

TEXT BY GREMLYN BRADLEY-WADDELL

# PRETTY pleasers

Say "thank you" with a thoughtful hostess gift

Jordan Rose already gets plenty of invitations to dinners, weekend retreats and the like.

But, once folks discover what she and her husband sometimes bestow upon hostesses as a thank-you gift, she may find herself with an even busier social calendar.

"We send a concierge for the day," says Rose, adding that the personnel service — which is truly personal and makes the ultimate unique hostess gift — is available at the law firm where she's employed. "I don't like doing the same old, same old."

The concierge service can handle everything from picking up dry cleaning and kennel-related errands to grocery shopping and scheduling appointments. And do those folks — the concierges — mind being hired out in such a manner? Not at all, according to Rose. "They love their job because everybody loves what they do for them," she says. "It's very satisfying. No one ever gets mad at them." (Find a concierge on Google, by searching "concierge Phoenix.")

Rose says other goodies she enjoys giving to hostesses include Molton Brown bath products, Jay Strongwater picture frames or, for a more casual affair, dates from the Valley's own Sphinx Date Ranch.

"They do pretty packaging there, and dates are good because they're good for you — and they taste like dessert," she adds.

As for the hostess gifts that have moved her, she says she has received many lovely ones through the years but one favorite is a stylish, modern-looking pen with a silver and black finish. She's not sure of the maker, but she adores the way it works.

"I use it all the time," she says. "It was just a nice gesture."

## GET CREATIVE

Harriet Friedland's friends know to expect a thoughtful thank-you. She likes to tuck a photo of herself with the hostess (and, as is usually the case, the woman's spouse) into a charming picture frame. "It's a great memory, and you can't go wrong with a little silver frame," she says.

Another gift Friedland gives that shows her flair for creating something personal is personalized wrapping paper or ribbon from a stationery store. Or, for a touch of whimsy, she'll pair some lottery tickets "with a cute little change purse." She might give the latte lovers in her life a coffee scoop teamed up with a bag of



Starbucks coffee and a Starbucks gift card. And hostesses with a sweet tooth are sure to be delighted when they discover a huge bag of M&Ms in a pretty bowl, all dolled up in cellophane.

"Or, I also might give a makeup brush," she says. "Girls just like a little treat."

#### FOOD'S 'WELL APPRECIATED'

Carole Machiz also appreciates the personal touch in a hostess gift. She says she has pretty much stopped entertaining at home — "It's better to go out," she enthuses. But when she does play hostess, she loves nothing more than being reminded of good times with guests. "The thing I enjoy is someone taking their time to make a personal gift," she says.

One treasure she received from local television personality Robin Sewell is a poster from a Phoenix Theatre play that was signed by all the cast members. Machiz, a theater supporter, is still awed by the thoughtful deed.

But she also has a practical streak that finds her making a beeline to tasty snacks when she needs a quick gift, and she's partial to quality chocolates and nuts.

"That's a well-appreciated gift," she says, knowingly, "because it's something you can use." ✍

## 10 IDEAS FOR DISTINCTIVE HOSTESS GIFTS:


Lisa Pagel, public relations manager for Neiman Marcus, and Jennifer Benavidez, a partner at Do Me A Favor, suggest these thoughtful ideas:

1. Anything monogrammed: sets of sticky notes and memo pads, luggage tags, embroidered guest towels, dinner napkins.
2. A tooled-leather wine journal.
3. Jeweled salt-and-pepper sets.
4. Collectible milagros. These small signs from Hispanic folk culture may be used as home décor and may be given as a house blessing or other purpose.
5. Sommelier cups.
6. Jeweled napkin-ring sets.
7. A candle snuffer.
8. Edible treats.
9. Anything by Match Pewter, an Italian brand that sells "the purest form of pewter you can buy," and whose items may be engraved.
10. Place Des Lices Peony soaps and sachets.



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