

Christmas Gift guide



TRINIDAD and TOBAGO
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Green & serene – the gift that counts

ANJANI GANASE

We should all be concerned about the growing plastic issue and the effect on our environment and to the health of our species. Scientists are observing the effects of microplastics that end up in our bodies.

Changing our habits with plastic must start with what we consume and individual choices. While some scenarios with plastics may be difficult to avoid, such as in the groceries and packaging of food, this shouldn't discourage us from considering all choices and looking for opportunities especially in special seasons and occasions of gift giving.

Christmas, for example, is the perfect time to start shifting traditions to the meaning of the gift rather than the gift itself. The length of wrapping paper thrown away in, for example, the UK every year (365,300 km) is just shy of the distance to the moon (384,400 km). Additionally, in the US, about 154 million people will receive at least one unwanted gift this year, adding to the pile of garbage. Here are ten ideas for environmentally thoughtful gifts this year.

Give a Tobago experience:

Give gifts of experiences that allow us to explore the wonders of our natural backyard. Many tour operators have suffered during the covid pandemic. Hotels and Air BnBs



Bowl by Helen Evans for Planet Ceramics is inspired by Pigeon Point. PHOTO BY CLAIRE PERCY

have been stifled by the closure of beaches, not to mention scuba diving shops, surf shops, boat and fishing charters, bird tours.

Give a staycation that would also assist small businesses through this time of a slow or no business. Find a place that you have not considered before. Cuffie River Nature Resort; rainforest retreat at Nature Retreat above Parlatuvier (<https://natureretreattobago.com/>); Castara Retreats are just a few of the places from which to explore the rainforest. Tour ruins of old estates. Hike to a waterfall. Join a birdwatching group.

Visit Christmas markets:

Well-organised markets across TT offer more dates to reduce crowding, and many advertise on social media to allow you to make the purchase beforehand for a quick pick up.

In Tobago, you can search out some places where you would not have gone before: the calabash carver and chac-chac maker in Charlotteville. Planet Ceramics (see the Instagram site) will open her shop by special appointment. The Shore Things Café offers chocolate and craft items.

Even the groceries, like Penny Savers and Morshead, stock specialty and gourmet items. If you go to the Scarborough market, look for homemade coconut oil. Look for made-in-Tobago, To-bag-o bags. Visit the vendors, listen to their stories, which can be shared along with the gift. We know TT is teeming with talent. Share the stories of innovative makers and support them!

Gift your friends ecofriendly utensils:

Bees wax reusable wrapping and storage paper, metal straws, compact takeaway containers and a reusable water

■ GREEN & SERENE continues on Page 3

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Homemade treats

– gifts from the heart

■ GREEN & SERENE from Page 1

bottle that can all fit into an eco-carrying tote. When presented with these fun reminders to take care of the planet, people are more willing to take on the challenge.

Let your seamstress friend be maker of special garments for male or female friends.

Gift a massage and spa day:

A little luxury goes a long way in enhancing mental and physical health: consider manicure or pedicure, hair and facial treatments. Most salons and masseurs already prep for hygiene, health and safety of their clients.

With pressures of the world, and no break in sight, think about small luxuries to reward yourself and those dear to you.

Support a cause:

Choose a gift that supports a charity or a cause. Purchase a subscription to local food gift boxes with weekly deliveries of local and seasonal fruits and vegetables. Purchasing CSA (community supported agriculture) baskets of in-season produce helps to maintain local, sustainable farming and eco-friendly gifting.

Join an NGO: a birding club or an environmental organisation and share your skills.

Give a plant:

We all love plants, from ornamental orchids to flowering shrubs, kitchen seasonings such as thyme, sage, ginger or rosemary. For those with a garden or even verandah space, what about a native fruit tree: can you have too many lime or soursop or breadfruit trees?

Visit the Louis d'Or propagating station; let the horticulturist recommend; maybe

you'll find plants that encourage local wildlife to visit, butterflies, hummingbirds and other birds.

Learn a skill:

There is a lot of expertise in a wide range of sports, arts, skills. Give the gift of a lesson: learn how to play the guitar or steelpan, learn to cook or to train your dog. Try out karate or yoga. Swimming pools are open: learn to swim; take scuba lessons.

Babysit:

For young families, give the gift of babysitting to allow young parents to have an outing, dinner at a local restaurant; a visit to one of the scenic places around the island. Let's give young parents a break.

