and relaxation products  
Men's: natural aftershaves and shave cream

Living gifts:

Edible Flowers  
Potted herbs  
Peace Lilies

Planters with seeds for summer garden favorites like strawberries, passion fruit or tomatoes.

**Checkout Area -- Grab & Go Gifts:**

Take pounds of your store's best-selling bulk nut and snack mixes (cashews are always a hit) and package them in clear containers or cellophane bags with a ribbon to sell as "grab and go" gifts

Organic Room Spray  
Biodegradable Golf Tees  
Recycled Holiday Cards  
Jump Ropes  
Complimentary intro session at the gym  
Never forget the power of the gift certificate or gift card!

Go all out with the finishing touches and turn your store into an "International Peace Bazaar" - peace signs in every language, staff in various native costumes, music indigenous to different countries. Give your customers something to write home about!

**Debby's Favorite Holiday Recipe links:**

<http://www.organicauthority.com>

<http://www.1stholistic.com/Recipes/default.htm>

<http://www.rd.com/channel/international-recipes/>

<http://www.healthylifeinternational.com/>

<http://www.is123.org/InternationalFoods.htm>

<http://www.healthyhomerrecipes.com>

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