

THE WINE LOVER'S GIFT GUIDE

WHAT TO BUY FOR THOSE IN-THE-KNOW

BY KASEY WILSON



COOL TOOL

Uncork bottles with flawless precision using the European-made Pulltap's corkscrew. The Teflon worm smoothly penetrates the cork while the unique two-step hinged lever ensures that the cork pulls out in one piece. The whole thing folds up so you can carry it in your pocket at a party or picnic. (Price range is \$30 and up) www.pulltalex.com

wines) and to remove sediment from older wines. Some young, well-made unfiltered California zins often have sediment, too. Don't be seduced by a pretty base. It's hard to beat Riedel's narrow based merlot (pictured here) and cabernet decanters available from \$20. www.riedel.com



RACK AND ROLL

Cool those homemade shortbread or chocolate-chip cookies with the versatile Roll Up Rack (\$20). Use this easy-to-store metal mat as a hot pad, broiler rack or as a cooling pad for your laptop computer. www.rolluprack.com

WRAP STAR

The hottest trend in gift wrapping is recycling — making the most of packaging that is useful in-and-of-itself. Maps of wine regions make fast, economical wraps or, if you're not into DIY, go to cavallini.com/wrap.html. Don't forget a gift tag. Label a gingerbread cookie or a salt-dough ornament and watch the tag move directly from the present to the tree.



WINO PURSUIT

You don't need to be a wine critic to sniff, swirl and wax on about wine. Start with one of these wine tasting kits from the Le Nez du Vin (The Nose of Wine) series priced from \$200 and up. The Vin Blancs et Champagne comes with a dozen aromas most commonly found in white wine and bubbly and the Vin Rouge will have you spitting Bordeaux, Burgundy and cabernet vintages with the wine geeks. Find them on-line at www.nezduvin.co.uk and in many wine shops.

MILE HIGH WINE CLUB

Your wines will fly first class even if you're stuck in economy. The ingenious WineCruzer airline compliant wine carrier will allow you to transport your bottles securely in a hard-shelled case that maintains the temperature for six to eight hours at 30,000 feet. Available in 2, 4, 5, 6 and 8 bottle versions (\$130 and up). www.winecruzer.com



HEALTH NUTS

These "It" nuts are a delicacy, native only to Spain. Similar to a macadamia, Marcona almonds (\$6.49 per 100 grams) are smoother and juicier than North American varieties and, unlike their porous cousins, they have a hard shell to protect them. Available at Whole Foods Market www.wholefoodsmarket.com

B.Y.O.B

Dress up a holiday gift wine with retro-chic embroidered bottle bags available for \$11 each. The bags come in three styles: If it weren't for wine I'd have no personality at all; Who says Happy is only an Hour?; and, Good friends like wine get better with age. www.lavishandlime.com



THE SWEET SPOT

Holt Renfrew raises the bar with their exclusive line of Gourmet food products; a delicious duo of milk and dark Belgian chocolate almond bark \$32; Curried Cashews, Sugar & Spice Pecans, Savoury Mixed Nuts with Rosemary \$38; or Red Pepper Jelly \$17 arrive in decorative sealer jars or holiday red tins. www.holtrenfrew.com