



Basic Juice Article Give Thoughtfully

by: *Beau Jarvis*

The worst gift I ever received during the holidays was a small plastic paperweight shaped like an airplane; filled with gold colored coins suspended in a clear liquid. What did this gift say to me? It told me a few things, most of which I already knew: “I don’t like you.” “I didn’t put any effort into this gift.” “Hopefully you’ll trip over this paperweight, fall to the floor, and if I’m lucky, break your neck.” Of course, this gift was from my significant other’s father. So I suppose I shouldn’t have expected too much (I must have made some inroads with “Dear Old Dad” during the following year, as he gave me a stick of salami the next Christmas).

The best gifts I ever received were from my significant other. One was a gift-card for twelve car washes. The other was a gift certificate for six facial spa treatments. What did these gifts say to me? They told me how thoughtful my S.O. is: “I understand you’re neurotic about having a clean car. I love all of you, including your neuroses.” “I know you have the world’s most sensitive skin. Hopefully this will make your skin happy.” I guess there really is truth to the old adage, “It’s the thought that counts.” The thought behind a gift will tell your lover, friend, brother or, sister just what you think about them. Your gift may also make it crystal clear just how *often* you think about them.

As for non-wine gift ideas, you’re on your own. If however, you are lucky enough to have someone on your holiday gift list who enjoys wine, I do have three incredibly thoughtful gift ideas for you.

The Wine-Security Gift

Does your wine lover crave reassurance? Does he need security? Show him you appreciate these stable qualities by making a gift out of a case of wine. Each time your lucky gift recipient frets about choosing a wine for dinner, he’ll remember your gift, know the choice is already made, and think fondly of you. Of course this type of gift requires a very flexible wine. If he is partial to red wine, buy a case of New Zealand’s value-priced Pinot Noir, *Brancott Pinot Noir*, for eleven bucks per bottle. If you’re feeling flush with dough and quite generous, purchase a case of the *Reserve* version of this Pinot for eighteen dollars per bottle. It will go with nearly anything on the dinner table. Pinot Noir is also quite tasty by itself.

If he is a white wine drinker, then Sauvignon Blanc is a nice bet. Two of my favorite, reasonably priced Sauvi-Blancs are made by *Kenwood* and *Giesen*. Both ring in at twelve dollars per bottle. While not as flexible with food, Sauvignon Blanc can handle veggies, salads, seafood and even poultry.

The One & Only Wine Gift

Your wine lover is truly one of a kind. She drives a twenty-year-old *Saab* and wears purple feather boas instead of a proper winter scarf. She personifies individuality. She

deserves an equally unique gift of wine. France's Northern Rhône valley is replete with quirky, rare little wine gems. Go with white wine and give your mold-breaking wine drinker *Condrieu*. *Condrieu* is a wine made from the fragrant, finicky, fragile Viognier grape. Viognier is extraordinarily difficult to work with. But when it works, it makes a nearly indescribable wine full of apricot, blossom and honey scents. Of course this individuality comes with a slightly hefty price tag. Perhaps an entire case is out of the question. So buy a single bottle of *Guigal Condrieu*, '01 for forty-five dollars, or *Guigal's* deluxe version called, "*Doriane*," for about seventy dollars.

Perhaps your unique loved one is of the fiery temperment persuasion. In this case, red wine is called for. No need to leave the Rhône valley; just head southward. The red wines of the *Chateauneuf du Pape* region are spicy, earthy blends of up to thirteen different grape varieties. These wines have yet to be successfully duplicated and they remain unique to the world of wine. *Chateau de Beaucastel* is one of the premier producers of red 'du Pape. A bottle will run between sixty-five and seventy clams.

The Oh-So-Precious Wine Gift

So the wine lover on your gift list just happens to be the center of your universe. He or she is precious and you want to say this with wine. Nothing other than Champagne will suffice. Instead of simply saying, "You are precious;" say it in elegant gold lettering with *Krug Grand Cuvée* (\$160). If you want to shout this using those same elegant gold letters, try *Krug 1988* (\$180), a vintage Champagne that is the pinnacle of wine elegance. Is there truly a better way to tell someone you love him or her than with tiny bubbles suspended in ambrosial liquid? I think not.

Be thoughtful in your giving this year. Cheers!

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