



LIFE & STYLE

HOLIDAY GIFT GUIDE 2020

By GRIFFIN MILLER

The season of good cheer is finally upon us and I can't help but feel the song "We Need a Little Christmas" (from the musical *Mame*) is all kinds of 2020 poignant, especially the lyrics, "And We Need a Little Snappy/Happy Ever After/Need a Little Christmas Now."

So grab some eggnog and join me as I run holiday amok, starting with Hanukkah on December 10th. Christmas (I think you know this one by heart), and Kwanzaa on the 26th. And while we're on the subject of partridges in pear trees and dreidels spinning their way to chocolate coins, let's remember to binge on favorite holiday flicks, embrace the warmth of family and good friends, shop for amazing presents (just turn the page to get started), and ring in a most Happy Ever After New Year! →

FOR HER

SCENT FROM ITALY

Jasmine Leather, Eau D'Italie's latest fragrance arrives on the holiday scene accompanied by a fascinating history dating back to the Florentine Renaissance. Evidently, back then it was customary to scent gloves, vests, and other leather items. Topping the list of essences was Jasmine, found to pair bewitchingly with leather. Today, notes of elemi, saffron, patchouli and cedar ensure Jasmine Leather will be one of the season's most coveted new fragrances! Info: beautyfrontier.com.



FEET FIRST

When I was growing up, every Christmas a new pair of slippers would be waiting for me under the tree. Having let tradition slip through the cracks, I've decided to share the slipper convention with my favorite people this year via a vis **Nauseni**, a socially savvy company known for its wool felt slippers handcrafted in Nepal exclusively by female artisans. High-quality and cozy, Nauseni's slippers also reflect Nepal's cultural heritage. Info: nauseni.org.



STYLE WISE

Bangs with their own frizz agenda set me on the path to find a flat iron that would keep them from going rogue, but when I let my hair grow I wanted a tool that could also curl. **NuMe's Megastar Hair Straightener** has lived up to its multi-thumbs up reputation on both counts, as well with such added tame-and-shine goodies as infrared heat and an ion booster. That said, all that's left is to ask yourself: "Who wouldn't want stellar hair?" Selfie time is now! Info: numehair.com.



VANITY FLAIR

Sometimes only the crème de la crème will do, and following an informal poll of my besties, the consensus is that makeup brushes should come with a flawless guarantee. **Veil Cosmetics Pro-On-The-Go Brush Set**—an assemblage of five indispensable tools—is spot on. The quintet of buffer, foundation, cheek, concealer, and lip brushes, with cruelty-free, faux-mink bristles (mega-soft!), not only do their job impeccably, they have "the look" aka trendy-classic! Info: veilcosmetics.com.



TO HAVE AND TO HOLD

While evening bags are sized for credit card, lipstick and phone, day bags are way bigger. Make that, were. Due to shorter jaunts and more at home time, "less is more" is now key. Still, we have stuff. **Marcher's Pia** and customizable **Petite Pia** clutches to the *en vogue* rescue! Exquisite lines, European leather, posh linings, and space+ for essentials make Pia a knockout must-have. Do not hesitate to gift and/or treasure—truly a five-star find! Info: marcherstudio.com.



LUNAR ATTRACTION

To steal from Monty Python: "And now for something completely different..." **Moonglow Jewelry's** belief that every moment has a moon. The site even helps you find the moon phase that matches a special date corresponding to several stunning pieces. My wedding anniversary led me to Lovers in the Locket necklace (two Swarovski crystals wrapped in a circle of rose gold). In short, expect to find a piece that unlocks a meaningful memory. Info: moonglow.com.



DESIGNED WITH PRIDE

Even though **Piccolina's Trailblazer Tees** were originally created "For Little Ones Who Dream Big," their inspirational artistry now comes in adult sizes and if your nice list includes a mom, grandma, teacher, etc., you'll so want to explore this wearable portrait collection celebrating historic female visionaries like Harriet Tubman, Rosa Parks, Eleanor Roosevelt, Jane Goodall, Maya Angelou and Ruth Bader Ginsburg. Extra points if you go for mommy & me tees! Info: piccolinakids.com.



