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# Holiday Gift Guide



It's a wrap!

From twinkling jewels to sophisticated stationery, our  
stylish experts choose the most magical holiday gifts

# 'We love this time of year'

**Buly 1803** | The husband-and-wife duo behind the French apothecary brand favours playful gifts and perfect presentation. By *Grace Cook*

I have a drawer at home that no-one else has access to, and it's where I hide all my gifts," says Ramdane Touhami, who is, according to his wife Victoire de Taillac, the Christmas elf of their Parisian household. "I buy so many things I think are good gifts throughout the year that I end up with a little mountain in the drawer. I'm a serious shopper."

That much would be evident from stepping inside the Marais store of Officine Universelle Buly 1803 – the cult French apothecary brand established by Touhami and de Taillac in 2014. With live parakeets in the shop and old-fashioned wooden shelves lined with lotions and potions, it's like entering a magic land brimming with all manner of curiosities, from scented rocks in porcelain boxes to horsehair toothbrushes and 196 different kinds of combs. Touhami is planning on giving a monogrammed comb as a gift this Christmas.

"I have a friend who is very fancy and he touches his hair non-stop," he says. "Giving a comb with his initials on shows I have understood him. You have to be a very good observer to buy a good gift." His wife agrees that his eye for present-buying is unparalleled.

"I can't tell you how much of a personal shopper he is!" she laughs. "He can even buy my mother gifts when I don't know what to get."

For his stocking fillers this year, Tou-

hami plans on giving Buly's new lip balms in colourful leather coffrets – personalised with the receiver's initials – and packets of flower seeds. He says he recently bought a 17th-century case of unopened seeds at a flea market, which he intends to plant. He also suggests Japanese stationery, which he picks up on his travels, a limited-edition Polaroid camera for capturing fun, festive memories, and an array of playful homewares and soaps.

But where Touhami's strength lies in gift giving, it is de Taillac who brings the tradition and festive cheer to the holi-

**Ramdane Touhami and Victoire de Taillac at their wrapping counter in the Marais, photographed for the FT by Max Miechowski**

**'You can have the most basic gift, fantastically wrapped, and people will thank you for it. The wrap is a gift in itself'**

day season. "I grew up in a family where Christmas was really important," she says. "So I have a big tree and decorations at home from December 1 – mostly for the kids, but it makes me very excited. I love this time of year, even walking down the street in Paris and seeing the first Christmas windows in the shops, and all the fairy lights." De Taillac enjoys the festive mood so much she works every day in the store from December 7. "I love the atmosphere – people are shopping because they want to make their loved ones happy."

After the retail rush, the duo head

with their two children down to Gascony, to stay with de Taillac's family and spend Christmas with her mother, siblings and nieces. "We have a dinner on Christmas Eve and open gifts early on Christmas morning. Then we have a big lunch with little gifts on the table, crackers and Christmas pudding. We have to go for a walk after because of all the food we have eaten in the last 24 hours."

De Taillac loves giving food-related gifts, from French olive oils to indulgent chocolates – and also likes giving games as gifts, even to adults. "It's fun to have something little to play with

on Christmas morning," she says.

And even the smallest gifts deserve to be presented beautifully – Touhami and de Taillac believe in the art of wrapping so strongly, they've just introduced a wrapping service in their Marais store, with more than 700 types of Japanese paper, ribbons and calligraphy. "You can have the most basic gift, fantastically wrapped, and people will thank you for it," says Touhami.

"The wrap is a gift in itself. I will get all my gifts wrapped at Buly," he says. "Plus it's my company, so it won't cost me anything!"



► **Stranger Things Polaroid**  
£119, polaroidoriginals.com



▼ **Doiy Design cactus glasses**  
£47, doiydesign.com



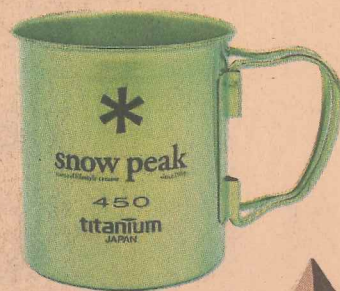
▼ **Marie-Hélène de Taillac bracelet**  
£163, net-a-porter.com



◀ **Corgi cashmere socks**  
£75, corgisocks.com



► **Buly 1803 lip coffret**  
£24, buly1803.com



▲ **Snow Peak mug**  
£39, thehipstore.com

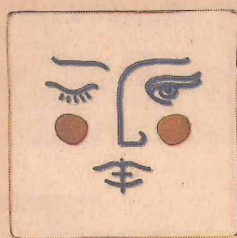


◀ **Bee Friendly seeds** £3.79,  
notonthehighstreet.com



▲ **Have a Good Time dice**  
£11, goodhoodstore.com

► **Alain Ducasse chocolate tree**  
£46, lechocolat-alainducasse.com



▲ **Janus Goddess tray**  
£23, store.wallpaper.com



◀ **Buly 1803 comb**  
£43, buly1803.com



▲ **Château d'Estoublon olive oil**  
£24, edelices.com



► **Buly for the Louvre travel scents**  
£188, buly1803.com



▼ **Hightide ruler**  
£9, goodhoodstore.com

▲ **Kaweco fountain pen**  
£73, trunkclothiers.com

