

Santa's gift list for wine lovers

From high-end gadgets to tokens of appreciation, there is a wine gift to fit everyone's budget.

STORY: MARY ANN DESANTIS

Buying wine for friends or acquaintances can be tricky. Rarely will your favorite varietal be their favorite. And buying a super expensive wine to impress someone can backfire: they may not like it at all or they may decide to re-gift it because they prefer a Chardonnay instead of the expensive Cabernet that you chose. Wine as a gift works best if you know what the receiver likes to drink.

In the meantime, though, you may want to splurge on these suggestions that will make your favorite wine drinker's life a little easier.

Coravin Wine System

coravin.com

This revolutionary wine preservation system is at the top of my wish list this year.

I taste-test wines to write about them, but I can rarely finish an entire bottle in one sitting. Finding a way to preserve the wine's freshness and flavors for a couple of days always is a challenge. Coravin says wine preserved with its system can last up to six months.

The Coravin Wine System

lets you pour wine without removing the cork. Being able to enjoy the rest of the bottle another day is revolutionary in any wine connoisseur's book much less keeping the cork intact. After all, oxidation is the enemy—once air gets inside the bottle, the wine's taste is going to be affected.

Coravin works on all cork-sealed still wines. The sleek design has a needle that is pushed through the cork to access the wine. A trigger releases argon, a safe and inert gas used by winemakers, which pressurizes the bottle. Release the trigger to pour wine into a glass, and when you reach the desired amount then tilt the bottle upright. When the needle is removed, the cork naturally reseals itself and continues to protect the wine.

Model One retails for about \$200. The more advanced Coravin Model Two is \$300

and includes a new, thinner needle that pours 20 percent faster than the original needle, as well as a carrying case. The Coravin Wine System is available at Bed, Bath & Beyond and online.

EuroCave Wine Art

wineenthusiast.com

Not everyone can have a wine cave or cellar in their home, but EuroCave



certainly makes it easier to keep wine bottles perfectly cooled. EuroCave, which has been making wine cabinets for more than 40 years, now offers a wine-dispensing system that preserves two bottles of wine for up to 10 days while keeping them at cellar temperature.

The air-extraction technology removes the oxygen from the wine bottle in an instant, eliminating the possibility of oxidation and allowing wine lovers to savor the delicate nuances of the wine for several nights. The compartments in the two-bottle system operate independently so a white wine and a red can be stored at different temperatures.

At 19 inches high, the EuroCave Wine Art fits under most kitchen cabinets, making wine readily available when you want just a glass. The cooler consistently receives five-star reviews online but it's not inexpensive. The suggested retail price is \$399. It is available through Amazon and the Wine Enthusiast Catalog.



Primeware Drink Purse

primewareinc.com

I am not sure why there is a need to store wine surreptitiously in the guise of a purse, but apparently, it's a thing because I've been seeing these cork purses in almost every wine shop and at Target.

The Primeware Drink Purse includes a disposable refreshment "baggie" that can be filled with up to 3 liters of any beverage or four bottles of your favorite wine. A gusseted wine spout makes pouring easy and the snap-down flap keeps things discreet. The water-resistant exterior has a cork pattern print, and the bag is lined and insulated to keep wine perfectly chilled.

If your date likes to take her own wine to a party, this may be the gift for her. The cork purse is quite fashionable and retails for about \$40.

The Wine Bible, Second Edition

karenmacneil.com

Books are always a great Christmas gift, and anyone who wants to learn more about wine will enjoy Karen MacNeil's comprehensive, modern guide to wine. The Wine Bible's first edition was the best-selling wine book in the United States and has been

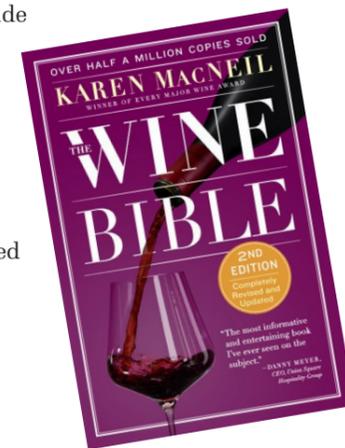
recommended by every top wine school and hospitality management school in the nation as well as by the Court of Master Sommeliers in the U.S.

Easy and entertaining to read, the second edition is even better and contains informative asides, tips, amusing anecdotes, definitions, glossaries, maps, recommended bottles, and more. The book is available from all book sellers and retails for \$24.95.

NOD Bottle Bags and Wine Markers

nodproducts.com

When you do give a bottle of wine, be sure to dress it up with a stylish bag, such as the ones from NOD Products. Crafted from durable card stock, the bags also come with six themed silicone glass markers. Your wine gift will certainly stand out from under the tree in these colorful bags that retail for \$7 each.



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Mary Ann DeSantis is a fellow of the Symposium for Professional Wine Writers, Napa Valley, and recently received certification from the Wine & Spirits Educational Trust (WSET). An award-winning journalist, she has written for *Lake & Sumter Style* since 2006.