Scout

edited by ERICA MOODY



SCALE IT UP

Shed your tired old shoes and slither into these sleek snakeskin-inspired booties instead. The embossed-leather style is equally fitting for a festive party or a wander through town. *$250 at Busstopboutique.com.*

Making a List

Anyone can whiz through their holiday shopping by logging on to Amazon—but chances are, everyone you're buying for has already done the same thing. This season is the perfect time to think outside the ubiquitous brown corrugated box and shop for thoughtful gifts from local businesses—no shipping delays, supply-chain snafus or cheap knockoffs involved.

PHOTOGRAPHY BY NELL HOVING DIXON

FOR THE ...

Fashionable Friend

When basic just won't do



WEAR-ANYWHERE BRACELET

Each of these hand-crafted bangles, made of 100 percent reclaimed 14-karat yellow gold or sterling silver, is unique—just like your friend. *$660 at Bario-neal.com.*

SHOES THAT SPARKLE

These vegan Stella McCartney Lurex boots evoke 1970s glamour, complete with a trendy sculptural platform heel. *$1,095 at Joanshepp.com.*

STATEMENT BAG

These clutches are stylish as is, or you can spell out your BFF's name, nickname or inside joke on a customized handbag perfect for a night on the town. *$99 and up at Raeoflightcustom.com.*

MULTI-PURPOSE MAKEUP

Your busy buddy can apply Manasi 7 to lips, cheeks and eyes for a simple and sustainable getting-ready routine. It's an organic one-stop solution for anyone on the go. *$57 at Freedomapothecary.com.*

FOR THE ...

LITTLES ON YOUR LIST

Polished gifts for precocious kids that will delight parents, too



SLEEK RIDER

Introduce elegant design early with this durable ride-on car by Baghera. A plus for parents: Its rubber tires are designed to be as noiseless as possible. *$240 at Boydsphila.com.*



WORDS TO BUILD ON

Local author Mollie Elkman and illustrator Georgia Castellano's picture book not only educates kids on what it takes to construct a house; it challenges gender stereotypes. *$17.95 at Shebuiltbook.com.*



TEACHABLE DOLLHOUSE

Learning daily routines is made fun for toddlers with Moon Picnic's "Make My Day" toy featuring an adorable wooden bear and his pet dog. *$62 at Omoionline.com.*



SWEET SWEATER

The Irish chain Primark, known for high street design and bottom-dollar prices, now has a location at Fashion District Philly. It's a must for last-minute gifts like this baby-girl cable knit. *$9 at primark.com.*

A WORD WITH ...

Gritty

Mascot, *Philadelphia Flyers*



What's on your holiday wish list this year? Like most young adults, I could really use the cash. If you're thinking of getting me a gift this year, plz make sure it's expensive; I will be returning it for cash. Also, make sure you gift me the receipt. If I have to settle for store credit, I will not be happy. **What will you be giving your loved ones this year?** The same thing I give them every year: my love, adoration, and something cheap from whatever store is open late on Christmas Eve. **What's your go-to gift for those who are hard to shop for?** This might be the year that I pull the trigger and just get everyone on my list a kitten. Ever met someone who didn't like kittens? Giving someone a pet against their will is the best, because it truly is the gift that keeps on giving ... for 10 or 15 years.

GRITTY: PHILADELPHIA FLYERS

FOR THE ...

Eager Reader

Local authors on the books they love to give



"I have a handful of books that I give out constantly as gifts: ***Confessions of the Fox*** by Jordy Rosenberg, sexy queer historical fiction; ***The Baron in the Trees*** by Italo Calvino, a tender, surprising novel; ***The Haunting of Hill House*** by Shirley Jackson, terrifying, gorgeous, perfect; ***Stranger Things Happen*** by Kelly Link, indescribable genre-bending short stories; and ***We Are Never Meeting in Real Life*** by Samantha Irby—gut-bustingly hilarious essays."