Give homemade treats:

Bake cakes or cookies; make sweetbread or ponche a crème. For the skilled and

well-prepared, try baking mini black cakes as gifts to friends and family. Home baking is affordable, healthy and add the personal touch.

Recycle old bottles for ponche a crème, sorrel or rum punch.

Tour the earth ovens around Tobago, find out their baking schedules: Store Bay, L'Anse Fourmi, Castara, all have earth ovens. In your own kitchen, make a meal for a vulnerable family.

Learn about options for gift wrapping:

Many of these options avoid packaging and wrapping. But, sometimes the best part of the holiday surprise is unwrapping the gift. Be creative with old magazines or newspapers. Gift wrap could be a length of special fabric, a lovely beach wrap, something with dried leaves, a patchwork from used garments. Learn how to wrap gifts without the use of tape. Recycle ribbons.

You know the old saying, it's not the gift but the thought that counts. Time to put on our thinking caps and give wonderful thoughts this Christmas.

Future gifts – bookings at restaurants, hotels or a date for a beach picnic – are always welcome!

Think fun – and safety – when buying toys

CAROL QUASH

Shopping for gifts for children can bring back memories of your own childhood, recreating the joy you may have felt when you received your presents on Christmas morning. But in order to avoid turning a fun, festive season into a disaster, there are some things you should keep in mind when selecting toys.

If the child for whom you are purchasing a toy is not yours, it's always a good idea to talk with their parents before making a purchase. Parents know their children's preferences and level of maturity, and would be able to recommend something appropriate.

Labels are placed on toys for a reason, and it is important to read the before

purchasing any item. "Toys usually have information on age appropriateness," the TT Bureau of Standards (TTBS) told Newsday. They (labels) should also indicate if the toy is new or refurbished, and they also address the issue of toxicity.

"Painted toys should be covered with lead-free paint. Labels should indicate if the toy is lead free," TTBS said. Additionally, toys containing rubber, liquid or plastic may be potentially harmful to young children. "Make sure the label says non-toxic," TTBS warned.

And when it comes to the beloved stuffed toys and dolls to which children can become so attached, those too must be properly labelled.

"Materials on stuffed toys and dolls should be labelled as flame resistant/retardant or washable/hygienic."

Battery-operated toys are a must on the list for many children, but as fun as they are, they can pose a real danger if the batteries are not properly secured, especially for children who are always putting things in their mouths. "If a toy has batteries, make sure the cover is properly screwed into place," TTBS advises.

Shoppers should also be wary of especially loud toys, as they can damage a child's hearing. The same goes for toys with projectiles which increases the risk of eye injuries, while toys with small pieces and magnets put young children at risk of choking.

"Kids love to pull apart toys, so purchase toys made from quality sturdy material... Think big when it comes to your child's toys to avoid choking," TTBS said.

And if you happen to notice certification marks on toys, the TTBS said these are there to ensure that toys are safe for use.

"Electric toys should be UL listed, which indicate they have been approved by the Underwriters Laboratories for use under specific conditions." Among the other common safety marks you may notice are CSA (compliance, safety, accountability), ETL (electrical testing labs), GS (Geprüfte Sicherheit, German for tested safety) and CB (certification body) – all indications that the items have been inspected and approved for use by these bodies.

But, if after reading the label you're still uncertain of the level of safety of a toy, it is better to err on the side of caution and go with something with which you're comfortable.

Ten to One Rum.



Special edition Johnnie Walker.

KIERAN ANDREW KHAN

The gift of wines and spirits is often a welcome one for the holiday season and definitely a crowd pleaser if you are invited for any Christmas festivities. But the key thing is to know the person or personality ahead of time. Here's a quick guide to understanding what you can find on the local markets.

SUPPORT LOCAL

Before we even talk about spirits for the season, there is the ultimate Christmas liqueur – ponche a creme! And don't think of it only in its most renowned form but a casual search across local pop up markets, shops or social media accounts will reveal a startling variety of the seasonal favourite.

There are options like coffee and sea-moss now and varieties for even the lactose intolerant and vegetarians. You can also consider the numerous makers of local liqueurs available at pop up markets or find growing local brands like King's Speciality which we featured in the past, in major supermarkets today.

