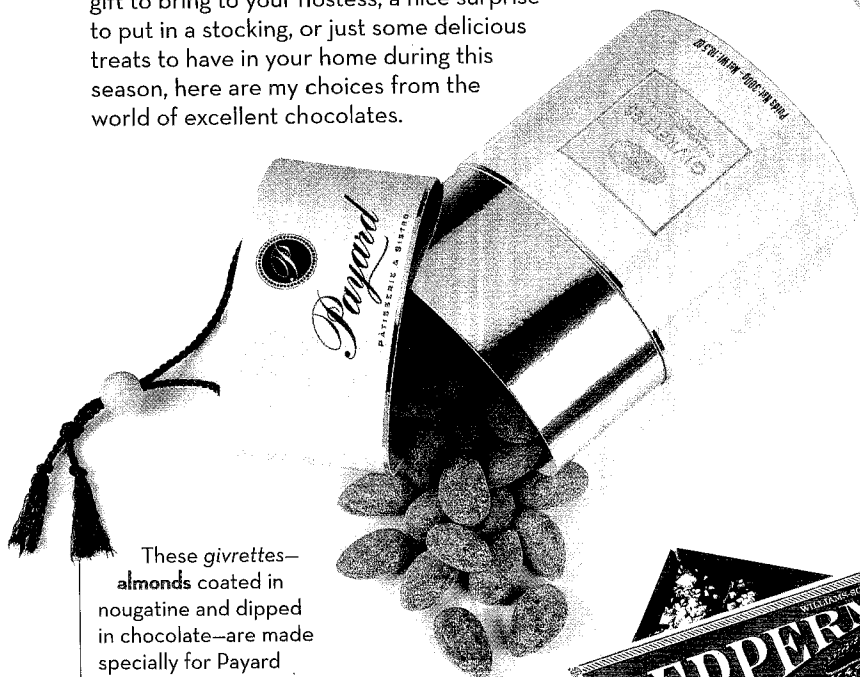


DECK THE HALLS WITH GIFTS OF CHOCOLATE

BY LORA ZARUBIN

Whether you're looking for the ultimate gift to bring to your hostess, a nice surprise to put in a stocking, or just some delicious treats to have in your home during this season, here are my choices from the world of excellent chocolates.



These *givettes*—almonds coated in nougatine and dipped in chocolate—are made specially for Payard by the French company Mazet Confiseur. Fill your favorite bowl with them. \$25 for 10.5 oz. payard.com.

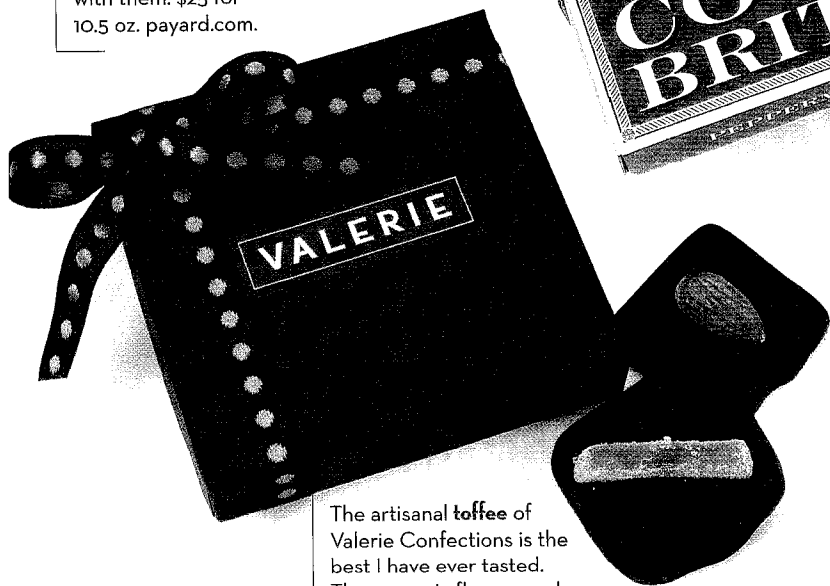


Recchiuti Confections' elegant **caramels** are infused with *fleur de sel* and dipped in chocolate. The hint of salt leaves an unforgettable finish on your palate. \$20 for a 16-piece box. 800-500-3396.

Keep plenty of the **peppermint cookie brittle** from Williams-Sonoma around this season. Every bite delivers the essence of holiday spirit: chocolate and peppermint. It also makes a great gift. \$20 for 1 lb. 800-541-2233.



A classic candy and a personal favorite, Bridgewater Chocolate's **turtles** were a happy discovery for me. I prefer the dark to the milk chocolate, but both are irresistible. \$27.50 for 12 pieces. 800-888-8742. □



The artisanal **toffee** of Valerie Confections is the best I have ever tasted. There are six flavors, and each seems better than the one before. A wonderful after-dinner treat. \$12 for four pieces. 888-706-1408. For more chocolates, see houseandgarden.com.

