

# How can I have a greener festive season?

WE ASKED ELENA KINANE, MANAGING DIRECTOR OF GREENHEART ORGANIC FARMS, FOR HER TIPS ON HOW TO CUT DOWN THE WASTE AT THIS LOVELY, BUT INDULGENT, TIME OF YEAR...



FOR MANY PEOPLE, SITTING TOGETHER WITH OUR FAMILIES AND FRIENDS AT CHRISTMAS TIME IS ONE OF THE HIGHLIGHTS OF THE YEAR. Sometimes, though, the feelings of joy are tinged with guilt as we cast our eyes over the excess of presents, wrapping, and food and drink leftovers. It dawns on us that we have consumed so much and, perhaps, unnecessarily wasted some. If you would like to avoid getting sucked in to the excesses of consumption but continue to enjoy it every bit as much (or even more than before), then here are some basic rules:

>> **Opt for quality:** Rather than buying cheap decorations, go for good-quality ones that you can reuse every year. Even better if they are made from recyclable materials. They may cost a few dirhams more but as long as you pack them away carefully, you can have them forever!

>> **Go organic:** The focal point of any festive gathering is usually the food. In general, this is where quality definitely trumps quantity. It's worth investing in good-quality organic ingredients, preferably locally grown. Plan meals carefully and remember to compost all raw-food leftovers.

>> **Power up:** When it comes to gifts, many require batteries. Normal alkaline batteries are virtually impossible to recycle responsibly. If cables or other alternative power sources are not an option, rechargeable batteries

are the way to go. In fact a recharging unit with batteries makes a great gift!

>> **Less is more:** While we're on the subject of gifts, consider buying better quality but less quantity. Why? It's about being more environmentally aware instead of an irresponsible consumerist. This may not delight the die-hard capitalists among us, but it sure is better for the planet. If possible, try to buy presents that are made locally from eco-friendly materials. Kris Kindle, or Secret Santa, can also help reduce waste by cutting down on lots of little gifts between a big group of

people, and replacing it with one slightly bigger pressie each.

>> **Smart wrapping:** Remember that wrapping paper is often just discarded afterwards. Try to use recycled paper and unwrap carefully, salvaging as much as possible for the next year.

>> **Bring bags:** Don't forget to bring shopping bags, or boxes, when going Christmas shopping to avoid using more

and more plastic.

>> **Go for real wax:** Candles are wonderful addition for ambiance at this time of the year. However, cheap paraffin candles are to be avoided. Opt instead for beeswax, or vegetable wax, as they are both biodegradable.

>> **Switch off** Remember to turn off decorative lights when not needed – this is as much about your safety as it is about saving energy. For details of Greenheart Organic Farms – its stores, products and delivery options – visit [greenheartuae.com](http://greenheartuae.com).AQ

**“IT’S ALL ABOUT BEING MORE ENVIRONMENTALLY AWARE INSTEAD OF BEING AN IRRESPONSIBLE CONSUMERIST”**