WINES

Far beyond red and white which are very particular depending on the person, you can find safe middle grounds this season with Rosé varieties, and sparkling options too. There are perennial favourites like Voga or you can consider newer entrants like Luc Belaire. Rosé options tend to lend to hints of berries with a lighter lingering taste and therefore are loved by most. Popular local "middle of the road" options

Getting into the spirit

locally hail from brands like Viña Maipo, Barefoot and 19 Crimes.

If you want a simple answer: go with with Apothic Red. And given that the palate in TT lends to sweeter tastes, you really can't go wrong with that mega-sized Cara Mia as an accompaniment for an evening out – unless you run into a wine snob.

RUMS

There are dark varieties, gold, white, overproof (like puncheon) and rum punches. The easiest option for the season is a rum punch which you can find from major

brands or if you prefer shop one that's more handcrafted (and tends to be spicier and therefore more flavourful) from local pop up markets. Trinidad rums are great but to the discerning rum drinker, there are other Caribbean rums too. Guyanese and Barbadian rums like Demerara and Mount Gay are great gift options as these aren't usually seen or consumed everyday.

Cachaca, from Brazil, has become locally popular as well. Spiced rums are in, which aren't rum punches but rather rums flavoured with spices for a different take on a centuries old favourite. The Kraken Black Spiced Caribbean rum is a beautiful gift. And if you're looking for something unique, Ten to One Rum, created by a Trini Marc-Kwesi Farrell, is enjoying a moment in the limelight with their recent partnership with singer and entertainer, Ciara.

OTHER LIQUORS

From whiskey, to scotch (not to be confused) and vodka, gin and more – this is where knowing your recipient comes in handy. Limited edition varieties in classics like Johnnie Walker appear everywhere in time for the season but you can also find older and more unique options too. There are now spiced gins and many varieties of flavoured vodkas that are sure to please as well.

BEERS AND ALES

Local brewery Tommy's has a wide selection of year round and seasonal favourites from pilsners to Belgian style dark ales. You can also find dozens of varieties at shops and groceries across TT that are sure to please. Most of us are familiar with lagers and stouts but there are and near infinite number of options in between such as a variety of pale ales, blond ales, brown ales, porters and more. At many speciality shops you can even ask them to mix and match a selection and pull it all together in a gift basket so that you give the gift of taste and experience across various beers from around the world.

ACCOUTREMENTS

If in doubt, there are many items that are easy to add to the gift of liquor – from openers, to beer blankets, glasses, whiskey rocks, decanters, trays and more. You can even find mixology classes online to give the kind of adult education your recipient might appreciate. And remember that sometimes this is a gift you get to enjoy too!

And of course, always consume responsibly.



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Diamonds are forever

The history of the diamond being the gem that is used for an engagement ring dates back to 1477 when Archduke Maximilian of Austria first commissioned a diamond ring to propose to his beloved. A tradition was born.

More to the point, as far as gems go, diamonds are the strongest. In fact, the Mohs scale (pronounced MOZE), the scale that rates the hardness of gems and stones, gives diamonds a 10, which is the highest level of hardness.

It is for this reason that they are able to stand the test of time. Consequently, they symbolize the kind of forever love and commitment that the institution of marriage signifies.

If you're a firm believer of tradition and looking to do the diamond route here are a few key elements to consider:



The cut













There are many different cuts or shapes of diamonds from which to choose, and while the cut that you ultimately decide to buy depends on personal taste, it is important to know what exists, so that you can make an informed decision. Take a look at the guide chart.

Clarity

When a diamond has internal defects, otherwise known as inclusions, it isn't considered to be perfectly clear. Clarity doesn't matter as much for other cuts as it is for either the emerald or Asscher cut diamond. If you are looking to purchase one out of the two, a minimum clarity of VS2 (ask your jeweller about this) is what you're looking for.

Carat

One of the main factors to consider when purchasing a diamond engagement ring is the carat or the weight of the diamond. This is where your budget will come into play, since the greater the carat, the more expensive the ring is going to be.

