



Food Drink

Cheers! A Viniferous EDGE Holiday Gift Guide

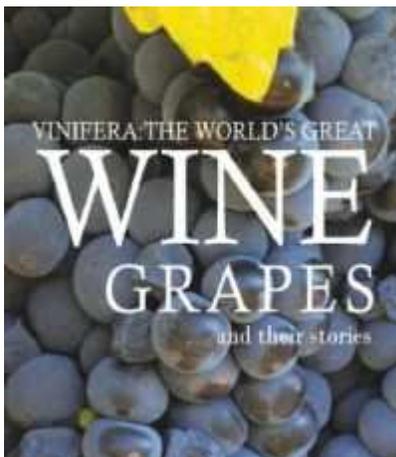
by Richard Frisbie
EDGE Contributor
Wednesday Dec 2, 2009

Is it too early to shake the wrapped presents under the tree, or sneak a peek into Santa's sleigh to find out what you can expect this holiday? Are you stuck trying to find the perfect gift for that special wine lover? EDGE's resident wine guy, Richard Frisbie, sorted through all the wine and wine-related presents to list the ones you should ask for, and to help you take the guesswork out of shopping for those oenophiles on your list.

When searching for wine and wine related gifts, the good news is that you have many options. There is always a wine club to sign up for. To simplify your choices [this website rates a wide selection of clubs](#). Or, how about making your own wine? [Glenora Winery](#), on Seneca Lake in New York's Finger Lakes, is one of the wineries that will let you make your own champagne-style sparkling wine to your own personal taste.

They'll even put your label on it. Imagine having a personalized gift you're guaranteed to enjoy imbibing and sharing with your friends. Or, you could give a gift certificate to one of the larger wine stores, [Sherry-Lehmann](#), or [Astor Wines](#), both of whom have huge selections and will ship.

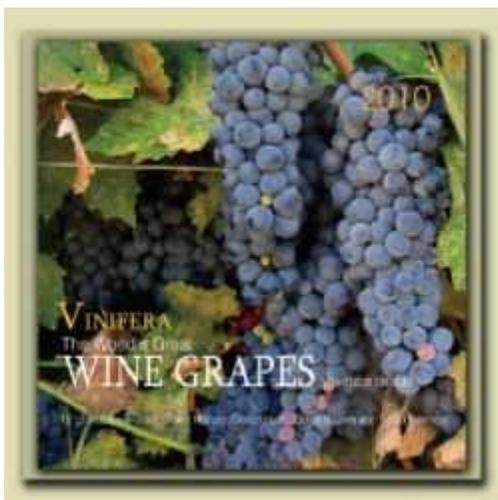
However, if you're not giving wine itself, read on to see some unusual wine-related choices.



(Source: Ghigo Press)

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Wine Calendars & Cards



Vinifera: The World's Great Wine Grapes

From [Ghigo Press](#), *Vinifera: The World's Great Wine Grapes and their stories*. The same title is used for a calendar (\$13.95) and for a boxed deck of 2.5"x6" cards (\$15.95). Both are lavishly illustrated histories of popular grape varieties and their uses. Full-color posters are also available (\$13.95).

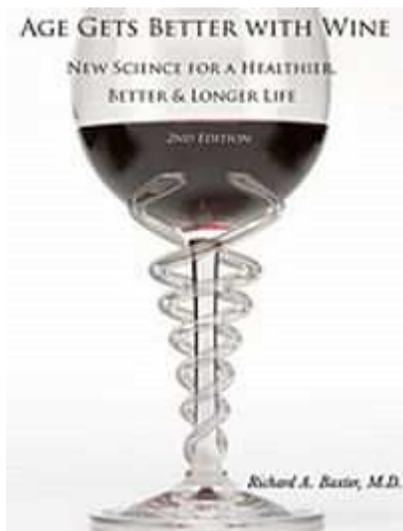
The 2010 calendar has 12 of the most common grapes, one for each month. Origins, food pairings, and a brief history caption a stunning close-up photo of a grape cluster. The calendar itself, at 12.5"x12.5", is large enough for notes and appointments, and includes holidays and phases of the moon.

