

NEW JERSEY LIFE'S

GUIDE

TO

GIFTS

*for people who have*

EVERYTHING



Sometimes, the best presents take place in the future. Following are notable experiential gifts that will create a lasting memory for your loved ones, as well as customized items from artisans at the top of their fields.

BY *Patti Verbanas*

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 SEND THEM  
DOWN THE  
SLOPES

If you know someone pining to try the black diamonds, start your adventure-seeker on the right path with ski or snowboard lessons.

Try **Campgaw Mountain**, Mahwah, 201.327.7800, [skicampgaw.com](http://skicampgaw.com); **Hidden Valley Club**, Vernon, 973.764.4200, [hiddenvalleynj.com](http://hiddenvalleynj.com); **Mountain Creek**, Vernon, 973.864.8000, [mountaincreek.com](http://mountaincreek.com)

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 SOAR IN  
A FAMOUS  
BIPLANE

Take flight in the *Cannibal Queen*, a 1942 open-cockpit biplane used to train fighter pilots. The aircraft boasts an exceptional provenance: It was immortalized in *The New York Times* best-selling author Steven Coonts' *The Cannibal Queen*, which chronicles the three months in 1991 he spent exploring America from the cockpit. "Most of our rides are presents," says owner and pilot Jim Lonergan. "So often I hear, 'Wow, did I nail this gift!'"

**Biplane Rides Over New Jersey Beaches**, Robert J. Miller Airpark, Bayville, 800.247.2371, [biplaneridesovernjb.com](http://biplaneridesovernjb.com)

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 CAST YOUR  
WANNABE  
SAILOR OUT  
TO SEA

Think summer with a gift certificate for a course at one of the Shore's sailing schools. Pair your gift with captain Donald Launer's *Cruising Guide to New Jersey Waters* to prepare your landlubber to jump on deck.

Try **Offshore Sailing School** (ranked No. 1 in the nation by *Practical Sailor* magazine), Liberty Landing, Jersey City, 800.221.4326, [offshore-sailing.com](http://offshore-sailing.com); **New Jersey Sailing School** (instructing since 1973), Point Pleasant, 732.295.3450, [newjerseysailingschool.com](http://newjerseysailingschool.com); **Nelson Sailing Center**, Island Heights (voted Outstanding Sailing School of the Year, 2004–2007, by the American Sailing Association), 732.270.6510, [nelsonsailingcenter.com](http://nelsonsailingcenter.com)

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 TEACH HORSE-  
LOVERS POLO  
AND FOX  
HUNTING

"These are sports I've participated in for most of my life, and I want to give back to these sports that have given me so much," says James Garfield, owner of the 50-acre January Farm, which contains a practice polo field and fully trained polo ponies. Garfield offers lessons for all skill levels with Argentine professionals. If your horse-lover is more interested in fox hunting, he can join world-class foxhounds and navigate hundreds of miles on the farm's comprehensive training course.

**January Farm**, Stanton, 908.236.9477, [januaryfarm.com](http://januaryfarm.com)



 HONE THEIR SWING WITH A TOP GOLF PRO

Set up a private lesson for your golfer with one of the state's top instructors.

Try **David Glenz Golf Academy**, The Resorts at Crystal Springs (Glenz is a New Jersey PGA Hall of Famer who is ranked in the top 50 teachers in the nation by *Golf Digest*), Sussex, 973.209.6075, [davidglenz.com](http://davidglenz.com); **Hamilton Farm Golf Club** (golf pro Mike Adams has taught professional tour players and past presidents), Gladstone, 908.901.4000, [hamiltonfarmgolfclub.com](http://hamiltonfarmgolfclub.com); **John Lubin Golf Schools**, Sand Barrens Golf Club (Lubin is one of the 2 percent of PGA members to have achieved Master Professional Status), Swinton, 954.701.9577, [johnlubingolf.com](http://johnlubingolf.com); **Royce Brook Academy of Golf**, Royce Brook Golf Course (golf pro Anthony Latham has been a PGA professional since 1995), Hillsborough, 908.904.0499, [roycebrook.com](http://roycebrook.com)



TRANSFORM THEIR WARDROBE WITH CELEBRITY STYLIST JILL SWID →

Surrender your loved one's closet for a day to Swid, the fashionista behind the looks of Marisa Tomei, Sienna Miller, Hugh Grant, and Uma Thurman. Swid starts with an in-home consultation to edit and update the closet's contents, identify what's missing in the wardrobe, and plan a personalized shopping expedition. Then, your recipient and Swid will hit Manhattan boutiques to shop together for chic items.