 <p>CUSHION Also known as pillow-cut diamonds, these are squares or rectangles with rounded corners.</p>	 <p>EMERALD These are rectangles with step cuts on the sides and a large, flat top.</p>	 <p>ASSCHER These diamonds are cut similarly to emerald-cut diamonds except they are squares.</p>
 <p>HEART This romantic shape is the perfect symbol of love.</p>	 <p>MARQUISE This cut is like an oval but with pointed ends. Turned on its side, it looks like a woman's slightly parted lips.</p>	 <p>OVAL These rounded diamonds are longer than they are wide.</p>
 <p>PEAR Also known as a teardrop, these have one pointed end and one rounded end.</p>	 <p>PRINCESS Traditionally squares but sometimes rectangles, princess-cut diamonds always have four pointed corners.</p>	 <p>RADIANT These are squares or slight rectangles with four trimmed corners.</p>
 <p>ROUND The most popular diamond shape, round-cut diamonds are cut to have 58 facets.</p>	 <p>BAGUETTE Cut with 14 facets, these rectangular diamonds are traditionally used to accent other diamonds.</p>	 <p>TRILLION These are triangular diamonds with three equal sides that can be curved or straight.</p>

Diamond alternatives

While choosing a diamond for an engagement ring is a nod to tradition, there is certainly no rule that says that this is a must have.

There are a number of reasons why one may wish to go with another stone.

Firstly, individuality. Someone with a strong, personality may not want to be identified with the rest of the pack. In this case, a stone that not only stands out but matches their particular aesthetic may just be the ticket.

Another reason for choosing a ring that is of a different gem can be that it is a family heirloom and passed down from one generation to the next.

Last but not least, price is a great consideration since other stones may be more affordable than a diamond. Here are some popular options.

Saying yes to the engagement ring

HALCYON PRESCOTT-ALEXANDER

There is something about Christmas that brings out the softer side of the most hardened cynic. The nostalgia, the magic, the lights, breaking bread with loved ones, the excitement and joy of a child waking up on Christmas morning, the overall feeling of love. It isn't hard to understand why this time of year sees a lot of wedding proposals.

On the more practical side, any marriage proposal is bound to be fraught with some anxiety and trepidation. How can I make the proposal unique and unforgettably romantic? What if he/she says no? How do I choose the perfect engagement ring?

While we can't help with the first or second question, we've definitely got you covered when it comes to choosing the ring. Here are some crucial tips to get you started.



Emerald

With its rich, deep green hue, an emerald is boldly decadent and brings with it a timeless elegance that is hard to beat. One should note however, that emeralds have a hardness rating of 7.5 on the Mohs scale, which means that they are more delicate than diamonds and require some care and attention.



Ruby

Like emeralds, rubies are also timeless, classic and bold, and it is for this reason that a ruby engagement ring is an excellent diamond alternative. While they are expensive (priced higher than any other coloured gem), they are quite durable, with a hardness rating of a nine on the Mohs scale and therefore suitable for everyday wear.

Sapphire

It has been over ten years since Kate Middleton got engaged to Prince William, but the blue sapphire ring with which he proposed continues to be trending. As far as durability is concerned, the sapphire is a wise choice. It also has a rating of nine on the Mohs scale.



Morganite

As far as trends go, morganite stones are right up there in terms of popularity. Its pink hue resembles the luxurious diamond, and its transparency makes it versatile in terms of blending with any outfit. It is important to note, however that it has a rating of seven on the Mohs scale, and as such can be easily scratched or damaged.

Moissanite

Of all the diamond alternative out there, moissanite rings are the most popular for a number of reasons. Firstly, they are considerably less expensive than the other gems. Secondly, they the moissanite gem most resembles the diamond in terms of colour. Thirdly, its clarity gives it tremendous versatility in terms of it being paired with any hue. It's also extremely durable, with a Mohs scale rating of 9.25, making it a perfect option for everyday use.



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A personalised wine box from Personalize It Gift Shop. PHOTO TAKEN FROM FACEBOOK

What to get at the last minute

CHERRISSE BERKLEY

Last minute Christmas shopping in TT is as traditional as ham, sorrel and ginger beer. But with the fear of contracting covid 19 hampering some people from their usual in-store shopping, local crafters and entrepreneurs have shifted their trade to online platforms to accommodate their customers.

Their products are displayed via their social media pages, and the offer of delivery to your door or an arrangement to meet at a mutual public location for collection.

Here are some of the more popular gift ideas making the round on social media sites.

Gifts such name plates, key chains, coasters and other personalised items are nothing new. But with the use of epoxy, resin, wood, metal, or recycled materials and popping colours, crafters are making these gift items stand out.

