



- Home
- LifeStyle
- FineLiving
- LuxeTravel
- Luxury Hotels
- LuxeVideos
- LuxeShop
- LuxeListings
- Best of Luxe
- Events
- Fashion & Style
- Food & Spirits
- Health & Beauty
- Home Decor
- News & Trends
- Shopping
- Fashion Videos
- Twitter
- Facebook

Home > Fine Living > News & Trends > Featured Article

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Glam Gifts & Gets

Contributor: [Merilee Kern](#) [VIEW PROFILE](#)



News & Trends: Finding fabulous gifts for those who seemingly have it all can be a challenge at best -- even if the gift recipient is your self. Each month I scour the luxury marketplace to uncover new, innovative and otherwise exemplary must haves -- the best-of-the-best across a range of product categories. The gift-and-get-worthy goods that make The Luxe List cut a mix of tasteful, trendy, and high quality commodities -- some extravagant, some practical -- that are all sure to please.

Consider this month's favorite finds:

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Theresa Kathryn Luxury Laptop Bags-\$350-\$499

There's no doubt about it: every chic business woman on-the-go should have a Theresa Kathryn bag -- a stylish and sophisticated synthesis of a handbag and laptop bag in one. Why continue to compromise an otherwise stylish ensemble with a cumbersome and uncoordinated laptop bag, or struggle to manage multiple bags, as you get from point A to point B? This line of luxurious leather bags will keep you functional and fashionable. Just ask some of the A-listers who are Theresa Kathryn devotees, including Eva Longoria, Teri Hatcher or Carol Alt who recently used her bag on season seven of *Celebrity Apprentice*.

Indeed, the Theresa Kathryn line of bags was designed and launched by Tammy Trenta, a candidate from season five of *The Apprentice*. A busy executive traveler herself, Tammy noticed that many women had professional clothes and stylish accessories, but their laptop cases were rather clunky, unattractive and decidedly masculine. What's more, she noted how awkward it was for these women to manage both their laptop bag and a handbag -- not to mention these items generally clashed with each other and a woman's outfit overall. Recognizing this distinct marketplace void, in 2006 Tammy debuted her first line of elegant, eye-catching laptop bags and, having gained a notable and rapid following among the stylish jet set, continues to launch a new line each season.

This year is no exception with the launch of the "Bella" collection, featuring six styles in four colors that include ebony, gunmetal, bordeaux, and ivory. Not just a laptop bag, this collection can also function as a handbag or carry-on for quick trips. There is room for everything a busy traveler needs. Features include an ample padded compartment for a laptop computer, files or magazines as well as specially designed pockets to keep small, frequently used items like PDAs, cell phones, business cards, pens, and cosmetics at hand. Convenient hooks for keys and sunglasses make finding these items a breeze rather than having to dig within the caverns of a standard handbag. I have to say that even my large laptop, with its 15.4" wide screen, slipped perfectly into the compartment and was duly insulated and secure.



Theresa Kathryn bags also feature detachable, ergonomic shoulder straps designed with the female shape in mind, making them ultra-comfortable and less strenuous to carry. An exterior pocket unzips and slides onto

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luggage handles for even easier transport through airport terminals. This collection of laptop bags is also carry-on size friendly, fitting easily underneath an airplane seat.

Conveniences aside, no expense has been spared on the high-quality materials used in Theresa Kathryn's bags, which boast trendy, cutting-edge designs fabricated with rich leathers, patent accents, and a satin brocade lining. Check out these "Bella" beauties and the company's other avant-garde accessories, including clutch wallets and scarves, on the Theresa Kathryn Web site. (www.theresakathryn.com)



The Elegant Setting Cotton Blend Throws - \$160

Who doesn't love to snuggle up underneath a luscious throw blanket in front of the TV or while reading a good book? But, all blankets are not created equal. Some transcend the cloth and transport you to a place of otherworldly warmth and comfort. This is indubitably my experience with the supple cotton blend throws from The Elegant Setting -- a nostalgic high-end gift store offering both new and vintage tabletop, custom embroidered and monogrammed items.

Listed as one of the company's most popular items, these uber-cozy throws measure a full 55" by 70" and may be custom embroidered and monogrammed with initials, family or house name for that special personal touch. A host of colors are available, including burnt orange, camel, slate blue, crème, grass, chocolate, royal blue, navy blue, Kelly green, and red. Also machine washable, the throws are easy to care for so you or the lucky gift recipient may cherish it for years to come.

The Elegant Setting's cotton blend throws are a wonderful gift for grandparents, parents, college grads, friends or anyone upon which you would like to bestow a little slice of Heaven. (www.theelegantsetting.com)

Repeat Possessions Jeweled Bra Straps - \$23-\$120

One of the ultimate fashion faux pas is to let your unsightly factory-fabricated bra straps be seen amid an otherwise stylish ensemble. Some attempt to resolve this problem with clear plastic bra straps that are certainly not invisible, and look as cheap as they cost. However, with Repeat Possessions' designer jeweled detachable bra straps, women can actually make their spaghetti strap, racer back, tank top and strapless attire look far more chic, sassy and sophisticated.



