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Never mention gifts on the invitation

Jay Remer, **Financial Post**
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Dear Etiquette Guy:

My family and I are giving my dad a retirement dinner. Is it proper to print on the invitations that he would appreciate a gift card from the store of the guest's choosing? We just want to make things as easy for people as possible.

Simple Request

Dear S.R.:

The answer is no. One never makes any mention of gifts on an invitation. The exception to this would be if you did not want any gifts at all, in which case you would write "best wishes only." If you want the gift card idea to get around, then do it by word of mouth. The reasoning behind this is quite simple: Requesting a gift implies that there is a price of admission to the celebration. Many people will want to bring a gift, but to suggest that one should come from this store or that store, or be in the form of cash, is the height of impropriety. Invitations are reserved for essential information, such as when, where and why. I hope this helps. - Jay Remer is the Etiquette Guy. He is trained and certified by the Protocol School of Washington as a consultant for corporate etiquette and international protocol. He lives in St. Andrews, N. B. E-mail your etiquette questions to jay@etiquetteguy.com and visit his Web site at www.etiquetteguy.com.

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