

SPECTATOR

# WINE

CHRISTMAS WINE & FOOD  
Joan Collins, Rod Liddle,  
Helen Lederer and Julie Burchill

**COMRADE  
MASON**

Paul Mason's  
bizarre reinvention  
as a bug-eyed Trot

**CLASSWAR.COM**

TripAdvisor's toff-hating  
keyboard warriors

**KNOW-IT-ALLS**

A child's guide  
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**PÉTRUS OR  
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Taki and Jeremy Clarke  
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Isabel Oakeshott  
says she doesn't mind  
online abuse

# Moggs Millions

**THE WATCH ISSUE**

What do  
Vladimir Putin and  
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in common?

The £150m fortune of  
Jacob Rees-Mogg  
by David Oldroyd-Bolt

# Hampers to pamper

## WAITROSE DUCHY ORIGINALS HAMPER (£100)

About as British as a hamper can get, with two types each of shortbread and oatmeal biscuits, plus lemon curd, orange marmalade, onion marmalade, English Breakfast tea and two types of organic real ale among the well-packed contents. No wine, though, which seems a bit mean at this price.

Organic is a recurrent keyword on the tastefully designed food packaging, which gives you the double snob value of both Waitrose and the Prince of Wales's Highgrove estate. The box itself is made from impressively robust wicker and everything is of excellent quality, though there is nothing to provide the thrill of a new or unexpected taste.

**Best for:** British expats and proud royalists



WINE&FOOD

## HARVEY NICHOLS LA DOLCE EATER (£150)

Harvey Nicks' La Dolce Eater is a curious black crate with an Anglo-Italian vibe, leather straps and an attitude problem. None of that common hay — the straw in this faintly kinky box is dark and rubbery. La Dolce Eater says: 'I am not a straightforward hamper. Have you got a problem with that?' And the answer is: 'No, amore, you're good with us.'

La Eater includes a *Wallpaper* City Guide to Milan. That leads pleasurably on to a tin of 'Lady Kisses' biscuits, panaforte, Christmas pudding, brandy butter and some Earl Grey tea, washed down nicely with bottles of English sparkling white and opulent red Barbera d'Asti.

**Best for:** Foodie romantics who fantasise about Vespas



## LA TRATTORIA, FESTA GRANDE (£142)

A Fattoria La Violla hamper is a blast of Italian summer just when you need it most. The theme is wholesome rusticity, with the bounty of a Tuscan farm beguilingly swathed in proper raffia.

FLV is a family-run organic farm in the Chianti region which only does mail order. You can create your own hamper, or there are several which are good to go. The largest is ideal for a household expecting plenty of guests, with an abundance of good homemade pasta and sauces (the picci is brilliant with the wild boar ragu). There are excellent wines — the riserva Chianti is jolly good, and so is the unfiltered prosecco. Also: an entire pecorino, fennel salami, olives, salsas and pestos. Yum.

**Best for:** Hosts who are bored with cooking

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## HARRODS KNIGHTSBRIDGE HAMPER (£250)

Harrods doesn't have a reputation for iconoclastic hamper design, but this new Christmas number is just that. Forgoing a hinged top in favour of a sporty leather lid, you'd be forgiven for presuming it was packed with laundry rather than Yuletide treats.

Harrods ought to know its way around a luxury hamper, but the results here are fairly mixed. The champagne and rioja are top-notch, as are the mince pies and condiments (mustard, chutney, fig jam). In other areas, however, it's more Oxford Street than Knightsbridge: an oversized bauble, emblazoned with 'Harrods 2016', sits atop the pile, along with a so-called 'prestige' corkscrew.

**Best For:** People who think Lamborghinis practical

