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PROFILE

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Wrap it up — an expert shares gift-wrapping secrets

By Lauren Gumpert

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Seaside Papery is a holiday shopper's dream. The shop off Rancho Santa Fe Road offers a selection of gifts and wrapping supplies as well as the opportunity to create wedding invitations, baby announcements, personal stationary and much more.

Owner Jori Jackman "has a great eye" and "travels to several gift shows in order to find the next best thing," said 24-year-old Rachael McDonough, a three-year employee of the company. "This store would brighten anyone's day. We carry a little bit of everything."

The store is stocked with attractive garnishes for presents, and it offers complementary gift-wrapping services for anything bought in the store. And for those who have already made their purchases and need help in the creativity department, Seaside Papery can come to the rescue.

"We once had a man drop off a suitcase full of presents and come back a couple of days later to pick it up," McDonough said.

McDonough, not only a seasonal gift-wraper but a woman who executes perfect wrapping jobs year-round, shares a few tips on beautifying presents and reminisces on the comical side-effects of her career.

Q: What is your position on curled ribbon?

A: "We love it here and use it quite a bit. It's part of our complementary gift wrap and is so easy to create without any additional fee."

Q: How high is the risk for paper cuts?

A: "Actually, if you wrap a gift correctly, they are not that normal. I haven't gotten any yet, knock on wood!"

Q: How do you deal with high pressure/impatient customers?

A: "When we do get backed up, we sometimes ask shoppers to leave their items in the store and we recommend a nice restaurant close by where they can grab a bite to eat and come back to a nicely wrapped gift. For the most part we get a lot of happy people;



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Jori Jackman owns Seaside Papery a local gift-wrap and stationary store.

grumpy folks are few and far between for us."

Q: What is the hardest thing you have ever had to wrap?

A: "Because we allow people to bring in their own stuff, I have gotten several awkward-to-wrap things like golf clubs. One time a lady came in with a five gallon bucket full of tools. But thankfully we have a variety of box sizes."

Q: Any timesaving tricks of the trade?

A: "If I can get away with it, I wrap something small (like the size of candy) in tissue paper, crunch the sides and tie ribbons to the ends. It turns out cute and is good to go."

Q: Gift bags or wrapping paper?

A: "The store does offer some cute gift bags, but the only time I use them is after I wrap a present and want to avoid carrying it around. It is important to make a gift look even more special than it already is, and wrapping it makes for a great presentation."

Q: Have any creative packing decorations in mind?

A: "We carry pretty hand-jeweled starfish with vintage broaches on them, which look

gorgeous on packages. The shop also has butterfly clips, which are great to attach to ribbon."

Q: Do people come in early or last minute?

A: "Always last minute, always. Everyone always needs gifts 'today' or 'right now.' We always try to accommodate these requests the best we can."

Q: How did your gift-wrapping career start?

A: "At the store when I began working here. The owner is really into presentation and I learned everything I know about wrapping here."

Q: Does doing this day after day take in the joy of wrapping your own gifts?

A: "No, because I bring in mine a lot. At home I don't have all of these options that the store has. Here you can match ribbon to paper and new items come in all the time. My Christmas gifts are wrapped in all different papers!"

Q: Why do people come to get their gifts wrapped?

A: "Because of our ever-changing styles here and because some people are just clumsy wrappers. I was before I worked here. There is a right way to fold and crease the paper and there is how I used to do it: crunching it up and slapping some tape on."

Q: What do you find rewarding about wrapping gifts?

A: "How excited people are when they see them. I like the complementary gift wrap because customers are always surprised that the wrapping job is not cheesy."

Q: Do you get gift ideas from wrapping so many?

A: "I have! Someone came in who ordered a scrapbook for him and his wife's first anniversary. I scribbled the company's name down and am planning to order one."

Q: Do you dream about wrapping gifts?

A: "When I started working I did because I had to practice doing it so many times! I once dreamt about curling ribbon and woke up actually doing the curling motions!"