LIBATION INFATUATION

Looking for an ingenious way to dazzle Mom or your BFF? Consider the limited-edition **Spa Girl Spritzer Set** featuring a 750ML bottle of Spa Girl Cocktails Vodka, a 375ML bottle of St-Germain Elderflower Liqueur, and a 1-liter crystal carafe. As for the cocktail itself, this mixologist dream drink—crisply decadent, bubbles included—is free from excessive sugar, carbs, and calories. Even the presentation is beguiling—all in all, the whole package. Cheers! Info: spagirlcocktails.com.



PHOTO FORWARD

The Buzz: **The Ricoh Theta SC2** 360-degree camera is pegged to be a white-hot seller this holiday season. The Reasons: It's user-friendly (not just for pros and perfectionists), high-performance, high-res and adaptable. Also, it's sharable, with rapid wireless transfer. All this in a lithe, hand-held body with multi-functional display. The tech info is well laid out on the website and I urge you to check out Face Mode, Night View, and Lens-by-Lens Exposure. Info: theta360.com.



FOR HIM

ON POINT

The nostalgic thrill that comes from stepping away from the keyboard and picking up a classic writing instrument is both palpable and powerful—totally the case when I penned my way across a crisp sheet of paper with a fountain pen from **Faber-Castell's Hexo Collection** (named for his hexagonal aluminum shaft and cap). Also in ballpoint and rollerball, these pens are, well, inspired! *Info:fabercastell.com*



WRITE AWAY

Once you're ready to gift a posh pen, might I suggest partnering it with an equally posh journal? **Hadron Epoch Light Steel Grid Journal** is my personal choice with its linen stock, contemporary grid format, back pocket and timeless cover. Its enticing bullet format—for quick notations, ideas, and planning—also shines when composing the first paragraph of the novel you've been noodling with for ages. *Info: hadronepoch.com*



CLEAN SWEEP

When it comes to shaving, it appears the 1800s were well ahead of the 2000s. To wit, instead of clunky, eco-dubious aerosol cans, savvy retro dudes simply lathered up a shave bar (by hand or brush) and *zingo!* It's razor time. **Unwrapped Life Shave Bars** have brought back this compact cost-saving item (1 bar equals 3 canisters) and the end result is an amazing combo of close, clean shave, and hydrated skin. Two thumbs up! *Info: unwrappedlife.com*



TOOLING AROUND

Patio Chef Update: **Cuisinart's Deluxe 20-Piece Grill Set** gives pros and wannabes the wherewithal to dazzle-dazzle guests with steaks, hot dogs, vegan burgers, corn-on-the-cob, or any other sizzling idea/recipe on the menu. Smartly organized with state-of-the-barbecue panache, the sleek storage case boasts stainless steel tongs, spatula, skewers and more, including a show-stopping digital fork with LED light for dining when the sun goes down. *Info: cuisinart.com*



FOOTWORTHY

Unique becomes a rather flimsy adjective when attached to **Taft's Rome Boots**, each pair boasting a seminal design, the leather enhanced by four staggeringly different coats of paint and stain. Made in Spain or Portugal, the boots are given life by "generational shoemakers" who clearly pride themselves on perfection. As for style, think casual, formal, you name it. *Info: taftclothing.com*



STREAM ON

Man cave ready or family friendly, welcome to **Amazon's All New Fire TV Stick**. With Alexa Voice Remote, this new device amps up your apps and TV volume as it serves up half-a-million films and TV episodes. This latest edition (upping the ante 50% from its previous incarnation), is billed as "Struggle-free, tinker-free and stress-free"—I concur, and that's saying something coming from stress central! *Info: amazon.com/amazon-devices*