What seems to be new this year is Trini-Christmas-themed cards, T-shirts, coffee cups and other novelty items. They feature fun illustrations and satirical quotes that make great gifts for young adults.

In the past few years local chocolatiers have been making their presence known. Social media is overflowing with options that feature developing local chocolatiers and their products.

With this year's heavy interest in climate change and sustainability, many crafters are using everyday discarded items to re-craft useful items. For example, making pet beds from old tyres and ends of cloth, placemats from woven canvas bags, and decorated and re-purposed jars for storage around the house. Some crafters have even taken to making beautiful and unique lamps and lighting fixtures using bamboo and incorporating copper and other re-purposed metals.

The aromatherapy trend continues upward as more and more entrepreneurs are making candles, incense and aromatic oils. Many of them also make organic body products such body oils, soaps, shampoos, fragrances, loofahs. These come packaged in attractive gift baskets, most times in combos.



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Taking the right tablet



Kindle Paperwhite with a cover designed for children.



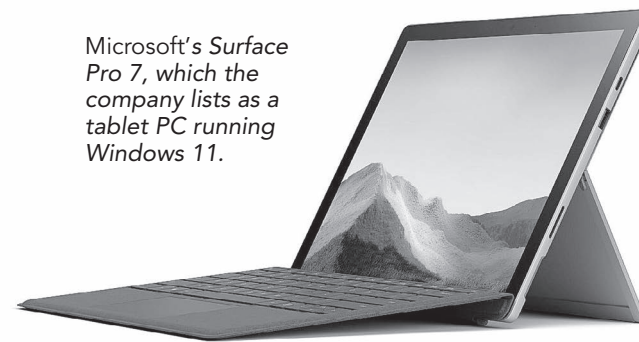
Samsung's Galaxy Tab S7 in rose gold with a matching SPen.



Amazon's ten-inch Kindle with matching keyboard.



Apple's lineup of iPads is defined mostly by size and capacity options.



Microsoft's Surface Pro 7, which the company lists as a tablet PC running Windows 11.

MARK LYNDERSAY

Choosing the right tablet computer is really a series of overlapping decisions that take you to different sectors of the computing market.

First consider the operating system running the device.

It's possible to get tablet computers and even laptops that fold over completely to give you a touchscreen interface, but apart from purpose-built devices like Microsoft's Surface computer and design-alike products, the choices in a true tablet will be between devices running Android and those that run iOS, Apple's iPads.

If there's no compelling need for one or the other, such as a company requirement or parity with existing devices, your choice should be guided by the primary use of the device.

Google's Android OS is more open to the user and functions more like a traditional desktop operating system than iOS, which is often insistently opaque in how it handles files internally.

Both operating systems have an app named Files for instance, but the Android version gives you a real window into where things are placed on your device.

Apple's version is absurdly limited, only granting access to a few resources on an iPad.

But when it comes to software, particularly casual games and graphics programmes, the iPad is wildly overstocked.

Save for Microsoft Word, available on both platforms, the options for a good word processor on Android, for instance, are appallingly limited.

The Google Play Store is also a bit of a frontier town for software, with multiple apps sporting similar names, buggy garbage apps alongside excellent code and an embarrassment of software that does little that's useful at all.

That's not to say that the occasional app that phones home or fails to impress doesn't show up on the iOS store, it just normally doesn't stick around for very long.

If your needs are basic, you will find perfectly adequate software for both platforms with little effort.

Chrome, Firefox and Edge are available on both Android and iOS as are staples like ePub readers and the Kindle App.

I've found that third-party video playback apps like VLC tend to behave better on Android, but their equivalents on iOS aren't bad either.

Many are lured to consider Amazon's Kindle as a tablet computer because of its very agreeable price.

While Kindles tend to be somewhat underspecified in terms of hardware, they are basic Android devices, though they run a flavour of the Google's OS that's heavily tailored to Amazon's services and offerings.

Without some serious effort at installing code that has been very deliberately left out of them (<https://j.mp/3o1xSn1>), Kindles won't run any of Google's apps or services.

The method is documented widely and constitutes minor hacking of the device, and those unsanctioned changes might conflict with future system updates.

For Kindle buffs, the Paper White editions of these devices are affordable ways to read, but trying to do much more than that with them inevitably leads to frustration.