The cards are a crisp glossy production with a color photograph on one side and informative text on the reverse. The history, origins, and lore of 45 varieties of grapes make up the full deck. My favorite bit of information on each card is the "adventurous and classic culinary pairings" included for each. The only thing missing is a pronunciation guide.

This series also includes a similar treatment of Coffees of the World, and Spices of the World. Any one makes a great stocking stuffer or hostess gift. Paired, they are perfect for the foodies and budding wine-lovers on your holiday list.

Available through [Ghigo Press](#)

Wine Books



Age Gets Better With Wine

Subtitled: New Science For A Healthier Better & Longer Life. In this 2nd Edition by **Richard A. Baxter, M.D.**, the author poses the question: "Can drinking red wine save your life?" and then sorts through the history and culture of wine drinking, addressing all the health related claims made for it. It is a fascinating look at the benefits of red wine consumption, and the chemical components in wine that make it healthy to drink.

Dr. Baxter is a cosmetic surgeon who is interested in resveratrol and the anti-aging properties of wine. He explains how resveratrol is only one of the polyphenols that may help to prevent Alzheimer's, heart disease, cancer, even the common cold. He also devotes a chapter to the other foods and drinks that may have similar health benefits to red wine. Tea, coffee, vitamins, pomegranates, cranberries, blueberries, and many more are included. He covers virtually everything besides surgery that is purported to help you stay younger and healthier longer.

[Age Gets Better With Wine](#) is a good read for anyone interested in the science behind the various health claims of wine drinking. Paperback 210 pages indexed \$19.95



FINE WINES The Best Vintages Since 1900

Author Michel Dovaz, with a baker's dozen of wine books under his belt, tackles this broad subject with an encyclopedic knowledge of vintages, viticultures, and grape varieties. He divides the best vintages into Outstanding (four), and Great (three), before identifying the absolute best and the worst years. (I'll let you read it to find out which is which.) Then he explains all the elements needed to make the best vintages, and where and when they can be found.

In another section, the growing regions throughout France are examined. Then the author covers them in the US, Australia and other major wine producing countries of the world to present a global overview of grape varieties, climate, soil and wines produced in each. He finishes with an account of the vintages of 2001 through 2008.

FINE WINES is an exhaustive look at the best wines produced during the best years (28 in

the 20th century) all over the world.

Throughout, FINE WINES is lavishly illustrated with colorful photographs of every imaginable aspect of wine production from the vineyard to the table. Vines, pruning techniques, bottling, maps; there are all kinds of beautiful and interesting pictures to illustrate the text.

In addition, Each "Best" vintage year has a black & white collage of historical photos to place it in a context of a century of history. As a clever creative device, these five iconic images define the year the way the text defines the vintage -- perfectly.

In fact, perfect is the word that comes to mind while reading this book. I know much more about wine now, and I know I'll continue to refer to this volume as I experience more and more great wines and vintages. FINE WINES is a dip-in-anywhere, or read cover-to-cover tome that should be on every oenophile's shelf.

[FINE WINES The Best Vintages Since 1900](#) New Edition by Michel Dovaz, With a

foreword by Michael Broadbent 420 pages 375 illustrations \$40

There you have it, an eclectic collection of gifts to give and gifts to receive. There is something here for every taste and pocketbook to help make your Holidays Happy!

Richard Frisbie is a bookseller and publisher in New York State whose food & wine travel articles appear in LGBTQ and regional periodicals, as-well-as at Gather.com and Travellady.com online. He accepts free copies of books for review, restaurant meals to critique, bottles of wine and liquor for tastings, and all-expense-paid trips in exchange for articles about the destinations. He is paid for these articles. You can email him at: hopefarm@hopefarm.com

[Back to: Food/Drink » Home](#)

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