

Solera port solves the challenge of gifts for men

There may be men, somewhere, for whom choosing a gift is not a daunting task; we haven't met any. Fortunately, there exists an elegant solution to the challenge males pose us on birthdays, holidays and other special occasions: Give them Meyer Family Port.

Port wine has a long and celebrated tradition of masculinity, with roots reaching back to the seventeenth century. Admirals and emperors savored it, often with fine cigars to heighten the pleasure.

Why have powerful men throughout the centuries prized port? Fragrant to the nose, silky on the palate, the finest port has a way of unlocking deep thoughts and stimulating conversation. It partners well with not only tobacco, but chocolate, fruit, nuts and blue cheeses, making it the ideal choice for after-dinner sipping.

Born in the hills of Portugal, port is now made around the world. One of the best tawny (red) ports comes from the northern California wine country: Meyer Family Port, from Meyer Family Cellars in the Yorkville Highlands district of Mendocino County's Anderson Valley.

Unlike vintage ports, Meyer Family is one of the few in the U.S. made in the solera style more commonly associated with sherry: New zinfandel from old vines is blended in each year for the five to six years it spends in barrels. Once the port is bottled, another three years will pass before it is released for sale.

The result of this patient aging is a delectably smooth-sipping wine with warm-spice aromas, flavors of baked fruit and a long, concentrated finish. Paired with a box of cigars (or chocolates), Meyer Family Port makes a distinguished presentation in its black bottle printed with a red rampant lion.

Perhaps best of all, from a gift-giving standpoint, is that once he polishes off the first bottle, he'll be delighted to receive another!

To order or request more information, contact Meyer Family Winery at (707) 895-2341 or visit the Web site, www.mfcellars.com.