Tablet screen sizes are very much a lifestyle decision.

Small seven to eight inch devices are easy to carry around, and are more convenient to use for browsing and reading than a smartphone.

Tablets between nine and 10 inches on the diagonal are the size range we tend to think of as being "tablets" roughly the size of a letter-sized sheet of paper. These are great general purpose tools for doing almost anything you might use a small laptop to do.

Larger tablets in the 11 to 12 inch range are almost like little laptops and should only be on your wish list if the extra screen real-estate will deliver a significant benefit.

Digital artists who want a bigger canvas, writers who want more screen real-estate and business executives who need to work with detailed documents like spreadsheets will find these devices, particularly when paired with a good Bluetooth keyboard, to be excellent mobile computing platforms.

As a happy bonus, these larger devices also tend to have more powerful processors and batteries.

The many versions of Android devices tends to work against brands that aren't in the top tier of production when it comes to accessories.

You will find a great many protective cases, positioning stands, and style-matched keyboards for premium devices like Samsung tablets, Kindles and Apple's iPads, so if those add-ons are important, it might be a best to stick to popular models which usually offer a good range of choices in accessories.

If style isn't an issue, any Bluetooth equipped tablet can be paired with almost any Bluetooth keyboard, so there will

often be an option available that works for your needs.

Recent Android tablets and iPads running current versions of their respective operating systems also support Bluetooth mice, so you can set up a tablet on a generic stand to work just like a laptop if you need that configuration occasionally.

Mix and match for impact

Tablets are rarely the only device a user will work with and there's no reason not to use multiple platforms if you want best of breed devices in a smartphone, tablet and laptop or desktop computer.

Microsoft's Office suite works on all major platforms and I've successfully run the apps on an Android smartphone, Apple iPad and Mac desktop computer system.

Many other software tools are being either developed or adapted to be platform agnostic as software begins to operate more like a service on multiple platforms user preference.

I like several no-cost or low-cost tools for working with multiple platforms without OS level barriers getting in the way.

Microsoft To Do (free, Android, iOS, Mac, Windows) allows you to create actionable lists that you can create, update, synchronise and reference on the device that's closest to you.

Evernote (free, Android, iOS, Mac, Windows) is a note taking tool that I originally began using for text capture on Android. The free version allows you to keep two devices in sync. Microsoft's One Note is also free also synchronises on multiple platforms, but isn't quite as seamless or elegant.

Firefox, Chrome and Edge allow you to synchronise tabs using an account you establish in the browser.

Start reading something on one device and you can open the link on another device if you care to. I keep an unholy number of tabs open on the desktop, so being able to sift through them for reading when I'm stuck somewhere with a smartphone is useful.

Dropbox and Box allow you to keep files in synchronisation across a number of devices. Both come with basic, free allotments of online drive space. Google Drive and Sharepoint can do the same thing, but I've found them fussier to use.



Consider who you're buying for

Relationships do matter. If you're shopping for a family member or loved one, you're literally on easy street, since you know them intimately. You already know what scents they're attracted to and what brands they like. If there's a new fragrance in their line of choice or a Christmas gift box collection, do not hesitate to grab it before the Christmas rush fully kicks in.

Contrastingly, if you're thinking of gifting perfume to someone with whom you're not intimately acquainted, you have to do some research. Find out what scents they've worn before. If you have the chance, take a sneaky pic of their dressing table or bathroom vanity; talk to people who they're close to. Do the leg work. It will pay off in the end.

Personality and interests count

Contemplate the recipient's personality. Are they bold? Extroverted? Outspoken? A strong, rich scent will be a perfect match.

On the flip side if the person is introverted and shy, a lighter scent should be chosen.

This is where fragrance concentration or the strength of the perfume comes into play and is usually listed under the name of the perfume on the bottle.

Typically, perfumes with a higher fragrance concentration contain more oils and less alcohol and as such, let the strength of the perfume be your guide.

Special consideration should also be given to the recipient's particular interests. Believe it or not specific fragrances are tied to different interests and moods.

Floral scents, for instance, are flirty, feminine and unapologetically romantic whereas woody scents are sultry but characterised by smelling like the great outdoors. Aquatic fragrances bring fresh air and the ocean to mind. A fragrance concentration guide and fragrance wheel are both included for ease of reference.

