

For him

Men | Ryan Thompson

presents stylish gift ideas

for the modern man

The seasonal dilemma of finding the perfect present for the discerning (read: difficult) male is upon us. Yet, this year, there's plenty of love to spread, or even share. For what would make a better offering at the seasonal dinner party than a first-class lump of white Alba truffle? London Fine Foods is trying them in from Piedmont twice a week to fill your boots, or stockings, or indeed your face. Looking for a complimentary apple? The organic mineral, Montelobos, is crafted in Orvieto by expert chef Tommaso. With a smoky taste and complex sweetness, it rates far higher than its price tag would suggest.

From the aficionado to the armchair, the Vinyl Factory offers beautiful and collectable limited-edition vinyl with bespoke sleeves. Bill Viola's 'The Talking Drum', featuring three hand signed and numbered wax incense burners, was first heard at this year's Fringe. The tech-minded should lend an ear also to the award-winning Mar-er, a minimalist 45W wireless music system made by Num, the Salisbury-based audio maker. State of the art connectivity together with unbelievable sound quality make this the perfect gift for music buffs with an eye for design.

If, like me, you've about had it with smartphones and their concomitant plugs-in your time, a Swiss company has teamed up with Italian designer Jasper Morrison to produce the Punk! MP01 mobile phone. Think of it as slow-tech for fast-lane people. All it does is make and take calls and send SMS. Recharge your life.

Showering is this season's key fabric for outerwear and our favourite is the Sellstaff 'Fraser', an impossibly soft hand-treated leather and fur-lined vest on the classic aviator jacket. It may also be prudent to nab for a warm jumper. Suppress any desire for a thermal fur life sweater and instead go to Berluti for this bright but subtle roll neck.

For the travelling man, check out the beautiful calf-skin leather stowaway case, by Tommaso Casinelli, a piece of luggage that will only improve with mileage. Outdoorsy types in search of chic footwear would do well to cast their eyes over Ludwig Reiter's latest offerings in the brook street store, where you can pick up these fabulous leather winter boots with warm grey felt trim. And the gift of socks should never be underestimated. A unique subscription service with the London Sock Company delivers box-fresh socks straight to your door every month.

Fragrances are another favourite making list, but many come with a distinct lack of exclusivity. For a more personal approach, Floris - London perfumery since 1730 - provides a bespoke fragrance service. After three consultations, taken over a six-month period, the scent created is kept on Floris's lodgers to fragrance future generations.

Time is often his most precious commodity so it's only fitting that the wrist of the "man who has everything" should accommodate a watch of considerable importance. At Basel world this year, the new Patek Philippe Nautilus in rose gold with a graduated dial was revealed. It's an art-deco-inspired masterpiece, not to mention a reasonable way to keep your shirt gold position.

From keeping track of time to killing it, literally. Take a trip to London gun and rifle makers William & Son. The



▲ London Fine Foods Alba truffle, 50g approx £500 londonfinefoods.co.uk



▲ Aston Martin DB9 GT, £140,000 www.astonmartin.com



▲ Bill Viola's 'The Talking Drum', £300, vinylfactory.com



▲ Berluti cable-knit cashmere sweater, £1,200 www.berluti.com



▲ Ludwig Reiter leather winter boots, £591 ludwig-reiter.com

▲ William & Son, bespoke shotgun, from £55,500 williamson.com



▲ Tommaso Casinelli cowhide stowaway case, £3,010 tommasocasinelli.com



▲ Nyumbia la Verbeke, £24,000 (for seven nights including gourmet catering) www.nyumbiala.com



