

moreformoms

By Alicia Brewster

Hold On!

We've all been there – trying to juggle a squirming toddler or an armload of groceries and fighting a handbag that keeps slipping off your shoulder. Keep your bag where it belongs with the **Shoulder Houlder**, an ingenious clip that attaches to your jacket, vest or shirt and holds purse straps in place, freeing up your arms for more important cargo. Choose from basic black, animal print or gold with Swarovski crystal, or customize your own design. Shoulder Houlders range from \$12.95 to \$16.95 at shoulderhouder.com.



Give a Little, Gain a Lot

Thanksgiving is a great time to teach your children about the importance of volunteering. While many of us gather with friends and family to feast and give thanks this time of year, many others in our area go hungry. You can help make sure that needy families have a holiday worth celebrating by collecting canned food donations, delivering groceries or serving Thanksgiving meals to the homeless. Volunteer at a food bank, like the Arlington Food Assistance Center (afac.org) and Food & Friends (foodandfriends.org), or help with a local food drive, like the one held by Reston Community Center (restoncommunitycenter.com) in my neighborhood. If you can't find a food drive in your area, start one yourself! Visit mannafood.org or capitalareafoodbank.org for great tips on how to get started.



Now You're Cookin'

Take your Thanksgiving fare straight from the oven to the table with **La Chamba's** beautiful line of clay cookware. The line includes casseroles, roasters, pans, griddles, soup and stock pots, bowls, plates, dishes and bakeware handcrafted in Colombia from black clay. The cookware retains the heat from microwaves, stoves or ovens, making it perfect for serving as well as cooking (and leaving you with fewer dishes to wash!). Pieces retail from \$11.50 to \$149.95 at mytoque.com.



Leader of the Pack

Looking for a bag that's as versatile as you are? The **Medium Camera/Carry-All Bag** from jill-e designs can be configured to fit Mom's many different roles. Customize the padded Velcro dividers to hold your laptop and business files, diaper bag essentials or overnight necessities. Perfect for holiday travel, the bag is also equipped to transport delicate camera gear so you can be sure to document Baby's first Thanksgiving at Grandma's. The weatherproof leather wipes clean with a damp cloth – another must-have feature for moms! The bags come in black, bone, red or pink leather for \$239.99 at jill-e.com.



Shop 'til You Drop!

Get a jump-start on your holiday shopping at the **Northern Virginia Christmas Market**, November 12-14 at the Dulles Expo Center in Chantilly. Shop for fine arts, pottery, jewelry, stained glass, wood, photography, fiber arts and one-of-a-kind Christmas collectibles from more than 300 artisans. Taste of the Holidays food vendors will be offering gift-packaged gourmet fare like homemade jams, cookies, cakes, salsas and more.

Admission is \$8; receive \$1 off by bringing a canned food donation for the Capital Area Food Bank. For more information, including a list of vendors, visit emgshows.com/ancvm.



Fair-Trade Fundraising

Here's a fresh alternative to the junk food and cheap tchotchkes found in most school fundraisers. **Equal Exchange** and **Ten Thousand Villages** have partnered to provide PTAs, sports teams and other community groups a fundraising program full of organic and fair-trade goodies that include food, beverages, home goods, gift wrap and more. You'll feel good knowing that you're not only helping to raise money for your child's team or school, but you're also teaching her about social and environmental responsibility and encouraging global citizenship. For more information on the program, visit equalexchange.coop/fundraiser.

