

Good Grooming Accentuated By Gifts

American men are, by and large, just great. Nowhere else in the world will you find men as hard-working, generous and generally devoted to the welfare of their women.

What better time than Christmas to say "thanks" to the man in your house? And not with the socks, ties, shirts and pajamas that he needs anyway. For no matter how adult, serious and generally solid he may seem, he can get excited over Christmas, too.

This year, gifts for men seem to accent good grooming. New on the market are the kind of things he would never buy for himself but which he would enjoy as gifts. Among them is a new, cordless, battery-operated shaver which delivers 30 minutes' shaving time. (In that amount of time, he could shave the living room rug.) It recharges itself overnight on its own separate charging device.

The man who does a lot of traveling will love to have one. It eliminates all fuss, muss and bother, and comes in its own carrying case.

If you decide to give dad cologne or after-shave lotion for Christmas, be the last of the big spenders. Get him either a great big bottle, the really handsome kind, or a set. In either case, don't buy for the bottle alone. Sniff the scent and if it's dry, brisk and light, that's for dad. If it's flowery, sweet and girly, that's for you.

Cuff links, tie tacks and tie clips can be tacky gifts unless you shop carefully. Don't, for instance, buy cuff links that you'd really love to wear with your blue silk shirt sometime. Look for severe, plain designs in a good, solid silver or gold. Buy with an eye to the future. That way, you'll give him jewelry that he can wear with pride for years.

If your budget is such that you must pass up anything in the nature of a luxury, settle for practicality. Let it be something to wear but make it a "something" which is handsome as well as serviceable. A fine example is a bulky, shaggy knit cardigan in Orlon. Done with a shawl collar in an arctic design, it washes by hand or machine and never needs hand blocking.

If the man in your life hands out hints in the weeks before Christmas, pay them some heed. They may make your shopping both simpler and more direct.

No Room For Christmas In Red Plan

Russian propaganda doesn't overlook a thing—it is even directed against Christmas. Says Khrushchev: "There is no room in the modern Soviet for the religious superstitions which give meaning to the observance of Christmas."

A milestone in the Soviet onslaught on the Christmas joys of normal childhood was reached in the mid 1950s, when the Ministry of Light Industries for captive "Eastern Europe" decreed that "children's toys may be produced for propaganda purposes only . . . dolls, teddy bears, and other toy animals must be dressed in uniforms of the Communist Party, army, police or organized labor groups."

While this edict inflamed parents, it inspired the toy makers. They marketed an ideological game called "Paths to Peace," which was widely distributed at Christmas time in public halls and schools by Father Frost, the Red substitute for Santa Claus.

Since the "Paths to Peace" game was bewildering even to mature adults, it definitely was not for children with below-average I.Q.'s. The tools of the game consisted of a map of the globe and six dice carved with colored peace doves. If, after a player cast his dice, he reached the capital of a "People's Democracy"—a Red-controlled country such as Rumania, Bulgaria, Poland, Hungary, Czechoslovakia—he won a point. But if he reached a Western capital, he lost all his points. He was even worse off if he landed in Washington, D.C.—he was thrown out of the game! One capital significantly missing was Belgrade, because Communist officials who censored the game during its initial production could not decide whether landing in the Yugoslav capital was an advantage or not. Presumably, an improvement in diplomatic relations with the Yugoslav leader Tito might some day put Belgrade back on the map.

Though Christmas is generally a drab affair behind the Iron Curtain, there are signs of hope poking up like crocuses through the hard crust of Soviet repression. Shortages in the stores around Christmas time come in for ridicule in the Polish press. A cartoon in a Warsaw newspaper showed an angry crowd jamming round a depleted toy store counter before Christmas. Stuck

in the throng are two department store St. Nicholases, and one says to the other: "One must be a saint, indeed, colleague, to stand this."

Humor is one of the few weapons that the Davids of the press in the captive lands have to combat the humorless Goliath of the party propaganda machine. While the church press continues to expound the Christian doctrine of the birth of Christ, its efforts are usually rigidly controlled. The party press tends either to omit mention of Christmas or stress its worldly or social aspects.

The captive press does what it can to needle the Communists from within, while strong assaults on the Iron Curtain come from the outside. Radio broadcasts from the Free World are tearing an increasingly larger hold in the Iron Curtain. For the past 10 years, 76 million people in the conquered countries have relied on Radio Free Europe's broadcasts as their strongest day-and-night link with the Western World. And for the sixth straight year, The Lutheran Hour's annual Christmas broadcast will be beamed from radio networks in Russian satellite countries. This year the message of Christ will be broadcast over networks in Czechoslovakia, East Germany, Hungary, Poland, Rumania and Yugoslavia, as well as other lands throughout the world. Dr. Oswald Hoffmann, regular Lutheran Hour speaker, will read the Biblical account of the Savior's birth and will offer a Christmas prayer to conclude the special worldwide broadcast, which will be sent to about 55 countries in 30 languages.

Long a harassed refugee from Communist rule in Eastern Europe, Christmas is making a comeback in Poland, Hungary and Czechoslovakia. In Rumania and Bulgaria, however, it has never emerged from the pall of Stalinism.

But even at the peak of Stalinist rule, the party did not attempt a direct all-out assault on Christmas. The technique was to divert attention from it by splitting up its symbols and ceremonies between Stalin's birthday on Dec. 21 and New Year's Day, with Christmas an ordinary working day in between. The Christmas tree became simply a "winter tree," and Saint Nicholas (Santa Claus or Father Christ-

mas, as the local custom might be), became the Soviet "Father Frost" distributing gifts to the children on New Year's Day as a symbol of Soviet generosity toward the satellites.