—**CARMEN MARIA MACHADO,**
author of *Her Body and Other Parties*, *In the Dream House* and more



"I love giving anthologies as gifts. It's a literary mixtape. Remember mixtapes? For teens, ***Battle of the Bands***, edited by Lauren Gibaldi and Philly's own Eric Smith, rocks. It brings together 15 authors and one actual rock star to tell the story of one high school's epic battle of the bands. I love the energy, wit and insight each of these authors brings to bear. And ***This Is Our Rainbow: 16 Stories of Her, Him, Them, and Us***, edited by Katherine Locke and Nicole Melleby, is the first LGBTQA+ anthology for middle-graders. It's designed to comfort, entertain, inspire, and start wonderful family conversations."

—**ALEX LONDON,**
author of, most recently, *Battle Dragons: City of Thieves*



"When giving books as gifts, the shorter the better. They're cute, and they aren't intimidating. They also look great in a stocking. I recommend ***The Vegetarian*** by Han Kang, ***Monkeys*** by Susan Minot, ***Convenience Store Woman*** by Sayaka Murata, and ***Red at the Bone*** by Jacqueline Woodson."

—**KILEY REID,**
author of *Such a Fun Age*



"I'm giving Francesca Serritella's debut novel ***Ghosts of Harvard***, the story of a young girl who goes to Harvard in the wake of her older brother's suicide. It's a psychological thriller you won't be able to put down, and I would love it even if it were written by somebody else's daughter. I'm also giving ***Mercy*** by David Baldacci, because his thrillers always feature strong, interesting female protagonists, like FBI agent Atlee Pine. And Jodi Picoult's ***Wish You Were Here***, a beautifully written novel about a young girl who's got it all until a global pandemic strikes and she reevaluates her life. Need I say more?"

—**LISA SCOTTOLINE,**
author of *Eternal, Everywhere That Mary Went* and more



FROM LEFT: ART STREIBER/AUGUST; GINA CLYNE; DAVID GODDARD; JEFF WOJTASZEK

FOR THE ...

SELF-CARE STARVED

And after the past two years, who isn't? —*Laura Brzyski*



NOURISHING NOMS

A gift card to healthy meal delivery service Reap Wellness cues visions of veggie-packed salads, tahini-cacao oats and turmeric quinoa. And best of all, no dishes! *$50-$200 at reapwellness.com.*

AT-HOME WORKOUT GEAR

Paris Fit's "Gym in a Box" gift set—featuring sliders, resistance bands, a Swiss ball and the like—will turn any gym newbie into a functional fit pro. *$100 at getparisfit.com.*

PERFECT SCENTS

Designed by a sommelier with "sensory evaluation" training, Old City Canning Company's candles emit the ideal amount of sophisticated fragrance without being overpowering. *$25 at Philadelphiaindependents.com.*

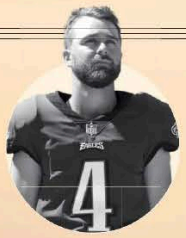
INVIGORATING EYE MASK

Mount Lai's rose quartz eye mask, sold at Fishtown boutique Vestige, promises the benefits of a spa facial—reducing eye puffiness and soothing your skin—right in your home. *$86 at shop-vestige.com.*

A WORD WITH ...

Jake Elliott

Kicker, *Philadelphia Eagles*



What are your favorite places to buy gifts in Philly? I like hitting all the little boutique shops. At Open House on 13th Street, you can get a lot of little gag gifts and some things for the wife. **What's the best gift you've ever received?** When I was eight or nine years old, a new Babolat tennis racquet. I remember coming down the stairs and seeing it by the fireplace. **What's your go-to gift for those who are hard to shop for?** When I don't know what to get, I usually just go to Best Buy and buy whatever the newest gadget is. **What will you be giving your loved ones this year?** With the world hopefully opening back up, a little vacation down the road!

