

Front Burner

FLORENCE FABRICANT

TO FERMENT

A Starter Kit For Baking Bread

► The bakery *Bien Cuit* has a make-your-own sourdough kit, good for yourself or for someone who is getting into bread baking. It contains a jar of the live starter from the chef Zachary Golper (right), assorted tools for baking, organic whole wheat flour, a loaf of sourdough bread and a signed copy of "Bien Cuit: The Art of Bread": *Sourdough kit, \$199, with shipping nationwide (\$140 at the bakery's 120 Smith Street, Brooklyn, and Grand Central Terminal locations); without the bread, \$189; without the bread and the book, \$139; biencuit.com.*



TO ENRICH

A Rich Stock For the Feast

▲ As you start to count your seven fishes, here's a holiday helper: *Greenpoint Fish & Lobster Company* is selling seafood stock for stews and soups. It's made from green crabs, an invasive species that threatens New England's shellfish. This aggressive European crab is not new to American waters, but warming seas have led to increased numbers of them, according to fishery experts. The crabs have too little meat for commercial value, but Vinny Milburn, an owner of the Brooklyn fish market, is exploiting them to make stock. It's sold frozen at the store, and is dark, murky and richly flavorful: *Green crab stock, \$10 a quart, Greenpoint Fish & Lobster, 114 Nassau Avenue (Eckford Street), Greenpoint, Brooklyn, 718-349-0400, greenpointfish.com.*

TO SAMPLE

Subscription Meats For the Connoisseur

▼ I make my own choices, so I'm not a fan of the curated box of goods as something to give or to receive. But there are a few notable exceptions. Sausage assortments, for example, can provide tasty discoveries. Several bou-



tique sausage makers offer subscriptions for monthly deliveries of their salami and other cured sausages. Peter Seghesio's *Journeyman Meat Company* in Healdsburg, Calif., sells subscriptions to its *Meat Guild* for quarterly salami deliveries. *Olympia Provisions* in Portland, Ore., has charcuterie boxes with several meats for monthly delivery. Justin Severino of *Salty Pork Bits* in Pittsburgh, who makes some unusual salami like leek-ash-porcini, and Iberian pepper, has subscriptions that sell out quickly: *Journeyman Meat Guild, \$35 per quarter, \$140 a year, journeymanmeat.com; Olympia Provisions, \$55 a month, olympiaprovisions.com; Salty Pork Bits, three months for \$135, orders now being taken for spring, saltyporkbits.com.*

TO SERVE

Wintry Treats To Give or Receive

▼ Seasonal *petits fours* and chocolates from *Valerie Confections* in Los Angeles lend a touch of elegance to the holiday table. They include snowy little eggnog butter cakes scented with nutmeg, lay-

ered with bourbon ganache and iced with white chocolate adorned with gold leaf. Bittersweet chocolate, also decorated with gold leaf, encloses tender nougat. And mint-infused chocolate truffles sport wintry decorations: *Valerie Confections petits fours, \$60 for 12; holiday nougat, \$36 for 12; evergreen box, \$25 for nine; valerieconfections.com.*



TO SIP

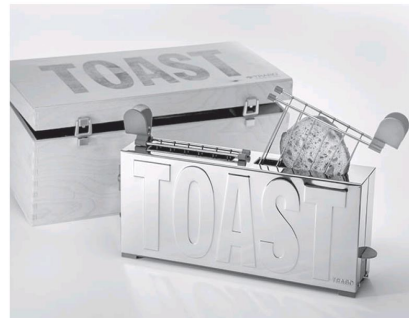
These Spirits Are Just Dandy

▲ Bespoke is a term used for custom-tailored clothing, and it describes some of the goods at the uptown New York boutique *Harlem Haberdashery* and its parent company, *5001 Flavors*. Sharene and Guy Wood, who run the company with family members and other partners, have also used the term for their new line of spirits. *HH Bespoke Gin* is in the dry London style, with a mellow finish. *Bespoke Vodka* is a clean spirit made mainly from corn. *Bespoke Rum*, a barrel-aged blend, delivers sweetness and spice, and could stand in for bourbon in a cocktail. Because of liquor laws, these bottles are not sold at *Harlem Haberdashery*: *HH Bespoke Gin, Bespoke Vodka and Bespoke Rum, \$54 each, for 750 milliliters at Pompette Wines & Spirits, 420 Lenox Avenue (West 131st Street), 212-368-9463, pompettewines.com, hhbespokespirits.com.*

TO CRISP

It Simply Makes Toast

▼ High style meets low-tech in this Italian toaster created in 1997 for *Trabo* by Gae Aulenti, the architect who designed the *Musée d'Orsay* in Paris. Until about a year ago it was sold only in Europe; now it's available in the United States. Its sleek simplicity could make it the pride of the kitchen counter. It handles two slices, but not a thick bagel. Wire racks are included, to hold the bread (or a sandwich wrapped in parchment paper): *Toast Toaster, \$185, AKA Dwelling, Alvarado, Tex., 877-388-7245, akadwelling.com.*



TONY CENCOLA/THE NEW YORK TIMES; TOASTER, TREATS, MEAT BOOZES; MOYA MALLISTER FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES (BAKER)