

# Drink: A Beer, Wine and Spirits Blog



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A blog about all things alcohol, from beer dinners to wine tastings to seasonal cocktails  
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## Holiday Gift Guide For Wine Lovers

2:44 pm December 15, 2010, by Gil Kulers



by Gil Kulers



DeLoach's three-liter bag-in-a-box-in-a-cask can be filled and re-filled with two different pinot noirs.



You'll be the coolest wine lover on the block with DeLoach's 10-liter barrel of wine.

"Well, I couldn't very well bring *you* a bottle of wine," said my friend Jen as she handed me my new deluxe potato peeler (a thoughtful host gift at a recent dinner party as I had been complaining to her days earlier about the condition of my well-worn, 10-year-old kitchen tool).

Let's be clear: a bottle of wine always makes a nice holiday gift. But, buying wine for a collector or your neighborhood "wine guy/gal," understandably, may be a little challenging, if not downright

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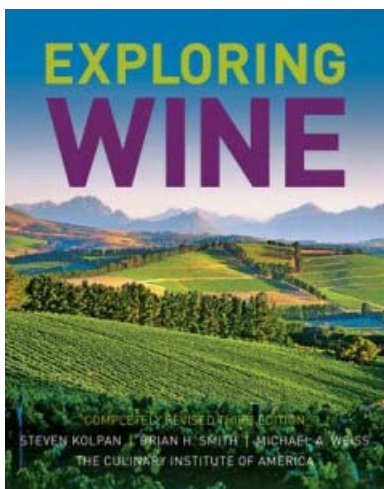
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intimidating for some.

Fortunately for the kind-hearted gift givers out there, there are so many wine gadgets and related paraphernalia that securing a present for the wine lover in your life is a cinch.

The first place to go is your local wine shop, which by now should have a bevy of wine doo-dads on display. Glassware (especially specialized glasses for dessert wines and sparkling wines or those bulbous Burgundy-style glasses) is always a welcome sight under the tree/holiday object of your choice. Items such as the Vintori wine aerator (about \$40) also will get you sincere thank-yous (yes, they really do work). An eight-ounce bottle of Wine Away stain remover (\$10) is something you never really can have enough of (trust me, this too really works).

Like to shop, but don't like to leave your bedroom? Something the kids call "the world wide web" may be your thing. Dozens of wine-oriented sites offer some of the darndest gadgets. I often go to the trusted [www.iwawine.com](http://www.iwawine.com) or [www.wineenthusiast.com](http://www.wineenthusiast.com) sites for my wine stuff. Both have been around for years.



If you really, really want to know everything about wine, you'll need Exploring Wine, 3rd Edition.

It should come as no surprise that wine geeks love books, the fatter and more detailed the better. And they don't come any fatter and more detailed than Exploring Wine: The Culinary Institute of America's Guide to Wines of the World (John Wiley & Sons, \$65) by Steven Kolpan, Michael Weiss and Brian Smith. The thoroughly revised third edition, which was my textbook once upon a time, was released earlier this year and should be in any wine lover's collection (especially those oenophiles who *think* they know everything).

Reference books not on the shopping list? Then get Vertical (Loose Gravel Press, \$15, e-book-\$10.95), the sequel to Sideways, Rex Pickett's 2004 bestselling, wine-soaked, buddy adventure. Miles and Jack are back, only this time Miles has a best-selling book and Jack (surprise) is divorced. This road trip takes our two ne'er-do-wells, along with Miles'

disabled mother, up the California coast to America's pinot noir Mecca, Willamette Valley, Oregon.

OK, it's not a wine book, but I recently enjoyed The World Atlas of Whisky (Octopus Publishing Group, \$34.99) by Dave Broom. Broom tastes and writes regularly about spirits for a number of publications and has put together a well-organized guide to the world's greatest whisky-producing regions, from Scotland to Japan (Yes, Japan. Who knew?). Easily understood by spirits neophytes like me, but also comprehensive enough for experts who needs to know their Strathislas from their Strathmills. The solid information is beautifully augmented by stunning photography and detailed maps.

If you absolutely must buy vino for your wine-centric gift, it might as well be different. DeLoach Vineyards sells barrels of their well-regarded pinot noirs...sort of. The Sonoma County, Calif., winery offers 3-liter and 10-liter oak barrels with spigots in the front to pour individual glasses of wine. There is no wine in the mini-casks, per se, the wine is actually in a bag that fits inside the barrel, much like those found in boxed wines. These replaceable bags can re-ordered as needed. The stylish casks cost \$220 for the 3-liter and \$250 for the 10-liter. Two wines are being offered, its Sonoma Coast Pinot Noir (\$60/3-liter; \$180/10-liter) and its California Heritage Reserve Pinot Noir (\$52/3-liter; \$156/10-liter). To order the casks and the wines, call (707) 526-9111 ext. 107 or (707) 473-9707.

And if your wine enthusiast giftee needs a potato peeler, I recommend the Oxo Good Grips Peeler (\$7.99), which you can attach to the handle of a 1,200 bottle, custom-built wine cellar with heart-redwood, double-deep racking, vapor-barrier sealing, adjustable shelving for large-format

bottles, a Rogar Estate bottle opener and a WhisperKool Platinum Extreme 8000 cooling system. It's safer than a Red Ryder bb gun and just as much fun.

*Gil Kulers is a certified wine educator with the Society of Wine Educators. You can reach him at [gil.kulers@winekulers.com](mailto:gil.kulers@winekulers.com).*

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**4 comments**

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**Wine Away Inc.**

December 17th, 2010  
3:35 pm

Thanks much for the Wine Away mention! You can purchase our red wine stain remover online with a 15% discount with the code HOLIDAY15. Cheers and Happy Holidays from Wine Away!  
<http://www.wineaway.com>

[Link](#) | [Report this comment](#)

**Cheryl Corn**

December 17th, 2010  
4:03 pm

Hello, Gil.  
Many thanks for recommending Wine Away — again. It really is a great hostess gift — a beautiful wine bag, a bottle of Walla Walla Merlot, and Wine Away — the perfect pairing!! Wishing you a Merry Christmas, and prosperous 2011!

[Link](#) | [Report this comment](#)

**Brian Mast**

December 18th, 2010  
2:04 am

Wow — that DeLoach barrel is very cool. We also put together a gift guide on wine carriers and tote bags at  
<http://www.valleyfog.wordpress.com>. Cheers!

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**Gil Kulers**

December 20th, 2010  
5:10 pm

Doh! Don't you know I just bought a new bottle of Wine Away....AND I PAID FULL PRICE!

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