

What to buy

2016 HOLIDAY GIFT GUIDE

13 SHOPPING DAYS LEFT

# WHITE ELEPHANT

**W**ho says white elephant gifts have to be tacky? We think they just need to be wacky. Be the star of the office gift exchange or family gathering by picking something clever not crass,

inexpensive not cheap, useful not banal. These picks will make your package the most-swapped-for present at the party.

— VANESSA McCRAY, BLADE STAFF WRITER

**Fresh air**

A holiday-themed reminder that benefits everyone year-round, this vehicle air freshener will get a smile and some use. \$8 at **Francesca's** at Franklin Park Mall or at **francescas.com**.



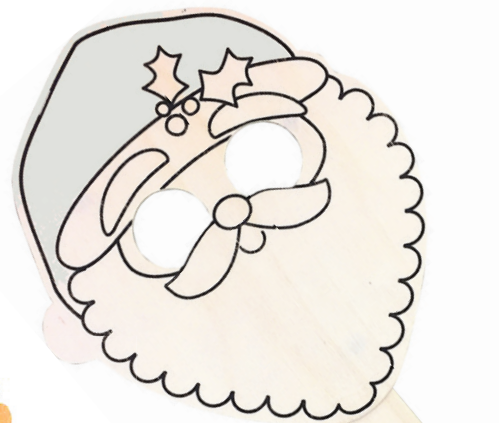
**S'no joke**

Take a minty fresh spin down the sledding hill on this peppermint-shaped snow tube — fun for adults and kids. \$19.99 to \$24.95 at **target.com** and **American Eagle Outfitters** online at **ae.com**.



**Christmas-querade**

Spice up a holiday party photo-booth by getting a wooden mask for each of your guests to use as a photo prop. Bonus points if you paint each one to personalize it for every Santa, reindeer, snowman, or elf on the guest list. \$1.49 at **Jo-Ann Fabric and Craft Store**, 4948 Monroe St.



**Charming companions**

These insanely detailed and thoughtfully costumed finger puppets from the Unemployed Philosophers Guild are a great choice for a gift exchange with your book club or college classmates. The puppets also work as magnets and depict historical, literary, and artistic figures — from Sherlock Holmes to Eleanor Roosevelt and Frida Kahlo. \$6.95 at **philosophersguild.com**.



**Monkey see, monkey do**

If you can't spring for maid service, at least make cleaning more fun. This washable microfiber duster fits over the hand and is perfect for cleaning computer and television screens. \$12.99 at **The Andersons**, 4701 Talmadge Rd.



**Monster hit**

This baby Nessie tea infuser is perfect for tea-drinkers, Loch lovers, and anybody who appreciates how a design-first approach can amplify a simple gadget. Place the loose tea leaves inside the strainer and marvel at the monster sightings each morning in your tea cup. About \$15 at **Amazon.com**.



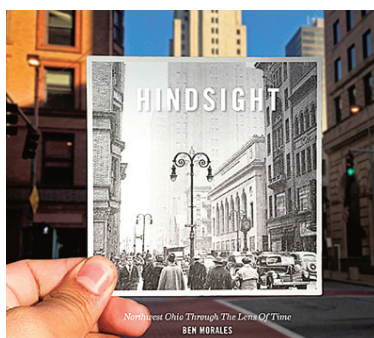
**This suds for you**

You can do better than a soap-on-a-rope gift set. Trade that cliché for soap with cache. These bars of Florida-made Finchberry soaps come in colorful creations and mood-enhancing scents. Try cranberry chutney, perfect for the holidays, or moxie, a watermelon-and-cantaloupe soap concoction that looks like a tie-dyed slice of cake. \$9 a bar at **The Art Supply Depo**, 29 S. St. Clair St., Toledo.



**Past is a present**

Photographer Ben Morales layers historic pictures over present-day street scenes and landmarks to create an all-in-one leap through local history in *Hindsight*. Published in August by the University of Toledo Press, his book is perfect for a more serious-minded gift swap. \$39.95 at **Gathering Volumes**, 196 E. South Boundary St., Perrysburg, or **Rockets Bookstore**, 3047 W. Bancroft St.



**A magic 8-ball with ink**

If it has to be a gag gift, at least make it practical. Click this pen and different messages pop up — from "If you're lucky" to "Not for a million \$." Maybe it will spell out the future. \$6.95 at **Barnes & Noble**, 4940 Monroe St.



**Stir it up**

These celebrity-designed spatulas are goofy but functional, our favorite kind of white elephant gift. Choose from a drawing of bearded comedian Jimmy Kimmel, model and cookbook author Chrissy Teigen's eggs-and-bacon doodle, or cookbook author and wife of a basketball star Ayesha Curry's curry powder homage. \$12.95 at **Williams-Sonoma**, Franklin Park Mall, or **williams-sonoma.com**.



\* Prices and availability subject to change.

Purchase \$30.00 Gift Certificate's  
**SAVE \$5!**  
 for \$25.00  
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*Black Pearl*

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4630 Heatherdowns

(Across from the Stranahan, stop in before or after the show.)

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