After 1953, the reaction against Stalinism, plus an emphasis on national culture and living standards, brought back some of the regional holiday customs. Increased tolerance toward religious worship restored a measure of the Christian meaning of Christmas. Even in rigidly controlled Czechoslovakia, mass church attendance on Christmas Eve appeared to be acceptable by 1956.

Christmas Day is still a working day, with no decorative signs of the season visible. The holiday has taken refuge in the countryside where the peasants, freer from scrutiny and with at least the fruit of their own farm plots, can still give it a token welcome. The Poles hold their traditional family Christmas Dinner on Christmas Eve, and place straw on the table to symbolize the straw-lined manger of Bethlehem. It is also traditional to set an extra place at the table as an indication of hospitality to a passing stranger. The Christmas Eve menu is meadless and composed mainly of fish delicacies, such as fish noodle soup, carp in sweet raisin sauce, and pike in horse-radish sauce.

Father Frost, the Soviet answer to Santa Claus, is a flat-stomached male athlete, sometimes bearded but mostly not, whose muscularity is demonstrated by the fact that he can drive his red sleigh apparently with greater skill than the mythical "eight reindeer." But for all his physical prowess, his career has been spotty. Forcibly introduced into the satellite countries between 1950 and 1952, he was passively assimilated in Bulgaria, totally rejected in Hungary, and merely tolerated for three or four years by the Poles who then threw him out with the rest of the trappings of Stalinism.

The Soviets will doubtless continue trying to put a "frost" on Christmas in the satellite countries, but such forces for truth as the Free World's radio broadcasts and the undying spirit of freedom among the conquered peoples show signs of thawing the cold front presented by the Iron Curtain.



LIKE MOTHER-LIKE DAUGHTER even in the kitchen. This pink fiber board toy range does not heat, but that's the least concern of the child at play. It stands 27 inches high and two flashlight batteries give it simulated heat. The oven door opens which adds more reality for the 3-7 age group.

NURSERY RHYME CAKE
From a nursery rhyme book, select your child's favorite character. Bake that character into a charming "Kiddie Cake," the delight of your tiny tot's party. For a lamb cake, sketch a lamb, about 12 inches from tip to tip, on shirt cardboard and cut out. Piece cardboard, with tape, if necessary. Cover top and bottom with aluminum foil. With thread, measure outer edge of pattern. Roll out strip of heavy duty foil (the length of the outer edge of the pattern), and fold lengthwise to within 1/2 inch of the other edge. Fold again in half, and then a third time, always folding so you end up with a strip two inches wide. To build sides of pan place strip (single edge down) around outline of your pattern. Tape single edge firmly to the underside. When completely around, overlap ends about one inch, tape closed.

To make cake: With pastry brush heavily grease and flour self-made pan. Prepare Burnt Sugar Cake Mix according to package directions. Fill pan half full. Bake at 350 degrees 50-55 minutes, or until cake tests done. Cool 15 minutes. Turn out, cool thoroughly. Frost with butter cream or fluffy frosting. Decorate as desired.

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Comfort And Utility Top Christmas Theme

By KAY SHERWOOD
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Newspaper Enterprise Assn.

An avalanche of delightful surprises for the home will overwhelm the Christmas shopper with what seems like unlimited choice. To survive the heady experience and remain solvent will require a carefully made gift list, plus a determination to stick to the budget.

More apparent this year than ever is that price tags don't really spell the difference between the good and the mediocre. Quality and charm are purchasable under five dollars and over \$100.

New furniture ranks high in the category of major Christmas gift investment. A young couple may give to each other an accessory piece and dress it up with a gay holiday decoration. Popular are new tables which fold down from a wall cabinet, jackknife folding tables, small chests, stackable stools or snack tables.

Home entertainment equipment will also enjoy high favor with young families and old. Just ready for the holiday trade is a room divider in walnut and brass which combines a televi-

sion on a full swivel and a high fidelity phonograph. Twin speakers are placed behind screened doors. The divider also has ample shelf room for books, records or bric-a-brac.

Besides transistor radios, other evidences of this scientific age we live in which will be represented on Christmas morning are compact air purifiers (for allergy sufferers), small colorful gauges which will tell you whether or not you are comfortably warm in the room, and clocks, entrancing battery clocks and electric clocks.

More in evidence this year, too, is the work of American crafts-men, too often neglected in favor of foreign craftsmen. In this area you'll find beautiful enameled

copper ashtrays, cigarette boxes, unusual glass and wood candleholders, cake stands and bowls, wooden bowls signed by such artists as Gertrude Hacke, Michael and Frances Higgins, Russel Dunbar.

Imports will always have their champions in the home. Some of the gayest serving pieces in the shapes of pigs with apple in mouth, and a gentle, flower-garlanded cow are coming from Italy. Spain contributes sturdy reed baskets with brightly checked cotton linings and tops. From Spain, too, come handsome inexpensive portable bars in wicker, folding towel racks (what a boon to the holiday hostess!) and welcome mats scented with greetings in season.

Household linens are a joy to behold and almost any homemaker, old or young, would welcome a new look in the linen closet. Towels and towel sets in wonderful mixed or solid colors promise to spark bathroom decor.

Soft floral blends, needlepoint florals, medallions, and modern prints decorate towels. Not for everyone are towels spotted like a leopard. These are part of a leopard skin ensemble that includes bedspreads as well. Table place mats in gay prints or solid colored linens laminated to foam rubber will protect a table top and cushion the clatter of dishes.

For family or friends who are collectors, new books on many of the most popular collecting hobbies are a cinch to please.

GIVE GIFTS

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