



# UNDER THE CHRISTMAS TREE

As the last minutes of the holiday-shopping season approach, **Ranjita Ganesan** lists some traditional and offbeat gifting ideas



## For the sweet tooth



►For those wondering what to bring to the office Christmas party, it is always a safe bet to go with sweet goodies. Delhi's Foodaholics has fudges in seasonal variants such as chocolate caramel sea salt, prunes, and rocky road.  
**Where:** [www.foodaholics.in](http://www.foodaholics.in), Delhi  
**Price:** ₹2,500 per kg

►Delhi-based cake decorator Ancy James makes signature chocolate heels filled with eight pralines. Her more classic offerings include Christmas cakes and apple cinnamon cakes.  
**Where:** Delhi, 9560059272,

[sweetart.ancy@gmail.com](mailto:sweetart.ancy@gmail.com)

**Price:** ₹1,000 for chocolate shoe, ₹650 for cake

►A santa sock-shaped cake would sit well next to the Christmas tree; it is a chocolate cake layered with truffle and nougatine, and covered in red marzipan. Also try stollen bread, a traditional German sweet bread, full of dried fruit with a strip of marzipan running down its middle.  
**Where:** Poetry, by Love and Cheesecake, Bandra, Mumbai  
**Price:** ₹4,000 for cake, ₹750 for a bread loaf

►The chefs at The Bakers Dozen will be whipping up madeleines, carrot walnut cake and cinnamon rolls. These will be packed into gift baskets together with lemon loaves, brownies and nut butter.  
**Where:** The Bakers Dozen stores, Mumbai  
**Price:** ₹2,200

►Fill up a tin with mildly-sweet cookies covered in the season's trademark patterns: snowflakes, gingerbread men, Christmas trees and Santa.  
**Where:** Sweetish House Mafia outlets, Mumbai  
**Price:** ₹100 for a pair of cookies, ₹100 for the decorative tin

## Something stronger

►Taiwan's Kavalan is on its way to becoming a global single malt, says Keshav Prakash, whisky connoisseur and founder of The Vault. The secret, he says, is in the distillery's wood management. Its Sherry Oak bears notes of dried fruit, marzipan and vanilla, while the Ex-Bourbon single malt has a palate of oak spice and semi-dry tropical fruit. After the closure of the state-owned sugar refinery in Trinidad, the Caroni distillery shut down 15 years ago, making its heavy rums a collector's item. "It would be prudent to own one even if you are not a regular rum drinker," says Prakash.  
**Where:** Duty-free stores, or visit [www.vaultfinespirits.com](http://www.vaultfinespirits.com)

for details on retailers

**Price:** About ₹19,800 for Kavalan sherry, about ₹16,000 for Kavalan bourbon, about ₹12,580 for Caroni rum (in Mumbai)

►Nikhil Agarwal, sommelier and CEO of All Things Nice, says he would indulge in cognac this festive season. He has recently become a fan of Martell XO, a rich spicy drink packed into an arch-shaped bottle.  
**Where:** Select duty-free stores  
**Price:** about ₹13,000



## Dial in style

►Smartphone cases are a studied choice when shopping for people you may not know too well. They also make a fun addition to gift hampers. You could invest in a soft smartphone case made of silicone with reindeer ears near the top, or a more pan-season version with glittering metallic flecks. To really ring in the festival, go for a solid clear case covered in a Father Christmas-print. These fit the iPhone 6 and 6S.  
**Where:** H&M stores  
**Price:** ₹399-599 a piece



## Keep it warm

►An "ugly Christmas sweater" would be a fun addition to the kids' wardrobe. In adult sizes, Next Direct has more staid options like an off-white tunic with a golden-sequin reindeer.  
**Where:** [www.nextdirect.com/in](http://www.nextdirect.com/in), [www.jabong.com](http://www.jabong.com)  
**Price:** ₹1,908-2,438 for kids' sweaters, ₹2,737 for the tunic



## Fly in style

►Louis Vuitton's Damier Graphite line for the season features rope patterns in red and blue. The selection includes backpacks, duffles, and small leather items for men. For women, the Monogram World Tour line has duffles, with removable shoulder straps, featuring printed stickers depicting cosmopolitan cities or paintings from the Hyperrealistic movement.  
**Where:** Louis Vuitton stores  
**Price:** On request



## Festive glitter

►While these are designed to adorn the Christmas tree, they can be used later to do up various living spaces too. The filigree ornaments are styled in the Taarkashi tradition, which has roots in Odisha. Fashioned out of silver-plated copper wires, they are available in designs such as an umbrella or a peacock. There are also fine hurricane candle holders, decorated by hand, with oriental images of a woman standing by a bird cage.  
**Where:** Good Earth stores  
**Price:** Ornaments are priced between ₹1,200 and ₹2,800, candle holder for ₹3,500



## One page at a time

►The graphic novel *Batman: Noel* written and illustrated by Lee Bermejo features characters from Charles Dickens's classic *A Christmas Carol* and the world of Batman. Subsumed in the part-superhero tale and part Dickensian-tribute are themes of crime, obsession, as well as the true meaning of the holiday season. Its masterful artwork further makes it a collector's dream. Fortunately for last-minute shoppers, a hard-cover version is available on express delivery. Alternately, have the book sent straight to someone's Kindle.  
**Where:** [www.amazon.in](http://www.amazon.in)  
**Price:** ₹1,030



## Gentleman's club

►Gentlemen with beards will appreciate grooming products. The folks at Beardo have gift hampers which include oil, a beard wash, beard wax and a wooden comb.  
**Where:** [www.beardo.in](http://www.beardo.in)  
**Price:** ₹3,189

## Glued to the screen

►If your loved ones have a taste for arthouse cinema, they will appreciate an offbeat alternative to popular video-streaming services like Netflix and Amazon Prime Video. MUBI selects and uploads one rare international film each day, and allows subscribers a month's time to watch it, which means you could be gifting someone a total of 365 such titles in high-definition.  
**Where:** [www.mubi.com](http://www.mubi.com)  
**Price:** ₹3,000 for a year

