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8 RESTAURANTS
WITH
KID-FRIENDLY
PLAY SPACE

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With Mother's Day right around the corner, kids and spouses are scrambling to find just the right gift for Mom. Many moms don't want store-bought gifts—they want things like sleep, privacy, peace, cleanliness, harmony and cooperation. The best part? These are gifts that fit every budget. Leave this list where the family will see it.

Lisa A. Beach

5 Mother's Day Gifts Mom Wants

1. Let Mom sleep in.

This is not the day to cut the grass at 8 a.m., slam the bathroom door, blare the game you recorded on ESPN, stand right next to Mom to see if she's really sleeping, or loudly whisper outside Mom's bedroom door, "Shhhhh! Mom is sleeping!"

2. Buy breakfast; make dinner.

If you're going to treat Mom to breakfast, satisfy her addiction to Panera and make an early-morning coffee run. More importantly, do it before she wakes up because she's a bit grouchy if she has to wait 20 minutes for caffeine. While you're getting Mom an extra-large cup of hazelnut coffee, grab bagels for the family and enjoy breakfast. Note: Do NOT wake Mom to tell her breakfast is ready. This is counterproductive to Gift #1.

For dinner, skip the raucous restaurant filled with other noisy families. Work together and make dinner while you bring Mom a glass of wine and a good book to enjoy on the patio (a five-minute shoulder rub wouldn't hurt either).

3. Adopt a "WMW" philosophy.

Mom is bone-tired from making hundreds of family decisions every day, so don't burden her with even one today other than "Do you want another glass of wine?" Instead, adopt a "WMW" (What Mom Wants) philosophy when you stumble into a decision-making quandary. For example, not only does Mom not want to cook any meals on Mother's Day, she doesn't want to think about cooking. You know a few of Mom's favorite foods. Think of what Mom orders when the family goes out, and BOOM, there's your answer.

4. Maintain a conflict-free day.

No fighting over chores, video games, who scratched the side of dad's car, who gets to eat the leftover Chinese food, who broke the sprinkler head, who left the bag of pretzels open, or who used the TV remote last because no one can find it. If you absolutely cannot help yourself, know that Mom can still hear you whisper-fight in the next room. Instead, let dad referee your verbal battles outside so Mom doesn't have to hear it.

Note to kids: It doesn't make Mom feel good when you fight about whose turn it is to do something nice, as in, "I just got her a glass of water, so you take the newspaper to her." "No, it's your turn. I just ran upstairs for her reading glasses." "That's not fair, why do I have to do everything?" Mom now feels like a big fat burden, so let's not fight about not wanting to do nice things. Kinda kills the moment.

5. Pick up the slack.

When Mom takes a day off, the state of the house takes a quick nosedive. The volume of daily messes that Mom picks up, steps over or averts her eyes from overwhelms her. Take a minute to start a load of laundry, hang up your towel, replace the toilet paper roll, unload the dishwasher, put away your cleats, throw away the empty bag of chips, wipe up what you spilled on the counter and cap the toothpaste. It's all in the details!

Bonus: Mom wouldn't refuse a gift certificate for a massage or an exquisitely good bar of sea-salt-caramel-filled dark chocolate that she doesn't have to share. Just sayin'. ❖

Lisa Beach is a freelance writer, humor blogger, and recovering homeschool Mom who lived to write about it.