**Excitations**, 877.839.2483, [excitations.com](http://excitations.com)



SEND THEM SPINNING

Are your loved ones glued to *Dancing With the Stars*? Have them get up and salsa, waltz, or tango at one of the state's dance studios.

Try **Dance With Me**

(home of *DWTS*' Maksim Chmerkovskiy), Ridgefield, 201.941.7797, [dancewithmecorp.com](http://dancewithmecorp.com);

**Fred Astaire Dance Studios**

(co-founded by Astaire himself) [fredastaire.com](http://fredastaire.com);

**Starlight Dance Center**

(international award-winning instructors and resident coaches, including *DWTS*' Louis van Amstel), Nutley, 973.235.9835, [starlightdanceusa.com](http://starlightdanceusa.com)

SCORE A PRIVATE LESSON WITH A NEW YORK POPS MUSICIAN

Send a pitch-perfect gift to the musician in your life with a one-on-one music lesson from a member of the New York Pops. Lessons are customized to match the player's skill level and interests. Plus, the recipient can select an instrument and style of music: classical, pop, jazz, or salsa.

**Excitations**, 877.839.2483, [excitations.com](http://excitations.com)

REINVENT THEIR HOME INTERIOR, HGTV-STYLE

Give your design enthusiast a behind-the-scenes view into home interior shopping with Libby Langdon, an expert commentator on HGTV's *Small Space, Big Style*. They will spend the day exploring Manhattan design shops and visiting some of Langdon's recent projects while she shares her secrets for achieving a designer look.

**Excitations**, 877.839.2483, [excitations.com](http://excitations.com)

GIVE THEM QUALITY TIME WITH A STOGIE →

Send your cigar aficionado a premium smoking experience or a club membership. Pair this gift with a luxury cigar from **Cigars Plus** in Red Bank (800.292.9921, [cigarsplus.com](http://cigarsplus.com)).

Try **Ashes Cigar Club**, Red Bank, 732.219.0710, [ashescigarclub.com](http://ashescigarclub.com); **Hoboken Cigar Club**, [hobokencigarclub.com](http://hobokencigarclub.com); **The Metropolitan Society**, Fairfield, 973.287.3540, [metroclub.com](http://metroclub.com)







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**LOVE THEM,  
LOVE THEIR  
BOOKS**

Have Beasley's Bookbindery re-cover your loved one's old books or have a beautiful new album made. While there, browse Beasley's selection of handmade, decorative stationary and leather desk sets.

**Frenchtown**, 908.996.9993, beasleysbookbindery.com

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**SUIT THEM  
PERFECTLY**

Start off your significant other's New Year in style with a contemporary look that has a nod to the

past. Book a session with **Sciortino Tailors** and have them create one of their signature bespoke men's suits, jackets, trousers, or coats in fine Italian or English fabrics.

Red Bank, 732.933.8448, sciortinotailors.com

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**HAVE THEIR PET  
PHOTOGRAPHED**

Invite **Jim Dratfield** to come to your recipient's home to take a personalized fine-art photograph of a beloved pet. Dratfield's work has been featured in *Elle Decor*; *O, The Oprah Magazine*; *Departures*; and *InStyle* as well as on ABC's *20/20* and *The View*. His

clientele includes Jennifer Aniston, Charlize Theron, and Billy Joel.