DRY AND MIGHTY

Since rain, wind, and snow seem to retain their forecast status every winter, an umbrella that's wind-resistant and keeps both downpours and snowflakes at bay is imperative. Should it come backpack-size, all the better. **The Weatherman Travel Umbrella** checks off every box and even provides the techno-fab Weatherman Droplet, an optional Bluetooth tracker with in-app maps to track strays. Lost umbrellas? Fugetaboutit. *Info: weathermanumbrella.com*



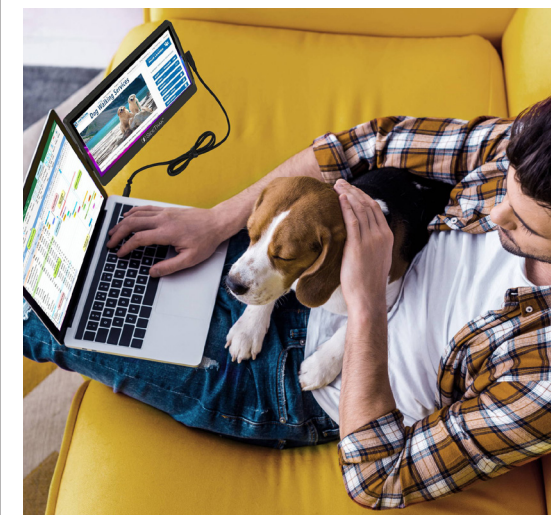
ALL IN GOOD TIME

Wristwatch fanatics are a restless bunch, scouring shops and the Internet for vintage and cutting edge. My latest find, the **Thomas Felice Modern Art Collection**, marks a singular melding of the artistic and practical. A gallery of interchangeable bands adds colorful panache to a quartet of watch faces named "Art," "Craft," "Abstract," and "Picasso". Said to be inspired by New York City, these timepieces absolutely capture the city's vibe! *Info: thomasfelice.com*



TWO MUCH OF A GOOD THING

If your laptop isn't multitasking, you totally need **SideTrak**. Seriously, how did we manage to survive without this staggeringly awesome portable monitor technology that turns a measly one-screen matrix into a two-screen power force that doubles workspace and kicks excessive document overlap to the curb. Sleek and lightweight, SideTrak now comes in a Swivel version that allows it to rotate horizontally or vertically. Wish list complete. *Info: sidetrak.com*



FOR KIDS

SOUND EFFECTS

Colorful, foldable, and cushiony, **LilGadgets Headphones** are what kids really, really want, and, since they reduce outside noise and raising the volume, parents are good with them, too. The included SharePort smartly allows kids to share a device but not headphones! *Info: lilgadgets.com.*



PLAY NICE

What toddler wouldn't want to build a toy airplane, race car, or even a city? Skipping the dicey sharp edges and tools, **Stick-O-City** makes it possible with a variety of shapes fitted with rotating magnets that magically take hands-on creativity to new levels! *Info: magformers.com.*



ANIMAL KINGDOM

The Menagerie of all menageries stands out even with **Melissa and Doug's** spectacular world of interactive playtime and toys. Huge, stuffed and staggeringly realistic, these hugalicious companions can be domestic, wild, or fantastical. Good luck picking just one. *Info: melissaanddoug.com.*



SMALL WONDERS

Winter at Hogwarts is, of course, magical. Which no doubt inspired the wizards and witches at Funko to create **Mystery Minis: Harry Potter Snow Globes**, an adorable bunch of tiny favorite characters, encased in glass and utterly collectible. Best. Stocking stuffer ever! *Info: funko.com.*



PAWS FOR STORYTIME

A Very Lappy Christmas by Carolina Henrich is equal parts adventure, teamwork, and love. Starring family of Finnish Lapphunds, recruited to save Christmas when several reindeer go missing, the book is full of heart and sure to become an annual family tradition. *Info: happylappies.com.*



HOW TO BUILD A BETTER TOY TRAP

Tidy kids who enjoy putting toys away—maybe three on the planet, and certainly none that I know. But in the, “OMG, I can actually give the gift of neatness,” corner is **Rice by Rice Raffia Toy Baskets**, colorful, themed and kids actually love—and use—them! *Info: ricebyrice.us.* •

