



It's Not Too Late!

It's not too late to order your holiday greeting cards! Available in multiple sizes, cards can be personalized with a picture or business logo for just \$5!

Convert cards to Hanukkah, Kwanzaa, or winter greetings at no additional cost.

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Shadeflower ~ Your Gift Depot!

Need some fresh ideas for your loved ones or party hostess? Shadeflower personalized notecards and matted photography make the perfect gifts! Gift cards are also available in any denomination! Start your holiday shopping now at ShadeflowerDesigns.com!

Going Green

Cheap Gas = Road Trip?! Think Again.

I about dropped my jaw when I drove past the corner gas station yesterday and saw \$1.69. With prices like these, it's tempting to fill up the ol' gas guzzler and hit the road... but before you go dusting off that \$50K Hum-V you have sitting in the garage, think twice.

Just because gas prices are low right now doesn't mean there's not a shortage of oil. Oil is not going to last forever and it's important that we invest time and research into alternative solutions. But until those solutions come up, it's important to continue to conserve, conserve, conserve!

Easy Tips to Conserve:

- **Public Transportation:** it's not as vile as it once was. In fact, local governments are spending more money than ever to promote safe, attractive alternatives.
- **Change Your Vehicle:** motorcycles and scooters get up to 100 mpg. Sedans such as Toyota Camrys can offer 30 mpg. Or try out one of the many hybrid and/or electric options (and get a government tax benefit to boot!)
- **Walk or Ride:** Take advantage of the double benefit by walking or biking - help the environment and your body!



Image courtesy of FatAmerican.tv

Recipe of the Month
Carol's Chocolate Crinkle Cookies

I dug into my mother's recipe book for this delicious cookie recipe. There are many variations of this holiday favorite, but this one is by far the best... it's the perfect ooey, gooey, and delicious treat - like a brownie in a cookie!

- Ingredients:
- 1/2 cups vegetable oil
 - 4 ounces (4 squares) unsweetened bakers chocolate, melted
 - 2 cups (granulated) sugar
 - 2 tsp. baking powder
 - 4 cups flour
 - 4 eggs
 - 2 tsp. vanilla
 - 1/2 tsp. salt
 - 1 cup confectioners (powdered) sugar



Directions:
Mix oil, chocolate, and granulated sugar. Blend in one egg at a time until well mixed. Add vanilla and mix. Mix in baking powder and salt, then add flour and mix thoroughly. Chill overnight.

Heat oven to 350°F. Drop teaspoonfuls of dough into confectioners sugar. Roll in sugar and shape into balls. Place on a greased baking sheet. Bake 10-12 minutes. Do not overbake.

Culinary Tips & Tricks

Just like fish or meats, cookies will continue baking after you pull them from the oven. For perfect cookies, consider removing them from the oven just a minute or two before the cookies are done.

Did you miss last month's Southern Mac-n-Cheese? [Click here to view recipe archives!](#)



Shadeflower News

Shadeflower has been busy the last few months, garnering new and interesting clients everyday. Whether it be a scrapbook-like brochure for the **Musculoskeletal Transplant Foundation**, writing the annual report for **Minnesota State Services for the Blind**, or custom-designing birthday invitations and print ads, my work is becoming ever varied and always exciting!

Recently I updated ShadeflowerDesigns.com with more user-friendly order forms and organized pages. Please take a few moments to check it out and let me know what you think!

On a personal front, my husband and I are happy to announce that we are expecting our first child in May 2009! At eighteen weeks pregnant, the baby and I are very healthy. And after an exciting live Vikings game over the weekend, Baby H has been letting his or her excitement continue with plenty of kicks and squirms! Unfortunately, with my pregnancy, food isn't tasting so great anymore... which is most disappointing to my husband who is longing for my gourmet meals. So this month, I've tapped into my mother's cookbook for a holiday cookie favorite.

To celebrate our good news and to share in holiday cheer, I am offering a **10% discount on all products*** now through the end of December. Just type in **BABY10** on the order form under "Promotion Code".

As always, thank you for your support and for passing the Shadeflower name to your friends and family!

*Happy Holidays,
Melissa*

*Discount does not apply to service fees, wedding packages, or shipping.

Give the Gift of Shadeflower with Gorgeous Prints From Around the World



All images are printed on high-quality archival paper and come with a black or white high-quality matte (other matte colors available upon request). Print prices start at just \$10! You can also order notecards of to share with your family and friends. [Click here to see more photography options, pricing and ordering information.](#)

Design Trends

Top Ten Colors For Women's Fashion, Spring 2009

Pantone, the global authority on color and provider of professional color standards for the design industries, recently released the PANTONE® Fashion Color Report Spring 2009. According to the report, blue and purple lead the top 10 hues for spring '09. The palette also includes pops of vibrant color representing the optimism of the season, combined with sophisticated neutrals to ground the palette and provide stability in an unpredictable economic climate. A spectrum of greens rounds out the report, evoking a sense of freshness and new beginnings.



The availability of the PANTONE Fashion Color Report coincided with the beginning of New York Fashion Week (Sept. 5-12, 2008).

"New York's fashion designers encourage hopeful attitudes with lively colors, while sophisticated, grounded hues address the need for stability in times of economic uncertainty," said Leatrice Eiseman, executive director of the Pantone Color Institute®.

Story & Image Courtesy of Pantone

Travel Tips

Torturing Your Children... One Roadside Attraction at a Time

If you're like many Americans, chances are you are going to be traveling by car for the holidays. When I was a kid, my dad would drag my brother, mom and me to some of the most absurd roadside stops: Carhenge in God-only-knows-where Nebraska; the 55-foot tall Jolly Green Giant in... yep, right here in Minnesota; world's largest ball of twine... sadly, also here in Minnesota; world's largest frying pan in Brandon, Iowa; and of course, The Corn Palace in Mitchell, South Dakota. I'm not sure if these wacky roadside attractions are spread throughout the U.S. or is just left to the bored Midwesterners with too much cold and time on their hands; but wherever we went, my dad would announce that, "This was the coolest thing ever!" My mom, brother and I would roll our eyes, grumbling as we pulled on our parkas and stumbled out of the car. "Carol, grab the camera!" he'd say. We'd grumble louder, trying hard to pretend that we were miserable (because truth be told, we kinda liked these off-the-wall diversions). So for this holiday roadtrip, my travel tip to you - pick up your nearest AAA guide and torture your own kids with the weird and wacky.



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