

## Not Another Fruit Cake!

### *Holiday Gift Ideas for Foodies*

With November upon us, it is time to finalize our holiday gift lists. So, in this month's column, I offer some ideas (all under fifty dollars!) for your foodie family members, friends, or colleagues.

- Ruth Reichl, former editor in chief of *Gourmet* magazine, recently authored the ultimate foodie novel - *Delicious!* This story of Billie, a young woman who accepts a job at New York's top food magazine, will delight foodies with vibrant descriptions — from Italian specialties including the fresh ricotta at Fontanari's market to the delicate soufflé prepared by Billie's friend, Sammy. The plot centers around a foodie mystery in which Billie discovers correspondence between a girl and the iconic James Beard during World War II. Both the mouth watering images and the curious collection of letters will keep your foodie friend enthralled.

- Other must reads for foodies are Erica Bauermeister's *The School of Essential Ingredients* and its sequel *The Lost Art of Mixing*. These novels detail the experiences of a diverse group of students who gather once a month for cooking lessons in Chef Lillian's restaurant kitchen in the Pacific Northwest. The author's passion for food is evidenced by the rich and vivid images of the dishes prepared by the eclectic group. Your foodie friend will be captivated by the relationships between the students, each of whom seeks and offers something at the table.

- Pastry Chef Jean Yves Charon of Galaxy Desserts, located just north of San Francisco, makes pastries for the foodie paradise Williams-Sonoma. Order these pastries online, and they will be shipped directly to the pastry lover. My favorites are the buttery and flaky plain croissants, but chocolate croissants, almond croissants, morning buns, and sticky buns are also available. These tasty gifts come frozen and ready for thawing and baking.

- If your foodie prefers baking from scratch, consider a nonstick Madeleine pan. These shell shaped French sponge cakes require a special pan to mold the unique treat. This pan will surely be a special addition to your baker's standard baking sheets and molds.

- For the jam lover, check out the preserves at Sarabeth's online. Sarabeth's may ring a bell as the famed breakfast restaurant in New York City. However, the Sarabeth's brand also makes an array of delicious preserves and marmalades. The sampler package includes the orange apricot marmalade, which was where the real Sarabeth got her start, as well as plum cherry, strawberry raspberry, mixed berry, pineapple mango, and peach apricot.

- Moving from sweet to savory, the salt lover on your list would likely enjoy an olivewood salt keeper. This attractive vessel is an ideal way to store sea salt on the kitchen counter. The swivel top permits your foodie friend to grab a pinch of salt while preparing a meal.

- Another specialty item for the home cook is finishing salt. For a large variety of salts, check out the Artisan Salt Company online. Here you will find salts from around the world in lovely glass jars with cork tops. Some of my favorites are the beautiful red Alaea sea salt from Hawaii, the famed Fleur de Sel from France, and the distinctive smelling Kala Namuk from India.

- Finally, any contemporary kitchenware from Joseph Joseph makes an excellent gift. This company sells colorful and modern kitchen supplies from stackable measuring spoons and bowls to serving pieces. Yet, my favorites are the unique cutting boards. Two are especially interesting — a folding cutting board with a colander at one end to make for easy chopping and rinsing of vegetables and an angled cutting board with a meat grip for cutting roasts and pouring their juices with ease.

I hope these ideas bring some inspiration...Happy Thanksgiving and happy holiday shopping! 🍷



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