ELLIOTT: PHILADELPHIA EAGLES

FOR THE ...

Dapper Dude

Sharp suggestions from designer **Mike Grady,** winner of HBO Max's *Stylish with Jenna Lyons*



FAIR-TRADE KICKS
These Nova High Tops have classic roots while being anything but traditional. Pick up a pair at Boyds, the last real department store left in the States. *$120 at boydsphila.com.*

BUSINESS-FRIENDLY BATHROBE
WFH culture is here to stay: time to upgrade that ratty old bathrobe. Whether he's taking a (video-off) conference call or fresh out of the shower, he'll look amazing in this bold striped robe. *$132 at Shopyowie.com.*

MODERN MASCULINE FRAGRANCE
Intoxicating notes of bergamot, black currant, birch, ambergris and more mean Creed Aventus is the perfect scent to keep him warm this winter. *$435 at Boydsphila.com.*

LOOK AS GOOD AS YOU SOUND
With its geometric silhouette and clean lines, Sturner's 1129 flagship guitar straddles the gap between classic American design and mid-century modern aesthetics. Don't like this model? No problem—custom ones start at $1,800. *Sturnerguitars.com.*

BOLD TOPPER
Let your man stand out in this Knickerbocker cap in blaze orange, from one of Philly's best menswear stores. *$40 at Franklinandpoe.com.*



A TOAST-WORTHY SUBSCRIPTION

Expand imbibers' palates with seasonally appropriate bottles sent to their doorsteps monthly. Cornerstone Wayne's wine club memberships start at $80 a month for two bottles (*cornerstonewayne.com*). City Winery's start at $25 for one bottle and offer perks like private winery tours (*citywinery.com*).

CRAFTY CONTAINER

Kazi's Hibiscus Sozi vase, intricately woven by women artisans in Rwanda, is sustainably made from sweet grass and the agave plant sisal. *$37.90 at Fasondeviv.com.*

WHIMSICAL STONEWARE

These charming, colorful dinner plates from French designer Nathalie Lete feature woodland creatures, seasonal florals, and Parisian attractions. *$28 each at Anthropologie.com.*

FOR THE ...

HOST WITH THE MOST

Give your party-thrower a gift too good to end up in the junk drawer.



OLIVE OIL MEMBERSHIP

An olive oil and balsamic vinegar club membership from Cardenas will bring a taste of the Italian Market home. *$39.95 a month over three months at cardenastaproom.com.*

A CUT ABOVE THE REST

This handcrafted herringbone cutting board—made of hardwood laminated to reveal a variety of colors and grains—can be used for both food prep and display. *$69 at Aliswagon.com.*

CONVERSATION STARTERS

Actually Curious playing cards cut out the small talk and get right to the deep topics, engaging even the most introverted guests. *$25 at Ritualshoppe.com.*

GARCES: OLIVIA GARCES

A WORD WITH ...

Jose Garces

Chef and restaurateur



What's on your holiday wish list this year? Being able to spend time with my family. This past year has taught me, over and over again, the importance of family. **What are your favorite places to buy gifts in Philly?** In Manayunk, Little Apple, this gift shop with cool little things. Tarte in Old City has great pastries. And I'd be remiss if I didn't mention Tinto's wine shop. We used the pandemic as an opportunity to do a minor pivot into providing a retail wine program. Now that we're able to do indoor dining, we've brought back the pinxtos but kept the wine shop. **What's the best gift you've ever received?** A set of noise-canceling Bose headphones. **What's your go-to gift for those who are hard to shop for?** Roy's panettone. You can have them shipped almost anywhere, but you have to order them early.

FOR THE ...

Sentimentalist

Turn a beloved object into an objet d'art.



SUITABLE FOR FRAMING

Send concert tickets, family heirlooms and other mementos to Philly-based photographer Stuart Goldenberg. He'll create fine-art prints of your most cherished possessions. *$350 and up at Storiedprints.com.*