

# RECESSION HITS CHRISTMAS - BRITS CUT BACK ON SPENDING BY £2.8bn

Submitted by: Brando

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## CHRISTMAS CUT-BACKS

- Brits cut back festive spending by £2.8bn -

RECESSION-struck Brits are cutting back by as much as £200 each in the run up to Christmas – costing the economy a staggering £2.8bn.

According to new research by Somerfield, a third of Brits (33 per cent) say they will be spending less this year than ever before. Almost a third (29 per cent) will be making cuts of up to £200 on their festive shopping in the economic crisis, and 17 per cent are looking to save up to £50.

When it comes to making sacrifices, workplace Secret Santa gifts are the first to go with close to one in five (18 per cent) taking colleagues off the Christmas gift list. More than one in 10 (13 per cent) will be cutting out Christmas sweets and 12 per cent are even considering taking wine and beer off the list.

However, some traditions are safe even from the recession – only three per cent would consider getting rid of the tree or the Christmas pud, and just two per cent would deprive the kids of presents.

Recently unemployed Russell Brand topped the Somerfield poll of celebrities who need to tighten their belts most this Christmas. Over a quarter (twenty eight per cent) of Brits chose the shamed star as most in need of saving a pound or two while he searches for a new job. Gordon Brown followed hot on his heels – 27 per cent want the Prime Minister to show some festive restraint to help see the country through recession.

Have a crafty Christmas

Taking on the mantra of the 'make-do and mend generation' two in five (40 per cent) have said they will make their own Christmas goodies this year, with 32 per cent baking their own cakes and puddings and 12 per cent making their own cards. A brave four per cent will even try their hand at making their own presents.

When it comes to leading the nation out of the economic doom and gloom, 58 per cent cited Winston Churchill, the charismatic war-time prime minister, as the best representative of the British fighting spirit. However, our current prime minister doesn't fare as well, with only four per cent naming Gordon Brown as the fighting force behind Britain's resilient spirit.

Pete Williams, Somerfield head of press and PR, said: "The recession has hit Britain hard and fast – it looks like many people will be tightening their belts this Christmas. But there are plenty of ways to make your money go further. Canny shoppers have been stocking up on festive fare well in advance to help spread the cost of Christmas - by stocking up early on store cupboard items, frozen party foods, nuts, biscuits, wine and beer, and treats like chocolates and crackers.. And of course taking advantage of supermarket deals by planning and shopping ahead.

“There are always ways to save money and still make sure you and yours have a happy Christmas. As our poll shows, homemade gifts, and foods are increasingly popular as a great way to stay within your budget. Scratch cooking as our grandparents did is back in a big way and many of us are even returning to the garden shed to make presents for the family.”

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For further information, please contact Brando: Emily Phillips (020 7419 7338/ [emily@brando-world.com](mailto:emily@brando-world.com)) or Lucie Kaye ( 020 7691 8767/ [lucie@brando-world.com](mailto:lucie@brando-world.com))

#### About Somerfield

Somerfield's aim is to be the UK's favourite local grocer. To achieve this objective it is investing in its stores and colleagues to create a friendly, modern shopping environment offering quality fresh foods in easy to shop store locations

Its stores offer a genuine alternative to the big out-of-town superstores providing local customers with a full-service supermarket, exciting choice and a wide range of fresh and convenient foods at great value prices

Somerfield operates over 850 stores across the UK with nine out of 10 located in town centre or neighbourhood locations. The supermarket employs over 42,000 colleagues and has more than nine million customer visits every week