Ho-Ho-Ho! Munch. Munch.

Wouldn’t you love to give a great gift this Christmas? I have three suggestions this year. They’re homemade and delicious, but don’t worry, that doesn’t mean you’ll be slaving over a hot stove!

These are **easy,** but beware.

You’ll want to make a couple extra batches for yourself.

- **Chutney…**Kick it up a notch when you add a little spark to an otherwise docile fruit preserve. Fruit chutneys look beautiful and taste festive, too. Use apples, and try seasoning with cumin or coriander.

Or how about oranges with chili peppers? There are countless variations. Pour your finished product into clean, glass canning jars and for a personalized touch, make your own labels. Here’s a basic recipe for Cherry Chutney from Sally Fallon’s book, *Nourishing Traditions*:

4 cups ripe cherries, pitted and quartered

½ teaspoon coriander seeds

½ teaspoon whole cloves

Grated rind and juice of 1 orange

1/8 cup Sucanat

¼ cup whey

2 teaspoons sea salt

½ cup filtered water

Mix cherries with spices and orange rind, place in a quart-sized, wide-mouth mason jar and press down lightly. Mix remaining ingredients and pour into jar, adding more water if necessary to cover the cherries. The top of the chutney should be at least 1 inch below the top of the jar. Cover tightly and keep at room temperature for 2 days before transferring to refrigerator. This should be eaten within 2 months.

- **Vanilla extract…**This universal favorite makes a great, long lasting gift. And, to top that, it's **easy** to do. Check out my recipe **here**! Every time your loved ones add a teaspoon into their latest batch of cookies, they'll think of you.
- **Slow Roasted Holiday Nuts…**Choose your favorite nut or a selection of only **raw** nuts (almonds, hazelnuts, pecans, walnuts, Brazil nuts, cashews, peanuts, etc.) and soak them overnight and for up to 24 hours. Drain and spread the nuts on cookie sheets and sprinkle with Celtic sea salt. You can season them with a variety of herbs or spices, such as cinnamon, cayenne pepper, cumin, chili powder, nutmeg, cloves, etc. Slow roast them in an oven preheated to 150° F, for 6-8 hours or until crispy. Place in little paper bags and tie with colorful ribbons.

Enjoy!