800.738.6472, petography.com

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**COMMISSION  
A PORTRAIT  
THAT HAS  
PERSONALITY**

"My commissioned portraits are narrative paintings, psychodramas that happen to star a person who asks for the work," says **Mikel Glass**, a nationally exhibited fine artist based in Tenafly. "The most satisfying projects are those where the subject has an adventurous spirit and is willing to collaborate with me on an ambitious

plan." Glass' portraits have captured the attention of John T. Spike, director of the Florence Biennale, for their "refreshing twist on portraiture."

mikelglass.com



ENLIVEN THEIR CORRESPONDENCE ↑

What can be a more customized gift than stationary, envelopes, and cards hand-lettered by one of the nation's top calligraphers? **Bernard Maisner's** work has appeared on album covers and celebrity invitations, in magazines, and in the windows of Tiffany's and Bergdorf Goodman as well as onscreen in *The Age of Innocence*, *Sleepy Hollow*, and *Finding Forester*. Have Maisner create a stationary set for your loved one, and you'll be guaranteed to receive a thank-you card with panache.

Bayhead, 732.899.9858, bernardmaisner.com

↓ GIVE THEM A NOSE FOR WINE

Wine lovers of all experience levels would enjoy a tasting in an elegant setting — or in their own home.

Try **56 Degree Wine** (in-home tastings), Bernardsville, 908.953.0900, 56degreewine.com; **Pluckemin Inn**, Bedminster, 908.658.9292, pluckemininn.com; **The Bernards Inn**, Bernardsville, 908.766.0002, bernardsinn.com; the **Wine Room at Copeland** (winner of a 2008 *Wine Spectator* Award of Excellence), Morristown, 973.451.2619, copelandrestaurant.com

== KICK UP THEIR COOKING SKILLS

“Besides classes in bona fide cooking schools, many restaurant chefs — including those at our top restaurants — are adding cooking classes at their restaurants,” notes Pat Tanner, *New Jersey Life* dining critic. “A simple check with your recipient’s favorite restaurant is likely to yield results. Among my personal favorites is **Kirti Rahi of Piquant** in New Brunswick,” (732.246.2468, piquantfoods.com).

Try **Classic Thyme Cooking School**, Westfield, 908.232.5445, westfieldtoday.com/classicthyme; **Culinary Academy at Kitchen Kapers**, Moorestown, 856.778.7705, kitchenkapers.com; **Ezekiel’s Table**,

Princeton, 609.240.7712, ezekielstable.com; **Kings Cooking Studio**, Bedminster (908.719.4966) and Short Hills (973.258.4009), kingscookingstudio.com; **Viking Cooking School**, Fairfield, 973.244.1580, vikingcookingschool.com

== ORDER IN

Know someone who always seems to be in the kitchen — especially during the holidays? Invite a personal chef in to give your recipient a chance to sit back and have a glass of wine while awaiting a fine meal.

Visit the **American Personal and Private Chef Association** for its recommendations at personalchefsearch.com or try one of its award-

winning members: **Bacco**, 973.202.5212, baccocatering.com; **Christopher’s Kitchen** (serving Monmouth, Ocean, Middlesex, Mercer, and Somerset counties), 732.491.3399, christopherskitchen.com; and **Foodini’s Catering and Personal Chef Service**, 732.775.3663, personalchef4u.com

== LET THEM MAKE CHEESE

Send your gourmand to the farm to take a class in cheese making or bread making.

Try **Artisanal Cheese**, New York, 877.797.1200, artisanalcheese.com; **Bobolink Dairy**, Vernon, 973.764.4888, cowsoutside.com; **Valley Shepherd Creamery**, Long Valley, 908.876.3200, valleyshepherd.com

== SEND THEM ON A SWEET ESCAPE

Make your chocoholics work for their fix at a class given by Antoinette Chocolatier. Run by Ann Little — who studied at the French Culinary Institute, the Institute of Culinary Education, and the prestigious Notter School of Pastry Arts — the classes teach students (beginners to advanced) how to make high-quality chocolate that will please the palate of any chocolate aficionado. Bonus: Students get to take home the recipes.

**Antoinette Chocolatier**, Phillipsburg, 908.859.4545, antoinettechocolatier.com