Repeat Possessions' artisan designer straps -- adorned with colorful, hand-selected fine glass beads and stunning gemstones, Swarovski crystals or freshwater pearls -- add just the right touch of "bling" that will have everyone talking. Each piece is unique and sturdy, yet delicate in appearance and surprisingly comfortable. The straps are adjustable and can also be used in a criss-cross fashion to extend the versatility of this unique fashion accessory. Go ahead, buy that tube top or a daring off-the-shoulder dress, and wear your convertible or strapless bra with confidence and class. (www.repeatpossessions.com)



Phenominoes Art of Possibility Collection Pendants - \$26.95

Like to play with fashion? The Phenominoes Art of Possibility Studios pendant collection features extraordinary, whimsical works of art on the backs of real dominoes. This playful pendant is available in a multitude of designs, and is accompanied by color-coordinated ribbon necklace and a special clasp making them interchangeable from one necklace to another.

What makes this jewelry line particularly special is the cause behind it. The artwork that adorns Phenominoes Art of Possibility Studios pendants was created by two inspirational, award-winning blind painters: Ketra Oberlander, whose work has been featured on ABC-TV's "Extreme Makeover: Home Edition," and George Mendoza, who has been featured in the two PBS documentaries. In addition to adding a unique twist to any ensemble, this meaningful fashion accessory also

helps support these disabled artists in their quest to become financially self-sufficient and not depend on charity and disability benefits.

For a very modest cost people can have wearable art that's pretty, fun and serves a greater good. Indeed, socially conscious consumers can readily vote their values of compassion and inclusion through fashion. Wear a trendy necklace and, in doing so, make the world a better place? Sign me up! (www.aopstudios.com)

isABelt - \$6.95-\$18.95



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Simple yet ingenious is the isABelt -- a must-have "fix it" fashion accessory that I now cannot live without. isABelt bills itself as preventing that unsightly and annoying pants back gap that shows your skivvies, also stopping slippage and avoiding the dreaded belt bulge. Having worn each of the available isABelt styles, I can personally attest this brilliant belt lives up to its promise.



Available for women, men and teens of all shapes or sizes, isABelt is a lightweight, flat, adjustable and virtually invisible belt that supports jeans, trousers, shorts or skirts without adding the weight or bulk of a normal belt or belt buckle. There's also no metal in the fabrication so this belt is fantastic for travelers who loathe taking off their belt to go through a metal detector.

isABelt products are constructed from a strong Thermoplastic Polyurethane (TPU) with a strong, sleek and streamlined plastic closure. The belt keeps your pants flat against your waist and firmly in place. The isABelt line is available in both narrow and full 1" wide varieties in both clear and black, and versions for plus sizes, teens, and men (HisABelt) are also offered. Additionally, the company has launched isASTrips - fashion apparel tape designed to keep tops and even the isABelt itself in place to avoid wardrobe malfunctions.

The company has a very specific set of instructions - and even a video on its Web site -- on how to properly adjust and place the isABelt, so be sure to heed those directives to get the most bang for your isABelt buck. (www.isabelt.com)

Chocolatines' CHOCOUTURE Edible Diamond Collection - \$12-\$105



Diamonds and fine chocolate are indelibly a Luxe List favorite. But, never have I had the opportunity to report on one product that combines both -- until now. Chocolatines, an artisan chocolatier specializing in the creation of exclusive chocolate gifts, offers a CHOCOUTURE Edible Diamond Collection. This first-class confection showcases a diamond made out of sugar and set in 24k gold, white gold or rose gold hand-painted chocolates, and are really something to behold.

A gift that's more novel and artful than traditional jewelry or chocolates, CHOCOUTURE's Diamond Collection is the perfect way to leave a long-lasting impression of good taste, exclusivity and style. Available in boxed quantities of four, nine and sixteen pieces, the Edible Diamond Collection also offers a variety of gourmet ganache fillings: single-malt scotch, champagne and Grand Marnier. In each variety, sugar diamonds rest on a chocolate setting adorned with edible gold leaves painted by hand. The gift-ready chocolates are delicately placed in glassine paper, packaged in the company's signature faux leather box and finished with a ribbon. All hail my new guilty pleasure. (www.chocolatines.com)

The Luxe List product, service and travel review editor Merilee Kern scours the luxury marketplace for new and captivating "musts." Submissions accepted via e-mail at Merilee@JustLuxe.com.

- Merilee Kern
JustLuxe.com's "The Luxe List" Executive Review Editor

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