Think of their everyday style

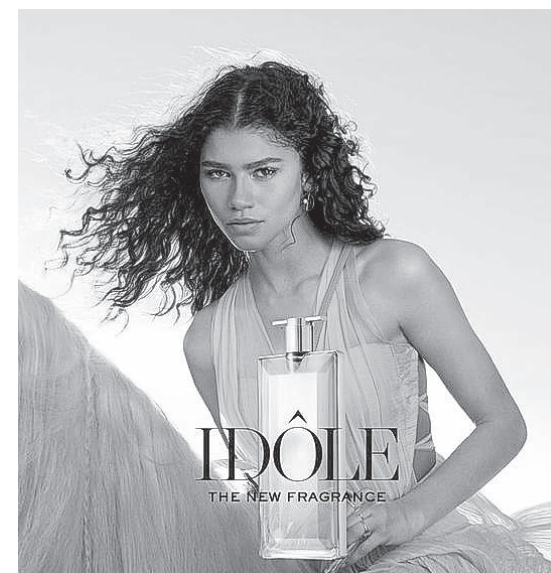
It is not by chance that most fashion design houses have launched perfume lines. It is because there is a correlation between fashion and fragrance. And just like personality and interests, your recipient's every day style ought to be considered as well.

Are they known for timeless, classic, elegant style? If so, then they are more likely to be attracted to classic fragrances that have stood the test of time.

Do they exude sex appeal? Fragrances with sultry, oriental or woody notes may be the right choice for them, in the same way that someone with an eclectic style of dressing may be pulled towards floral scents, and so on.

Age isn't just a number

Among the criteria to be taken into account when giving the gift of that keeps on giving for Christmas, the age of the person receiving the perfume should



Lancome Idole

be taken into account.

Unfortunately, this is one scenario where age isn't just a number, as it can give some clear indications on what kind of fragrance should be chosen.

Women in their 20s, for instance, are usually at a stage where they are looking to assert their independence and make their mark in the world. It stands to reason then, that bold, strong scents would be welcomed.

This is in sharp contrast to a woman in her fifties, who has a clear understanding of who she is and is enjoying the fruits of her labour. Fragrance experts recommend a perfume that has a subtle, sultry scent, with an air of mystery. They point to woody scents in this regard.

Finally, perfumes that have a fruity or citrus notes are recommended for children. As far as teenagers are concerned, they are usually guided by pop culture and what is currently trending. To this end, consider their interests – favourite celebrities, television shows etc since there are many fragrance lines that are tied to these individuals and elements.

And what about the men in our lives?

If you're thinking about buying cologne for that special man in your life for Christmas, it is important to find a scent that suits him.

If he already has a signature scent, then giving him a bottle of that is easy enough. If on the other hand, you're choosing blindly, his interests, tastes and personality will play a major role in helping you with your decision.

According to experts, very masculine, woody notes are highly suited to powerful, virile men, who are highly confident and successful. The man in question may be into sports and the outdoors, in which case a fresh fragrance (eau fraiches) is what you should be looking for. Fragrances with marine or aquatic notes can also work for your sporty guy as well.

Men who are full of charisma and charm are usually paired with warm scents, such as oriental notes offer a hint of mystic and sensuality.

After all is said and done, follow your nose, and choose what feels right to you for him.

5 trending colognes for 2021:

- Dior Sauvage
- Dolce & Gabbana Light Blue
- Paco Rabanne Invictus
- Kenneth Cole Black
- Giorgio Armani Acqua Di Gio

Perfumes the gift that keeps on giving

HALCYON PRESCOTT-ALEXANDER

When it comes to Christmas presents, perfume is definitely "the gift that keeps on giving." Fragrances are known to have staying power and giving perfume is one of the most personal and thoughtful gifts that you can give. It's a sign of great affection, since it signifies that you've put a lot of thought into what the recipient means to you and what they might like.

The fact that they will think of you anytime they use the gift is just the star on top of the Christmas tree.

On the other hand, while the idea of gifting perfume can have tremendous appeal, it is easier said than done, and even the gift-giving experts among us might be intimidated at the thought of choosing the right fragrance for the right person.

Luckily for you, we've done the research so you don't have to. Here are some quick and easy tips to make the experience of perfume gifting an easy, successful and fun one. As a bonus, we've also included the top five trending perfumes for 2021.

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