

MOTHERS DAY GIFTS FROM THE HEART

By Kerry Wekelo

MOTHERS SHARE A BOND OF UNCONDITIONAL LOVE WITH THEIR CHILDREN AND FAMILY. MOTHERS ALSO WANT TO FEEL LOVED AND NOURISHED IN RETURN. AS WE CELEBRATE MOTHER'S DAY, REMEMBER THERE ARE MANY WAYS TO CELEBRATE THAT SPECIAL MOM, WIFE, GRANDMOTHER, SISTER, AUNT – OR ANYONE WHO HAS PLAYED THE STARRING ROLE OF MOM.

When Mother's Day rolls around, it's oftentimes tough to think of ways to thank mom. It seems no gift can ever compare to the love and support she's given you or your family. But whatever you decide upon, remember the idea is to give from the heart. That is the best gift any mother could receive. She will shine and radiate love even stronger than before and will get a newfound energy from your love. And the best part is that the following ideas are either free or inexpensive, and you can work as a family to create a great gift or experience for her:

Write a poem, or have the kids write a short story about their favorite time with mom.

Put together a computerized picture collage if you are good with technology, or simply place a collage of pictures in a frame bought at a local store. If you want to make it fancier, utilize the option of printing on canvas.

Create a shadow box of great memories such as the birth of a child, other momentous events, ticket stubs or her favorite pictures.

Give her a day of pampering in which she will not need to lift a finger the entire day while members of the family pitch in and take care of everything. Give her a back or foot massage. Ensure all her favorite foods are in the house. Buy her a few new magazines. Treat her to a movie if you think she would prefer to get out of the house. Take her to her favorite restaurant. Ensure there is no complaining or bickering from anyone. Whatever she wants, goes!

Finish the items on the honey-do-list she gave you...a while ago!

Take a photo of the kids writing the words "I love you" on their hands or feet with colorful markers, and get creative with the poses. Let the kids decorate a simple frame for it to give it that extra special touch.

Wrap a small present for each hour of the day (from 8am to 8pm), ensuring that all gifts are thoughtful and heartfelt.

Create a booklet of free passes from the kids and you, such as taking out the trash without being asked to, massages, cooking (and

washing the dishes!) or making her bed. Think of the things she is always asking you to do, and make sure those are all in the booklet.

Act out a skit with the kids showing her all the reasons why you love and are thankful for her.

Fill balloons with messages of love, gratitude and appreciation, and make popping the balloons a fun family activity. Another option is to place all of the love notes in a hand-decorated jar.

Plan an outing to her favorite spot and include the whole family.

Organize a scavenger hunt for the family. This will be a fun, adventurous way to bond as a family.

Have a picnic at your local park, but make it a magical experience by using nice linens, plates, utensils and flowers.

Let her decide if she'd like to have one-on-one time with each family member, i.e., taking a walk with her son; getting a pedicure with her daughter; or having a quiet lunch or dinner with you. She may prefer to do everything as a family, but this gives her an option if she is craving some alone time with a family member.

No matter what you decide, be sure to shower her with extra hugs and kisses all day, use your imagination and, most importantly, remember to give from your heart. **P**

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Photography: Al Wekelo