▲ London Sock Company, from £11 londonsockcompany.com



▲ Montelobos organic mineral, £44.95 theshopbycheff.com



▲ Sellstaff Philippe Nautilus, £54,000 patek.com

▲ Sellstaff Fraser jacket, £3,200 sellstaff.co.uk



▲ Floris bespoke full fragrance design, £4,000 floris.com

▲ Punk! MP01 mobile phone, £229 punk!uk.com

▲ Num 45W wireless music system, £895 num.com

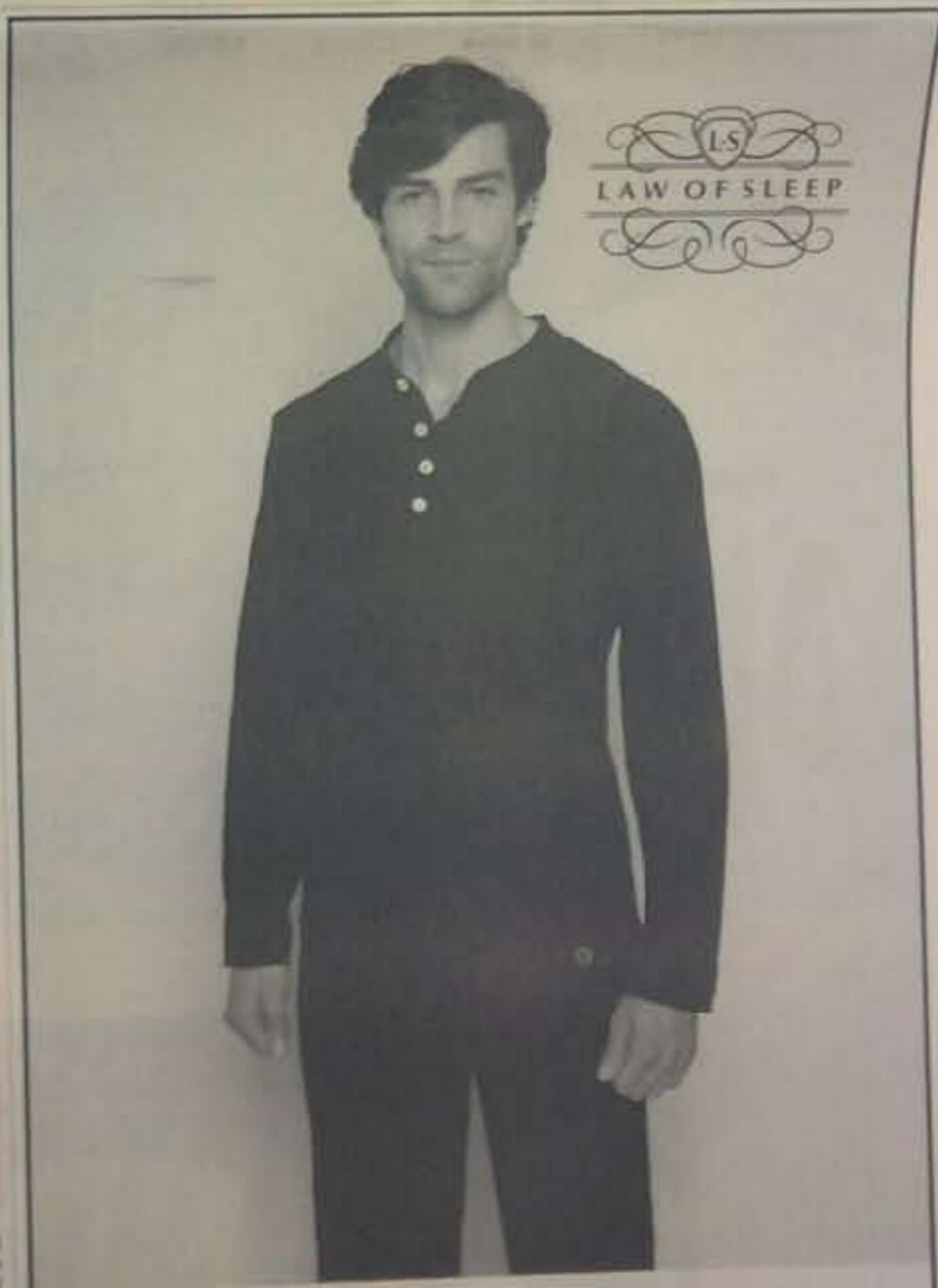


student gunsmith Paul West has been looking down barrels for 47 years. He and his team dedicate 1,200 hours to each beautifully handcrafted gun, which will continue to fire live rounds long after you've shot your last.

We should hope that Christmas is a time for self-reflection so what could be chicer than seeing your own face beaming back at you through the steering of Aston Martin's new DB9 GT? It isn't pretentious to understand the significance of the all alloy, quad overhead cam,

44-valve 5,995cc iron and-steel V12 but what I will say is that the DB9 GT is probably the most beautiful grand tourer ever made.

And finally, from high-speed will-to-Rubicon springs imagination to the face of the luxurious hotel Nyumbia la Verbeke. Envision some of the best views of the valley, Nyumbia always (2) extremely lucky friends and family and includes a private spa decked out in Italian marble. (The chalet is being offered as a discounted rate). Happy shopping and a very merry Christmas.



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